

The Tamaqua Borough Council held its first Regular Council Meeting for the month of June on Tuesday, June 15, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at the Tamaqua Municipal Building, 320 East Broad Street, Tamaqua, PA.

Present were Councilmembers Robert Amentler, Ronald Bowman, Brian Connely, Jay Hollenbach Jr., Mary Linkevich, Ritchie Linkhorst and David Mace. Officials present were Mayor Nathan Gerace, Chief of Police Michael Hobbs, Borough Manager Kevin Steigerwalt, Solicitor Anthony Odorizzi and Borough Secretary/Treasurer Georgia Depos DeWire.

The meeting was called to order by President Mace. A moment of silence was held for Herbert Curvey. The invocation was given by Councilman Connely followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Councilman Amentler. The roll was called with all councilmembers present.

The reading of the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held on May 19, 2021 was ordered suspended, and with no additions or corrections, the minutes were approved as written on motion of Bowman, seconded by Linkevich, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Francis Betz, secretary of the Citizens Fire Company #1 requesting permission to hold their annual Bazaar on July 10, 2021. The communication is requesting permission to close Hegarty Avenue and Rowe Street. The communication is requesting permission to close Hegarty Avenue from July 9th to July 11th. The 100 block of Rowe Street would only be closed during the hours of the Bazaar from 12:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. The communication also requested permission to hold their annual Fire Apparatus parade on July 10th at 4:00 p.m. The parade would start at the high school and proceed through town and end back on West Broad Street at South Railroad Street. A recommendation was made to grant the requests. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Connely, seconded by Hollenbach, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Dale Freudenberger, president of the Tamaqua Historical Society, stating that the 30th Annual Tamaqua Summerfest would be held on June 20, 2021 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and is requesting permission to close several streets and also asked for parking restrictions the day of the event. The communication also requested the use of a borough dump truck and wooden stairs parked on South Railroad Street near Spruce Street to load trash into at the end of the day after Summerfest. The Historical Society will pay for the tipping fee at the Tamaqua Transfer Station. A recommendation was made to grant the requests. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Linkevich, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Manager Steigerwalt reported on the bid results for the Lincoln Street Retaining Wall Project as follows: the lowest bidder was Semmel Excavating, LLC with a base bid amount of \$67,762.00; five bids were received; a bid results worksheet was provided to council; and the engineer reviewed and recommended awarding the bid to Semmel Excavating. A recommendation was made to award the Lincoln Street Retaining Wall Project to Semmel Excavating, LLC in the amount of \$67,762.00. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Bowman, seconded by Linkhorst, and unanimously approved.

Manager Steigerwalt also reported on a pre-construction meeting for the 2021 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Road Program. The project is scheduled to start June 28th, weather permitting. The project involves roadway milling, overlay, replacement of existing bituminous curb and other associated roadway work on Market Street, Elm Street, Pitt Street, West Elm Street, Nescopec Street and Clay Street.

Manager Steigerwalt also reported on the following: the Schuylkill County Demolition Program projects at 252 West Cottage Avenue and 307 East Broad Street; the CDBG Program Demolition Projects at 130 Clay Street and 517 Washington Street; a Blight Remediation Program Grant in the amount of \$100,000.00 and the local match was waived; submission of an application for the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021; submission of a Flood Mitigation Grant Application in the amount of \$400,000.00 for work in the Wabash Creek; the advertisement of a Civil Service Examination for the position of Full-Time Police Officer; the ending of Governor Wolf's pandemic disaster declarations and the ending of Zoom virtual meetings; and the bids for the CDBG Road Program came in way under the borough's estimates.

Under the Public Safety Committee report, a recommendation was made to approve an updated Memorandum of Understanding between the Tamaqua Police Department and Tamaqua Area School District for police response on school property. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Connely, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Under the Finance, Wage and Salary Committee report, a recommendation was made to appoint Jeffrey Hartz to the position of Chief Mechanic effective immediately. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Bowman, seconded by Linkhorst, and unanimously approved.

Under the Finance, Wage and Salary Committee report, a recommendation was made to hire Nathaniel Kovalchick as a part-time maintenance worker at a pay rate of \$12.50 per hour. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Bowman, seconded by Linkhorst, and unanimously approved.

Chairman Bowman of the Finance, Wage and Salary Committee reported that there were no in-house applicants interested in applying for the vacant position of Assistant Mechanic/Street Maintenance Worker. A recommendation was made to advertise for an Assistant Mechanic/Street Maintenance Worker position. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Bowman, seconded by Linkhorst, and unanimously approved.

Under the Neighborhoods, Downtown and Historic District Committee report, a recommendation was made to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness to install handrails on porches at 409 West Broad Street. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Hollenbach, seconded by Connely, and unanimously approved.

Under the Neighborhoods, Downtown and Historic District Committee report, a recommendation was made to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness to install a concrete sidewalk and curb and repair the chimney per engineer drawings, to install a three-foot to four-foot

prefabricated wood railing dividing the porch and paint it white in color, and to install roll down blinds above the railing for privacy at 520 Arlington Street. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Hollenbach, seconded by Amentler, and unanimously approved.

Under the Recreation and Youth Committee report, a recommendation was made to hire Casey Akins and Alexis Buchala as part-time lifeguards at a pay rate of \$10.00 per hour plus an additional \$0.25 per hour for each year of service. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Linkevich, seconded by Hollenbach, and unanimously approved.

Under the Recreation and Youth Committee report, a recommendation was made to approve a request from the Tamaqua Area Chamber of Commerce to park a food truck on the North Railroad Street Parking Lot for train excursions on July 8th and August 5th. Councilwoman Linkevich stated that the truck would be parked closest to the Depot Square Park gazebo. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Linkevich, seconded by Connely, and unanimously approved.

Under the Recreation and Youth Committee report, Councilman Connely asked that a thank you letter be sent to the Tamaqua Ambulance Association for donating some emergency equipment to the Bungalow Pool, which included a stair chair and a stretcher.

Councilman Connely reported that the Blighted Property Task Force Committee meeting had to be rescheduled.

Chairwoman Linkevich of the Recreation and Youth Committee reported that in 2019 a group of pool patrons donated money to purchase a plaque "In Memory of Pauline Boettger", who spent a lot of time at the Bungalow Pool. The plaque is ready to be installed.

Mayor Gerace thanked Manager Steigerwalt for the submission of an application for the American Rescue Plan Act. There was some discussion about how the funds would be used.

The meeting was opened to the floor.

Peter Nein of Myrtle Beach, South Carolina extended a thank you to council for this amazing city. Mr. Nein also owns properties in Pottsville, PA. He also discussed opportunity zones and suggested getting to know the creative community. He would like to hold a hospitality event in the future.

With no one else wishing to address council, the meeting was closed to the floor.

Solicitor Odorizzi discussed a property at 523 North Railroad Street now owned by Eleanor Hadesty. Manager Steigerwalt stated that the borough demolished the structure around 1998 at a cost of approximately \$16,000.00 and is a vacant lot. Ms. Hadesty's deceased brother had owned the property and she had been paying the taxes for years on a property she did not own. As a settlement, Ms. Hadesty is requesting that the borough's demolition lien of approximately \$16,000.00 be satisfied for \$6,000.00. There was some discussion about this matter. A recommendation was made to accept \$6,000.00 as settlement to satisfy the borough's demolition lien for the property at 523 North Railroad Street. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Connely, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Solicitor Odorizzi discussed an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance as proposed by Walker Township. There is no agricultural district in the borough. Manager Steigerwalt stated that Zoning/Code Enforcement Officer Kurtz would be contacting the Solicitor for Walker Township to correct some typographical errors and discuss other matters.

Solicitor Odorizzi discussed a lease agreement between Reading Blue Mountain and Northern Railroad Company and the Borough of Tamaqua for a property identified as Schuylkill County Tax Parcel Number 65-14-0002.000 located on East End Avenue in the Borough of Tamaqua for the amount of \$100.00 per lease year.

Solicitor Odorizzi requested an executive session prior to adjournment to discuss real estate and legal matters.

President Mace announced that an executive session was held prior to tonight's council meeting to discuss personnel and legal matters.

A recommendation was made to accept and file the various reports of borough officials. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Connely, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved.

A recommendation was made to pay all properly approved bills and claims against the borough. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Bowman, seconded by Hollenbach, and unanimously approved.

A recommendation was made to hold an executive session to discuss real estate, legal and personnel matters. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Bowman, seconded by Amentler, and unanimously approved.

The council meeting was recessed at approximately 7:41 p.m. while council met in executive session.

The council meeting was reconvened at approximately 8:24 p.m.

President Mace announced that an executive session was held to discuss real estate, personnel and legal matters.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:25 p.m. on motion of Bowman, seconded by Amentler, to meet again at the call of the President.

ATTEST:

Georgia Depos DeWire, Borough Secretary/Treasurer