

**ALDAN BOROUGH, DELAWARE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**

July 8, 2009

The Borough Council met in an executive session at 7:30 p.m. and in a regular session at 8:00 p.m. at the William Reinl Recreation Center on the above date with President Short presiding.

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

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**ROLL CALL**

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

Council members absent: R. Baker; J. Cosgrove

Officers present: J. Hopely, Mayor; T. Quinn, Treasurer  
G. Kaut, Secretary

Officers absent: G. Seflin, Solicitor

**MINUTES**

On a motion made by P. Brookes seconded by S. Coppola the minutes from the June 10, 2009, Council Meeting be accepted as presented and unanimously approved.

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President Short turned the meeting over to Councilwoman Brookes. Our newest part time officer is Jonathan Meister. Jon is a lifelong Aldan resident. He is a member of Aldan Union Church as well as a past member of the Aldan Boys Club. Jon is a 2003 graduate of William Penn School District and a 2008 graduate of Temple University. Jon attended the Delaware County Police Academy and graduated in June of 2009. Mayor Hopely swore in Jonathan Meister as a new part time Police Officer in the Borough of Aldan.

**WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE**

No written correspondence tonight.

**VERBAL CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no verbal correspondence tonight.

**REPORTS OF OFFICERS**

**MAYOR**

Mayor Hopely read a letter; Dear Aldan Township, “Thanks for the playground at the park. It is so fun and creative. My sister and I go the park every time we are at our G-Mom’s house. We love the playground. Sincerely, Kaleigh and Delaney Weaver. P. S. Aldan Girls’ Club is the best around.” Mayor Hopely agrees with the statement about the Aldan Girls’ Club and the playground is magnificent and it is so nice to have a nice positive responsive.

**TREASURER**

Terry Quinn read the Treasurer’s Report:

	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>State Highway Fund</u>
Balance of cash on hand	\$1,208,255.95	\$ 49,923.35
Receipts for period	63,782.52	9.80
Expenditures Prior Month	177,793.07	7,241.92
Balance	\$1,094,245.40	\$ 42,691.23

Terry Quinn asked Council’s approval this evening for checks from the General Fund totaling \$120,512.17 and from the State Highway Fund \$7,241.92. M. Xavier made the motion to approve the Treasurer’s report as presented and authorize her to release the checks as indicated on the bills list, seconded by T. Owen and unanimously approved.

**SOLICITOR**

Mr. Seflin is not here tonight he is on vacation. If anyone has any questions President Short will try to answer.

## **ENGINEER**

Mr. Close reported the Borough is required to update its Flood Plain Management Ordinance Chapter 137 by November 18, 2009 to comply with new FEMA National Flood Insurance Program Regulations.

Today we received a review letter from FEMA suggesting specific changes to our Ordinance to bring our ordinance up to date with the new NFIP regulations. Mr. Close forwarded these comments to the Building Inspector and the Solicitor to assist them in the preparation of these changes. It is only 2 pages so it looks like a fairly easy change to bring us up to speed.

Mr. Close reported we are working on the 2009 Road Program and we have a pre construction meeting set for Thursday, July 9, 2009. We will be meeting with the Contractor as well as SEPTA to coordinate that work. The majority of that work will be along Woodlawn Avenue from Providence Road down to Collingdale Borough. They are tentatively scheduled to start the week of July 20. They are in Glenolden Borough now and when they are finished they will be coming our way.

Mr. Close also reported we are working on the LED sign, Lobbs Run Interceptor Project and the Metering Project and will defer any question to the respective reports.

Dan Procopio asked if we heard anything about our Grant Application. Mr. Close responded are you referring to the PA H2O Grant Request. The original target date for the consideration of the applications was May and they got inundated with a lot of applications for those funds so they were pushing the date back 2 months till July. Mr. Close is expecting to hear something within the next few weeks but up to this point we have not received anything yet.

## **REPORTS OF BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

### **PLANNING COMMISSION**

John McBlain reported they did not have anything to review this past month so they did not meet.

### **HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

Peggy Brookes will report during her committee report.

## **REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

### **PUBLIC HEALTH**

T. Owen had nothing to report for the Board of Health tonight the meeting will be held next Monday, July 13, 2009. Mrs. Owen will give 2 months report at the next Council Meeting.

Mrs. Owen also reported, several residents may have heard the activity that happened on July 3 that involved the Giant Food Store. Several persons, employee and customers smelled a noxious odor and therefore the Giant was evacuated and the Building was inspected. The source of that odor is still under investigation. Ten persons were taken to local hospitals and to the best of our knowledge they were all released after being evaluated. The business was declared safe to occupy by the Hazmat Department and was reopened for business within 5 hours. That is all we know at this point. The Chief and Mrs. Owen have been in contact with each other and if there is more to learn we will report that to the Borough.

### **HIGHWAY**

Mr. Cosgrove was not at the meeting tonight but Mr. Close covered his committee.

### **PUBLIC WORKS**

Mr. Coppola had nothing new to report tonight.

Dan Procopio asked where it stood with our rebate on the double billing and the meeting with Darby Creek Joint Authority and DELCORA. Mr. Coppola responded Mr. Close is in the process of putting some figures together and we will present them to Darby Creek and get a sense of how they feel about it. Dan asked how they were going to handle the rebate. President Short commented that's why we are in negotiations with them now but more than likely it will be a reduction in the bill rather than a rebate check and this will include 2008 and 2009. Mr. Coppola commented it will be reduced from billing that way the money is received more quickly rather than waiting for adjustment in 2010. We would like to make the adjustment this year and remove that amount from the current billing. Right now we are in the process of communicating with Darby Creek and working out the figures with them. We should know more next month.

Mike Ceci asked if we are aware of Pennsylvania Funding Opportunities for Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program. The deadline for a proposal for any kind of Energy Efficiency Program is July 17 through August 17. President Short responded it is not something we have talked about yet but definitely something we are interested in. Mr. Ceci commented they give up to \$250,000.00 for a single Municipality.

Mr. Coppola said we would take a look at it and present it to the Engineer. We try to apply for any Grant money we can. We apply for all the grant money we can and we have been quite successful on a number of occasions.

President Short said over the past several years we have to be close to a million dollars in grant money that we received from the state through Representative Micozzie and Senator Erickson. We are aggressive in going after grant money and this is something that is very appealing to us.

### **PUBLIC SAFETY/ HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

Mrs. Brookes had nothing to report for Pubic Safety but want to say how happy we are to have our new part time police officer.

Mrs. Brookes reported the Historical Commission will meet next week and begin preparations for Founders Day to be held on September 19, 2009. We sold our newest collectible, the Colonial Playhouse, on July 4<sup>th</sup> at the Park. This collectible along with the other 6 will be on sale Founders Day and also at the Municipal Building.

Mrs. Brookes reported our 4<sup>th</sup> of July festivities were held on Saturday, July 4<sup>th</sup> and a good time was had by all and we want to thank everyone who participated.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE and BUILDINGS**

Mr. Baker was not at the meeting tonight. President Short reported that it has come to our attention there is an electrical wire that has come loose from the building. We have secured an electrician to re-attach the wire. While the electrician was here we found some short comings to our electrical system in the building that we will also take care of at the same time.

### **FINANCE**

Mr. Xavier did not have any report on finance but Mr. Xavier had two Ordinances he wants to present. First Ordinance # 501 An Ordinance of the Borough of Aldan establishing a curfew restricting the presence of minors in public places of the Borough after certain hours of the evening, establishing the responsibility of parents/guardians for the activity of the minors, and providing the penalties. To explain the Curfew is not going to change just the time is going to change. The time change is going from 11:00 P M to 10:00 P M seven days a week and will also include holidays. Prior the time was different on weekends then it was during the week. M. Xavier made a motion to adopt Ordinance # 501, seconded by P. Brookes and unanimously approved.

M. Xavier also introduced Ordinance # 502 Aldan Borough Residential Parking Permit Ordinance. This ordinance will restrict parking for non residence from 12:00 A M to 6:00 A M on the street. The reason for this ordinance is for the 500 and 600 block of West Magnolia Avenue, right off of Oak Avenue, the entire block of Ridley Avenue and Maple Avenue. In that section of town we have had an issue with non-residents parking their vehicles on the street and not just a one day thing some of these cars sit there for weeks at a time. This has created a quality of life issue for the residents in that area. We will be giving placards out to the residents when they show proof of ownership of their vehicles and proof of Residency so they can park on the street.

Then we will be able to enforce and fine the non-residents. M. Xavier made a motion to adopt Ordinance # 502 seconded by T. Owen and unanimously approved. Dave Mass asked are these permits given out or do you have to buy them. Mike Xavier said, they are given out to the residents free of charge. How many vehicles is this for. Mike said, we will come to your home and you can show us proof of residency and your registration for your vehicles and we will issue placards for each vehicle you have at your home. Roxanne Trauger asked, sometimes she has to park on Magnolia or Maple. Mike Xavier said, we can provide you with what you need to park. Mike Xavier also commented, we have plenty of these printed because we anticipated this happening and if we find that the non-residents are moving further into the Borough we can do an addendum to the Ordinance and increase the area we enforce.

John McBlain commented the restriction for non-residents parking and having some sort of free sticker this is only applying to the four blocks mentioned. Mr. Xavier also explained that if there is a resident that parks in that area and provides proof they are a resident we can issue them with a placard. A resident asked will this change and allow trucks to park from 12 midnight to 6 AM. Mr. Xavier explained the truck ordinance is still in effect.

Lynn Trocky asked about the Curfew Ordinance and how it will impact the adjacent communities. Lynn's concern is the kids are walking back and forth between the communities. Mr. Xavier responded the surrounding communities all have lowered their curfew to 10:00 also. We are not looking to badger our kids we don't want the other kids chased into our community because we have 1 hour later curfew. Mrs. Trocky said there are a number of department in the County who have compiled list of curfews in the County who list will be incorrect. Mr. Xavier asked after the meeting if Lynn could give us some contact information we can update those departments with the lists. Charlie Duffy asked when the curfew ordinance will go into effect so he can report to Town watch. President Short said it will be this weekend when the change goes into effect and the only thing changing is weekends and holidays. Resident asked what will happen, will warnings be given out in the beginning, so parents will be aware. Chief Coppola said first time offenders are always given a warning.

Vickie Myers asked about a citation if you forget to put the placard up or have an overnight guest. President Short and Mike Xavier responded we have provisions in the Ordinance for that. If something does happen and you can't park off street and you are a resident or guest, the spirit of this ordinance is for the out of town people who park in town. Mr. Xavier explained we are not looking to make money by charging for the placards we are looking improve the quality of life for residents in that area. Dan Procopio asked what the effective date of the Parking Ordinance is. Mr. Xavier answered we are waiting for the signs to come in because according to the ordinance we will post 2 signs per block to give fair warning and we will start distribution of placards in the next week. Mr. Xavier also commented they are 5 year placards. A resident asked what the area was for the parking permits being issued. Mr. Xavier answered the 500 and 600 blocks of West Magnolia Avenue, entire block of Ridley Avenue and Maple Avenue.

## **LAW, ORDINANCE & BUILDING**

President Short reported during the month of June, 2009 there were 55 transfer and mid-term inspections performed by our Residential Inspector; there were a total of 40 Building Permits issued with a construction value of \$87,242.50; there was 1 plumbing permit with a construction value of \$11,094.00.

Lynn Trocky asked about the citations given out to put numbers on the rear of a building in the alley behind Beech Avenue was this something new? President Short explained they were not citations they were Code Enforcement Notices and this is something that has been on the books for a while and it is for safety issues. If the Police or Emergency Vehicle is in the back alley it allows the Emergency people to identify where they are and very helpful in the situation. Lynn Trocky explained this is a wonderful thing but not happy the way it was done vs. some nice way of getting this information into residents homes. Lynn felt penalized by not having that done but also not being aware of needing to have that done. Lynn applauds what we are doing and thinks this is a great idea. President Short said I apologize for that but this is the only form we have let resident know. It was never anybody's intention to cite anybody for this. President Short said he applauds all the residents who responded so quickly and complied with this request. Dan Procopio asked about numbers on the front of properties. With being a member of Town watch for many years he noticed the amount of home without number on the front. President Short responded this is true and when we are made aware of this we will drop off the same notice to inform the residents to number their houses. A resident asked if there is a specific place to put the numbers. President Short was not sure and will get back to you with that information. We are not sure if a specific location on the front is call for or should the numbers just be visible from the street.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There is no unfinished business this month.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

President Short announced that Caucus will be Wednesday, August 5, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. at the Municipal Building; and Council will meet on Wednesday, August 12, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. in an executive session and regular session at 8:00 p.m. at the William Reinl Recreation Center.

### **PRIVELIGE OF THE FLOOR**

Lynn Trocky 66 Beech Avenue commented she belongs to a group called Pro Act which is a group that tries to bring awareness to addiction problems in the County. This is a Federal Funded Program and began in Bucks County, went into Montgomery County and Delaware County. Monthly we have free family education for people who have substance abuse problems in their home and where they can go to get information and get information about intervention if needed. We want to make sure it gets on the web site where people can get help. President Short asked for the brochure and we will pass it along to Joe Cosgrove to put on the web site.

Dan Procopio reported on behalf of the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Association wanted to thank the Borough, Borough Council, the Recreation Board, Chief Coppola, the Police Department and those who were collectors, and all the people in town who contributed to the efforts of the days events Thank You. Lot's of comments on what a nice parade we had.

Mike Ceci asked if anyone was interested in going to the First suburbs Project Meeting on Sunday, July 12, 2009 at 7:00 PM at the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Club in Lansdowne. Mike has tickets if anyone would like to go. The Documentary is called The New Metropolis and in the fall the Documentary will be on PBS. They are focusing on all of the challenges throughout the Country, the interring suburbs are facing with aging infrastructure, diminishing tax phase and all the challenges we face with our schools. What this project is trying to do get Municipalities to work more collectively, not just on inter-Municipal grants, and trying to get more attention from Harrisburg and the Federal Government. They are asking for a suggested donation of \$15.00 but if that is a problem, Mike can get tickets for Aldan Council.

Dave Maas from Ridley Avenue asked about the School Tax going up. He heard the School Tax was going up and does this go to the Teachers contract. President Short responded it goes to a variety of different things, gas going up, salaries going up and things like that. Our Representative to the School Board fought that feverishly to try and hold that down and he does that every year when the budget comes up. Mr. Maas asked if petitions would help to get out of the William Penn School District. President Short said going to the meetings would help. Let the School Board know you are not happy with this. Nobody goes to the meetings. President Short commented the meeting dates are in the paper. President Short also reported Mr. McBlain goes to the School Board Meetings and knows who attends and how many people attend. Mr. McBlain said at the School Board Meeting in June the preliminary budget called for a raise of 4.37%, and we attended the School Board Meeting and urge them not to adopt any tax increase. This is a far cry from what has occurred in years past, when the State Legislature adopted Act 1 a few years ago and that capped what they could raise it to every year. It used to be we would fight about the preliminary budget being 16% to 20% increases. Now they have to stay within the index. The index this year was about 6%. They were down at 4.37% and a lot of people think this is too much. Bob Reardon, our School Board Representative, was 1 of the 2 School Board Member who were the sponsors of a motion to amend the Budget so there was a 0% tax increase but that motion failed. Then there was a motion to make it 3.9% and that motion failed. Dave Maas said what would happen if people said they can't afford it.

Mr. McBlain said, I agree with you but it is difficult when you go to a school board meeting they are long, they are boring for the most part. Ten years ago when we had a big push we had hundreds of people go to the meeting and it was effective. Our School Board representatives were successful in getting the School Board to agree to no tax increase but these School Board members all they hear is from the administrators who tell them we need, we need, we need. They don't hear from anybody in the public. Mr. Maas said he thinks it's about time the public got involved. Mr. McBlain said the people are getting sick of the taxes again. It is outrageous what these administrators put forward. Mr. McBlain reported we found out at the meeting from the representative from East Lansdowne, that somebody had anonymously told her that there was a trip planned for school administrators to learn some sort of software program to Disney in July. Not a lot of information was provided about it but the Superintendent swore that night that there were 15 people going and don't worry they will be in class from 7:00 AM till 9:00 PM. Mr. McBlain thought this to be in creditable, if it was true. That is not why you hold seminars in Disney. We did make a Right-to-Know request. We asked for all the documents. It was not 15 people it was 20 and they were not going to be in class from 7:00 AM till 9:00 PM and they are going to spend over \$70,000.00 to send these people there. This was not approved by the Board. So if you want to be outraged about something go and tell them. The meeting is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the Month. Mr. McBlain is going to meet with Mr. Reardon as President of the School Board they used his name and stamped it on there.



The Board was not presented this for approval at all. The administrators are starting to answer for it now. This was \$70,000.00 they got from Federal money that was to be used to increase test scores under the No Child Left Behind. Mr. Maas said to stop the busing. Mr. McBlain said they need to hear from you. Our School Board Representative would agree with every thing you said. There are school board members there who thought that 4.37% wasn't enough. Look to see when the meeting is and they need to hear from you. The meeting is on the Borough's web site and the School District also has a web site and tell them about your outrage. Mr. McBlain commented ten years ago there were hundreds maybe a thousand people at the meetings and things got better, in terms of the state laws that have been adopted and last year the money from the gaming kicked in, so your school bill last year was actually lower than the year before. That was the first time in history that happened but once again it will creep back up if they don't hear from people. This is a tough job it's an \$86 million dollar budget and you have 9 volunteers, they get nothing for being School Board Members. It is impossible for them to know. Our system is so screwed up; they should do away with the current system of how these school boards are constituted. It is hard for 9 members to run a Boy's Club or Girl's Club or 4<sup>th</sup> of July let alone an 86 million dollar company. A lot of time these administrators stick things in there and don't tell them anything about it and this is the result. Then you get somebody that anonymously tells a school board member about it before the public finds out about that kind of a disgrace. President Short said there are a great deal of people in the school system that think we are not spending enough and should throw more money at these kids and that's the answer to raise these test scores. Mike Ceci commented this is something that needs to be addressed at a more regional level. Mike also said everything that everyone is saying as far as the burden that Aldan is shouldering is unreasonable. One thing that Governor Rendell is proposing is maybe doing County wide school administration that would save millions of dollars in overhead for administrative costs. This is the kind of thing we need to come up with solutions for because we are stuck with people who want to raise rates in order to address the educational deficiencies of the students but we have to shoulder this as local people rather than something that is funded at a Federal or State level. In addition to going to these meetings we need to put pressure on State and Federal Elected Officials to try and get some better solutions. President Short said to go into a County wide School District is just creating a larger conglomerate and that is what was promised to us when the school district was created. It was going to lower taxes, and make the education better and it did every thing but that. The education in this area has dropped dramatically. The people in Aldan don't even feel comfortable sending their children there. We are in the neighborhood of about 17%. The problem is not enlarging this it is bring it back. Bring back the neighborhood school, that's the school the people have pride sending their kids to. President Short said the place to have this conversation is at the School Board Meeting. Heidi Clark from Beech Avenue responded her daughter moved into her home and her grandkids had to go to William Penn School District. They tried to get them into Aldan School Elementary but they ended up in Walnut Street School in Darby. The children had to pay \$20.00 for their moving up Graduation Day, which included a mug, t-shirt and their certificate but they can send these other people to Disney, which is a disgrace. President Short said, people have to go and tell the School Board Members exactly your concerns, the safety of your children, the lack of education, these are things you have to go and tell them. All of us need to go throughout the School District and really complained to them at the School Board Meetings, and then they would listen. They are sitting in front of an empty audience and what message does that tell them, we don't care, jack it up whatever it is and we are not going to come and complain. Heidi Clark commented a lot of people think it is a losing battle; it's a done deal, if we show up or not it's a losing battle.

President Short said it is a lot harder to do something when the people that you represent are sitting there in front of you then it is when there is nobody out there. S. Coppola said it is a long time battle. I was one of the last classes from Lansdowne Aldan High School so this has been a battle since 1979 or 1980. It appears to be a losing battle among the residents who don't have any other opportunities. Heidi Clark complained you can't get your child who lives in Aldan into the Aldan Elementary School. President Short asked when they moved into Aldan and the response was late August. President Short said that was late registration and Aldan was probably already full but we can talk with you if they are still eligible to attend that school next year. Lynn Trocky wanted to thank John McBlain for going to the meetings and also knows she needs to go to these meetings. Lynn does some work with the High School and if you ever get a chance to go through the High School during the day while school is in session it is an appalling situation. Lynn has done assessment there and the noise level, the screaming and the yelling is appalling during the day. I never have experienced anything like it and I have work in schools in Philadelphia and all over. It is sad to think we pay a lot of taxes for what is happening in the High School and what it sounds like. Lynn agrees with John's challenge, we need to go to the meetings and it is simple as that.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion made by T. Owen seconded by M. Xavier and approved unanimously, the regular meeting of the Borough Council was adjourned at 9:00 P.M.

### **ATTEST**

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MARIE V. KAUT  
Borough Secretary