

DALLAS BOROUGH

Drain pipe replacement project mired in government red tape

Norton Avenue resident says property continues to be damaged by stormwater.

By REBECCA BRIA
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Resident Don Holdredge asked borough council Wednesday evening when a stormwater drainage piping replacement project would begin in his neighborhood.

Holdredge says his Norton Avenue property has been continually damaged by stormwater runoff beginning in 2006. Holdredge alleges he has been in contact with the borough for 17 months regarding the issue and it has still not been resolved.

Borough manager Tracey Carr said Norton Avenue, Spring Street and Lehman Avenue will receive \$100,000 in federal funds through a 2009 Luzerne County Office of Community Development grant.

Carr says that because the federal money is going through the Department of Housing and Urban Development, an environmental study is required. The study was completed and sent to the county and to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), which Carr says still has the documents.

Once DEP returns the study, it must be advertised for 15 days and then the county must send it back to the federal government before the project can be bid.

"We're probably looking at a couple months," said council President Pat Peiffer. "It's the government at work; very, very frustrating."

Holdredge says in the meantime, his property is continuing to deteriorate.

"I'm the one suffering," Holdredge said. "I'm the one suffering the costs."

Moment of silence

Council held a moment of silence in honor of Thomas Edward Reese, who served as the borough's tax collector for 32 years. Reese, who was 85, died Sunday at his Dallas home.

Zoning ordinance amendment hearing

Carr was given approval by council to set a public hearing date and advertise the zoning ordinance and zoning map amendment for a public hearing with council as recommended by the borough's planning commission.

Carr says the rezoning is part of the borough's master plan to revitalize the downtown area. The new zoning districts are being created to allow a mix of uses to recreate the downtown feel.

The borough's zoning ordinance was last updated in 1992.

Illegal signs

Mayor Tim Carroll expressed his concerns over non-political signs he says are being posted throughout the borough by various businesses. Carroll said he discussed the matter with Carr, who agreed to send out a news release reminding the public that such signs are illegal.

"They're really making our

town look bad," Carroll said. "It's bad enough we have to put up with the election signs."

County sales, use and occupancy tax

Council passed a resolution urging Luzerne County to pass a county sales, use and occupancy tax.

Fire relief funds

Council acknowledged the distribution of Commonwealth's 2009 allocation supporting the Volunteer Fire Relief Association for \$16,960.19 to the Dr. Henry M. Laing Fire Company Relief Association, the relief association to Dallas Fire and Ambulance.

Municipal pension aid

The receipt of the general municipal pension system state aid for 2009 in the amount of \$33,601.25 was acknowledged by council. Council members authorized the distribution of the funds to satisfy the 2009 minimum municipal obligations for the borough pension funds as follows: \$23,034.25 for deposit into the police uniformed pension fund; and \$10,576 for deposit into the non-uniformed pension fund.

Release of fire escrow funds

Authorization was granted for the partial release of \$18,980.50 in fire escrow funds to Michael Yankovich, 72 Jackson St. The borough received \$19,240 from Allstate in January 2009 and \$19.59 has accrued in interest on the money held. Of those funds, the borough is withholding \$235.79 for emergency fencing supplies and \$43.30 for road department personnel to secure the site.

Gaming funds distribution concerns

Council authorized borough officials to correspond with Sen. Lisa Baker and Rep. Karen Boback to express concern for the language in Senate Bill 711 representing significant changes to the distribution of the local share assessment grant gaming funds allocation in Luzerne County. The borough would like the representatives to consider a more equitable allocation of funds for municipalities in the county that are non-contiguous to the casino.

Property appraisals

Besecker Realty was authorized to complete certified appraisals on borough-owned properties at 141 to 142 Lackawanna Ave. for a fee of \$150 and 109 through 113 Main St. for a fee of \$150.

Support of PEC master plan

Council authorized borough officials to correspond with Pennsylvania Environmental Council in support of the Harvey's Creek and Toby Creek greenway and trail feasibility master plan.

Curbside collections

Curbside yard waste recycling pick up will conclude for the year on Oct. 27. Curbside leaf pick up is scheduled to begin on or about Nov. 2.

"We're probably looking at a couple months. It's the government at work; very, very frustrating."

Pat Peiffer
Dallas Borough Council president

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