

September 11, 2023

The Alexandria Borough Council met at the Alexandria Firehall in Alexandria, PA 16611. The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by President Judy Scott. Pledge of Allegiance and prayer

Attendees:

Sergeant Hartsock from PA State Police, Ron Kuntz, Tracy Isenberg, Sam Isenberg, Ron Kuntz, Mike Peters, Dain Davis, Pres. Judy Scott, VP Joel Pheasant, Rachelle Hopsicker, Leslie McDermott

Motion to accept the minutes from August 12th VP Pheasant motioned to accept. Rachelle Hopsicker seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

Financial Report and Bills –

A tribute tree was included in the finances, \$279.84 – Leslie stated. Motion to accept and authorize the bills, Mike Peters Rachelle Hopsicker seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

Public Comment

Sergeant Hartsock from the Pennsylvania State Police – President Scott welcomed him and addressed the traffic calming and traffic accidents in the borough. She said we understand their resources are tight, but Alexandria is in a predicament and we truly need assistance in this borough with the speeding and wreckless driving.

Sergeant Hartsock said he was here to introduce himself and trying to give the townships and boroughs a face to go with the State Police. A rundown of some of what they deal with in the borough, obviously we see issues, but what they see here and in the county – this is a nice place to live considering crimes and all. 61 calls over last 12 months – 2 were disturbances, 2 PFAS, 4 Harassment stocking, 1 teristic threat, 9 security checks (including churches), 6 crashes, a DUI, 1 animal cruelty, 3 other domestic dispute, 7 other related officer calls, 4 welfare checks, 2 thefts, 1 suspicious person. That's pretty good. It really is. It seems like a lot and if you were affected obviously it's more impactful, but that's a good level from the State Police level. Is there a snowplow issue? President Scott did talk to the State Police about cars being off the street so they can plow. He said the State Police can't enforce the Alexandria Borough's ordinances. President Scott said because Main Street is a PennDOT roadway they should be able to take care of that. Sergeant said if there are signs up there from PennDOT they could potentially enforce them. The size of the borough dictates. President Scott said the clarification is helpful. President Scott said that the recent crash data doesn't include end of 2022 or beginning of 2023, the crash data report. Sergeant said he hasn't used CDART – some information is intentionally delayed, but they shouldn't hold it that long. President Scott said the cdart hasn't included most recent crash data and she was hoping that it could. We need a

crash data report to go along with some paperwork due on Friday. Sergeant said he can't give her what he has, but will look to see what public report he can provide. He isn't sure why they'd be delayed with the CDART. Some of our stuff isn't posted up to date because by the time information actually comes in, it can be inaccurate.

Ron Kuntz asked the Sergeant that he may be aware that speeding is a big issue on Main Street – your data on crimes is good, but everyday there's 60 people speeding on Main Street. What can small town people do at reasonable cost to help with the problem?

Sergeant said, requesting our help is one thing. They don't want us enforcing speed limits that are very small. If we have an influx of issues in a short period of time I can work to get approval for our guys to do. Ron said, that aside from you all enforcing speeding, what else can we do? I recall a town with blinking signs and a police cars – now 3 or 4 years go by and I never see a police car because people slow down.

Ron said let's say we do the signs and some form of enforcement – how long does it take people to change their behavior pattern. Sergeant said the time varies, from personal experience during COVID there was a pull back on a lot of things and pace changed fast. I've never seen a stat telling me this is what we need to do to be sure. The more we're out and seeing in the problem areas – it does have an impact.

Sergeant said PennDOT has been using a radar sign that displays the speed, we had it here, but pretty quickly people realized it was telling speed, but not enforcing Ron said. Ron said, if I see a sign and a police car and someone getting pulled over then it's more effective.

Sergeant said sometimes what we will do, even though we can't patrol the 25 mph, there's other reasons we can stop cars. The people speeding through here are speeding before and outside the time. Sergeant said they want it to be a mile long.

President Scott said what does that tell a borough if you can't do anything if it's not a mile. Sergeant said the regulation said it's supposed to be a mile to address specific speeds, but there are other violations we can stop cars for. It can be stop signs, etc. Or we can patrol right outside

VP Pheasant said I know we like when someone patrols near the stop signs, even if occasionally. I think when they know someone is occasionally there it has an impact.

Sergeant will go back and tell people that the borough really appreciates seeing us in the community. Thank God if we can be out and seen to help. It's very rare that I'd leave a township or borough meeting and not have something to share which is good because we're having conversation. VP Pheasant said he likes to see them there and posts pictures.

Rachelle Hopsicker said you've made yourselves very visible at Hartslog Day and you've had ones walking through and you really made yourselves available. We really appreciate that.

Ron Kuntz let's say there is a timeframe, if the borough contracted with another enforcement part time for a named period of time – is that something you'd even eat your lunch at the side

of the road for some visibility. If we can supplement your presence... Sergeant said I don't think that'd be a bad thing.

At 7:18 pm Rachele Hopsicker departed and the meeting is lack of quorum

Sam Isenberg said I live across from ACCO and I've called and asked your crews to come and it doesn't take long to get someone for speeding. The laundromat area, camper sales by ACCO and it's a good place to get people for speeding, there's a lot of activity in the afternoon and evening.

President Scott said the accidents that happened are on the 600 block right by my house. She said you can sit in my driveway and do anything you want.

VP Pheasant said we're a pretty small borough are there anything's we should be aware of happening outside of our borough that we should be aware of.

Sergeant said nothing is coming to mind. I've been here about a year and half and there hasn't been anything too significant. There has been quite a bit of drug stuff, we've seen a bit of a new drug in the county, not here in the borough, but in the county. You don't have that in this borough, but it's around. This is a good area and we have good troopers.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ron asked about the finances, Leslie can bring a print out of finances – she will bring a print out at every meeting. VP Pheasant mentioned posting online, but President Scott said she wasn't comfortable posting online, but happy to have finances brought to view at each meeting.

Ron asked if there's been any discussion about the traffic since the meeting a few months ago. President Scott said she spoke with them and they've been here periodically.

Ron asked if we could contract with the Sheriff's Department. President Scott said there's nothing in the budget for law enforcement, our operating budget is approximately \$74,000 annually – tax base, liquid fuel funds that goes towards road and is used a lot for winter maintenance, Ron said is there \$200,000 some in the general fund? President Scott you're welcome to review everything – our operating budget is approx.. \$74,000.

Ron asked about the issue with the alleyway – has there been any money spent there? Approximately \$1,500 for the surveying. Ron asked was that in the budget for this year? President Scott said we are being very fiscally responsible, we have no debt – Ron said alright, but for the last 4 or 5 years we ran a surplus. Mike Peters said we have money in CDs. Ron said can we hire the Sheriff's department for 6 – 8 weeks to get someone in. President Scott said she doesn't like talking in hypothetical figures. I don't have a figure. VP Pheasant do we have a contact at the Sheriff's department? So there sounds like there's potential for us to contract with them. We can't go back to having a regional Police department. Do we have some way to reach out to the Sheriff's department and ask how much it would cost for about 10 hours a week? President Scott said she could ask them the question. Mike Peters said if we pay them

does that mean they wouldn't come at no cost again? President Scott said they are here once or twice a week. VP Pheasant said my understanding is that they can't pull people over in the borough for speeding, but can for other violations. Ron said I thought they couldn't do radar, but could do something. VP Pheasant said he understands what President Scott is saying about concrete numbers to work with. When we talk about funding, we need grant funding and/or if we have to match projects with funding the money will go very quickly. Ron said well, this is just as important of a project and if there's a way to do it with reasonable cost. If we can do something cheaper and quicker, what can we do today. Maybe it doesn't make sense financially, but find out. So, has there been a discussion with council. President Scott said we didn't discuss this as a council as far as paying, we will be looking at the 2024 budget. Ron said well, I've been to other meetings and this is a number one issue so why isn't it a priority. President Scott said she understands his frustration she's with him. VP Pheasant said I know we've budgeted for other things, not to discredit other things – we are paying an arborist now, which the trees are great, but this has been a very high priority for us. If we don't have the money to do this number one thing we need to look at where we are putting money and see if we can shuffle things over. I love the trees, just something to think about. President Scott said previously we had donations for trees, some money seen is money given for specific projects. We have money given for specific projects somethings. Ron said maybe we can get some donations for other things. President Scott said what's your suggestion? Ron said first find out if there's another option, could we do a 6 week and/or get some signs, etc.

VP Pheasant said at one point we had joint police – I don't know if Huntingdon is open to it, but maybe Huntingdon Regional Police they might be willing to come to an agreement and work with us. Ron said I don't know the numbers, but if you did a six week thing – is that enough to help and then every so often have them come in. Ron said I've seen them maybe two months ago, maybe I miss them, but if I don't see it, it's not enough. Ron shared of other communities and what they have...

VP Pheasant said even if the State Police drive through town or do eat their lunch here, just get their presence here. President Scott said, yea, that's true.

Conversation continued... Ron offered to call around and get information – do you want to form a committee. President Scott said that's awesome. He will use his time for that.

President Scott said about the arborist and the arm of the tree that crosses Main Street and needs taken care of. VP Pheasant said he'll talk with Lisa. Mike Peters confused by the way they trimmed the trees and left the longest branch.

Leighton to get August 22nd meeting minutes from VP Pheasant.

Dain Davis does anyone have any grant questions? President Scott said, no. On Wednesday he's meeting with the Water Authority and Engineer and they will be scheduling a walk over. President Scott said she wants to be a part of that walk over because residents, rightly so, are upset about how their property has been left. Dain said they

President Scott asked if anyone else would like to be a part of that walk through or have questions about what they've done?

President Scott said she's been made aware that the secretary is going to resign.

President Scott had a phone call in regards to the bees, it's noted and I didn't engage, but it doesn't bring in farm animal ordinance is in there. VP Pheasant recognized that although we aren't in quorum – are you referring to animal ordinance? This one specifically talks about... read ordinance... my concern is that it's not a general livestock – it indicates specific animals. President Scott said we need to address the ordinance for that reason. I don't want to be a negative on it because it is a positive, but the location is a negative. VP Pheasant I'm just wondering if there's anything we can currently do because it's not in there currently?

Jeff Stover has authorized Dain to help us with certain matters to offset legal fees. Dain said I'll save you a pile of money.

8:01 pm meeting ended