

**Albion Borough
Council Meeting
April 27, 2023**

PRESENT President Jason Harayda, Vice President Jim Vorse, Scott Seaton, Donald Bambarger, Jacqueline Ksenich, Borough Mayor Will Rogers, Manager Gary Wells
Absent: Brett Hall, Charlie Stiles

CALL TO ORDER 6:30pm

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

**Approve
04/27/23
Agenda** **J. Vorse:** Motion to approve 04/27/23 agenda
S. Seaton: Second motion
Vote: All in favor. Motion passed

**Approve
of Minutes
03/23/23** **J. Ksenich:** Motion to approve Council Meeting minutes 03/23/23
D. Bambarger: Second motion
Vote: All in favor. Motion passed

**Approve
of Minutes
04/13/23** **J. Ksenich:** Motion to approve Council Meeting minutes 04/13/23
J. Vorse: Second motion
Vote: All in favor. Motion passed

**Approve
Purchase
Order** **J. Ksenich:** Motion to approve purchase order listing dated April 27, 2023, for a total of one hundred fifty-one thousand three hundred eighty-four dollars and sixty cent (\$151,384.60).
D. Bambarger: Second motion
Vote: All in favor. Motion passed

Public Comment **Laurie Vorse, 236 East Pearl Street:** Who owns the Santa House? Does it belong to the Borough or the Albion Fire Department? **Mayor Rogers:** The original house belonged to the Chamber of Commerce, a new one was built and I'm not sure who really owns it. **Laurie Vorse:** Is it still available for use for Christmas? Or is the Albion Fire Department going to burn it, take it? **J. Harayda:** We can have Gary reach out to Attorney Ward and get some answers.

Project Need **J. Harayda:** I don't believe we can get involved with this; I just can't justify spending tax dollars on this. **Mayor Rogers:** Could be a shelter for battered women, may want to contact Safe Journey. **Moose Club:** We are looking to sell the property if no one is interested in taking over. Per the zoning the upstairs can be an apartment and the bottom must be some type of business, correct? **Borough Manager:** Yes, that is correct.

MMESC **D. Bambarger:** There's really no updates. **J. Harayda:** We did discuss the building at 19 Smock Avenue, Plyer did come out to get new keys. **Borough Manager:** Rabell surveyed the lot and I was asked to look into available

grants. **J. Harayda:** The bathrooms need to be updated. **J. Vorse:** Yeah, the men's and ladies' restrooms are not ADA compliant. **Borough Manager:** Your best option is a low interest loan from like the DCED. **D. Bambarger:** What about the monies that are going to come from the county? **J. Harayda:** We aren't going to get that money; it's not coming here. Cranesville Volunteer Fire Department is putting in for another grant for \$150,000.00. **Borough Manager:** The county is trying to get more monies to push more towards fire and EMS.

19 Smock Ave Lease

Borough Manager: What are you looking for in the lease? What are the terms you are looking for? I do not know what your budget is for the lease. There are some costs to consider, such as the building maintenance. I do not think that it would be fair for this to fall on the residents of Albion and Cranesville, that if there is something that isn't being set aside and planned for to maintain that by all four municipalities that have shared into the MMESC. So, under the MMESC budget, things like that should have been in there. **J. Harayda:** Well, it wasn't Gary because are not chipping in and paying for Cranesville's building. **Borough Manager:** It should all be built in there because there is going to be a payment due at some point and it's going to be quite a burden on all of the residents. Even if you give them the money, making them responsible for things like the utilities and maintenance so they know what that is. Also allowing us access to do a walkthrough of the property should be in the lease. **J. Harayda:** Agreed. **Borough Manager:** So these are just some things you need to look at and consider when drafting the lease. **J. Ksenich:** Can you email this to us please so we can make some notes. **Borough Manager:** Sure, and Ed will also have to add the legal portion that needs to go into the lease. **D. Bambarger:** I believe they are asking for a five-year lease to start. **S. Seaton:** So, the restrooms need to be updated to be ADA and we were talking about getting a loan for it? **D. Bambarger:** Yeah, we were talking about it. **S. Seaton:** My thoughts on this are we ran into this problem in the past. Albion Borough owned the building, and the Fire Department owned the Borough Office building. The thing that kept coming back up was "We can't do anything at the Firehall as the Fire Department because we do not own the building" because they had talked about making improvements in the past. So, Albion Borough, being the owner, would have had to get the loan for those improvements. The Borough did not want to get engaged with that because it was operated by the fire department. So, this may be something you want to address in the lease so if they want to go and get low interest loans, they will be able to. **J. Harayda:** Well we talked about us updating, I would assume we would update the bathrooms, not the fire department. It is our building. **S. Seaton:** The Borough solely, or split four ways? **J. Harayda:** Well, I don't have that answer right now. But I would say, **S. Seaton:** What I am getting at **J. Harayda:** What I am getting at is no the fire department. **S. Seaton:** What I am getting at is we have had problems in the past to resolve this **J. Harayda:** The MMESC is not going to take out a loan. **S. Seaton:** What I am stating is to resolve the issue through the lease, if would let me finish to the end please, or what about the option to just buy it? The Albion Borough just sell it to them, and they can then do whatever they want. **J. Harayda:** No, I do not

want to do that. **S. Seaton:** I am not saying to sell it, I am stating to have that as a possible option. The MMESC was to help reduce costs, but now it's all falling back onto the Albion Borough. **J. Harayda:** Honestly, these bathrooms should have been fixed a long time ago. This isn't something that should just be coming out in 2023. **S. Seaton:** I understand that, but this is where we are at now. So, looking at this as we move forward, we need to put all the options on the table. **J. Harayda:** Look I see what you are saying but here's my issue I don't believe we were looking at selling it because one: the MMESC have a one year now, well it's going to be three-year agreement with them. So, if for some reason in the future again, just like Gary said, we all change hands. We don't know in the next three to five years if Cranesville will be the provider, because they are only going to come in this fall and sign an agreement for another three years. So, I don't believe it would be a good idea for us to sell that to them. **J. Vorse:** I know when Cranesville remolded the fire hall and went to ADA, I would say talk to Brandon and Ryan and see how they went about the money and get an idea that way. That's my suggestion. **J. Harayda:** Again, the problem we are back to is this is something that has been kicked down the line for some time. **Borough Manager:** From a Borough standpoint, we did not budget for any of this. **J. Harayda:** Correct, I mean I'm not saying we are gonna get this done next week. That was just the first project we were looking at. **D. Bambarger:** I think you are going to see Elk Valley and Craneville decide they take care of that fire hall over there and it would be us and Conneaut Township taking care of this fire hall. **J. Harayda:** Correct. We will look at it for further discussion. The station here is not going to be the main hub anyway. It's to keep a truck on this side of the tracks. We have some time to figure things out.

West County Paramedics

J. Ksenich: Gary you sent an email saying Fairview is giving like 1 mil to West County. Is that something that is going to come our way too and be required? **Borough Manager:** It has already come our way. We got a breakdown of what each municipality and what they are asking for **J. Harayda:** Well, we did but we are pushing back, basically as a commission we are pushing back. As in our feelings is, and there is another couple of meetings coming up, our argument and feeling is same as when the State Police came out and said if you don't have a police department, they were going to charge like \$25.00 per household or something like that but if you have a department then you were not required to pay that. Our feeling is, as the committee, we want to go to them and are prepared to say to them is we are not looking to commit and or pay the same amount as everyone else or anything because we have a primary EMS system already set up. So why would we pay that? **D. Bambarger:** The other problem is they are getting handed a bunch of money and nobody is putting any type of stipulation on where the money is being spent on. They have got to have guidelines. **J. Ksenich:** Right, that was my concern too. I read this strategic plan. **J. Vorse:** That breakdown you got from Kristen, she was not directed by the Board of Directors from West County to do that. She did that on her own. Same as that meeting a year ago that her and Katrina put together, they were not directed by the Board of Directors from West County to do that. They are doing that

stuff on their own. **J. Harayda:** The same people who are on the Board of West County are also on Platea Borough Council are also the heads of Platea Fire Department. So, it is a very convoluted and incestuous thing going on between those three. That's part of the issue and is being brought up by the MMESC. And their bylaws need to be changed immediately. There is a meeting coming up in May. Anyone who wants to attend, I plan on being there. A lot of things need to change, needs to change on who's running it, and services they are going to provide. **J. Vorse:** As of May 31st 2023, West County will no longer be providing wheelchair business due to liability. They lost \$28,000.00 in a month and that all had to do with COVID. What happened there, I can explain it cause I understand it, it used to be they could take two people at one time in a wheelchair van, once COVID hit the government said nope one person. Well now the nursing homes are still saying we only want one person at a time in the van. Well, you are only charging \$35.00 for the trip, you're not making any money. When you were doing two you were getting \$70.00 per trip so you were making a little money and it paid for itself. Now it's not paying for itself. It was brought up at the commission meeting at the Board meeting the one month they said "yeah we are doing good, the wheelchairs are sustaining themselves" the next month it was "oh we lost \$28,000.00 on wheelchairs" so there is a lot of issues with the West County going on. **J. Harayda:** Another issue is they do not have a collection agency; they are not going after people who owe them money. There are a lot of issues and many meetings coming up. If you don't want to go, I am going for sure. **J. Ksenich:** I just wanted to make sure, I read this strategic plan they got a grant for, and it is so vague. They have no plan on how to fix their weaknesses. **J. Harayda:** And the reason being, like I said, when you have the head of West County that should be coming up with these plans, they are also the heads of Platea Fire Department so they don't want to do anything that's gonna hurt their department and they're not gonna do anything that's gonna make them pay more as a fire department. So that's a problem there and the same with Springfield, Luke Welding and them. Luke is a Township Supervisor and he's on the Board for West County. **J. Vorse:** He's also Chief of Springfield. **J. Harayda:** He can't flip hats. **Attorney Betza:** Fairview Township gave the \$70,000.00 to West County as a forgivable loan, so there are strings attached to that money. **J. Ksenich:** I don't think that was in the email I was sent. **Attorney Betza:** I was in Lake City when that was discussed. Lake City was asked to contribute \$25,000.00, they debated because they want to support West County. I believe they gave \$12,000.00 or \$13,000.00 without any strings attached. **D. Bambarger:** They were talking in the meeting that they were a week away from closing completely. **J. Harayda:** I would say with us and in our situation that we already have our EMS contract here I would just say me personally we don't give any money at this time to West County. **J. Vorse:** Cranesville already pays West County on the ALS side of things for that medic to come in, which is quite a bit I don't know the exact amount though. And yes I work for West County but I agree with Jason that at this time we do not commit to pay any money. Because we don't know. The president of the Board hasn't been to a meeting in like 4 months, she hasn't been there. If you're the President of the Board, I understand missing one or two, but when

you haven't been there for 4 months that doesn't make sense. You need to step down and let somebody else take over. **D. Bambarger:** I have a question regarding the building at 19 Smock Avenue, are they going to clean up all that garbage? **Attorney Betza:** Yes, they will. **D. Bambarger:** And have they returned the Argo and the radios? **J. Harayda:** No they haven't returned any of that.

**Adjourn
Meeting**

Motion made by **J. Vorse** seconded by **J. Ksenich** to adjourn the meeting at 7:30pm. All in favor.
Motion carried.

Minutes submitted by Angela Telega

Angela R. Telega
Signature

May 26, 2023
Date

