

**Minutes
Throop Borough Council
Special Meeting for General Purposes
Thursday, January 15, 2004
following the 6:30 p.m. Budget Work Session**

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

“God Bless Our Troops and the Coalition”

Roll Call:

Members of Council

President - George Marushock - **P**

Daryl Menichetti - **P**

Vice President - Susan Shortz - **P**

Cindy Blanchard - **P**

Thomas Lukasewicz - **P**

James Barnick - **P**

Joseph Barone - **P**

Solicitor - Louis A. Cimini - **P**

Mayor - Stanley Lukowski - **P**

Treasurer - Christine Hartshorn - **A**

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

Announcements:

- An Executive Session was held this evening at 6:00 p.m. to discuss personnel matters.
- Ed Karpovich, Lacka. County Treasurer, assigned a representative to sell Dog Licenses at the Throop Municipal Building on Thursday, January 29, 2004 from 10:00 a.m. until 3:30 p.m.

Audience comments on tonight's agenda:

Dominick Rocco, 110 Sanderson St. - I'm totally against all these cuts you're making. I don't think it's necessary, we're not in the red. What are you guys up to? Things are being done, you know, the sky's not falling. You guys are yelling, "the sky is falling, the sky is falling". What is going on here? First Mr. Cimini, our solicitor, I think he did a good job. You think you're really going to get a guy for \$32,000? For how long is he going to work for \$32,000? Ten or fifteen years ago we paid more

than \$80,000 a year . Check the records, I come to almost every meeting here. It's ridiculous what you guys are trying to do already. What are you going to get for \$32,000, a bum off the street?

Larry Hartshorn, 140 Dimmick St. - Yes, Mr. Cimini's done a good job and I also got to commend the people that's doing this job now, Rocco, trying to save you money and do things for your town. If we were in good shape, why couldn't the last loan payment be made? *A discussion ensued.* Hartshorn then made mention of the Boulevard Project and maintenance of the playgrounds, including the baseball fields. He commended this council on the job they are doing.

John Musewicz, 2 Mruck St. - With council's budget concerns he questioned the status of the borough's annual monetary donation of the fireworks for the Booster Club Cow Flop for 2004.

Rebecca Bukowski, 724 George St. - Discussed the position of borough manager and thought at a previous meeting Marushock stated the manager should/would be a non-political person that all council would agree on, someone that knows the town, and someone that is not politically connected. It's a majority, we know how all this works, please. Mrs. Morrell has been in her position for twelve years as administrator, which means she has gone through pretty much quite a few council men and women in this town. So I don't see why you people would consider advertising for a borough manager, let's give credit where credit is due. If Mr. Kalinoski isn't at his job and you call the borough, who do we get to talk to? Elaine Morrell. Complain and nothing is done, but when you want to find something out, call Ms. Morrell, because Elaine doesn't lie to you when you call her. Elaine does fill in for everyone when you're not here, does try, and 99% of the time takes care of the problem or will send you where you can have it taken care of. Personally, I think it's a really bad insult not only for the people of this town who voted you in, but for the lady who's been doing the job for twelve years through all you council men and council women. There shouldn't even be a question on board. She knows the town inside out, which is more than I can say about any of you people. The assistant, yes, go for broke, have fun, hire whoever you want. The story is always better than the truth in this town, cause we all know the truth doesn't go around the town, the story does, and we all know how the story is. You want to make the rude comments and this and that but you're not listening to the other side. And whether you have a majority or not, that doesn't do anything for anyone who lives in the town or anybody else, for that matter. You're not doing it for us, you're doing it for yourselves. Are you having fun? Is your half hour of comedy up yet? What did you do? You cut a bunch for \$50,000. Everybody's in debt, nobody's working, everybody lives this way. Are you out of debt? You don't spend beyond your means? And if you were trying to fiscally manage the borough and save money, I would have heard, Mrs. Morrell as Borough Manager, and we're looking for an assistant. But you're not, you're just trying to make them mad, it's obvious.

Dominick Rocco, 110 Sanderson St. - If we have a person in Throop that's qualified for this job (Borough Manager) and a person that has the same qualifications outside of Throop, who are you going to hire? I believe there was motions made and passed that any job that's 'up for bid' that Throop residents will get the first opportunity for it, providing they're qualified.

Frank Galli, Kossuth St - Continued on the discussion of Borough Manager, who would be in charge of every department and the eyes and ears for council. If this Borough Manager made a

recommendation to terminate a person, was council going to act on that recommendation and make the decision? What would the Borough Manager be doing that was any different that Elaine Morrell was doing right now? With the current budget cuts and council mentioning there would be other cuts, would the \$5,000 for the Cow Flop's annual fireworks be available? He stated the Washington Street Park field is truly one of the best hard ball facilities around, a crowned jewel of the area. He had been to all fields throughout the county and thought the maintenance was a bit more involved than people thought.

Robert Cabets, Mary St. - Asked if the Cow Flop would still be held because he thought it was cancelled. That's what he heard because, you know, you hear things. *A discussion took place regarding the Cow Flop and scheduling a meeting with the Booster Club.*

Chris Musti, 502 Cypress St. - Discussed the \$100 per month paid to planning and zoning board members. He thought the money should be given to the Mayor to beautify the town to lure more taxpayers and business into the Borough. Raise the population to generate more income. You're saying it's a bad time in this borough, we don't have any money and you're getting rid of people. *He made a monetary comparison of hiring a borough manager vs. keeping Mrs. Morrell, "a great employee" and Mrs. Sullivan.* Musti: We're in a financial straits but paying planning and zoning, we're cutting people's jobs, people with kids and everything. It doesn't make sense.

Ron Bukowski, 724 George St. - As a landfill inspector and who has attended meetings and listened to various comments about actual duties, he thought usually you want to get rid of somebody when they don't fulfill their obligations or duties. He never saw Ms. Blanchard at meeting and how did she knows what's been going on? How much money did you actually save by hiring people who are not qualified for the position, Mr. Cabets and Mr. Yontos, landfill inspectors? How much money did you save by hiring those guys? Are they qualified now, presently, Mr. Marushock? If not, what are they doing up the landfill? Was DEP and Throop Borough paying my salary? Why aren't they (DEP) paying his salary? Because he is not qualified, certified. You've got people up there illegal. A discussion ensued. Dave Morrell has been going every six months to keep his certification, to be re-certified. He's the one that should be up there in my spot if you wanted to get rid of me, not Cabets or Yontos who are not qualified, collected unemployment and sued the borough when they lost their jobs. Yet, you rehire somebody who sues the borough? Where are your brains?

Council Comments:

Barnick: Same as the last time with the engineers, there's no proposal for this new solicitor. What's the hours, the costs, is it going to be 40 hours a week? Why can't we get a proposal and why do you keep hiding this stuff? If it's \$35,000, what does that include? Phone calls, postage, mailing, 35 hours a week, what is it? I can remember Cimini doing 75 hours a week. You're going to vote on it tonight and have a contract with this man. What is he going to do for the borough? You already know what Cimini does, ordinances, resolutions, cases, you name it. Even the Zoning Appeal in the matter of Gould. *Blanchard: About the same that Cimini is handling now. Marushock: We can provide a proposal. Quite honestly, can you say every week that was ever billed out at the rate of \$75,000 a year that 40 hours a week was definitely put in? A discussion ensued.*

1. Motion by Lukasewicz **Seconded by Barnick**

To accept the resignation of Thomas Lukasewicz as Council President.

All in favor

Motion carried

2. Motion by Lukasewicz **Seconded by Barnick**

To appoint George Marushock as Council President.

All in favor

Motion carried

The following Motion was withdrawn:

Motion by Lukasewicz

Seconded by Barnick

To appoint Cindy Blanchard as Council Vice President.

Blanchard: No, I don't think I'm qualified right now. Lukasewicz: I'd like to withdraw my motion seeing as how she doesn't want it. Barnick: That's fine. I'm just saying, I mean, if you have enough gall to fire people, you should be able to take up the vice presidency. People you don't know.

3. Motion by Lukasewicz **Seconded by Barnick**

To appoint Susan Shortz as Council Vice President.

All in favor

Motion carried

4. Motion by Lukasewicz **Seconded by Barnick**

To adopt Throop Borough Resolution # 2 of 2004, a resolution naming the following as authorized signatures on all borough accounts and certificates of deposit; President, Treasurer, Administrator/Secretary and to authorize the Vice President to sign in the absence of any of the three. Three signatures are required. All accounts and certificates of deposit to date are deposited in the First National Community Bank, Dunmore.

All in favor

Motion carried

5. Motion by Shortz

Seconded by Menichetti

To combine Sunny Day Fund CD # 41-303236-4 in the amount of \$45,085.14 that matures on January 21, 2004 and Sunny Day Fund CD # 40-302321-5 in the amount of \$71,942.23 that matures on January 28, 2004 plus 10% of the January quarterly host municipality landfill check at the best rate and term available.

All in favor

Motion carried

6. Motion by Menichetti

Seconded by Shortz

To amend the Throop Borough Budget for 2004 as previously noted this evening and the Liquid Fuels Budget.

On the question:

Lukasewicz: The position of borough solicitor, would that be included in this motion or will that be done separately? I would prefer if it was done separately. *Marushock: That should be done separately.* Barnick: So the current salary is going to stay the same, \$35,000? *A discussion took place.*

Barone: You're taking 50% off of the zoning and the planning. What about the secretary? Is she going to make more than zoning or planning? She's going to get \$100 and the other guy's going to get \$50. You want to save money, don't you? I have nothing against the secretary but if you're going to cut one, you don't pay the secretary more than you pay the boss, do you? *Marushock: She does more work, I think, by her part. I'm leaving that the same as what was in the budget previously.* *Menichetti: She got paid when they didn't get anything before.* Barone: I don't care what happened before, this is what you people are making here, now. *Marushock: I'm leaving it as we addressed previously.* *Menichetti: The planning and zoning never got paid before. The secretary always did. She works for both, not just one. A discussion ensued.*

Four in favor - Marushock, Menichetti, Shortz, Blanchard

Three against - Lukasewicz, Barnick, Barone

Motion carried

Menichetti: I would like to put a to table this next motion because we need to have a proposal. Without a proposal, I really don't feel we would accept it because there's been a lot of controversy over this. *Barone: Yes, I'd like to see everything that man's going to do.* Lukasewicz: I'll just say one thing to you. There's such a thing as right and wrong in this world. You do not do this to an individual sitting here. Have the gall to fire the person today and have it over with. I'd like to put a motion on.. *Menichetti: Maybe he won't be fired.* Lukasewicz: Well, why bring it up and disgrace somebody? *Few speaking at once.* Lukasewicz: Why do we do the things we do? It's embarrassing. Doesn't anything bother you people? How would you like to be in his shoes right now? Disgusting. I don't anybody thinks (about) what you do any more.

Motion #7 tabled, as follows:

7. Motion by Menichetti

Seconded by Shortz

To hire P.J. LaBelle as solicitor at the rate of \$34,000 a year, pending written documentation. Barone: I want everything in there, what he's going to do compared to what this man did. And let me ask you a question. If he doesn't live up and do everything that this man did, are you going to reverse your decision or are you going to give him a \$10,000 raise? *Lukasewicz: Would you just go and have it over with? You don't do that to a person. Just do it and be over with it.* Barnick: Just do it.

On the question:

Lukasewicz: Spineless and heartless, that's on the question. Barnick: I'll agree with that.

Lukasewicz: That describes it the best. Barone: And I want to see an itemized list of what this man's going to do.

Four in favor - Marushock, Menichetti, Shortz, Blanchard

Three Against - Lukasewicz, Barnick, Barone

Motion tabled

Motion #8 failed, as follows:

8. Motion by Lukasewicz

Seconded by Barnick

Motion to vacate Throop Borough's deed to the 48 acres and revert it back to the DEP.

On the question:

Morrell: I think it's a big mistake that we are going to lose this land. We put years worth of work, money and planning, and it really is a shame. Where do you get 48 acres for \$1? *Barnick: It's been doomed ever since, inaudible, got this council.* Menichetti: I'd like to say I don't have a problem with the 48 acres, I just didn't want the DPW Complex there. I just didn't feel that was a good site for it, and I'll stand by that.

Audience Comments on Motion #8:

Dominick Rocco, 110 Sanderson St. - I'm totally against getting rid of it. We spent a lot of money and time on that. I think it's a lot of bologna for a handful of people to say they don't want it. Where's the rest of the people that said they want it? You've got to go by three or four people? I mean, that's bologna. You're (Marushock) against everything they did up there and everything they wanted to do, so why do you want it?

Larry Hartshorn, 140 Dimmick St. - On the project up there, do we have any guarantee that there's no fire there? How much money do we have invested in there now? Are we obligated to do so much each year there? Do we have a time limit? So, we didn't actually, we didn't get it for a \$1? Well, this is what the people are not telling the taxpayers. You got plenty and enough recreation; one down in the Boulevard you don't even operate, you don't even send nobody there, that's not part of Throop. You've got another one up in Warsaw, the Washington Street Playground and one down the patch. Where do you need another one? I'm not against the kids having anything but they got plenty here in this town. That's all. When you get a paper that guarantees that there is no fire up there, everybody would agree to the site.

Frank Galli, Kossuth St. - Mr. Marushock, you don't give away 48 acres of land, I don't care. There's a lot invested and could be recreation put in there, something like Mellow Park. There's

grants that are available. Do not give up that 48 acres. There are ways around everything. Work together to do it. You could put a facility in there that would make Mellow Park look sick. Do you see how many people go around Mellow Park everyday walking? Do something with it, because somebody's going to buy it. *A discussion ensued.*

Council President called for roll call on Motion #8. A discussion ensued regarding the order of voting.

All against

Motion failed

Motion by Menichetti, Seconded by Marushock
To adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned.

Elaine Morrell, Administrator/Secretary

Minutes by Christina Sullivan, Assistant Secretary