

The Tamaqua Borough Council held its first Regular Council Meeting for the month of March on Tuesday, March 1, 2016 at 7:03 p.m. in the Council Chambers at the Tamaqua Municipal Building, 320 East Broad Street, Tamaqua, PA.

Present were Councilmembers Ronald Bowman, Thomas Cara, Brian Connely, R. Daniel Evans, Micah Gursky, Kerry Lasky and David Mace. Officials present were Mayor Christian Morrison, Chief of Police Richard Weaver, Borough Manager Kevin Steigerwalt, Solicitor Michael S. Greek and Borough Secretary/Treasurer Georgia Depos DeWire.

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

The reading of the minutes of the last Regular Council Meeting held on February 16, 2016 was ordered suspended, and with no additions or corrections, the minutes were approved as written on motion of Gursky, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Antoinette Allesch, president of Salute, LLC of 300 East Broad Street, Tamaqua, PA expressing an interest in operating the Tamaqua Swimming Pool Concession Stand for the next three years. A recommendation was made to have the Borough solicitor prepare a three-year lease agreement with Salute, LLC for the pool concession stand. 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 Cara, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Darlene Fetterman, council secretary of Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, requesting "Church Parking Only, Saturday 4 p.m. to Sunday Noon" designations for both sides of Mauch Chunk Street from Greenwood to Market streets and for the church side of Greenwood Street from Mauch Chunk Street to the end of the church property. A recommendation was made to refer the matter to the Parking and Traffic Committee. 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.

Communication was received from C. Dina Depos stating that the Tamaqua Salvation Army would like to hold their third Kidz Karnival event on Tuesday, August 2, 2016 from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. with set-up beginning at 10:00 a.m. The communication is requesting permission to close and use the North Railroad Street Parking lot, and to have access to electricity and a generator. The event would be held in conjunction with National Night Out. A recommendation was made to grant the requests. Councilman Gursky stated that the Kidz Karnival is a great event and that the Tamaqua Salvation Army does a great job. 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 Evans, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Robert Boyle, president of the East End Fire Company, stating that the East End Fire Company would be celebrating its one hundred year anniversary this year and would be holding its annual block party on June 10th, 11th and 12th. The communication is requesting permission to hold a truck parade on June 10, 2016 starting at 7:00 p.m. at the former Jamesway lot and to utilize the parking lot at the Borough Garage for apparatus parking following the parade, if needed. A map of the parade route was provided with the communication. The communication is also requesting permission to close Columbia Street from East Broad Street to East End Avenue and to close a portion of East End Avenue from Elizabeth Street going east, as

needed. A recommendation was made to grant the requests. President Mace described the truck parade route. 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 Lasky, and unanimously approved.

Manager Steigerwalt reported that he had a communication via email from the Law Offices of Gary D. Marchalk, LLC stating that an inter-municipal liquor license transfer is being requested by Ross Restaurant Enterprises, LLC of 6 Glory Road, New Ringgold, PA. The current license location is 550 West Penn Pike, Tamaqua, PA and is currently in safekeeping. Manager Steigerwalt stated that a public notice, public hearing and a resolution would be needed. A recommendation was made to advertise a public hearing and to prepare a resolution for the transfer of the liquor license. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Gursky, seconded by Connely, and unanimously approved.

Under the Borough Manager's report, a recommendation was made to advertise for part-time seasonal summer laborers. There was some discussion about this matter. 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 the 2016 Schuylkill Keep It Pretty (SKIP) clean-up would take place from April 21st to April 24th. The spring clean-up would be held during "Earth Day Week".

Manager Steigerwalt requested an executive session to discuss personnel matters prior to adjournment.

Chief Weaver requested approval for Officer Anthony Stanell and Officer Thomas Rodgers to attend the Pennsylvania Narcotic Officers' Association Annual Training Conference and Business Meeting in Harrisburg from March 30, 2016 to April 1, 2016. A recommendation was made to grant the request. 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 Lasky, and unanimously approved.

Chairman Connely of the Public Safety Committee reported on a proposal from KME/Kovatch Ford Inc. for a new police car. A motion was made by Connely and seconded by Bowman to approve a proposal for a new 2016 Ford SUV police vehicle at a cost of \$39,875.72 from KME/Kovatch Ford Inc. There was some discussion about the following: cycling out the oldest police vehicle; the value of the old vehicle; a plan and goal to cycle out the vehicle; a higher cost for the next model year vehicle than for the 2016 model year; and a rifle and cycle rack from the old vehicle could be used for the new vehicle. After the discussion, the motion and second were amended as follows: A recommendation was made to approve a proposal for a new 2016 Ford SUV police vehicle at a cost of \$39,875.72 from KME/Kovatch Ford Inc. and a plan to cycle out the oldest police vehicle every three years. 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.

Andrew Leibenguth of Dutch Hill expressed his concerns about parking meter violations and enforcement. Mr. Leibenguth's discussion included, but was not limited to, the following: he

found sixteen broken meters; asked how many meters are broken; repairs to meters; meter vandalism; the issue of not refunding parking tickets if the meters were found not to work; ticketing hurts the public, who are innocent victims; the borough should budget for vandalized meters; marking the parking meters that do not work; and meters in residential zones.

President Mace discussed a 15-month detailed repair log kept by John “Bud” Comisac, who is responsible for repairing the parking meters. President Mace discussed the following: 62 of 247 entries detailed intentional vandalism with another 35 meters as probable vandalism combining for a total of 40 percent of the repairs made were due to vandalism; 64 repairs involved replacing a battery; the vandalism included meters jammed with gum, bent coins, twigs, paper and other items; the number of meters being vandalized are on the rise; bagging meters that need repair; and a plan for replacing meters.

Donna DeBellis of 459 East Broad Street also expressed her concerns about parking meter violations and enforcement. Ms. DeBellis stated that she was taking her 92 year-old mother to the hearing aid business and the meter that she parked at was broken.

Richard Shupp of 328 Washington Street also expressed his concerns about parking meter violations and enforcement. Mr. Shupp stated that he put a quarter in the meter for a one-hour time limit but the meter did not register the time correctly and only allotted him twelve minutes. He said it gives a negative impression of the town and it would not help stop the vandalism.

Mayor Morrison stated that the parking meter ordinance was written in 1942 and over the years a police officer has used his discretion whether to excuse or to write a ticket. Chief Weaver discussed parking meter violations and enforcement. Chief Weaver stated that a ticket would be excused for maintenance issues but not if the meter is intentionally jammed. Councilman Evans stated that a number of the old meters are failing at an increasing rate. Councilwoman Lasky stated that vandalism also hurts innocent victims and that residents should be more upset that vandalism is on the rise, than being upset with the police for enforcing the tickets. Councilman Gursky stated that parking meter enforcement is a reoccurring issue and council is willing to discuss alternatives to meter enforcement.

Beth Kester of 423 North Railroad Street, Apartment 1, also expressed her concerns about parking meter violations and enforcement. Ms. Kester stated that she is on a fixed income and it is an affordability issue for her when she receives a ticket.

Liz Pinkey of 237 West Broad Street also expressed her concerns about parking meter violations and enforcement. Ms. Pinkey stated that she has been a resident of West Broad Street for eleven years and lives in a metered section where she pays to park at her place of residence. Ms. Pinkey stated that she has experienced vandalism on many occasions. She cannot believe that people are condoning a 40 percent parking meter vandalism rate over issues concerning parking meter enforcement, illegal sewer discharges or rising vandalism.

There was much discussion about parking meter violations and enforcement.

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

Solicitor Greek reported on a draft license agreement to attach a security camera to a building. Chief Weaver and Solicitor Greek will review the draft license agreement.

Under Unfinished Business, Councilman Gursky stated that he had an ordinance creating a Defined Contribution Pension Benefit Structure for all full-time, non-uniformed employees hired on or after January 1, 2014 to present for council’s consideration:

ORDINANCE NO. 682**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 295, AS AMENDED, WHICH PROVIDES FOR A DEFINED CONTRIBUTION BENEFIT STRUCTURE FOR NEWLY HIRED FULL-TIME NON-UNIFORMED EMPLOYEES AND OPTIONS FOR CURRENTLY EMPLOYED FULL-TIME NON-UNIFORMED EMPLOYEES OF THE BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA, SCHUYLKILL COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA.**

A recommendation was made to adopt the foregoing ordinance. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Gursky, seconded by Connely, and approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Under Unfinished Business, Councilman Gursky stated that he had an ordinance revising the tapping fee for connection to the sewer system to present for council's consideration:

ORDINANCE NO. 683**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 262, AS AMENDED, CODIFIED BY ORDINANCE NO. 304, AS AMENDED, OF THE BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA PROVIDING FOR A TAPPING FEE TO BE PAID UPON CONNECTION TO THE TAMAQUA SEWER SYSTEM.**

A recommendation was made to adopt the foregoing ordinance. Council recognized Andrew Leibenguth who asked about the tapping fee cost. Manager Steigerwalt stated that the tapping fee cost was \$2,000 and is being changed to \$550. There was some discussion about this matter. There was no one else from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Gursky, seconded by Cara, and approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Under New Business, Councilman Evans stated that he had serious concerns about council's action taken on January 19, 2016 to enter into a Street Light Agreement with PPL Electric Utilities for the conversion of all street lights in the borough to Light Emitting Diode (LED) streetlights and is recommending that council consider rescinding or reversing that motion. Councilman Evans discussed the following: a cost savings of only \$1,200 annually by implementing the change to LED; a recommendation to develop an inventory of lights by types and classes; converting to LED; a recommendation to contract professional groups or our borough engineers to review the matter; there is bigger money in this than what had been presented; and looking into this project has merit. A recommendation was made to rescind the approval given by council at the January 19, 2016 council meeting to enter into a Street Light Agreement between PPL Electric Utilities Corporation and the Borough of Tamaqua for the conversion of all streetlights in the borough to Light Emitting Diode (LED) streetlights. A discussion about the matter included, but was not limited to, the following: a cost of approximately \$485,000 to convert the streetlights; the borough would not be able to come up with the \$485,000 cost for conversion; a plan with Municipal Energy Managers (MEM) several years ago to acquire the borough streetlights; getting better cost savings for the borough; and a timeframe for conversion from PPL. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Evans, seconded by Connely, and unanimously approved.

Under New Business, a motion was made by Evans and seconded by Connely to authorize the borough's engineering firm of Gannett Fleming or Alfred Benesch and Company and their electrical division to put together a plan to look at the inventory of streetlights for conversion from high pressure sodium to LED. After some discussion about this matter, the motion and second were amended as follows: A recommendation was made to authorize the Borough Manager to solicit a proposal from an engineering firm to study and inventory the borough's utility owned streetlights

with a cost analysis for acquiring the streetlights and the money saved after conversion from high pressure sodium to LED. Councilman Gursky asked if it would include operation and maintenance and stated that the timing is tight if it is to be completed by the end of 2016. Council recognized Herbert Curvey of 118 Clay Street who asked about putting a cost limit on the study. There was some discussion about this matter. There was no one else from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Evans, seconded by Connely, and unanimously approved.

A recommendation was made to hold an executive session to discuss personnel matters. 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 Evans, and unanimously approved.

The council meeting was recessed at approximately 8:40 p.m. while council met in executive session.

The council meeting was reconvened at approximately 9:00 p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:00 p.m. on motion of Connely, seconded by Gursky, to meet again at the call of the President.

ATTEST:

Georgia Depos DeWire, Borough Secretary/Treasurer