

Myerstown, PA  
Thursday, January 19, 2017

President Bryan L. Rittle called the advertised special meeting of the Myerstown Borough Council to order at 6:34 p.m., on Thursday, January 19, 2017. The meeting was held in Borough Council Chambers in the Myerstown Municipal Center, 101 East Washington Avenue, Myerstown, PA 17067.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, a roll call was taken. Present were: President Bryan L. Rittle, President Pro Tem Park W. Haverstick, II, Councilmembers Vince Podolski, Eric L. Powell, Jeffrey L. Thomas, Mayor Gloria R. Ebling, Economic Development Manager Michael McKenna, Deputy Secretary Lisa A. Brubaker and Manager Christopher J. Moonis. Absent were: Vice President Michael D. Behm, Councilmember Dana Reich, and Assistant Manager Barry A. Ludwig.

No minutes of past meetings were presented for approval at this planning meeting and no action was taken on any minutes.

Vice President Michael D. Behm entered the meeting at 6:36 p.m.

The President proceeded to the Committee Reports:

Planning/Zoning/Public Safety Committee: (Park W. Haverstick, II, Vince Podolski, and Eric L. Powell) Chairman Park W. Haverstick, II stated a safety committee meeting was held on Wednesday, January 11, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. to discuss public safety issues with the Goodwill Fire Company. The committee will be meeting on Tuesday, January 24, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. with the Fire Chief's and President's from Keystone Fire Company and the Goodwill Fire Company for further discussion on Public Safety and how the companies can better work together to serve the community.

Public Works Committee: (Vince Podolski, Dana Reich, Michael D. Behm) Chairman Vince Podolski stated he has done some research on the brake retarder regulations. To enforce brake retarder restrictions, a municipality must have a local police department to enforce. He has not yet spoken to State Representative Russ Diamond or Senator Mike Folmer on the issue.

The President proceeded to the agendas order of the business:

The Manager stated the main item is the review and discussion of the RFP (Request for Proposal) for the Branding and Marketing of the Borough. The Manager explained the grant expires June 30, 2017. The grant is an 80% - 20% split. 80% being paid by the grant, 20% being paid by the borough. The total grant is \$117,000.00, \$93,600.00 (80%) portion from grant, \$23,400.00 (20%) portion from borough.

The work the borough is doing with URDC (Urban Research and Development Corporation) for the Zoning Ordinance and Map update is part of this grant also at \$20,000.00. The Council Visioning Project for \$10,000.00. Some funding could be used, but does not have to be used, from the Circuit Rider budget to help produce this Branding and Marketing proposal for \$15,000.00. The borough could have \$55,000.00 to \$70,000.00 for the branding and marketing project.

We received six proposals, Char Co. – Myerstown, PA; Donovan Connective Marketing – Lancaster, PA; Level Eleven Art Department – Lebanon, PA; Mad Crayfish Design Co. – Annville, PA; Revize Software Systems – Troy, MI; SkyLimit Marketing and Associates – Lebanon, PA.

The Economic Development Manager led the review of each proposal.

SkyLimit Marketing and Associates:

- Company is based out of Lebanon
- was on Mayor Capello's Marketing and Vision Committee and created the slogan for Lebanon
- most costly for the videography
- Local professional with knowledge of the market, and the media outlets
- Knowledge of the marketing business
- Suggests beginning an annual Myerstown "My Town" Festival in 2018

The Economic Development Manager stated he cannot say with certainty that the promotional video done for Lebanon City has brought in any new businesses or residents.

President Rittle asked is videography something the borough really should be thinking about doing based on that comment. The Manager stated the concept is after the campaign is in place, logo and marketing is in process, the borough will do a video as to why the borough is a great place and it would be placed on website as part of a growth model that promotes the town and region.

The Economic Development Manager stated Lititz has two websites, a borough website, and a destination website. The Manager stated years ago Lititz was no different than the borough but they have put the effort, time, and years to get to where they are today. Councilmember Haverstick stated Warwick Township website is a well-organized website.

The Economic Development Manager stated marketing for a government is very different then marketing for a business. When you are marketing for a government, you are marketing for people to come live here, come work here, or come start a business here. When you are marketing for a business it is to come buy my product. Social Media can be a powerful tool if used correctly. The strategy has to be related to government, because government is serviced based, it is about engaging the residents and the community.

The Economic Development Manager stated a lot of municipalities have done branding efforts and a lot have been unsuccessful because the campaign is not relatable to the citizens and businesses and they do not think it adds any value.

Councilmember Haverstick stated he believes the Council may have to justify the marketing strategy to the residents. The Manager stated what the Council is trying to do tonight is to identify the right firm to help you answer these questions. To find who can come in here and direct you professionally on making the decisions on what will be the right marketing for the borough.

The Economic Development Manager stated his option is SkyLimit Marketing is not the correct firm for the project.

#### Mad Crayfish Company:

- Provided great examples of a logo
- Clearly lays out a branding strategy
- Neat and Professional
- Explain marketing process
- Website does not have many of the modern elements of a municipal government website
- No experience creating government websites or online strategies
- No mention of social media or social media strategies

The Economic Development Manager stated if this was just a logo campaign, they would be great, but they did not offer anything on marketing, branding strategy, or a website.

#### Revize:

- Big name brand company for government website design and content management
- Impressive TOOLS/APPS to increase communication with citizens
- Prioritizes enhancing communications of government and citizens
- 24/7 technical support
- Ability to design a website that allows residents and businesses to fill out and submit documents, review and pay bills and taxes, perform searches to answer FAQs, and other tasks that would normally require the time and assistance of Borough staff
- Back-up data centers
- Can update locally

The Economic Development Manager stated his recommendation is to have Revize do the website but the branding and brand strategy should be done by another company.

CHAR Co.:

- Located in the Borough of Myerstown
- Personally and professionally invested in the borough of Myerstown
- 8 years of business and brand strategy experience with clients nationwide
- Brand Strategy project for Lititz
- Coaches small business owners, taught business workshops
- Emphasizes the intrinsic value of storytelling
- Clearly lays out a strategy process
- No experience creating government websites or online strategies
- No mention of social media or social media strategies
- Is willing to negotiate pricing

The Economic Development Manager stated he believes CHAR Co. really understands the concept of building consensus among the borough residents and businesses, reaching the target audience and adding value to the town.

Level Eleven Art Department:

- Local company with relationships in and around the borough
- No experience with government branding or government websites
- Doesn't display an understanding of the elements that are important to municipal branding

The Economic Development Manager stated he believes they are not even close to the experience, talent, and end result we are looking for.

Donovan Connective Marketing:

- Only one government website
- Corporate marketing and sales promotion
- Firm has worked with many brands
- Mostly commercial, little government branding experience
- Clearly identifies brand strategy
- Understands what was asked in RFP

The Economic Development Manager stated he believes they would be perfect for a business, but for a municipality with different needs to service the community, and getting all stakeholder input, they might not be as great in terms of branding.

The Economic Development Manager is recommending to Council to approve the proposal from Revize for the website design portion and CHAR Co. for the branding and branding strategy portion. A motion was made by Park W. Haverstick, II, seconded by Vince Podolski, to accept the Economic Development Managers recommendation and authorize the Manager to negotiate the final contract with Char Co. and Revize to start the branding and marketing campaign. All those in favor: Motion unanimously carried.

The Myerstown Rotary Club is holding a Flags for Heroes Project. They would like permission to hang two banners in the Borough. A motion was made by Vince Podolski, seconded by Park W. Haverstick, II, to approve the Rotary Club to place banners within the Borough until Memorial Day Weekend. All those in favor: motion unanimously carried.

The Manager explained during discussions with URDC (Urban Research and Development Corporation) under the Zoning Ordinance and Map update Consultant Charlie Schmehl felt it would be helpful if the borough would place some conditions upon historical places being torn down without Borough Council

approval; that action will require an Ordinance. The Manager stated the reason for Resolution 2017-01, he is presenting here is, currently one developer could get some relief while under renovations if there was some historic value designated to his property.

The Manager stated this type of resolution will help anyone who is one of these thirty six valued properties the historic trail put together through the Lebanon County Commissioner and County Planning. The Resolution states based on the Historic Trail there are historic valued properties.

The Manager stated these properties are not on the National Registry, with the exception of the Isaac Meier Homestead, or the Pennsylvania Historic Museum Commission, but notes these properties have historic value. We are also identifying these properties as having some historic value to the local economy. It is important to preserve the historic structures, but it also helps reduce some of the barriers to renovations and reaching regulation that exist. The Manager has prepared a Resolution - 2017-01 - Historical Value Properties outlining the thirty six properties.

Councilmember Haverstick stated his concern is to approve a resolution with a property listed on it that the Borough wants to tear down. The Manager stated 301 S. Railroad Street is a borough owned property and the Council has approved the demolition, so that would not be an issue, but with that, the Manager informed the Council he continues to have people wanting to preserve the 301 S. Railroad Street property.

The Manager provided letters from various places wanting to purchase and preserve the 301 S. Railroad Street property. Prior, the Council has directed the Manager to prepare bid documents for the demolition of the dwellings on the property, but the Manager just wanted Council to be aware of all of the opportunities and options regarding this property.

The Manager received a request from This Old House magazine to feature the 301 S. Railroad Street property in their magazine. The property would be featured in the magazine which would go out to all of their subscriber and online. They are willing and able to put and feature this property in their magazine. The Manager stated this would go out nationally to people who care about old houses and could potentially purchase for rehabilitation.

The Manager stated the borough would set the price and conditions, like, they must tear down the back area, timeframe for renovation completion, must be a single family dwelling, and developer must meet code and conditions. The bid would state the borough is accepting the highest responsible bidder and the borough has the right to reject any and all bids. Councilmember Podolski stated it would bring national attention to Myerstown. The Manager stated this is just one more option for the property.

The Manager stated if Council agrees to let This Old House feature the property he can work in tandem with the demolition bids, so if it doesn't sell the borough could then proceed with the demolition. The Manager stated the magazine issue will start going out in March with full distribution in April. The May issue will be the current issue on newsstands through mid-May in order to allow enough time for a potential buyer to see the property and secure financing for renovations. This Old House would recommend a wrecking ball deadline of at least July 1, 2017.

The President asked what are the wishes of Council. A motion was made by Jeffrey L Thomas, seconded by Eric L. Powell, to tear down the 301 S. Railroad Street property. All those in favor: On a roll call vote, - Michael D. Behm – yes; Park W. Haverstick, II – no; Vince Podolski – no; Eric L. Powell – yes; Jeffrey L. Thomas – yes; Bryan L. Rittle – no. there is a tie vote 3-3. The Manager explained the Mayor has two options. The Mayor can vote to break the tie or she can remand it back to the Council to retake up the issue. Mayor Ebling stated she will break the tie and she is voting no. The Manager stated with that, there is a stay to demolish. Motion carried.

President Rittle stated he believes the borough should go ahead with the This Old House article for 301 S. Railroad Street, letting that take place, but also advertise for bids for the demolition of the property based on the wrecking ball timeline given by This Old House of July 1, 2017. If no one shows interest or to our terms then it will be torn down. A motion was made by Bryan L. Rittle, seconded by Vince Podolski, to allow This Old House to feature and advertise the 301 S. Railroad Street property in their magazine, setting guidelines of the rear area being removed, be a single family home, renovations are to restore as close as possible to original, substantial renovations be completed within a year, the minimal opening bid is the actual costs spent by the Borough, and if no bids are received or to the Borough terms by July 1, 2017 then demolition will proceed. All those in favor: On a roll call vote, - Michael D. Behm – yes; Park W. Haverstick, II – yes; Vince Podolski – yes; Eric L. Powell – yes; Jeffrey L. Thomas – no; and Bryan L. Rittle – yes. Motion carried.

President Rittle went back to Resolution 2017-01 – Historical Value Properties – Councilmember Haverstick wanted to make sure this resolution will not affect or hinder the demolition of 301 S. Railroad Street if needed. President Rittle stated the resolution states the Council is the governing entity making the decisions and it is a borough property. The Manager stated this will happen before the Zoning Ordinance is adopted, so that is the assurance. A motion was made by Park W. Haverstick, II, seconded by Eric L. Powell, to approve Resolution 2017-01. All those in favor: On a roll call vote, - Michael D. Behm – yes; Park W. Haverstick, II – yes; Vince Podolski – abstain\*; Eric L. Powell – yes; Jeffrey L. Thomas – yes; and Bryan L. Rittle – yes. Motion carried. \*Councilmember Podolski provided a written statement stating he abstained due to owing and residing at 40 W. Main Avenue, which is one of the properties listed within the resolution.

The Manager stated he and the borough are trying to create an organization that is urgent and performance driven, it is his professional judgement working with the current Tax Collector, we are not getting high end production from that service. The Manager is recommending for the next election cycle that the borough not have the position of Tax Collector.

The Manager stated the Solicitor is not present and he would like to get his opinion on the matter. An Officials Notice letter was received from the Lebanon County Bureau of Elections & Voter Registration asking the borough to certify the office for the next election. In that letter, it discussed the Tax Collector and how it is handled even if a municipality uses the Lebanon County Treasurer's Office or a collection agency to collect taxes.

The office has done some research. The Lebanon County Treasurer's Office and Elections & Voter Registration Office were contacted. If the borough decides to have the Treasurer's Office do the tax collecting for the borough, we would notify the Election Office. The Election Office stated they would mark this borough change in their records and if someone came into their office and inquiries about the position they would let them know the borough does use the County to collect taxes.

The Election Office stated in most cases this prevents anyone from running, however if someone does run or wins via write in vote their office would forward them to the borough office. We would have to notify the winner that the position is done by the County.

The Lebanon County Treasurer's Office is willing to be the designated tax collector for the borough, and an Intermunicipal Agreement would be needed, which has been provided for review.

The Manager believes this would be the best decision moving forward. His recommendation is to move, like many municipalities, to Lebanon County or a third party to collect the taxes. The Manager will report back once he discusses the matter with the Solicitor.

President Rittle stated last evening, Wednesday, January 18, 2017, the Public Sale was held for the sale of the borough municipal building – 101 E. Washington Avenue. There were two major bidders. The highest bidder was Stoneridge Retirement for \$405,000.00. Settlement is on or before March 15, 2017, but Stoneridge will allow the Borough to stay rent free until May 10, 2017.

Councilmember Jeffrey L. Thomas asked for information on the Managers letter pertaining to a minor subdivision. The Manager stated EASCO Enterprises is doing a minor subdivision at their property on Richland Avenue. All of this subdivision is in Jackson Township. The Borough has to do a formal letter informing Lebanon County Planning that the Borough is deferring all plan review for this particular subdivision to Jackson Township. The letter does note that any additional site work that impacts borough land, then we will reserve the right to review the plan.

The President asked if there were any additional comments for the good of the borough. Seeing none, a motion was made by Park W. Haverstick, II, seconded by Vince Podolski, to adjourn the meeting at 8:53 p.m. All those in favor: Motion unanimously carried.

Lisa A. Brubaker,  
Deputy Secretary