

**Minutes
Throop Borough Council
Special Monthly Meeting
for General Purposes
Tuesday, October 14, 2003
following the 6:30 p.m. Work Session**

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

“God Bless Our Military and the Coalition”

ROLL CALL:

Members of Council:

Anthony Chrzan - **P**

Vice President - James Barnick - **P**

President - Thomas Lukasewicz - **P**

James Mellody Jr. - **P**

George Marushock - **P**

Daryl Menichetti - **P**

Joseph Barone - **P**

Mayor - Stanley Lukowski - **P**

Solicitor - Attorney Louis Cimini - **P**

Treasurer - Lenore Dolan - **P**

Administrator/Secretary - Elaine Morrell - **P**

Announcements:

Blood Drive - Throop Civic Center - Tuesday, October 21, 2003 - 12:00 Noon to 6:00 p.m.

Audience comments on tonight’s agenda:

Dominick Rocco, 110 Sanderson Street - Expressed to council he was against the purchase of three acres of land for \$180,000.

Jack Dolan, South Valley Ave. , (Chairman, Throop Planning Agency) - The 48 acres were on the agenda at the regular monthly planning meeting last evening and the potential for any fire on the site. The Borough Engineer, John Szczepaniak, addressed the issue indicating that either the DEP or state drilled holes (approximately 36) around the site over the last ten years and have yet to find a fire at the site and there was documentation with regard to this. In another matter at the meeting, a discussion took place regarding the use of the Little League property for the DPW garage and putting three fields up the 48 acre site but that would be up to council.

1. Motion by Marushock **Seconded by Mellody**

To combine Sunny Day Fund CD # 51-102228-4 in the amount of \$155,567.20 and Sunny Day Fund CD # 51-102233-4 in the amount of \$293,760.26 on maturity (October 30th) plus 10% of the October quarterly host municipality landfill check at the best rate available.

All in favor Motion carried

2. Motion by Mellody **Seconded by Marushock**

To allocate \$12,500.00 to each of the three fire departments, Throop Hose Co. # 1, Throop Hose Co. # 2 and Throop Hose Co. # 3. This represents the balance of the annual allotments.

All in favor Motion carried

3. Motion by Marushock **Seconded by Mellody**

To allocate \$200.00 to Jerry Barone, Fire Marshal, and to allocate \$100.00 each to Ed Bocan and Maurice Menichetti, Assistant Fire Marshals. This represents the balance of the annual allotments.

All in favor Motion carried

4. Motion by Mellody **Seconded by Marushock**

To allocate \$6,700.00 to the non-uniform pension plan as per the MMO (Minimum Municipal Obligation). The state aid pension check was in the amount of \$60,188.13. This was deposited directly in the Non-Uniform Pension Fund.

All in favor Motion carried

5. Motion by Mellody **Seconded by Marushock**

To issue a check in the amount of \$20,755.19 to the Throop Volunteer Firemen's Relief Fund. This amount represents the check that was received from the state.

All in favor Motion carried

6. Motion by Barone **Seconded by Marushock**

To grant permission to the Mid Valley Basketball Officials to use Council Chambers for their meetings on Sundays from Noon to 1:00 p.m. from November to February (as they do each year).

All in favor Motion carried

7. Motion by Mellody **Seconded by Marushock**

To advertise Throop Borough Ordinance # 8 of 2003, an ordinance amending Throop Borough Ordinance # 14 - 1996, Act 600 Police Pension Fund. The amendments are those required as per Act 30 of 2002 - Changes to Act 600 and modifying the retirement age as per the Arbitrator's Award "To provide for retirement at age fifty (50) with twenty-five (25) years of service.

All in favor Motion carried

Lukasewicz discussed adding Motion #8, to review back through the archives to approve or disapprove for once and for and to answer Mr. Rocco's question concerning the Rinaldi property.

8. Motion by Lukasewicz **Seconded by Chrzan**

To have Atty. Louis Cimini review the Rinaldi property and put in writing regarding the development of the property.

Audience Comments: None

All in favor Motion carried

9. Motion by Barnick **Seconded by Barone**

To approve Application for Payment #2 in the amount of \$7,533.47 to Scranton Craftsmen, Inc. for the Dunmore Street Emergency Repair Project, as per the Borough Engineer, Frederick C. Spott & Assoc., Inc.

Six in favor - Barnick, Mellody, Marushock, Menichetti, Barone, Lukasewicz
One abstain - Chrzan Motion carried

10. Motion by Mellody **Seconded by Marushock**

To increase the part-time police officers rate to \$12.00 per hour effective immediately.

All in favor Motion carried

11. Motion by Lukasewicz **Seconded by Chrzan**

To request an investigation and information from the Borough Engineer, Fred Spott & Assoc., regarding any mine fire at the 48 acres and what the approximate cost would be.

On the question:

Lukasewicz: Hopefully this will dispel any rumors that are out there. I'll tell you what, I'm sick of hearing..... If I have to waste borough monies to stop idle rumors, I'm going to have to do it. These rumors have to go. We can't conduct business with rumors over our head.

Barone: I can't see the spending the money.....

Mayor: Well that's the best way to go. But, consult with Gannett-Fleming.

Lukasewicz: Whatever way it comes out, Stanley, let the cards be read, all right? One way or the other I want a solid answer. Request whatever he thinks a proper investigation should be.

Menichetti: How in depth are you going to go?

Lukasewicz: How in depth? In depth that I could say to the people there's no mine fire there. Don't bring it up at a council meeting again or if there is a mine fire, then don't touch that one.

Marushock: I don't think anyone's going to guarantee that.

Lukasewicz: Well, we're going to find out what's available but one way or the other we have to stop the bickering over it. We're educated people, get the answer to the question itself.

Morrell: I think, I agree. I think we need to drill test it or something and clarify it.

All in favor

Motion carried

12. Motion by Mellody

Seconded by Marushock

To direct Elaine and Attorney Cimini to collectively gather information regarding the 48 acres, the progress, in preparation of a letter to DEP, to be submitted to council for review prior to the next work session.

On the question:

Lukasewicz: Hopefully again we'll know exactly what has been expended and where we do sit (the status) and move forward one way or the other.

Six in favor - Chrzan, Barnick, Mellody, Marushock, Menichetti, Lukasewicz

One against - Barone

Motion carried

13. Motion by Mellody

Seconded by Marushock

To purchase land from Rinaldi per the agreement from his office. Purchase price \$100,000 plus \$80,000 for clearing. Rinaldi agrees that all liens will be paid against the property upon signing, upon closing.

On the question:

Barone: What are we going to go, nothing against Rinaldi, what are we going to do about moving the Little League up there (48 acres) and going down the Little League. You throw that out the window, every time something pops up you're going to throw it out the window.

Marushock: I don't think you would see the Little League... You're not going to see that in the immediate near future. *Barone asked why. Marushock's response inaudible. Everyone speaking at once.*

Lukasewicz: What we can do is address that issue in the future because the Borough of Throop always needs more land.

Barone: I talked to the Boosters and they said whatever council decides, it's good enough with them.

Lukasewicz: What I'm trying to say is, Joe, possibly in the future when we get up there and we start to develop the 48 maybe we could develop the ball field.... Move up there, this land down here will

be back to the borough and the borough can use it for something.

Menichetti: And I don't have a problem with the Little League moving their park up there or anything. I just can't see the DPW up there.

Mayor: Let me give you a little history. You know, there was a ball field used extensively up there many, many years ago.

Everyone speaking at once. A discussion took place.

Barone: Getting back to that 48 acres, whatever you decide you better get a bulldozer up there quick.

Three in favor - Mellody, Marushock, Menichetti

Three against - Chrzan, Barnick, Lukasewicz

One abstain - Barone, until I find out more

Tie Vote - Mayor, In Favor

Motion carried

Everyone speaking at once.

14. Motion by Mellody

Seconded by Marushock

To adopt the Employee Handbook including the recommended changes by Atty. Cimini.

Four in favor - Mellody, Marushock, Menichetti, Lukasewicz

Three against Chrzan, Barnick, Barone

Motion carried

Motion #15 failed

15. Motion by Mellody

Seconded by Marushock

To hold a public hearing on vacating the parking on the westerly side of George Street between Sanderson Street and Clarion Court.

Four against - Chrzan, Barnick, Barone, Lukasewicz

Three in favor - Mellody, Marushock, Menichetti

Motion failed

16. Motion by Barone

Seconded by Chrzan

To authorize the same number of sick days for all full time employees as the DPW receives and to include that in the Employee Handbook.

On the question:

A discussion took place with regard to sick days for full time employees. Few speaking at once.

Lukasewicz: So this vote would amend already the handbook. So it can be done.

Cimini: You probably should look at it every year (the handbook) .

Five in favor - Chrzan, Barnick, Menichetti, Barone, Lukasewicz

Two against - Mellody, Marushock

Motion carried

17. Motion by Barnick

Seconded by Chrzan

To purchase a new computer for the administrator's office from T.R. Associates at a cost of \$1140. plus \$350 for MS Office and Windows XP. (Or Windows 98, whichever would be compatible with current software being used.

All in favor

Motion carried

18. Motion by Barone

Seconded by Chrzan

To purchase a monument from Fairview Monument Company pending approval of Atty. Cimini.

On the question:

Menichetti: Now, what is Atty. Cimini going to review?

Barone: To find out if it's legal for us to do.

Menichetti: Could we have that in writing?

Barone: You're against it, right?

Menichetti: I think it's too expensive, Joe, I really do.

Barone: Monuments are expensive, what are you going to do?

Four in favor - Chrzan, Barnick, Barone, Lukasewicz

Three against - Mellody, Marushock, Menichetti

Motion carried

A discussion took place and ensued with regard to the purchase of the Rinaldi property. Everyone was speaking at once.

Lukasewicz: Wanted everyone on council to decide what you're going to do with three acres of land that you just paid \$60,000 an acre for. It's probably the most highly rated piece of land now in Northeastern Pennsylvania, \$60,000 an acre. If you want to spend \$60,000 an acre what you do is fine, you voted on it but decide what you're going to do with that land. I know no one else in their right mind would pay \$180,000 for three acres of land but anyway, you voted, so you voted. I wasn't in agreement with it and I will not be in agreement with it but justify it to me, somebody, I'd like to hear it.

Mellody: The intention in making that motion was to put the DPW Complex there like we discussed.

Lukasewicz: Well, it's not going there. Lukasewicz/Mayor: Speaking at once. The DPW Complex was already voted on to go up the 48 acres.

Lukasewicz: \$180,000 for three acres of land with no intention of getting four votes to put something there. So, now decide what you want to do with that land to justify it.

Barnick: You talk about \$7,000 just for a monument which will probably never happen again in the history of Throop and you're going to spend \$60,000 an acre.

Lukasewicz: Get the land, then decide what you want to do to justify it to the taxpayers of Throop that you paid \$180,000 for three acres of land. Justify it to the taxpayers.

Audience Comments:

Dominick Rocco, 110 Sanderson Street - I think it's a shame. Four councilman and the Mayor to buy three acres of land, \$60,000 an acre. My God, you ought to be ashamed of yourselves.

Menichetti and Rocco both speaking at once. Rocco continued: No matter how you look at it, it's \$60,000 an acre. I don't care how you looked at it, that's what it comes out to.

Menichetti: What do you think it's going to cost at the 48 acres? You think it's going to clear itself? It's going to cost about a \$1m to get that going. *A discussion ensued.*

Frank Galli, 609 Kossuth Street - My question to council is you just spent \$60,000 an acre. The 48 acres, how much money did we have already invested in that 48 acres? Why would you spend \$60,000 an acre? Galli thought council should start thinking about the future.

The meeting was adjourned.

Elaine Morrell, Administrator/Secretary

Minutes by Christina Sullivan, Assistant Secretary