

The Tamaqua Borough Council held its second Regular Council Meeting for the month of January on Tuesday, January 21, 2020 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, Thomas Cara, Brian Connely, Mary Linkevich, Ritchie Linkhorst and David Mace. Officials present were Chief of Police Henry Woods, Borough Manager Kevin Steigerwalt, Solicitor Anthony Odorizzi, Borough Secretary/Treasurer Georgia Depos DeWire and Director of Community Development Ann Marie Calabrese.

The meeting was called to order by President Mace. The invocation was given by Councilman Cara followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Councilwoman Linkevich. The roll was called with all councilmembers present.

President Mace announced that an executive session was held at 6:00 p.m. prior to the meeting to discuss personnel matters and legal issues.

The reading of the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held on January 6, 2020 was ordered suspended, and with no additions or corrections, the minutes were approved as written on motion of Cara, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Under Special Business, President Mace called for the nominations for Vice President of Council. Brian Connely was nominated for Vice President by Councilman Bowman and seconded by Councilman Linkhorst. With no other nominations, the nominations for Vice President were declared closed and Brian Connely was elected as Vice President by a unanimous vote.

Communication was received from Charles F. Burrell stating that he is resigning from his position as Custodian effective at the close of business on the last day of the FMLA (Family and Medical Leave Act) protection that was extended to him. A recommendation was made to accept the resignation of Charles F. Burrell and to send a letter of appreciation for his 36 years of service. 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 Linkevich, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Michael Zangari, Mayor of the Borough of Girardville, and also on the behalf of the Ancient Order of the Hibernians Jack Kehoe Division, requesting the assistance of the Fire Police to participate as part of their traffic control for the annual St. Patrick's Day parade on March 28, 2020. A recommendation was made to authorize the Fire Police, if available, to assist the Borough of Girardville for the annual St. Patrick's Day parade. 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 Linkevich, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Paul Dodson, walk coordinator of the Tamaqua Area Faith Fellowship Network (TAFFN) requesting permission to have a "Tamaqua Walk for Hunger" at 2:00 p.m. on May 3, 2020. The purpose of the walk is to help the needy of Tamaqua Area by donating what is collected to the Tamaqua Salvation Army, Trinity Church and Primitive Methodist Church food banks. The communication is also requesting permission to distribute fliers to homes in Tamaqua during the last week in April that will inform people about the Walk and its purpose. The route would begin at the Tamaqua Community Art Center, walk south from the Art Center, cross Broad Street and turn left, walk east on Broad Street to the end of the seventh block, turn left and cross Broad Street, walk west on Broad Street to Pine Street, turn right and walk north on Pine Street to the Art Center. The communication also requested the assistance of the Tamaqua Fire

Police for this event. A recommendation was made to grant the requests, and to authorize the use of the Tamaqua Fire Police. 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.

Manager Steigerwalt reported that a bid opening would be held on February 13, 2020 for the demolition of properties at 209-211 Lombard Street and 200-202 Pitt Street. Manager Steigerwalt also reported that Code Enforcement Officer Kurtz would be revising the demolition list.

Under the Borough Manager's report, a motion was made by Cara and seconded by Bowman to advertise for a part-time assistant to the Code Enforcement Officer at an hourly rate of \$15.00 and 20 hours week. There was some discussion about the following: credentials needed for the position; the position does not have the requirements as would a full-time Code Enforcement Officer; and not limiting the hours to 20 hours per week but having the hours as 32 hours per week. After some discussion about these matters, the motion and second were amended as follows: a recommendation was made to advertise for a part-time assistant to the Code Enforcement Officer at an hourly rate of \$15.00 and 29 ½ hours per week. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Cara, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Director of Community Development Calabrese reported on the Pool Feasibility study and that she is preparing an entry for the HGTV Home Town Takeover contest.

Chief Woods requested that council consider drafting a letter of conditional offer of employment for Kyle Woodward as a part-time police officer. Chief Woods stated that Mr. Woodward has recently retired from the Baltimore County Police Department and is interested in returning as a part-time officer. A recommendation was made to draft a letter of conditional offer of employment for Kyle Woodward as a part-time police officer. 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.

Chairman Mace and Councilman Connely of the Railroad Committee reported on a meeting that was held with members of the Reading, Blue Mountain and Northern Railroad as follows: the discussions are ongoing; a joint venture to construct a train platform at the Tamaqua Train Station; the train platform would enable visitors to disembark train coaches; it provides the borough with an opportunity to allow passenger service to return to Tamaqua; a tentative agreement with the railroad; the borough would pay a portion of the project cost; the cost to the borough would be \$36,000.00, with an initial deposit of \$20,000.00 to start the project and the remaining balance would be paid at a minimum of \$4,000.00 per year for the next four years, if not paid sooner; and to grant permission for the railroad to access the job site via the Railroad Street Parking Lot. There was some discussion about this matter. A motion was made by Connely and seconded by Linkevich to enter into a tentative agreement with Reading, Blue Mountain and Northern Railroad for the construction of a train platform at the Tamaqua Train Station at a cost of approximately \$36,000.00. There was some discussion about the following: the project would allow passenger service to return to Tamaqua; private donations would be accepted towards the cost of the platform; the railroad would do all of the construction; it is a good project for Tamaqua; and President Mace described the scope of the project. Council recognized Liz Pinkey of The Times News newspaper who asked if there would be any impact to the existing platform and the decorative bricks. President Mace stated

that there would be no impact to the decorative bricks. After some discussion, the motion and second were amended as follows: a recommendation was made to enter into an agreement with Reading, Blue Mountain and Northern Railroad for the construction of a train platform at the Tamaqua Train Station at a cost of approximately \$36,000.00. There was no one else from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Connely, seconded by Linkevich, and unanimously approved.

Chairwoman Linkevich of the Recreation and Youth Committee reported that she had a resolution accepting a \$60,000.00 grant from the John E. Morgan Foundation Inc. for pool operating expenses to present for council's consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-1
RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL, TAMAQUA, PENNSYLVANIA
REGARDING GRANTS FROM THE JOHN E MORGAN FOUNDATION, INC.

A recommendation was made to adopt the foregoing resolution. 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 Linkhorst, and approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

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.

The meeting was opened to the floor.

Carol Bohringer of 122 Washington Street and Jeff Nunemacher of 124 Washington Street expressed their concerns about the blockages in their sewer lines. Their homes are attached but there are separate laterals. Mr. Nunemacher's line is open. Mr. Bohringer stated that his property is still blocked. He found baby wipes, toys and dolls. The plumber they used, Noel Arnt, said it was blocked between the curb and the main. Manager Steigerwalt stated that the borough workers were there three times and did run the camel and camera through the line and was told by the Public Works Director that the main was not blocked. Manager Steigerwalt would contact the plumber. There was much discussion about this matter.

Mayor Gerace arrived at approximately 7:41 p.m.

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

Mayor Gerace stated that Congressman Dan Meuser would be joining the Tamaqua Police Department for a ride along. Mayor Gerace also stated that he received a complaint from a resident on South Cherry Street regarding snow plowing.

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 Cara, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved with President Mace abstaining from voucher #V40532 in the amount of \$45.00.

Under New Business, Councilman Cara distributed an updated handout of items he would like to address. Councilman Cara added ten new items to the list as follows: 24. Can we change the no turn on red sign at Hunter and Broad streets from 6am-11pm; 25. Can we have the red lights at Hunter and Broad streets and Swatara and Broad streets blink yellow after 10pm; 26. Replace the pipe railing on Lafayette Street with something modern, fix the sidewalk and retaining wall; 27. There are two large tree stumps four feet tall on the sidewalk at the corner of Elm and Nescopec streets; 28. The 25mph speed limit sign on the river side of Schuylkill Avenue across from 519 is

full of moss or algae and should be cleaned; 29. There are two unreadable signs on the corner of Clay and Nescopec streets; 30. Trailer parking on borough streets; 31. Dangerous structure ordinance - in PA Maintenance Code; 32. Drone ordinance; 33. Two stumps at 324 Union Street. Councilman Cara stated that the Pennsylvania Association of Boroughs recommended ordinances. Councilman Cara also discussed an Airbnb ordinance, hotel taxes, a drone ordinance, tractor trailers parked on residential streets, problem intersections, a special events ordinance, a tree ordinance and the Burger King sidewalk issue. Manager Steigerwalt stated that the borough already has one Airbnb and it is treated as a rental property. Councilwoman Linkevich stated that she would look into matters concerning Airbnbs and drones. President Mace referred the tractor trailer parking issues to the Parking and Traffic Committee and a special event ordinance to the Neighborhoods, Downtown and Historic District Committee. Manager Steigerwalt stated that Burger King is not responding to the borough and has not obtained a Highway Occupancy Permit. It was recommended that Solicitor Odorizzi prepare a letter to Burger King regarding the sidewalk issue and Code Enforcement Officer Kurtz would do the follow-up. There was much discussion about these matters.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:57 p.m. on motion of Bowman, seconded by Linkevich, to meet again at the call of the President.

ATTEST:

Georgia Depos DeWire, Borough Secretary/Treasurer