

Borough of Alburtis

Meeting Minutes

February 24, 2021

The February 24, 2021 meeting of Borough Council was called to order by Council President Ron DeIaco at 7:00 p.m. Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19), the meeting was held via video conference. The change in venue was announced on the Borough website and by a posting notice on the Borough Hall doors. The meeting was open to the public where participants could attend the meeting by using an assigned web link and access code.

Council members in attendance:

Ron DeIaco	Steve Hill	Vanessa Taggart	John Aleszczyk
Stephen Kaufman	Kathleen Raines	Hector Vazquez	

Associates of Alburtis in attendance:

Dave Knerr, Solicitor	Kathleen Palmer, Mayor	Sharon Trexler, Borough Manager
Jeffrey Ott, Borough Engineer		

Visitors in attendance: Howard Kutzler – Jaindl Land Corp. Matt Hook – Jaindl Land Corp.

Lydia Jones	Gary DeRoner	Chad Atkins	Thomas Gorr	Al Senk
Harvender Singh	Chad Nevel	Lori Miller	Ted Miller	April Stern
Matthew Mumma	Mehmet Birtek	Michael Wambaugh	Sojeet Kaur	
Joe Stern	Janelle Alfano	Steve Reichenbach		

MAYOR’S REPORT – Mayor Palmer thanked everyone for better cooperation with the last storm. We will need to fix the pool parking lot in spring.

MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 10, 2021 – Vanessa Taggart made a motion to approve the Minutes of February 10, 2021, Kathleen Raines 2nd and a unanimous vote followed.

BILLS FOR PAYMENT – FEBRUARY 24, 2021 – Kathleen Raines made a motion to pay the bills of February 24, 2021, Hector Vazquez 2nd and a unanimous vote followed.

FISCAL CONSULTANT’S REPORT –Hector Vazquez made a motion to approve the Fiscal Consultant’s Report, Vanessa Taggart 2nd and a unanimous vote followed.

ADMINISTRATION

Hills at Lockridge Walking Path – Sharon checked with Lehigh County regarding moving the access point of the walking path to the opening off of Church Street. She was told they do not want that entrance used. They paved the area for fishermen, and it is a popular fishing spot. Jaindl Land Company has offered to remove the East-West portion of the walking path. Several residents are opposed to this since the path is on the approved plan and Council reviewed a letter written to this regard by Michael Wambaugh. After further discussion, Council decided that, since this has been on the approved plan for 15 years, the walking path will remain as is on the plan.

Hills at Lockridge – Lot 85 and Lot 86 – Howard Kutzler of Jaindl Land Company was present to talk about the two remaining lots on Church Street and Scenic View Road. Currently, the Lots are zoned L-1, Light Industrial. Jaindl Land Company may propose to downzone the lots to Residential. They showed a concept plan that consisted of 22 townhomes. Behind each home would be a roadway that would be maintained by an HOA. John Aleszczyk is worried about storm runoff and Mr. Kutzler said they would probably use spray irrigation to have the water diverted into the pond across from Scenic View. Kathleen Raines asked if they would be two- or three-story homes and was told they would be similar to the homes in Maple Court.

Hills at Lockridge – Lot 85 and Lot 86 (cont.) – Steve Hill questioned why they would propose an HOA and was told that the roads would be privately owned so that the Borough would not have to maintain them. Hector Vazquez does not have an issue with the down zoning but would rather see units for 55 and over. Stephen Kaufman believes it will be very difficult for parking with a 20' roadway. Residents, April Stern, Al Senk, Janelle Alfano and Ted Miller all expressed concern regarding storm water. Church Street is always closed after a heavy rain. Mr. Kutzler responded that these items would all have to be addressed and to keep in mind that this is just a concept plan. Ron DeIaco does not have a problem with the zoning change but is worried about the storm water as well and Hector would like to see the Hills at Lockridge completed prior to starting another project. Howard Kutzler stated that, again, this is a concept plan, and they will return to a future Council Meeting once they decide on the two lots.

Hills at Lockridge Dedication Plans – Howard Kutzler reported to Council that they have been working on the punch list from Ott Consulting and they hope to have everything in good order for the next Council Meeting. Hector Vazquez noted that he walked the area last week and there are noticeable flooding issues. Aril Stern added that this is correct, and they always have standing water as well as a mold growth. Janelle Alfano said the water pools behind her home and the side of her house. There is a green moss growing and the basement sump pump is constantly running. Howard Kutzler responded that this is a builder issue. Al Senk asked about the wires still present along the road. PPL has been asked repeatedly to take care of this and they will check again. Howard will coordinate a time to discuss these items with Jeff Ott and Sharon. Hector Vazquez asked if the Borough was liable for the homes once we take the development over and Dave Knerr replied no, but we do not want them to walk away from it either. John Aleszczyk said we are accepting the roads, not the properties.

Ott Consulting – MS4 – Borough Engineer, Jeff Ott, was present to review the status of our Municipal Sanitary Storm System (MS4). He had previously been to Council with several options to fill our requirements of the pollutant reduction plan. One was to have screening done behind the Maple Court Development and the other was stream bank restoration. Now that Liberty Property is beginning construction in the Alburtis portion of the warehouses, they are replacing the existing channel off of W. Penn Avenue with a new channel. Zachary Mitchell is an Ott Consulting employee and works on the Borough's MS4 Program. He saw this as an opportunity to save the Borough about \$100,000 by using this channel being constructed by the developer to obtain the required credits. The Borough may need to add a few berms, but this is much less expensive than previously projected. Jeff Ott would like to add this as a third option and send it off to DEP for review. Hector Vazquez made a motion to have the Borough Manager advertise the third option, Kathleen Raines 2nd and a unanimous vote followed. Council thanked Jeff for seeing this opportunity.

Ott Consulting – Sewer Lateral Grant – Ott Consulting is ready to begin the work on sewer laterals in the Borough. Knowing that Borough Council is interested in eliminating the sewer station and going to a gravity fed system, they will be concentrating on the sewer shed area. The project is ready to go out to bid. Steve Hill made a motion authorizing the Borough Manager to advertise and move forward, Kathleen Raines 2nd and a unanimous vote followed.

Ott Consulting – Franklin Street Grant – Ott Consulting would like to get started on the Franklin Street improvements. Since we are putting sidewalks along a Penn Dot roadway, Penn Dot is requiring that the existing driveways be put to their standards. We are receiving push back from several of the residents who do not want this project done at their property. An alternative would be to still install curb and sidewalk along the front of the church property and then continue down Church Street towards the park. Council would prefer not doing work on privately owned properties and would like Jeff Ott to contact the State to see if the grant can be altered.

Public Comment – In regard to the drainage problem on Racite Road, resident, Ted Miller informed Council that there was no drainage issue on the west side of Racite.

Public Comment (cont.) – Resident, Michael Wambaugh was present for two reasons. First, in regard to the Hills at Lockridge, the Plan was signed off on 15 years ago. He views this as a contract, and he encourages Council to hold Jaendl and Kay Builders responsible. Dave Knerr commented that if the builder does not build properly, we have nothing to say. We can only go by the Plans. Secondly, the recent snowstorms are in the top ten of storms and he wants Council to know that the maintenance crew did a tremendous job. The people that are not making noise on social media are our everyday residents. Janelle Alfano responded by stating that Racite is different and she will continue to voice her opinion.

Sewer Station – Air Compressor – The air compressor at the sewer station stopped working. Donnie Derr put in the back up air compressor and needs to purchase another spare for \$443.50. Hector Vazquez made the motion to purchase the air compressor for \$443.50, Stephen Kaufman 2nd and a unanimous vote followed.

Maintenance Shop – Air Compressor – The air compressor in the shop is not working properly and needs to be replaced. Donnie gave Sharon a price of \$1,000 for a new one. Vanessa would like more quotes. Hector made a motion to obtain two more quotes and to allow Sharon to authorize the purchase of an air compressor not to exceed \$1,000. The motion was 2nd by Kathleen Raines and a unanimous vote followed.

Alburtis Elementary School – Egg Hunt – Sharon was contacted by Lydia Jones on behalf of the elementary school. They would like to do an activity for Easter for the kids and asked if clues and maybe treats can be placed outside of Borough Hall and the ballfield. Sharon suggested they include the playground and Church property. Hector Vazquez made a motion to allow the school to utilize Borough property, Kathleen Raines 2nd and a unanimous vote followed.

William Butz Memorial Fund, Inc. - \$2,500 was received from the Memorial Fund for the Church. Vanessa asked if we could find out if they are able to donate more. Sharon will include this question in her thank you to them.

SW Comp Plan – Sharon attended the Comprehensive Plan meeting last night. Projects in the works are 400 homes being built on Mertztown Road in the Township. This was approved by the former Township Administration. There is also a development going in on a portion of the Brookside Country Club property.

A motion to adjourn at 9:08 p.m. was made by Kathleen Raines, 2nd by Vanessa Taggart and a unanimous vote followed. Meeting minutes were taken and submitted by Sharon Trexler, Borough Manager.