

**I. OPENING**

**CALL TO ORDER:** The General Business & Developer meeting of Lower Saucon Township Council was called to order on Wednesday, August 18, 2021 at 6:30 p.m., with Mrs. Sandra Yerger, presiding.

**ROLL CALL: Present:** Sandra Yerger, President; Jason Banonis, Vice President; Thomas Carocci, Kristen Stauffer and Priscilla deLeon, Council Members; Tom Barndt, Chief of Police; Tracie Raven, Administrative Assistant; Allison Leayman, Finance Admin.; Linc Treadwell, Township Solicitor; Brien Kocher, Township Engineer.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF ANY EXECUTIVE SESSION (IF APPLICABLE)** – Mrs. Yerger said Council did meet in Executive Session to discuss contract negotiations with the Police Department.

**MOTION BY:** Mr. Banonis moved to authorize the employment lawyer Mike Miller to send a letter to Council for the Police Union regarding the contract negotiations.

**SECOND BY:** Mrs. Stauffer

**ROLL CALL:** 5-0

**PUBLIC COMMENT PROCEDURE**

Mrs. Yerger said we do welcome input from everybody but we ask that you keep your comments to three minutes per item. If you want to speak, please raise your hand.

**II. PUBLIC COMMENT – TOWNSHIP RESIDENTS ONLY – 3 MINUTE TIME LIMIT – NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

Victoria Opthof-Cordaro, 1682 Woodfield said at the last meeting there was discussion on the data breach and the attorney’s contract that was quite hefty and she didn’t see it on tonight’s agenda so she was hopeful to see if Council could share any additional information on that data breach incident and if there’s any new information on the insurance company assuring us that the Township will not be on the hook for the quite hefty attorney fees. Attorney Treadwell said there is nothing new. The experts in that field have been engaged and are working on it, that’s all there is now. From an operational standpoint the Township computers are all back up and running and everything is good. It’s just a question of the experts doing their investigations now. Ms. Opthof-Cordaro said can you share what the data breach incident was? Attorney Treadwell said no. Ms. Opthof-Cordaro said at the meeting last time you said you had gotten verbal insurances from the insurance company that the attorney’s contract fee would be covered by our insurance policy. She’s hopeful you can indicate if we have anything in writing. Attorney Treadwell said he believes we do have a coverage letter, he doesn’t have it with him at the moment. The letter indicated what our policy covered and that these were covered items. Ms. Opthof-Cordaro said she’s hopeful at the next meeting maybe it could be an agenda item or if there’s additional information to share that we could do that.

**III. PRESENTATIONS/HEARINGS**

**IV. DEVELOPER ITEMS**

**A. BROWN LOT LINE CHANGE - #LL02-21 – 1616 SAUCON VALLEY ROAD & 3376 BINGEN ROAD**

Mrs. Yerger said the applicant is proposing a lot line adjustment between three (3) existing lots located along the southern side of Saucon Valley Road and western side of Bingen Road. There is no development proposed for either lot at this time.

Scott Mease from Mease Engineering was present. He said Ken Brown owns two properties, one with a house on it and one is a landlocked parcel. They are both 11 acres and his son owns the three acre parcel on Bingen Road. They would like to take the vacant landlocked parcel and divide it. A new line will be created so his son’s property would go from three acres to six acres and Ken’s property goes from 11 acres to 22 acres. It’s a simple lot line adjustment with the caveat that we have three tax parcels now and will end up with two parcels. There is no new construction, both lots are fully constructed. Mr. Kocher had no comments. Mr. Mease said the draft motion was signed by his client.

- MOTION BY:** Ms. deLeon moved to approve the lot line adjustment with the conditions and grant the waivers set forth in the HEA draft motion dated August 18, 2021 for the Brown Lot Line.
- SECOND BY:** Mrs. Yerger
- ROLL CALL:** 5-0

**V. TOWNSHIP BUSINESS ITEMS**

**A. LOWER SAUCON FIRE SERVICES**

**1. ORDINANCE NO. 2021-02 – PUBLIC HEARING & CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION – RECOGNIZING LOWER SAUCON FIRE RESCUE (LSFR) AS THE SOLE PROVIDER OF FIRE SERVICES WITHIN LST**

Mrs. Yerger said Ordinance No. 2021-02 has been prepared to designate and recognize Lower Saucon Fire Rescue as the sole provider of firefighting services within the Township.

- MOTION BY:** Mr. Banonis moved to open the public hearing.
- SECOND BY:** Mrs. Yerger
- ROLL CALL:** 5-0

Attorney Treadwell said for the benefit of Council and the audience, this is the ordinance that the staff was directed to prepare from our last Council meeting, No. 2021-02. What it would do is name Lower Saucon Fire Rescue (LSFR) as the sole provider of firefighting services within Lower Saucon Township, it's fairly simple, that's what it does. The purpose of the public hearing is for Council to ask any questions and to take any questions or comments from the audience. Ms. deLeon said give a recap from the last meeting for people who may not have been there. Attorney Treadwell said at the last meeting, Council directed the staff to prepare an ordinance that would designate Volunteers Fire Company known as LSFR as the sole provider of firefighting services within the Township. That's what was discussed at the last meeting and that's what this ordinance would do.

Scott Nocek, President of Steel City Volunteer Fire Company said he was there to ask another request. They did meet August 3<sup>rd</sup> with LSFR, their attorney and Linc Treadwell was there as well, about possibly continuing with the merger itself. They agreed, and did send Scott Krycia the requirements typed up to send to his attorney, their attorney if they agreed upon it and if the new resolution was updated for Steel City and promised with their commitment to the Township and to them and was signed automatically and filed under LSFR. Mr. Carocci said it's his understanding that Mr. Krycia and Mr. Johnson sent applications to you to fill out to join LSFR right after that meeting and they were not returned to them. Is that correct? Mr. Nocek said he hasn't filled them out. Mr. Carocci said you could have been at this meeting as part of LSFR but you chose not to fill the applications out, and that was 14 days ago and they are still not filled out. Mr. Nocek said they were going to do it all as one. Mr. Carocci said in 14 days. Attorney Treadwell said he thinks your question and your intent, his understanding of your intent from the meeting we had was to merge with LSFR. This ordinance does not prevent that from happening. You can still go ahead and merge. Mrs. Yerger said so you guys can be one. Mr. Nocek said if they postpone it to the September meeting or at the September meeting LSFR can at least vote on that, then they will keep Workman's Comp until then. Mr. Carocci said there's no reason to do that and as Linc said you can still merge. Mr. Banonis said he's a little bit unclear as to the nature of the request. We as a Council sought to task you with advancing this merger in September 2020 and there were deadlines put into place and they were very reasonable and liberal deadlines that allowed these conversations to take place and they didn't. In March, you received a letter at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour requesting another extension; and it continued on through the spring and here we are again, on the day when this day when this ordinance is about to be passed and you are asking for yet another extension. He just doesn't see how we as good faith as a Council, at least speaking on behalf of himself, how we as a Council could even consider this request based upon the history we've had here. Mr. Carocci said you can respond to that, also Solicitor Treadwell sent a letter to you and your attorney on April 15<sup>th</sup> and you didn't have enough respect for us to even answer those questions. Mr. Nocek said

he does, its right here. Mr. Carocci said let's hear it. Mr. Nocek said can he give a copy to Linc. Mr. Banonis said before you answer those questions, he has a question for you. Why today, four months after the Solicitor sent you a letter are we getting this? What took 120 days to compile and provide responses to? It just doesn't make any sense to it. Mr. Nocek said they were answered and at one meeting they did discuss and their attorney advised not to provide responses as it didn't involve Township funds, it was in Steel City itself. Mr. Banonis said he's going to disagree with you that it doesn't affect Township funds. We as a Township provide \$50,000 of funding to Steel City on an annual basis plus other capital expenditures. It does affect Township funds because how Township funds are dealt with reflect the questions that were raised in the Solicitor's letter, so he's going to have issue with that statement and he'll respectfully disagree with you. Mr. Nocek said okay, it was a grant they received from somebody else, not the Township. The \$50,000 we receive yearly is accounted for in a separate checking account, the \$3,000 for fuel is accounted for by the Township. We did a fundraiser and received \$50,000 from it and we donated \$40,000 of it to a fallen police officer and we received \$10,000 ourselves. Mr. Carocci said why don't you give that letter to Linc and he'll take a look at it, he's asked that twice now. Ms. deLeon said the Worker's Comp insurance we pay to cover all of our firemen, that also covers them during fundraising events, correct? Attorney Treadwell said yes. Ms. deLeon said so when you were doing that fundraiser for this money, you were being covered by the Township's W/C insurance so...Mr. Nocek said it was an extra policy they took out on their own. Ms. deLeon said that's fine, but it was Township funds that paid for your coverage. Am I understanding this correctly? Attorney Treadwell said yes, while that was going on, they were under the W/C insurance. Mr. Banonis said just to be clear, the members of Steel City also are with other fire companies, correct? Mr. Nocek said some. Mr. Banonis said so when you are running with another fire company essentially you are still under the coverage that the taxpayers are paying for, right? Mr. Nocek said the other companies they run with are covered under, like Steel City or LSFR or who they are with, that's when they become covered until they return home. Attorney Treadwell said he sees some highlighted responses here and he's not going to read them right now. Mrs. Yerger said that's fine, is there anyone else in the audience who wishes to speak. There was none. Ms. deLeon said if we close the hearing and go into voting and we all vote in favor of doing this, they still have an opportunity, can you explain that opportunity again. Attorney Treadwell said they have the opportunity to merge with LSFR at any point, either before or in the 20 years that's it's been discussed so far or after. Ms. deLeon said that paper that Tom was talking about, that could be completed and submitted? Attorney Treadwell said yes, one of the options that he presented to Attorney McConnell after the August 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting we had with both of the fire companies was that is if the members of Steel City chose to join LSFR then they would be covered under the W/C as members of LSFR. If their actual intent is to merge with LSFR, then he doesn't see why they wouldn't join right now to maintain that W/C coverage. Ms. deLeon said that ISO we talked about, have you met with those individuals yet? Mr. Nocek said September 1<sup>st</sup> is when it's scheduled for. Mrs. Stauffer said what was the delay in scheduling the ISO meeting? Mr. Nocek said she had emailed them through Facebook messenger and it got lost, and he never saw it and he left his name, email address and phone number and he never got anything back until the meeting itself and they reached out to Kathleen and he hasn't received any emails back. Mr. Carocci said Kathleen Cavalla and she called him after she talked to Scott and Ty and she couldn't reach Chris or Scott as they weren't responding and Mr. Carocci provided her with at least two months ago with their phone numbers and email addresses. She sent numerous emails back saying she still wasn't able to contact them. Mr. Nocek said you can look at his email and search it. Mr. Carocci said he's just telling him what happened. Mr. Banonis said he has one question for Chief Johnson if he's here, as he understands it and he doesn't mean to put him on the spot here, but LSFR still is willing to have conversations and is still welcoming the members of Steel City Fire Rescue to join LSFR even after tonight's decision is made. Mr. Johnson said yes, they are open to discussions. They are viable members that we just have to build a new force

and get things strong over there. Mrs. Yerger asked if there was anyone else in the audience who wished to speak. Mrs. Stauffer said she's curious as to why no one was here at the last meeting. Like why? The benefit of the doubt is there, she wants to give it to you. She doesn't know why no one was here and she didn't feel like we have heard you this whole process. Mr. Nocek said the donation was going to be talked about and their Solicitor told them not to attend or respond. After talks were made, that Council person called the IRS and the Attorney General and then it was legal issue. Attorney Treadwell said you did have a member here at the last meeting. Mr. Banonis said he just wants to point one more thing out and that is he respects and appreciates what Steel City Fire Rescue has done for the community over the decades that it has existed and he don't necessarily want this vote to be reflective of any sort of discounting or dismissing of the services of the members of LSFR and services of Steel City Fire Rescue have provided the community over the years. He wants that to be perfectly clear as you have provided valuable service to the community. He also wants to thank and acknowledge LSFR for their willingness to step in and fill the void, a void that's been pretty evident over the course of the last couple of months. He'd like to offer assurances to the residents of Steel City and throughout the Township that we have excellent emergency services, highly trained competent individuals who take their jobs very seriously. They are very well equipped and they are willing to meet any challenges that are presented. Looking back at history and looking towards the future, he wants to thank everyone as he sees we have a large contingent of fire rescue people here today and he appreciates what you do and he thinks he speaks for all of the other members of Council that we appreciate what you do and what you have done. With that said, he has nothing else to say on the topic and he's ready to close the hearing and have a vote on this ordinance. He thinks it's important to have that statement out there so the public all of you know how we feel. Mr. Carocci said he wants to say that the feels if this ordinance passes, that the fire safety of the Township and especially in Steel City, will be vastly improved with the passage of this ordinance. The fire services with LSFR and the Township working together, especially in Steel City, will get better every day and week, every month, every year. We are going to have to put money into it and be fully committed and he thinks it will be vastly improved if this ordinance passes. Ms. deLeon said she'd like to refresh the conversation from last meeting when somebody brought up about like how are we going to put fire trucks over in Steel City, did they find a place to put them, are they going to use Steel City's? How is that going to work? Mr. Carocci said he'd like to request that Mr. Krycia and Mr. Johnson come to the table. You can sit down, Mr. Nocek, we've heard enough. Attorney Treadwell said before they get into it, let him just say the suggestion he made to Attorney McConnell when he suggested that perhaps the members of Steel City wanted to join LSFR prior to this meeting to maintain coverage was if the members of Steel City chose to do that then they could work out with LSFR how that building could be used. That didn't happen but that was an option. Mr. Carocci said Mr. Nocek please sit down. If this ordinance passes, you are willing to provide use of the pole barn to LSFR starting tomorrow. Mr. Nocek said when does the ordinance go into effect, he thought it was ten days after the passing. Mr. Carocci said the County call will be made tomorrow. LSFR would need access to that pole barn tomorrow morning to put a truck up there. You are the President, are you going to provide access tomorrow morning or not as the letter is going to go out, and what's the answer? Chris Snyder, Fire Chief Steel City said he did make a call yesterday to Chief Johnson and did want to speak about the use of the pole barn if the ordinance did pass, and he did not hear from him. Mr. Carocci said well I'm asking you, what is your answer now if the ordinance passes, can they use the building or not? Mr. Snyder said he doesn't see why we couldn't work something out. Mr. Carocci said it's a yes or no. Mr. Snyder said we have to move the equipment around and make sure it's safe to sit outside. Mr. Carocci said Priscilla is right, we did ask about where you could park a truck and you guys have been working on it, if you could update Council about some of the possibilities if Steel City does not provide the pole barn. Mr. Johnson said Chris did call him last evening and he has some family commitments and today with working we were busy and he didn't have a chance to call him.

That's definitely a viable option to put a truck in that station. We do have some logistics on our end to work out, insurance, if something happens to the station, we got to have insurance to cover that piece of apparatus. Then we have to discuss with them how they are going to fit into the whole picture and get them trained on the apparatus and make sure it's safely operated. Mr. Carocci said they'd have to join LSFR is the ordinance passes. Mr. Johnson said yes, and provide the background checks and everything like that and then they would be part of LSFR and we'd move forward and start building it up. Mr. Banonis said the best-case scenario, how quickly can that happen? Mr. Johnson said we got to touch base with the insurance company. He'd say within a week as Scott is right, they do have things they have to move around on their end too. He doesn't think it would be right to just go in there and throw them out of there, but it's definitely an olive branch that they are offering to put a truck there. The goal is to work together and make one fire department and make the emergency services even stronger in LST. Mr. Carocci said do you want to talk briefly about the other two options we talked about. Mr. Johnson said he'll let Scott as he did the phone calls for them. Mr. Krycia said he met with some landowners in Steel City and identified some key properties they thought might work with them. They have two options on the table. One of the options is a short-term solution and would only be good until winter, but that landowner is more than willing to let them park a truck there but it would be outside. Mr. Carocci said the truck would still be plugged in. Mr. Krycia said yes, and everything like that and would be in a state ready to go. Mr. Carocci said it would get us through September and October, then there's water on the truck and it will freeze. Mr. Krycia said the other option is we have another gentleman on the edge of Steel City's district on Applebutter Road that has a heated pole barn and would be willing to do something too, but that doesn't necessarily put a truck in Steel City proper but it does put it a lot closer that our guys would be able to respond to Applebutter Road, get that truck and take it over. Mr. Carocci said that location you actually have some volunteers that live close by. Mr. Krycia said we have some new volunteers in Steel City too and we have a few gentlemen that live close by where that truck would be. Those are our two options on the table besides buying a piece of land and building something and he doesn't think that's feasible. Mr. Banonis said the outdoor option, are there any concerns about the security of the piece of equipment by leaving it outdoors. He's not saying so much elements, but vandalism and other issues like that. Mr. Krycia said the cabinets on that truck do not lock, so we would have to invest in some kind of fencing or security system or something like that. Mr. Johnson said not just the temperatures would hurt the truck, but the UV is no good for the hoses and all the equipment that's on it. The light shining through the windows through to the air packs, they would start degrading the integrity of some of the equipment. It's just a short-term solution but ultimately if we can work something out with them, and he'd like to add that through this whole process, the fire protection in Steel City is not going to be compromised at all. We have a new structured dispatch in place and he has it here if the members of Council would like to see it. If you go down the page, you'll see fire dwelling, we will use that for instance as that's a big one. You see Fire 16, 1311 which is an engine out of Hellertown; Engine 1212 which is an Engine out of Freemansburg; Engine 1711 which is an Engine out of Bethlehem Township; Ladder 1421 which is a truck out of Nancy Run and a Basic Life Support ambulance which comes out of Hellertown. That is stacked pretty good all those fire departments are pretty close and in last month's packet all the mileage was in there so you can refer back to that. That's just for instance. Any other call, Fire 12 is on for all calls with us because they are 1.5 miles from Steel City Fire Station. On the backside of that fire district, it's more mileage but we have trucks coming from the other way. There won't be any lapse in fire protection until we are able to get more membership built up there to staff that truck properly.

**MOTION BY:** Mr. Banonis moved to close the hearing.  
**SECOND BY:** Mr. Carocci  
**ROLL CALL:** 5-0

**MOTION BY:** Mr. Banonis moved to approve Ordinance No. 2021-02 designating Lower Saucon Fire Rescue for fire services within the Township.  
**SECOND BY:** Mr. Carocci  
**ROLL CALL:** 5-0

2. **DISCUSSION/AUTHORIZATION FOR FUNDING A RECRUITING EVENT IN STEEL CITY**

Mrs. Yerger said Council member Tom Carocci would like to discuss with Council funding LSFR in holding a recruiting event in Steel City. Mr. Carocci said he asked at the fire service meeting if LSFR thought it would be a good idea for them to hold an event in Steel City to facilitate recruiting and also introduce themselves to the village and the people they are going to be servicing. They thought it was a good idea as well and he told them he would like Council to consider funding this recruiting event as we need to start rebuilding the fire services in Steel City as it has not been good by any measure and we have the numbers in the packet. He thinks an event like this can go a long way for the community and getting volunteers. You need volunteers and need to talk to people. They put a budget together.

Mr. Johnson said going back to the ordinance, he needs to know for the 911 center, the ordinance says 10 days, where do we start our structure dispatch for this. Attorney Treadwell said he thinks we can send a letter to 911 tomorrow and maybe we should have Council make a motion to send a letter to 911 informing them that this ordinance was adopted this evening and we should also have the Township Manager notify the W/C insurance people of the issue. He thinks it can start tomorrow.

**MOTION BY:** Mr. Carocci moved to instruct the Township Manager to contact the Northampton County 911 stating that LSFR is the only fire services for the Township and also to notify the W/C insurance of just the active members of LSFR who should be on the roster tomorrow.

**SECOND BY:** Ms. deLeon but she'd also like you to consider adding a phone call to them besides the letter.  
Mr. Johnson said he was in contact with the Director of the 911 center before the meeting just to see where they stood. He said he's waiting for a phone call tonight to see which way this goes. His suggestion is that we add Fire 16 as of tonight, they still dispatch Fire 63 because you guys are passing it tomorrow morning and it can switch over but just to cover everybody. He still was going to require a letter from the Township but they were willing to do that so there's no lapse in coverage. Mrs. Yerger said do you want to amend your motion? Attorney Treadwell said to have Mr. Johnson call 911 tonight to add 16 to the structure dispatch.

**MOTION BY:** Mr. Carocci amended his previous motion to have Mr. Johnson call 911 tonight and to add 16 to the dispatch and also for the Township Manager to write a letter to Northampton County 911 stating that LSFR is the only fire services for the Township and also to call the W/C insurance of just the active members of LSFR who should be on the roster tomorrow.

**SECOND BY:** Ms. deLeon  
**ROLL CALL:** 5-0

Mr. Krycia said they are going to be holding a recruitment and retention Meet and Greet in Steel City Park on September 18<sup>th</sup> with a rain date of September 19<sup>th</sup>. The time will be from 12 p.m. to 3 p.m. It's going to be a private invite only and will go out to the residents of Steel City only. It's very similar to what we did at our Leithsville station in October, this is who we are, this is what we do, fire safety type things. They are going to have it catered. The fire company will provide the beverages. We are going to have a bounce house. They will send a letter out to every resident of Steel City engaging them to come down to the event. They will also have some handouts for the kids. Their plan is to directly engage the people that come down, show them who we are, what we do, how we can help the community and then hopefully on the reverse we can maybe get a few members out of it too. The budget for the event is \$2,575. That's what we would ask for the Township portion of it. We would be paying for some of the stuff on their own using some of their existing stuff they already have. They would also need to get access to the park. Mr. Carocci said it's not Township-

wide, just Steel City residents. Mr. Krycia said everyone will have to RSVP so we have an accurate amount of people who will be there and for food also. They have a big recruitment day they do in October for fire trucks and they have food trucks. Ms. deLeon said Nicks Catering, is that Bethlehem? Mr. Krycia said he actually operates out of their Se-Wy-Co social hall. Ms. deLeon said she wanted to support a local business in the community. The bounce house, she doesn't have kids, and unfortunately she is unavailable that day and cannot attend, but the bounce house with COVID and kids climbing all over the place. Mr. Krycia said they are still kind of on the fence about that. They are not 100% sure what's going to go on, so he would see what the guidance is and talk to Bryan and see what his guidance is. If we have to nix the bounce house, then we have to nix it. Ms. deLeon said she's nervous about that. Mr. Banonis said he'd make a suggestion that we approve this for the funding for this and he would not want the money to come from the Emergency Services fund, he thinks the money should come from the General Fund so the Emergency Services fund stays intact. Mr. Carocci said he will make a motion. Can we nix the bounce house? Mr. Krycia said yes. Ms. deLeon said it's at the playground. Mr. Johnson said your concerns are valid. Mr. Carocci said it brings the kids in and brings the parents in. Mrs. Yerger said it would be \$2,100 if we take the bounce house off.

**MOTION BY:** Mr. Carocci moved for approval that the Township funds the event from the General Fund for the \$2,100.

Mr. Banonis said the only thing he would add to that before we advance is there's a date and a rain date and if that gets blown out by a tropical storm, he doesn't want our motion to be restrictive that it has to take place that weekend, so it would be soon as possible as weather permits.

**SECOND BY:** Mrs. Yerger

**MOTION BY:** Mr. Carocci amended his previous motion and moved for approval that the Township funds the event from the General Fund for the \$2,100 and the date TBD depending on weather.

**SECOND BY:** Mrs. Yerger amended her second

Mrs. Stauffer had some questions. How much is LSFR's budget for recruitment now? Mr. Krycia said we ask for \$10,000 every year from the Township. He doesn't have the numbers in front of him because they really didn't do any recruitment last year but he's going to estimate that we probably spent roughly \$10,000 a year on recruitment and retention. They also have their FEMA grant that we use for the retention aspect for their membership too and that's \$15,000 a year. Mrs. Stauffer said we give the \$10,000 but if requested, have we released that this year. Mr. Krycia said no, because we have the FEMA grant and felt that we didn't need it. The initial \$10,000 you were giving us, we would be using for the recruitment and retention program but we had the \$15,000 from FEMA, so they didn't request it this year and just use the FEMA money. Mrs. Stauffer said moving forward, we also were doing \$5,000 for Steel City. Mr. Krycia said before the FEMA grant, yes. Mrs. Stauffer said in theory there would be \$15,000 available? Mr. Carocci said in next year's budget or when the FEMA grant runs out. Mr. Krycia said we have two more years for the FEMA grant and he plans to apply for that funding again next year and keep it going. Mrs. Stauffer asked for Leithsville, there's an October event? Mr. Krycia said yes. Mrs. Stauffer said does that funding come from the recruiting budget that you get from the Township. Mr. Krycia said they pay for that solely by themselves. Mrs. Stauffer said that's the plan for this year should the event be held. How much is that event? Mr. Krycia said he wants to say it's about \$2,500 to \$3,000 depending on what they do. They have all of their trucks there and all their membership. They set up demos. They will have a food truck and will typically do a donation only for the food truck. People can come and eat, walk around, meet the firemen, they set up an obstacle course for the kids; they switch it up. They also do Touch-a-Truck which they start in May and June, and in July they will be at Dewey's carnival. They do about four a year. They will do one on Route 412 at the Giant. Mrs. Stauffer said the \$10,000 was still in our budget this year. Ms. deLeon said it was in this year's budget as we didn't know if you were going to spend it. We don't know what's going to happen in September

when Cathy does our budget for next year. Mr. Carocci said he thought we didn't allocate that for this year. Mr. Krycia said correct, they did not allocate it this year. Ms. deLeon said you didn't but we have it in our budget. Mr. Carocci said he really doesn't think it was in this year's budget but we'd have to clarify that with Cathy and address at the next meeting. He thinks it was in 2019. Mrs. Stauffer said she thought if that money was on the table it would be something to be considered as part of this evening's motion to support this event since it's only \$2,000 and in theory you could have had \$10,000. Mr. Johnson said we appreciate the offer, but we can use it somewhere else. Mr. Krycia said thank you. Mrs. Stauffer said she'd like to have that clarified for next meeting to see where the line item was in our budget.

ROLL CALL: 5-0

3. **DISCUSSION/AUTHORIZATION FOR REIMBURSING ATTORNEY FEES ASSOCIATED WITH MERGER AND REVIEWING FIRE STATION BUILDING MAINTENANCE**

Mr. Carocci said he would also like to recommend reimbursing the fire company for the Attorney fees incurred in trying to facilitate a merger. Last year we set a merger process in place and LSFR really committed to it. They voted to merge. They were willing to change their by-laws, but it was not to be. The attorney fees were \$1,722.

MOTION BY: Mr. Carocci moved to authorize Attorney fees associated with the merger in the amount of \$1,722 to be paid out of the General Fund and reimbursed LSFR for their legal costs related to the merger.

SECOND BY: Mr. Banonis

ROLL CALL: 5-0

Mr. Carocci said one thing he forgot was Leslie and Linc did review the bill and Linc felt everything on there was merger-related.

4. **DISCUSSION/AUTHORIZATION TO FUND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AT LSFR FIRE STATIONS**

Mrs. Yerger said LSFR has developed a list of concerns/capital improvements that need to be addressed in some of their fire stations. Mr. Carocci said the fire stations are quite old except for Leithsville which was rebuilt. We've been talking about putting some money in to them to make them a lot safer and more functional for our volunteers. We have \$50,000 in the budget that was initially allocated to Steel City. He's going to make a motion that we reallocate it and put it towards some of these projects in the packet that LSFR has identified as priority fixes and equipment that they need. They put the list together and it's what they think they need. He's going to ask we allocate \$50,000 from the Federal money we received recently as we received \$1.1 million and allocate it to these projects. You'll see these projects roughly come up to about \$130,000 but the way it would work is, and he's spoken to LSFR about this, they would engage a contractor to do some of the work, present invoices to the Township as the work is done and the Township would pay the contractors. One of the reasons for doing it this way is he wanted the Township residents and Council to know what they were getting with this \$100,000 and where it exactly was going. With the Federal money, Linc advised us that you really need some good accounting and bookkeeping with that because you can get audited on how you spent that money. You can't just spend it freely, it has to be spent by 501(c)(3) or other which this qualifies so we have to keep track of where the money goes, what it's used for and these projects are their preferences and they will have freedom to do whichever they feel should be done first. There's another reason he wanted to do it tonight is because they need this stuff done and if we wait until next month and try to address it in the budget, they really wouldn't get that money until 2022 and put them 5-6 months behind when they could have started some of these projects. That's why he wants to do it tonight if Council will see to it. Maybe you could give us a highlight of each of the projects that you are proposing and discuss them briefly.



**MOTION BY:** Mr. Carocci moved to approve \$50,000 in the budget initially allocated to Steel City and \$50,000 from the Federal money we received, for a total of \$100,000 to LSFR.

Mr. Krycia said they broke their requests down by stations. He will go through the Wassergass station first. Some issue with this station is it's an older building and has very old windows in it. It doesn't have good quality doors on it, so a couple of things they have done there, they built a lounge up there for memberships. If they are on a standby they have a place to congregate. They also took a bay and split it in half and made it a ready room, a room they store all their turn-out gear in. The idea behind that is you want your turn-out gear stored away from where the diesel exhaust of the trucks are. That building doesn't have any exhaust extraction system so if you have your gear next to the exhaust, all of that particular matter gets in your turn-out gear and that can cause cancer. That's a thing they have gone through at their station. It's a separate room where the guys come in a separate door and put their turn-out gear on. It's a clean environment then they can go out on the truck and go to the fire call. That ready room doesn't have AC in it and no filtration and in the summer that room can get easily 90 degrees. Our goal for the Southeastern Station was to replace the man door in the back of the building and the man door that's in our lounge, add AC to our ready room and add AC to our lounge. That's the first phase of it. That station doesn't have any kind of cascade system to fill our cylinders which are the air packs we wear on our backs. When those guys have a call they use it off a truck or have to drive over to Se-Wy-Co or Leithsville to fill their SCBA box. That's time-consuming, so they are asking for a cascade system which is an air compressor and fill station for that station. They will be more self-sufficient and can fill bottles when they need to. They are asking for a commercial gear washer, a way they can clean and remove that particulate fire debris that gets into their turn-out gear for that station. They have one at Leithsville and Se-Wy-Co. A long with the gear washer, they are asking for a commercial drying cabinet. You can't put turn-out gear in a regular home dryer as its heavy so they have a metal cabinet you actually hang the gear in and it circulates air through it and that's what dries the turn-out gear. The only other thing they are asking for is additional lockers. They have an influx membership out there and do not have enough lockers for them. To recap, Southeastern, AC system, mini split in their gear room, a mini split in the lounge, a door, two-man doors in the gear room, one in the lounge, the commercial gear cleaner, the drying cabinet, and the lockers. Personally, that's the most important aspect of this whole thing is the station out there.

Mr. Krycia said the next station is Leithsville which is relatively new and pretty much to go. One thing when they built the station, they have a room above the lounge called a training room. They try to utilize it as a training room but the problem is it's not air-conditioned and open to the bays below so there's a noise problem. When we have a class up there, it's difficult for the students in the class to hear what the instructor is saying. The quote for Leithsville is really easy. We want to have that training room closed in, we want to have a man door put on that training room and we also want to have AC along with heat in the training room. That would allow them to have a nice facility that we could go to and have the classes directly there.

Mr. Krycia said the last quote is for Se-Wy-Co and a similar situation, we have a ready room there and it's open to the bay. The exhaust for 14 is right there. Their plan would be to put a new man door on the outside of the station, a new man door inside the building separating our ready room from the engine bay and then add AC to both those rooms. The other thing is to actually finish the ceiling in our 2141 bay. That will help them retain some heat down there. Mr. Johnson said the insulation has been on a ladder truck going out on a call. Mr. Krycia said they wanted to do all this stuff, but they are big projects. They are always worried about we have to buy turn-out gear, hydraulic tools, and this truck needs to get fixed. We are always switching money around. They wrote a grant for a cascade and it got turned down by FEMA. Mr. Carocci said keep active with it, and it's been sometime we've done upgrading and it will help with recruiting volunteers to see the fire houses are much

improved. We have the \$50,000 budgeted for Steel City and another \$50,000 from the Federal money we just got to allocate these individual projects. They would start engaging contractors and working with Cathy and Leslie when bills need to get paid.

Ms. deLeon said when Leithsville merged with Se-Wy-Co, the \$50,000 went to Se-Wy-Co. When Southeastern merged with Se-Wy-Co and Leithsville, so \$150,000 went to that company. If what we heard tonight comes true and Steel City becomes part of LSFR, then it should be like what happened in the past, that \$50,000 stays with them as they should get \$200,000 because the building at Steel City. She remembers making one of the first motions to give these fire people \$5,000 many years ago and as the years went on the numbers raised and now its \$50,000. That was to pay your daily, general monthly, yearly bills that everybody has to pay then you start doing what you're supposed to do with raising money and paying other stuff. She would have a problem with taking that \$50,000 and if Steel City does do what they are supposed to do what they said tonight, she would think that you guys are going to do that money for basic utilities and expenses at that fire company. She doesn't understand why we can't just do the whole thing with the COVID money. Mr. Carocci said his thought on that was the budget is coming up in September and it remains to be seen whether they are going to get the station or not. You're a little more optimistic than he is and that's fine to be optimistic. His thought was when we do the budget we can certainly allocate the \$200,000, maybe more to LSFR and by that time we'll know for sure if Steel City has actually turned over the fire house. If they do, then he thinks we propose in the budget, to get them more money for the firehouse like we are doing now. He doesn't want to handcuff them and wants them to start these projects now with this money not thinking we may have this thing with Steel City later. He'll believe it when it happens and when it happens we'll be right in budget season where we can get them some money. Ms. deLeon said the \$50,000 is now in the 2021 budget, so she wants to save that there. Just like the historic sites, we need to help these volunteer organizations as we don't want them to crumble. Mrs. Stauffer said are you saying to reallocate the \$50,000 that would have gone to Steel City this year that has not been released in a separate motion and release it now to LSFR. Ms. deLeon said no, that was supposed to go to Steel City and if they follow through with their merger, and as they stated tonight they were going to do, then that \$50,000 would go to them or to an entity. She doesn't want to lose that \$50,000 as these bills are for this year and you guys would have to pay them. Mr. Carocci said its August 18<sup>th</sup> already and they've been paid for 9 months this year. By the time they get titles and deeds to the equipment and building, he thinks it's a valid concern and its \$50,000 that belongs to Steel City, but his problem is he doesn't want to put it into Steel City until they change the titles to the equipment and firehouse. That could take till October or November. Ms. deLeon said if it takes to October, then it takes to October. The question is all this adds up to how much. Mr. Carocci said it adds up to about \$130,000 but we're only providing \$100,000 as it's going to take a while for all this stuff to get done. We can always go back at future meetings if they need more Federal money, provide them with it. This is just to get them started and enter into agreements with contractors. Ms. deLeon said now we are using tax-payer dollars for this which is fine. The Township is bound by the Second Class Code for bids, whether they do a phone bid or an actual written bid. You can't piece meal it. If we're talking about spending \$130,000 of taxpayer money and you didn't get bids for these jobs, did you? Mr. Krycia said they just asked their vendors. Ms. deLeon said so they really never bid it out, so she has an issue with that, as we are using taxpayer dollars. You could have used your own money and did it your way but now we are doing it with taxpayer dollars. Attorney Treadwell said if he's understanding correctly about making donations to the LSFR organization and they decide what they are going to do with it. We're not entering into contracts to anybody. We are giving them a certain amount of money and they get to pay. He's sure knowing how they've operated in the past, they are getting the best price they can get as it's only in their best interest. Mr. Banonis said he'd like to add to that you get \$150,000 a year, we don't require them to give us invoices and bid it out. Ms. deLeon said

they have to provide what they spent all that money on, most of it is basic insurance. Mr. Banonis said we don't require them to bid with that money. Ms. deLeon said no and they don't have to bid with that money. She's just asking a question and having it on the record as it's tax dollars. Mr. Krycia said a lot of this equipment there will be installation involved like electricians and plumbers and things like that, the fire companies plan to pick that up. The Township won't be paying for that. For the installation of the cascade system, installation of the gear washer, installation of the drying cabinet, all that electrical and plumbing stuff the fire company is going to pay for that. They felt that was the only way to make it safe and feasible. Ms. deLeon said the motion tonight, she doesn't know if she can support the \$50,000. She likes the concept of all of this, but she doesn't want to give away the \$50,000. Mr. Carocci said he'll still make the motion. Ms. deLeon said how can we do this without...Mr. Carocci said Linc explain. Attorney Treadwell said if the concern is \$50,000 that the budget allocated for Steel City Fire Company expenses, that it would go away if it gets reallocated. If the merger happens then the \$50,000 would go to LSFR. Does LSFR anticipate needing that \$50,000 this year. Mr. Johnson said for Steel City? Attorney Treadwell said for whatever your operational expenses are. Ms. deLeon said they don't know that yet. Mr. Johnson said that's a good question for Jim Rayner. He's the treasurer. Attorney Treadwell said what Priscilla is saying is let's hold on to that money as later this year you might need it for operational expenses. If you don't anticipate you are needing it, then it could go to capital. Mr. Rayner said if Steel City assets come under our responsibility to pay the bills and all the upkeep, then yes, we probably need that money. Attorney Treadwell said then that answers the question. Mr. Johnson said to use \$50,000 in three months would be pretty tough. The other thing on the flip side, if things work out with that fire station over there, that's going to become LSFR's asset and they will put money into that building to make it safe which when they meet with Steel City the other week they informed him there are new furnaces in there. They've done some upgrading. He doesn't see a whole lot they are going to have to do. They have been maintaining the building properly. Mr. Carocci said if something came up there, we are getting \$1.1 million in Federal money and we are only taking about allocating \$50,000 of that tonight. If you needed another \$10,000 or \$20,000 and you took the building over and something went like the heat, then at that time at a meeting it can be discussed. Mrs. Stauffer said she'd like to outline the discussion so we have it right. The first thing is it's great to have these improvements. With that being said, that will be a massive benefit to your work flow and the first class procedures you run. We're talking the \$50,000 that would have gone to Steel City is being allocated to LSFR at this time for these three station improvements and then the other \$50,000 is coming from the Federal money and then there's \$30,000 kind of hanging out there that they would be responsible for. Attorney Treadwell said or it would carry over to next year depending on how many projects they get done. Mrs. Stauffer said for the Federal money are we responsible for any sort of bidding process. Attorney Treadwell said he thinks we can allocate the Federal money to a 501(c)(3) and allocate it for fire purposes. He is not aware of any bidding requirements, but again, we are not entering into the contracts, so we are taking the \$50,000 from the Federal money and donating it to the fire company. Ms. deLeon said kind of like we did with the fire trucks. Mrs. Stauffer said we're not on the front line of the deal. Just because the Township generally bids things out, it's helpful in a capitalist market to see if you'll get a better rate and she would hope you guys do that for your own budget. She would personally like to see them. Earlier this year in the budget, we went from 1 mill to 0.75 mills for the fire tax. Would the fire tax money been able to be used for these capital improvements. Mr. Carocci said yes when we changed the language of the fire tax, from just equipment...Attorney Treadwell said it went from vehicles to...Mrs. Stauffer said there's more language so that you guys can do more with the money. That would have been an extra \$110,000 dollars. Right now it's about \$330,000 you guys are getting with the 0.75 mill. With the full mill it would have gone up about \$110,000 so you would have gotten about \$440,000. You could have actually done what you wanted to do. Attorney Treadwell said it's in the fund the Township has and then the Council decides how

to allocate it. Mrs. Stauffer said if we allocate it to them, would they have to follow a bidding process or things like that for that money. Attorney Treadwell said every amount of money that LST has given to any volunteer fire company is a donation to that fire company that they then decide what to do with. Later on in the agenda, there's a truck payment, we know what they are going to use it for, but it's still a donation to them. Mrs. Stauffer said that's fine, she just kind of wanted to clarify that the donation to you, it might be worth revisiting the fire budget in October to reinstate the 1 mill as it would have been really helpful to you this year to have the full mill instead of the 0.75 mill which passed with a 3-2 vote by this Council. Mr. Banonis said he hears where Priscilla is coming from with the \$50,000, he just thinks it's short sided not to reallocate that money now. The suggestion is to withhold the money in case Steel City merges with LSFR and we've been talking about this merger for a year and it hasn't happened and he's not holding his breath that it is going to happen. He hopes it does happen and if it does, we'll address any needs at that time. Certainly these gentlemen can come here and say we need more money for this reason or that but they already indicated they are familiar with the facilities and equipment and don't think that money is going to be needed, particularly when we're now at the end of August and there's only a few months left to the year and we also have the budget coming up. One thing he would say is encourage LSFR and what remains of Steel City Fire Rescue to try to come to some understanding as to what's going to happen with the Steel City Fire Rescue assets. If they are going to be capital needs and a request from them, he'd like to hear that sooner so we can incorporate that into the budget and have fiscal management of the Township resources. Mrs. Stauffer said she thinks supporting them is something she's done from day one and this is more about looking at the budget itself and the numbers and looking at what you could have had this year without having to come to us for all of this tonight. Her concern is how we allocated taxpayer money with the revenue stream. The revenue stream would have been there had you had that extra millage for this. We have Federal funds and are very fortunate to have the \$1 million and that's going to go a long way in this Township. The Steel City allocation is valuable here. She hopes everyone here can come underneath one umbrella and work as a team. She's just looking at what you could have had this year. Mr. Banonis said one of the things you would have not had this year is the allocation for Steel City Fire Rescue as they are not part of LSFR and that money was earmarked separately for them, so he supports Tom's motion, he's already seconded it. Ms. deLeon said there's a policy or resolution that says once a budget is approved at the end of the year, you just can't change a budget line item without a resolution that comes before Council, does anyone remember that? Mr. Carocci said he's talked to Cathy about it and she thinks we can just do it. Ms. deLeon said Cathy usually gives us resolutions saying that X number of dollars gets transferred into X number of whatever the line item is. Attorney Treadwell said he just wants to make sure if Tom made a motion for \$50,000...Mr. Carocci said to reallocate the \$50,000 in the budget...Attorney Treadwell said so the motion to reallocate and allocate \$50,000 from the Federal money is a concept and if Council votes for the concept, and Cathy determines she needs a resolution to actually carry out the concept, then she'll be back with a resolution to carry out the concept. Ms. deLeon said Cathy better have a good memory why we instituted that resolution; if you can read between the lines. Mr. Banonis said he just doesn't understand the resistance to provide LSFR with funding here. They provided services to the Township. Ms. deLeon said she's not denying them. Mr. Banonis said let me finish please. They are agreeing to fill a hole which otherwise would exist and has existed and he can't understand the resistance for it. He has nothing else to say. Ms. deLeon said she hopes you guys realize she's in support for this and there's money in the Federal COVID money and she just thinks in theory that she's following suit that the \$50,000 went with all the other mergers and she's hoping this will happen. It may not and you can laugh at her then, but she does have hope and she'll be voting no to this and is supporting the concept and will continue to support the concept and improvements to your facility. Mr. Johnson said just so he's clear as a taxpayer, that \$50,000 is just going to be hanging out. Ms. deLeon she doesn't know where it's going to be hanging. Mr. Johnson said eventually it's going to

be going to the fire companies so it's kind of like just, he doesn't want to say robbing Peter to pay Paul, but it's going into the Fire Services one way or the other. Mr. Banonis said theoretically that \$50,000 allocated to Steel City Fire Rescue could go nowhere as we didn't authorize the disbursement of that money and it could just stay in the Township funds and be carried over to next year. Mr. Carocci said the fact of the matter is there was a footnote on the budget that said if they didn't agree and the money would go back to the Township and we're saying no, the Township doesn't need it and try to improve these fire stations. The Township didn't keep the money as Steel City didn't merge. Mrs. Stauffer said do you feel comfortable with the \$40,000 that's not covered with tonight's funds. Do you see that as being necessary in 2022? Mr. Krycia said probably what we'll do is come back to the Township for that money. We'll take it in phases, station by station and work through it. That's how we'll handle it. If the Township wants oversight on it, they will make a separate checking account and all the bills for the renovations will go in that account. Mrs. Stauffer said for the residents tonight and for whoever listens to the audio, what are the vendors? Mr. Krycia said the main vendor to handle the construction aspects is Spirk Brothers. Bucks Run is in cooling and the vendor they use. Whitmore Public Safety is known as the fire store. They are going to handle the compressor and the gear extractor and Gear Grid is the company that is going to actually handle the locker buildout. There's one thing on the Leithsville station which was keypad on their door. When the guys get a fire call they have to run to the back of the station and go through the key pad instead of the side door as it doesn't have a key pad on it. They'll put a key pad on there from Geary Systems which is their existing vendor they use. They've worked with all these vendors and talked to Spirk six or seven months ago about doing the training thing up there and at the last minute they decided to pull out and do the air packs. Mr. Banonis said are these vendors you used before you feel comfortable with? Mr. Krycia said absolutely.

**SECOND BY:** Mr. Banonis  
**ROLL CALL:** 4-1 (Mrs. deLeon – No)

**5. AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE PAYMENT NO. TO LOWER SAUCON FIRE RESCUE FOR LADDER TRUCK**

Mrs. Yerger said LSFR's loan payment for the recently purchased ladder truck is due October 1, 2021. Council agreed to fund 75% of the purchase price over a period of five (5) years after a down payment in the amount of \$425,600. The breakdown would indicate the next payment to apply toward LSFR's loan payment due October 1, 2021 and would be in the amount of \$134,313.35. Ms. deLeon thanked them for putting this all together.

**MOTION BY:** Ms. deLeon moved to approve the release of payment No. 2 in the amount of \$134,313.35 to LSFR for the ladder truck

**SECOND BY:** Mr. Carocci  
**ROLL CALL:** 5-0

Mr. Johnson thanked everyone for their support.

**B. APPOINTMENTS TO LOWER SAUCON AUTHORITY BOARD VACANCIES – BOB DAVIS & BOB KEICH**

Mrs. Yerger said the Lower Saucon Authority has two vacancies. Bill Ross, LSA Administrator, has received several applications and is recommending Bob Davis and Bob Keich to be appointed. Mr. Carocci said he met them last night at the LSA meeting and they seem like good guys.

**MOTION BY:** Mr. Carocci moved to approve Bob Davis to fill the remainder of the term which expires 12/31/24 and Bob Keich to fill the remainder of the term which expires 12/31/21 to the Lower Saucon Authority Board.

**SECOND BY:** Mr. Banonis

Mrs. Stauffer said how many applicants did we receive? Mr. Carocci said Bill Ross received four and these two were his recommendations. Mr. George Gress said he did speak to Bill Ross last night after the meeting and he said there were four people; however, there were only two who filled out their applications. The other two had just expressed their interest in an email and didn't follow

through. Mrs. Stauffer said we've had other boards with multiple applicants and things had changed at the last minute so she wanted to insure we had the full roster.

**ROLL CALL:** 5-0

**C. DISCUSSION OF CONDUCTING HYBRID COUNCIL MEETINGS**

Mrs. Yerger said Staff has contacted surrounding municipalities to inquire how they are conducting their Council/Supervisors meetings. Council can discuss the options for holding our meetings moving forward. Ms. deLeon said this has been on the back burner for a long, long time. We built this building and had a state-of-the-art equipment put in so we could have our PPT and it's not fully utilized. Over the years we talked about putting in cameras and the school district and Hellertown was doing it and we're not doing it. When COVID started, we talked about when we would have our initial in-person meeting we would do Zoom and have both and this is our second meeting and we're not doing it. She's very disappointed and this is something like the mergers of the fire companies, it's been on the back burners for a long, long time. We need to go forward and really get this in gear and quickly put it together. She knows Leslie put together a good packet, so she'd like to see it happen as soon as possible. Mr. Banonis said he was impressed by the turnout of the people in person and the energy from the people that were here. Having done meetings by Zoom for over a year by COVID, he could not find the same level of energy, enthusiasm and engagement that we had at this meeting and the last meeting. Maybe it's the topic...Ms. deLeon said it was the topic. Mr. Banonis said at the same time, if people are interested in a topic, they are going to come here and speak to it. He finds that to be rewarding because we as Council people get to see our constituents and the voters and our taxpayers and find out what's really important to them. Mrs. Stauffer said maybe hybrid option is the best of both worlds. It's not about us in the Council room, it's about residents who may be getting home late from work and can't swing over here, it's about residents who aren't maybe mobile and can't leave their home and can't join us in these halls. Mr. Banonis said it's entirely permissible and Leslie has at times read into the record comments that residents have submitted by email. If an individual can't be here for one reason or another, they have the option to send in their concern to Leslie to bring up in her Manager's report or any agenda item as well. Attorney Treadwell said he's not quite sure what we mean by the hybrid option, he knows in another Township he represents, they live stream the meeting on some kind of computer network, but there's a camera and the meeting is live streamed. There's no interaction between the people watching and Council. You can just sit at home and watch it but you don't have the ability to then ask questions or do anything like that. In that municipality, they say if you have a question you want to be addressed at the meeting, email it to the Township Manager by 5:00 p.m. Like he said, that option doesn't allow somebody sitting at home to simultaneously interact. He's not sure if that's what we are talking about live streaming a meeting. Ms. deLeon said we've been talking about it forever. Attorney Treadwell said that's different than having Zoom which was interactive. He's not sure how you do a Zoom. If the person at home is watching a TV screen, what are they seeing as you can only see one person on the stream. He doesn't know how it works physically. Mrs. Yerger said another thing depending on what these options cost. There's going to be cost to this. Ms. deLeon said and COVID money can cover it. She was at the PSATs conference. Mrs. Yerger said we should still know. Ms. deLeon said of course, we can't make any decisions tonight. We have to support the concept of doing it. Ms. deLeon said Tom Rieger is sitting here and he was very instrumental in our SVP meeting last week. She doesn't know how he does his things, maybe you could take the podium and explain. The SVP meeting went very well, and it was on Facebook and Zoom. Mr. Banonis said the difference there it was decided to be a purely Zoom meeting and it's not subject to state law. Ms. deLeon said yes it is, it's a meeting. Mr. Banonis said his understanding is that now that the Governor has lifted his COVID emergency, it's no longer appropriate for Township Council to hold our meetings exclusively by Zoom. Attorney Treadwell said that's correct. Mr. Banonis said that proceeding is not subject to the same requirements that this is. That's a partnership meeting, this is a Council meeting, two different organizations, two different entities. Ms. deLeon said Council could be here but the participation could be on the other end.

Mr. Tom Rieger said he saw this on the agenda and thought you may have some questions. You are absolutely right. Being the Township code or the Borough Code, you still have to have a quorum present in the building, but that doesn't stop you from offering a hybrid option. They have been since last March doing it a couple of different ways. They have the ability at Borough Hall and the cost was under \$15,000 to install a technology where you can do a hybrid Zoom approach, you could have your consultants Zoom in, you could have residents Zoom in and he made this offer to the Township staff and he's going to extend it to you guys if you want to see how it works, shoot him a message and they can even set up a test meeting so you can see how it works. How it works for them they are on the hybrid approach. With the expiring of the Governor's order, their virtual meetings are gone so their policy is they need to have at least four Council persons in the room and whatever your policy is here with teleconferencing in a Council member, it's the same thing as the video option. At the Borough they have two screens, one the Council can see and you guys have them in front of you. The other screen the public can see and they have a microphone and camera in the room and they can see the other participants on the Zoom call and hear them just like they were sitting at the staff tables. They also then take it a step further which they found highly engaging to the public, sometimes not to the benefit of Council, but they also stream that meeting as a non-interactive state on their Facebook page. He can show you the statistics they have more people watching what's going on now than they ever did before. A similar situation, they would have two, three, you have more people here tonight than they have at their meetings the entire year, but they have hundreds of people viewing their Facebook videos. It's something he took charge of last year, they used the first round of COVID money to pay for the expenses and if you guys have any questions, let him know. On the SVP meeting it was un-hybrid approach. He could have been sitting at Borough Hall doing it and didn't have a problem doing it, it was just easier doing it from his office at home. He can answer any questions. Attorney Treadwell said if he's at home on Zoom, what is he looking at. Mr. Rieger said when Council is talking they are looking at a video of you guys. Attorney Treadwell said like on a Zoom meeting you see one person. Mr. Rieger said there's a setting on there that you can go to grid. There's a whole bunch of different settings. They see the active talker. If Council chambers if the one conversing or if for example, we have all our consultants and engineers Zoom into the meeting as we don't want to have them there right now, but when the Engineer is talking, you see the Engineer as you can on Facebook. You can have interaction on Zoom. He tends to have interaction on Facebook and read it in as a comment just like you would get an email, but again to speak at the agenda times, you have to be on Zoom or in the room. Mrs. Stauffer said we need to keep it here that it's always to the benefit of the public. He totally agrees with you, and agrees that we should be here as Council members in person if we can, health willing. She does think it would be helpful to get some numbers on what this would cost here for our Township. Mrs. Yerger said we need to know the cost. Mrs. Stauffer said it's so easy to do with today's technology and we should embrace it especially if we have funding from the government that we can use. Mr. Rieger said he's been able to run the meeting in person, run the stream through Zoom and handle the Facebook stream while doing all of that at the same time. It takes practice to get used to, but it's pretty straight forward and like he said, the offer doesn't have to be at a Council meeting, but it is the policy of the Borough of Hellertown is it's not going away. That's what they are doing and the SVP meeting, that's one reason it was streamed. Ms. deLeon said she thinks we should follow what Hellertown is doing, it's working for them.

**MOTION BY:** Mrs. Stauffer moved to ask Township Administration to investigate pricing as to how to feasibly bring this technology into the Township building similar to what Hellertown does.

**SECOND BY:** Ms. deLeon

Mrs. Stauffer asked how do you get the camera hooked up to the Zoom. Mr. Rieger said in Borough Hall they have a dedicated Zoom computer that's connected to all of our screens and then we have a professional camera that is basically logged in at Borough Hall. If you go in to our videos, when Council chambers is talking there's a separate Zoom account created that says Council chambers. In the Council room you have one person on it. One of the things you experienced is you can't have more than one person on the same Zoom in the same room or you get the echoing effect that none of us can stand. If you are running this by a computer in this room that is dedicated with a camera, the camera and the microphone would be hardwired to that computer. He can tell you whatever

microphone and his staff at Borough Hall will give you what they did and he believes it was about \$15,000, it's very simple. They had some bugs they worked out and had it in place in June. It's fairly simple once you set it up. The microphone technology, you have a phenomenal sound system in there, they don't have that at Borough Hall. They are looking at upgrading it. There's one microphone in that room that picks up every Zoom and it's phenomenal what it does.

Ms. Opthof-Codaro said on this particular topic it would be wonderful for our Township for members throughout the Township to see us wherever they are. Many of you are parents or have been parents and your children are older now, but multi-tasking is the entire world right now. For parents of kids, she would love to see more parents with kids or whatever be able to attend. You can go to a soccer practice and watch a Council meeting, which would be phenomenal. Even at home she has young kids they have to go to bed, thank goodness she has someone at home that can be with her children right now; however, if we have a Council that can do Zoom and a hybrid model, that would give her the opportunity to put her kids to bed, be there for their bedtime routine and listen and be able to comment when the necessity to do so. She doesn't think it's something that is new and our Township would do wonderful service for transparency. She did see some of the Zoom calls during COVID and many people attended. Transparency and letting people see your process and how it's conducted, it's a lot nicer to see via video than to just submit a question. At SVHS when they have meetings, you can see it on You-Tube. There are many, many options which aren't expensive and you do have funding so she would implore Council to really take this seriously and look at allocating funds and bringing us into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**ROLL CALL:** 5-0

Ms. deLeon said let's make this a priority now.

**D. AUTHORIZATION TO ADVERTISE DISPOSAL OF TOWNSHIP PROPERTY**

Mrs. Yerger said in accordance with the Township Code, the disposal/sale of Township property over \$1,000 shall be advertised. Previously the Township has sold equipment through the Municibid platform. Attorney Treadwell said there were two things the Manager wanted to advertise for sale. One was the universal laptop mounts for the PD and then a John Deere backhoe.

**MOTION BY:** Mr. Banonis moved to authorize advertisement to dispose of Township property.

**SECOND BY:** Mrs. Stauffer

**ROLL CALL:** 5-0

**E. RESOLUTION #57-2021 – GROW NORCO GRANT ROUND 2 APPLICATION SUBMISSION**

Mrs. Yerger said Resolution #57-2021 has been prepared to authorize the submission of a 2021 Grow NORCO Grant Round 2 application for the purchase of speed enforcement signs and emergency notification message signs. The grant is a matching fund grant. For municipal Police Department support grants, the match is \$1 for every \$2 granted. We will also be evaluating the submission of an additional application toward a capital improvement project.

**MOTION BY:** Mr. Banonis moved to approve Resolution #57-2021 authorizing the submission of a 2021 Grow NORCO Grant Round 2 application for the purchase of speed enforcement signs and emergency notification message signs.

**SECOND BY:** Mr. Carocci

**ROLL CALL:** 5-0

**F. AUTHORIZATION TO EXECUTE AGREEMENT WITH UGI TO COVER EXPENSES ASSOCIATED WITH PAVING TOWNSHIP ROADS**

Mrs. Yerger said UGI conducted utility maintenance, replacement, installation and repair work in the Township. In order to comply with Township Ordinances, UGI is required to mill and pave. In lieu of UGI performing the required work, the Township has agreed to a certain sum of money.

Attorney Treadwell said you have an agreement between UGI and the Township. When UGI comes in and does line installation or repairs lines, they required to put the road back into the condition it was in. In this case, UGI has agreed to pay the Township for each of the projects as in the agreement. The



Township will do the work. That's been gone through by the Township Manager and the Road Foreman and we need the Manager to sign the agreement.

**MOTION BY:** Mr. Banonis moved to execute agreement with UGI to cover expenses associated with paving Township roads.

**SECOND BY:** Mrs. Yerger

Mrs. Stauffer said its 1400 University Avenue for \$55,509.42; Old Philadelphia Pike for \$10,439.00; and 3800 Cannon Avenue for \$34,889.15 for a total of about \$101,000.00. That's interesting to see how much it would cost for roads to be paved.

**ROLL CALL:** 5-0

**G. DIRECT MANAGER TO PREPARE POLICY, PROCEDURES AND MONITORING OF STATE AND LOCAL FISCAL RECOVERY FUNDS (SLFRF)**

Mrs. Yerger said Lower Saucon Township received an allocation of \$1,134,404. in State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) to be used for recovery from the negative economic impacts related to COVID-19. The SLFRF Guidelines define approximately 50 expenditure categories for using these funds. Any funds not used for the eligible purposes must be returned to the Federal Government by 12/31/2024. The American Rescue Plan Act signed into law on March 11, 2021 requires Lower Saucon Township to create written Policies and Procedures for deciding how to use the funds, reporting how the funds were used, and developing internal controls for overseeing the funds. This must be completed prior to spending any of the funds. At this time Council would like to direct the Manager to prepare a policy, procedures and a plan to monitor the disposition of funds to be reviewed and adopted at an upcoming meeting.

**MOTION BY:** Mr. Carocci moved to authorize and direct Manager to prepare policy, procedures and monitoring of FSLRS funds.

**SECOND BY:** Mrs. Stauffer

Mr. Banonis said do we want to put a timeline on this as we allocated \$50,000 of the funds to LSFR and he wants to make sure we're in compliance. Attorney Treadwell said he thinks there's an initial deadline coming up in the fall so it has to be done quickly anyway. Mrs. Stauffer said it's unfortunate about COVID, but this money will go to good use in the Township in the coming years. Mr. Carocci said it already has tonight.

**ROLL CALL:** 5-0

**H. APPROVAL OF RECREATION FEE ALLOCATION TO POLK VALLEY PARK**

Mrs. Yerger said as required in our SALDO, we received a recreation fee from Pennoni for the Majestic Bethlehem Center - Eastern Phase in the amount of \$69,510.00. At the August 2, 2021 meeting the Parks & Recreation Board recommended to Council that the recreation fee be allocated to Polk Valley Park and deposited in the Park Capital Fund

**MOTION BY:** Mr. Banonis moved to approve the recreation fee from Pennoni of \$69,510.00 to be allocated to Polk Valley Park in the Park Capital Fund.

**SECOND BY:** Mrs. Yerger

**ROLL CALL:** 5-0

**VI. MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS ITEMS**

**A. APPROVAL OF JULY 21, 2021 COUNCIL MINUTES**

**MOTION BY:** Mrs. Yerger moved for approval of the July 21, 2021 Council minutes, with corrections.

**SECOND BY:** Ms. deLeon

**ROLL CALL:** 5-0

**B. APPROVAL OF JULY 2021 FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Mrs. Yerger said the July 2021 financial reports are ready for Council's review and approval.

**MOTION BY:** Ms. deLeon moved for approval of the July 2021 financial reports.

**SECOND BY:** Mrs. Yerger

**ROLL CALL:** 5-0

**VII. COUNCIL & STAFF REPORTS**

A. MANAGER – Mrs. Huhn – Absent

B. COUNCIL

Mr. Carocci

- The LSA went through their audit with flying colors. They have \$4.3 million in reserves and about two years of operating expenses. No penalties for late fees during COVID.

Mr. Banonis

- The SVP meeting took place and there were some developments the public should hear about. The Borough of Hellertown has received a \$1 million parks improvement grant and will be conducting a study next year for the SRT. We should keep our eyes on that as the Rail Trail bisects the community.
- Hellertown Borough also completed a pedestrian safety project on Main Street that's done now, and it's important as the second part of his discussion talks about the ATP.
- The Compost Center has been very busy, because a lot of people have been at home catching up.
- The Meadows Road Bridge looks like October 2021 will be when they start the demolishing process.
- The Hellertown Spirit Parade will be October 24, 2021 and Trick or Treat is October 31, 2021.
- The SVP will be having a meeting September 8<sup>th</sup> and will be discussing approving the final plan of the Comprehensive Plan. It's the strategic vision for LST and HB and the School district going forward for the next decade. The plan was ready to be decided and approved at the last meeting, he suggested we table it and that's because at the September 1<sup>st</sup> Council meeting we will be discussing and approving the ATP. It's available on the Township website and lays out improvements within LST to make it more pedestrian and bicycle accessible. Some of the areas are Meadows Road Bridge, better access to Polk Valley Park and better access to connecting the 378 corridor to the rest of the Township and being to get from 378 to the SRT.

Ms. deLeon

- She attended on July 28<sup>th</sup> the PSATS regional forum and actually saw the President ride past her.
- She attended the SVP meeting on August 11<sup>th</sup>.

Mrs. Stauffer

- The LS Historical Society History through Photography contest ends September 1<sup>st</sup>. Get your submissions in.
- Tonight the library had a carnival, she doesn't know how it's going with the weather.

Mrs. Yerger – No report

C. SOLICITOR – No report

**VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS – NON-RESIDENTS ONLY – None**

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION BY:** Mr. Banonis moved for adjournment. The time was 8:33 p.m.

**SECOND BY:** Mr. Carocci

**ROLL CALL:** 5-0

Submitted by:

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Leslie Huhn  
Township Manager

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Sandra B. Yerger  
Council President