

ALDAN BOROUGH, DELAWARE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

December 14, 2011

The Borough Council met in a Special Hearing for our CDBG application at 7:30 p.m. and in a regular session at 8:00 p.m. at the William Reiml Recreation Building on the above date with President Short presiding.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and led by President Short.

ROLL CALL

Council members present: H. Short; P. Brookes; T. Owen; S. Coppola
J. Cosgrove; R. Baker; M. Xavier

Council members absent: None

Officers present: T. Quinn, Treasurer; G. Kaut, Secretary
G. Sefflin, Solicitor

Officers absent: None

MINUTES

On a motion made by P. Brookes seconded by R. Baker minutes from the November 9, 2011, Council Meeting be accepted as presented and unanimously approved.

WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE

No written correspondence tonight.

VERBAL CORRESPONDENCE

No verbal correspondence tonight.

MAYOR REPORT

Mayor Hopely on behalf of himself and Council wished Bette Alburger, writer for the Daily Times, a Happy Birthday.

Mayor Hopely commented this is the last meeting for 2 of our Council members. Ron Baker has been on Council for almost 20 years and Mike Xavier has been on Council for 8 years. They have both done a fantastic job and both very dedicated to Aldan, the welfare of Aldan and we thank you very much.

Mayor Hopely said on behalf of himself, Chief Coppola and the Aldan Police Department we wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and very safe holiday.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

TREASURER

Terry Quinn read the Treasurer's Report:

	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>State Highway Fund</u>	<u>Sewer Fund</u>
Balance of cash on hand	\$ 523,877.04	\$ 25,555.96	\$ 56,393.65
Interest		\$ 3.71	\$
Receipts for period	\$ 24,904.87		\$ 58,735.72
Expenditures Prior Month	\$ 243,678.75	\$ 7,446.14	\$ 5,558.51
Expenditures Current Month	\$ 197,550.98	\$ 7,444.51	\$ 135,763.16
YTD Transfer from GFto SF	\$ 26,776.79		\$ 26,776.79
Balance Adjustment	\$ 2.77		
Balance	\$ 80,778.16	\$ 10,669.02	\$ 584.49

Terry is asking Council's approval to release funds from the State Highway Fund totaling \$ 7,444.51. Terry is also asking Council's approval to release check this evening for checks from the General Fund totaling \$199,371.78 and from the Sewer Fund \$135,763.16. Councilwomen Brookes made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented and authorize her to release the checks as indicated on the bills list, seconded by Councilwomen Owen and unanimously approved.

SOLICITOR

Mr. Seflin reported he sent a release to Erie Insurance Company regarding a motor vehicle accident that happened on April 27, 2011, where they went out of control and took out a pole and traffic sign. We anticipate that by next Caucus we will have a check for \$104.03.

Mr. Seflin reported on the Tax Delinquencies; for 2010 a few days ago we entered into an agreement with our largest delinquent. This is a property that is in Collingdale but is hooked into our sewer system. As of right now we have entered into a 90 day oral agreement, he has not signed the agreement paper yet, to pay the Borough \$3,981.97 and if he signs that would begin next month and end in March, 2012. We did have an agreement for 2009 for about \$4,200.00 and he did complete that plan.

Mr. Seflin reported on 120 W Providence Road, Mr. Toth, has been delinquent for about 6 years in a row. In 2009 we filed a lien and a law suite against not only the owner but his girlfriend because of some evidence we were able to develop, that she was a beneficial owner. Mr. Seflin has had discussions with her attorney and they have agreed that if we drop this one equitable owner they will give us \$500.00. Mr. Seflin is recommending this to Council because that at least pays more than the principal due for that year 2009.

We still have many, many liens on the property for Mr. Toth, he has gone in and out of bankruptcy, but we still have the liens on the property and they were not affected by the bankruptcy. Unless Council directs otherwise we will enter into an agreement with the girlfriend only, in exchange for \$500.

Mr. Sefflin reported on the 2009 delinquency at 31 E. Wayne Avenue we did receive a check for \$87.14 from the Bankruptcy Trustee.

ENGINEER

Mr. Close reported on the MPDS MS 4 program we received from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's annual review of our report for 2010-2011 and they indicated the overall effort was very good. They always have some minor feedback they ask us to incorporate into our program and our report. A lot of that has to do with public education and outreach and they love to provide tons of new and exciting web links and things like that. We will be coordinating with the Web Master to maybe consider adding a few things to keep our program up to date with the state. We respond back that we will incorporate these things. Mr. Close wanted to note our MS4 coordinator, Charlie Duffy, is really a big help, his volunteering and the things he does really does keep the cost down and we are very fortunate to have Charlie helping out with that effort.

Mr. Close also reported on the sewers, metering and I & I. Councilmen Coppola and Mr. Close met with DELCORA and Darby Creek Joint Authority on November 17th. We had some questions about our annual bill and also a tru-up that we received in the third quarter for a 2010 tally. We wanted to talk over a few things with them and we also have been monitoring our metering and unfortunately the gains we are making on our meter 3 as a result of our slip lining are being negated by some unexplainable increased in our meter 2 area in the Linden and Rively Avenue area. They have committed to some action plan to go and verify the accuracy of meter 2. Also it is unexplainable at the same time our flows are going up in that quadrant of our town and the Collingdale flows are going down. We have done some night time work and are still looking at some data and make sure it is accurate and we are being billed for what we should. There is some more information to follow and more follow up we have to do with them and Mr. Close will report back as more information come in.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

PUBLIC HEALTH

Councilwoman Owen reported the holiday trash collection schedule will be as follows: trash will not be collected on Monday December 26, 2011 but will be collected on Tuesday, December 27, 2011 and trash will not be collected on Monday, January 2, 2012 but will be collected on Tuesday, January 3, 2012.

Councilwomen Owen reported on our curbside recycling program. It has been very busy placing orders, scheduling deliveries, and making plans for the delivery of the bin held on Saturday, December 10th. The committee of Councilwomen Owen, Councilwomen Brookes and a resident Casey Stauffer met several times to finalize the education materials, determine the best size bins for the cost that was available. The printer we use, Poth Associates, made good recommendations for the flyer and the magnets that were given out with information about what materials residents can put into the recycle bins. The flyer contains the purpose of the curbside recycling program. Frank Poth did an excellent job getting this done for us.

We had envelopes stuffed with the flyers magnets and an extra recycling sticker if needed for another bin. We thank Ginger for taking the initiative to stuff 2000 envelopes so they were ready to go on December 10th. After placing the order for 2000 bins in two different sizes, the bins were ready within a week but we would be responsible for unloading and storing these 33 skids weighing about 465 pounds each. There are so many generous people in the Borough and they stepped up when asked and agreed to help out. Chief Coppola and Terry asked Joe Mastacola from Roddy Products if he could help us. Joe responded absolutely. We have a fork lift, the man power and the space to store them and use the property as your staging area to distribute the bins. The volunteers who stepped up again as always were the Booster, the Boy Scouts, local youths, neighbors, friends and Borough Officials. There was a small hold up of getting into the staging site on Saturday morning because of the smell of gas but after the Fire Company had the area checked and cleared we were ready to start. In addition to the 10 volunteers we had all of a sudden there were 25 which was a great help. The end result was the task was completed in 4 hours. Councilwomen Owen told Bette Alburger about the event that was about to happen and Bette came to see for herself. 2 years ago Bette asked Terry why she was running for re-election and I told her "I was not done yet" and this was the exact project I had in mind, there was no nudging needed from anybody. This task was already in the works and it took 2 years to come about but recycling is here now and moving forward. The next phase is turning this over to the residents to make it successful. With our educational materials, answering questions, and information on the web site we hope to make this a worthwhile effort for the Borough. President Short wanted to congratulate Councilwomen Owen and her Committee on a job well done.

John McBlain wanted to congratulate Councilwomen Owen, you really pulled this together. It has been a long effort and to have that many volunteer residents come out to help distribute is a great tribute to the residents of Aldan.

Dan Procopio also wanted to compliment Councilwomen Owen for coordinating the effort and I have the same sentiments about the residents of Aldan and do not doubt for one moment that they would not come out to volunteer if asked to do so. The results should be tremendous because most of the residents are happy to get their bin and start recycling.

Bill McNally asked what will happen if someone refuses to recycle. Councilwomen Owen explained the recycling hauler is the same as our trash hauler and his crew will be able to see what is being deposited in the bins and will let Councilwomen Owen if the wrong things are in the wrong bin.

Councilwomen Owen explained if we think in 6 months we need to re-educate we still have some money from the grant to remind residents what is the right thing to put in the bin.

HIGHWAY

Councilmen Cosgrove reported a quick up date on the LED change of scope, and we thought this has been a bit long since we heard from them so Councilmen Cosgrove went to Representative Micozzie's Office to see if they could help get an answer and it turns they have been call Councilmen Cosgrove for the last month but had the wrong number. They were calling for a question of clarity and Councilmen Cosgrove did catch up with them and answered their question so we hope by the next Council Meeting we have a go on this project.

Dan Procopio asked if the Winter Service Agreement has been fully executed and our new plowing operator is ready to go. Councilmen Cosgrove responded yes they are ready and they have been getting deliveries of salt and are ready.

PUBLIC WORKS

Councilmen Coppola presented Resolution 2011-03, this is a Resolution for the Application of Community Development Block Grant Funds for the Fiscal Year 2012, and this is related to what Mr. Close presented in the meeting prior to the Council Meeting tonight. Councilmen Coppola made a motion to adopt Resolution 2011-03, seconded by Councilwomen Brookes and unanimously approved.

Dan Procopio asked the amount of the CDBG funds requested. Councilmen Coppola responded \$150,000.00.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUILDINGS

Councilmen Baker had nothing new to report this month.

Dan Procopio wanted to thank Councilmen Baker for his years of service to the Borough of Aldan and wishing the Councilmen many peaceful 1st and 2nd Wednesday nights. Councilmen Baker would like to thank the resident of Aldan for the honor and privilege of serving them for the last 20 years. I hope they were satisfied with the job I did and thank you again.

FINANCE

Councilwoman Brooks is presenting Council tonight with the 2012 Final Budget for acceptance. Councilwomen Brookes commented a few notes on the budget. Like virtually all municipalities in Southeastern Pennsylvania, and especially so in the eastern section of Delaware County, Aldan's 2012 budget is proving to be very difficult, reflecting the current economic environment. While in 2011, Borough Council was able to actually reduce the average homeowner's combined real estate tax, sewer fee and trash fee bill, in 2012 it appears that the current economic conditions will require an increase in real estate taxes and sewer fees.

Although Borough Council has been able to control spending on discretionary governmental line items and has been able to generally control spending overall, nondiscretionary line items such as police pension benefits, police medical benefits, insurance and sewer charges from the Darby Creek Joint Authority have increased overall spending by approximately 3% from 2011.

For General Administration, excluding insurance costs, Borough Council was able to slightly reduce spending. Spending has been held steady for Health & Sanitation and Fire Protection and Emergency Preparedness. Additional resources are budgeted for 2012 for highway improvements, as Borough Council continues to prioritize the Borough's road resurfacing program. Also, the Law & Ordinance Committee's budget has been increased to reflect increased costs to the Borough to combat nuisance properties.

Borough council has announced the implementation of a curbside recycling program for 2012. The expected increase in recycling grant funding and decrease in tipping fees paid to the Delaware County Solid Waste Authority (as a result of the expected decrease in trash volume) are expected to equal or exceed the cost of the recycling program.

The Borough's Police Department budget is slightly increased, approximately 2.5%. Increases in required pension payments, officers' health insurance costs and general liability costs are partially offset by reductions in operating expenses, reflecting the retirement of a long time officer. Although operating expenses have decreased, Council has prioritized ensuring that Chief Coppola receives all of the staffing requested to ensure that enough police officers are on the street protecting our residents and businesses. Overall, spending on police services represents 40% of the Budget expenses, the largest area of spending in the Budget.

Sewer expenses, especially relating to sanitary sewer expenses, continue to become an ever increasing burden to Aldan homeowners. Although Borough Council has implemented an aggressive inflow and infiltration remediation program, the fees to the Borough charged by the Darby Creek Joint Authority continue to increase. For 2012, the DCJA charge to Aldan is expected to increase approximately 10% over 2011 charges. Borough Council is forced to pass these charges from DCJA on to Aldan residential and commercial property owners. Final charges have not been established by the DCJA at this time.

While Borough Council has been able to control spending, 2011 revenues are expected to again decline for certain line items, affecting the overall bottom line. Significant decreases will occur in the balance of cash on hand line item (due to 2011 cost increases), real estate transfer taxes received and state grant funding available. Together, along with decreases in fine revenue and interest income, these revenue line items are projected as an approximate 4.75% decrease in overall revenue compared to 2011's budget.

Budgeted grant revenue for 2012 is decreased by almost \$60,000, reflecting the reduction or discontinuation of grant programs at the state and county level. The decline in the housing market that has been felt in our country overall has affected Aldan in the budgeted 40% reduction of real estate transfer tax, down \$20,000. Budgeted fine revenue and interest income are also expected to slightly decrease.

The nation's poor economy has a direct affect on portions of the Borough's revenue income. The deduction in real estate transfer tax and interest income is especially notable, compared to levels of five years ago. In 2007, the Borough budgeted \$67,000 in real estate transfer tax and \$35,000 in interest income, a total of \$102,000. In 2012, \$30,000 is budgeted for real estate transfer tax and only \$1,500 in interest income, an overall reduction of \$70,500.

The budgeted real estate tax millage will increase from 5.658 mills to 6.111 mills, .453 mills, less than one half of one mill. An Aldan homeowner with the average assessment would see an increase of approximately \$3.21 per month. This increase will generate approximately \$73,500.

The trash fee will remain the same as 2011.

Borough Council will continue to monitor revenues and expenses as 2012 progresses to ensure that Aldan residents get the best bang for their bucks. Setting responsible budgets and controlling spending are the hallmark of the current administration and will continue to remain a priority with the incoming Borough Council.

Borough Council thanks the residents and taxpayers of the Borough for continuing to meet our common obligations when it comes to taxes and maintaining the highest standards in our Community of Holmes. We promise to continue the effort to Keep Aldan a Great Place to Live.

Councilwomen Brookes read Ordinance 508, Tax Levy Ordinance for Fiscal Year 2012. Councilwomen Brookes made a motion to adopt Ordinance 508, Tax Levy Ordinance for Fiscal Year 2012, seconded by Councilmen Xavier and unanimously approved. President Short thanked Councilwoman Brookes very much and Councilwomen Brookes thanked President Short, Councilmen Xavier and Mrs. Quinn for all their help.

President Short said we will hear the reports of the final two committees before we open the floor for questions for the Finance Committee.

LAW, ORDINANCE & PUBLIC SAFETY

Councilmen Xavier explained he will propose a motion to participate in the Proposed Stray Animal Agreement but President Short attended the meeting and he will report on the meeting. President Short attended a meeting on Saturday, December 10th that was run by the County, in an effort to provide us with a place to bring our stray animals since the SPCA will no longer accept our animals at the end of the year. In an effort to fulfill this service the County got together and proposed the building of an animal shelter in Darby Township by the Emergency Service Center. For a fee of \$1,250.00 a year they will take our stray animals and charge us \$250.00 per animal but we can work that off of the \$1,250.00 that we pay annually for example if we bring 5 animals in we break even. One of the problems we had with the SPCA, we did not sign with the SPCA, but would allow anybody off the street to take strays to the SPCA and tell them they found or picked up the stray in any Municipality and then that Municipality would get charged the fee to shelter that animal. There were no checks and balances and no way of us to determine if that animal really came from our town. That was the one reason we did not sign up with them.

The County proposal would stop that. As it is set up right now, the only one who would be able to bring the animal would be the Animal Control Officer for the Borough or a Police Officer (some representative from the township). At this time they are asking us to send a Letter Of Intent and after discussion we all felt this would be the proper thing to do and by law we are responsible for handling strays off the street and taking them to a shelter. The closest shelter now is in Chester County and they are in negotiations with Chester County to take our strays until our facility is built. This will be a state of the art facility with all the latest sanitary and veterinary items needed to insure proper care of the animals. In an effort to hold down the cost the County has secured the labor from Organized Labor in the County to provide that labor at no charge to the County. They have an architect that drew up all the mechanical and architectural plans at no charge to the County. The volunteerism is still alive in Delaware County. This should greatly reduce the cost of building this facility. It is our recommendation that we get on board with the County and sign and send the Letter Of Intent. Councilmen Xavier made a motion to send a Letter Of Intent to participate in the Proposed Stray Animal Agreement, seconded by Councilmen Cosgrove and unanimously approved.

Councilmen Xavier reported for the Fire Marshal for November, 2011 there were 3 calls responded to by Collingdale Fire Companies #1 and #2 all resulted in no damage. During the month of November, 2011 Collingdale Ambulance/Paramedics responded to 26 calls in the Borough of Aldan.

A note from the Fire Marshal: the Fire Marshal received a thank you letter from Aqua Water Company thanking us for our cooperation in the recent work that was completed in the Borough.

Also the Fire Marshal commented the holiday season is now upon us. I would like to remind all residents that all electrical lights, ornaments, etc., should be checked for broken wires and faulty defects. If no one is home, all electrical decorations should be disconnected and not left on. Also all live Christmas Trees should be kept in water and away from any heat source or ignition points.

Another note from the Fire Marshal; fireplaces, wood burning stoves and other types of open flame appliances and chimneys should be kept cleaned and serviced to insure proper and safe use. Heaters should also be serviced and cleaned on a yearly basis. "Don't let your dreams go up in smoke."

Councilmen Xavier reported for the month of November 33 Building permits were issued with a construction value of \$122,858.00; there were 30 Transfer and Mid-term inspections by the Residential Inspector; and no Plumbing permits were issued.

Councilmen Xavier wanted to say it has been a pleasure the last nine years to serve the residents of Aldan and my job has been made much easier by my fellow Councilmember's and the professional people involved with the Borough. Aldan residents are very fortunate to have elected such a capable team of hard working individuals. There is a lot of hard work that goes on between the meetings each month. Some of the accomplishment we have made as a team during my time on Council such as the playground improvements, Veterans Park, the purchase of the Swim Club Property have all been very rewarding to me. I have learned so much in the last 9 years and fostered relationships with both Council and the residents it will last a life time. It is really easy when you like the people you work with. I owe a debt of gratitude to the residents of Aldan for electing me twice to serve them and look forward to spending more time with my family and enjoying life in Aldan. Thanks guys.

Dan Procopio wants to rise to complement Councilmen Xavier for his service and involvement with lots of groups and actives. Thank you Mike for the last 9 years of service to Aldan.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

President Short returned the meeting to the Finance Committee but with a limit of 3 minutes to each individual.

Chief Coppola commented this is the first time he had a look at the final budget and want to thank Council on behalf of the Police Department for maintaining staffing levels. We have a Police Officer that is retiring after 30 years of service and it was a concern that we would lose that man power. With a lot of hard work from Council we were able to maintain our officers. There are a lot of towns throughout the Country and even in the area that are losing police officers through lay offs and retirement and not being replaced.

Thank you again on behalf of the Police Department and you stepped up to the plate as far as officer's safety as well as the residents of Aldan. Thank you. President Short responded thank you for the complement.

Bill McNally 420 Willows Lane; I don't mind paying these taxes, I know you don't believe that but when I hear the police car going down my street at night and in the morning checking the area and I see the Mayor riding around with the Chief checking everything, trash pick up twice a week, you don't mind paying taxes for things that are being done. Thank you.

Dan Procopio asked I heard the 6.111 mills and the trash fee of \$140.42 was there a sewer fee in there that I missed? The response was yes the sewer rate is \$329.00 but that is a preliminary figure we have not received the figures from Darby Creek Joint Authority as of today. Dan asked how many days do you have to amend that. Mr. Sefflin explained we have ten days after the new Council is sworn in. Dan asked if DCJA or DELCORA have a dead line they must meet.

Dan asked there is a new line under line 20 Pension Sate Aid. Councilwomen Brookes explained we just broke it out. Dan asked last years pension contribution was the \$106,300 plus the \$24,230. Councilwomen responded yes it was included.

Dan asked is there a number for the Reserve and the Sewer Reserve available? Councilwomen Brookes responded in the General Reserve the balance is \$541,484.11 and in the Sewer Reserve the balance is \$241,921.40. Dan commented that equates to almost \$830,000 which is roughly 48% of the entire budget for the Borough. I do realize the numbers are segregated but the number that was given tonight is combined. Has Council ever considered not increasing the tax rate and taking the 73,000 additional revenue out of the Reserve Fund and transferring it over and still leave you with 40% in reserve for your entire budget for the year. When everyone is having difficulty across the board and there is a fairly significant amount of money in the reserve did you ever consider that before passing the increase? Councilwomen Brookes explained we did a lot of soul searching and tried to consider if that would work but with DELCORA cost which is just a preliminary number, and we were hit with a substantial amount of money we were not anticipating called a tru-up. This is just too much money for us to take a chance that we would not have it. Dan asked for clarification the money that is listed for the numbers from last year the tru-up appears to be about \$59,000. Peggy responded no it was \$81,000. Dan said the number reflected in the budget numbers on the back page as opposed to last years budget is only about \$59,000 more. There is a minor increase a sanitary number listed on there of about \$1,200. Councilmen Xavier commented he had finance in prior years and this borough has operated in the most fiscally responsible manor to the residents. We don't take tax anticipation loans and we care very much about the money we keep in reserve for rainy days for problems with an aging infrastructure and you know about it because you question it every month. We can't take a chance on taking our reserves down to where we would have to take tax anticipation loans like other Municipalities do. We manage our money very carefully. We can't help DELCORA we can only fight them. As far are raising the taxes for the residents we are very prudent on how we do that.

Mr. Sefflin wanted to respond to Dan about how many days we have to amend the budget. Because this was an election year the Borough has until February 15th to enact a new budget after the new Council is sworn in. The 10 days that was referred to earlier be after a new Council is sworn in and a new budget is proposed there has to be a 10 day inspection period.

NEW BUSINESS

President Short reported the Reorganization Meeting will be Tuesday, January 3, 2012 in the Reinl Recreation Building. Caucus will be Wednesday, January 4, 2012 at 7:30 P.M. at the Municipal Building at 7:30 PM.; and Council will meet on Wednesday, January, 2012 at the Reinl Recreation Building at 8:00 PM.

PRIVLIDGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. McBlain commented it was his privilege and honor to work with Ron Baker almost the entire time he was on Council. Thank you for all the many years and all tasks you have done over those years. It does take a lot of time from your family and other interests to spend the time and effort every month dealing with the problem in the Borough. Ron has some of the more difficult jobs in terms of sidewalk inspections it is a very difficult thing to tell your neighbors they have to fix something and Ron did this for many, many years and we appreciate that.

Mr. McBlain also commented as for Mike Xavier he will never be the same after a Booster we had a discussion about running for public office 10 year ago. We appreciate all his efforts. Mike always stepped up to do the most difficult jobs. Mike took over the Finance Committee when we needed someone and when Law and Ordinance became a more difficult committee with more things going on in town and different personal Mike stepped up and volunteered to do that job no matter how difficult and we thank him very much. Council will be looking to honor Ron and Mike more appropriately in months to come and we look forward to that but we want to thank them on their final night. President Short added that in the near future we will invite the Councilmen and their families back for a proper send off. We could spend the rest of the night going over what the 2 of them have accomplished in their years of service to Aldan. President Short has worked with Mike closely in the past 3 or 4 years as he served as Vice-President. We are very aware of the accomplishments of Mike and Ron and we do appreciate all they did for Aldan.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by Councilmen Xavier seconded by Councilmen Baker and unanimously, approved, the regular meeting of the Borough Council was adjourned at 9:10 P.M.

ATTEST

MARIE V. KAUT
Borough Secretary