

The Tamaqua Borough Council held its first Regular Council Meeting for the month of March on Tuesday, March 3, 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, Mary Linkevich, and David Mace. Absent were Councilmembers Thomas Cara and Brian Connely. Councilman Ritchie Linkhorst arrived later in the meeting. Officials present were Mayor Nathan Gerace, 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 President Mace followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Councilman Amentler. The roll was called with four councilmembers present and three absent.

The reading of the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held on February 18, 2020 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 Secretary/Treasurer Georgia Depos DeWire asking council to consider a motion to open an escrow account for fire loss insurance proceeds to be received from State Farm Insurance for the property at 126 Gay Street. A recommendation was made to open a new account for the fire insurance proceeds for the property at 126 Gay Street. 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.

Councilman Linkhorst arrived at approximately 7:03 p.m.

Manager Steigerwalt reported on a notice to proceed for the demolition of properties at 200-202 Pitt Street and 209-211 Lombard Street.

Manager Steigerwalt also reported on an oil and chip project on Owl Creek Road. He spoke with John Davis, our PennDOT municipal services representative, about the project and Mr. Davis helped put together the bid documents and had some suggestions. The project would start at the base of the entrance of Owl Creek Road and there would be a twenty-foot wide strip of oil and chip. The bid opening is planned for April 2<sup>nd</sup> and the project would be awarded at the council meeting of April 7<sup>th</sup>. A recommendation was made to advertise for bids for the oil and chip project on Owl Creek Road. Councilman Bowman stated that the oil and chip project would not go out to the highway line at Route 309 for safety reasons. 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.

Manager Steigerwalt also reported on using Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for a street improvement project. He discussed the project with the CDBG consultant and the borough must work with an engineer regarding this project. Councilman Bowman, Public Works Director Jones and Manager Steigerwalt would return with a recommendation.

Manager Steigerwalt also reported that there is approximately \$14,057.00 in CDBG funds remaining from the municipal building bathroom accessibility project. A recommendation was made to reallocate the remaining CDBG funds from the municipal building bathroom accessibility project to a street improvement project. 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 the following: advertised for pool personnel and a vendor for the pool concession stand; the street sweeper is out; an overabundance of road salt for this season; the borough must order road salt for next season next week; storing the road salt; and Councilman Cara started working on a Welcome to Tamaqua sign in the east end area of town.

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

Under the Borough Manager's report, there was some discussion regarding the repairs to the sidewalks at Burger King and the progress that is being made after Solicitor Odorizzi sent a letter to the owners of Burger King.

Director of Community Development Calabrese reported on the following: a public meeting would be held on March 10, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. to hear the results of a Pool Feasibility study; a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting scheduled for March 10<sup>th</sup> has been rescheduled to March 31<sup>st</sup>; Solicitor Odorizzi is working on by-laws for the CAC; and a Chamber of Commerce event to be held on April 2<sup>nd</sup> to talk about the Tamaqua Community Revitalization and Improvement Zone (CRIZ).

Under the Public Safety Committee report, Councilman Bowman reported that he had an ordinance establishing the International Fire Code, 2015 edition, as the Fire Code of the Borough to present for council's consideration:

**ORDINANCE NO. 713**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA, SCHUYLKILL COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, AMENDING IN ITS ENTIRETY CHAPTER 157 OF THE BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA CODE OF ORDINANCES BY ESTABLISHING REGULATIONS FOR FIRE PREVENTION AND PROTECTION.**

A recommendation was made to adopt the foregoing ordinance. Council recognized South Ward Fire Chief Mark Bower who asked about getting the code books. There was no one else from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Bowman, seconded by Amentler, and approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Chairman Linkhorst of the Parking and Traffic Committee reported that he had an ordinance establishing a 40-foot vehicle length restriction on Hazle Street and restating the truck weight restriction on Owl Creek Road to present for council's consideration:

**ORDINANCE NO. 714**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA, SCHUYLKILL COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, REVISING AND AMENDING SECTION 326-18 OF THE BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA CODE OF ORDINANCES ESTABLISHING REGULATIONS FOR VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC, ARTICLE II TRAFFIC REGULATIONS, SECTION 326-18 TRUCK TRAFFIC RESTRICTED TO CERTAIN STREETS.**

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 Linkhorst, seconded by Bowman, and approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Under the Parking and Traffic Committee report, a recommendation was made to approve a handicapped parking space application for 202 Orwigsburg Street. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Linkhorst, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Chairman Linkhorst of the Parking and Traffic Committee reported that he went to the Tamaqua Elementary School to look into the traffic flowing in and out of the area. He was amazed at how orderly it was and does not see a need for any action to be taken there.

Under the Finance, Wage and Salary Committee report, Councilman Bowman reported that he had an ordinance allowing 25 days for payment of sewer bills effective May 1, 2020 to present for council's consideration:

**ORDINANCE NO. 715**  
**AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA, SCHUYLKILL COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, REVISING AND AMENDING SECTION 260-30 "A" OF THE BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA CODE OF ORDINANCES ESTABLISHING REGULATIONS FOR SEWERS AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL, ARTICLE II SEWER RENTALS AND REGULATIONS, SECTION 260-30 TIME AND METHOD OF PAYMENT, SUBSECTION "A" CHARGE FOR LATE PAYMENT.**

A recommendation was made to adopt the foregoing ordinance. President Mace explained the purpose of the change. 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 approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Under the Finance, Wage and Salary Committee report, Councilman Bowman reported that he had an ordinance allowing 25 days for payment of garbage bills effective June 1, 2020 to present for council's consideration:

**ORDINANCE NO. 716**  
**AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA, SCHUYLKILL COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, REVISING AND AMENDING SECTION 273-9 "B" OF THE BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA CODE OF ORDINANCES ESTABLISHING REGULATIONS FOR SOLID WASTE, ARTICLE II GARBAGE AND REFUSE COLLECTION, SECTION 273-9 FEES, PENALTIES, DISCOUNTS AND DELINQUENCIES, SUBSECTION "B".**

A recommendation was made to adopt the foregoing ordinance. President Mace explained the purpose of the change. 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 approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Under the Building and Equipment Committee report, a recommendation was made to order and install one eleven-foot by ten-foot overhead garage door from F&L Doors Inc. of Hazleton, PA at a cost of \$1,600.00 for the borough garage with funds designated from the Building and Equipment Fund. 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 Building and Equipment Committee report, a recommendation was made to approve the appraisals for five properties, which includes the Water Department garage and the two lots adjacent to the garage, the Magistrate building and a lot off of West Cottage Avenue between Lehigh Street and Route 209, by Gownley Appraisal Services of Pottsville, PA at cost of approximately \$3,000.00. Council recognized Kathy Kunkel of 420 Spruce Street who asked if the properties were all borough owned. Council recognized Dan Poncavage of 235 High Street who asked what the purpose of obtaining the appraisals is. President Mace stated that the borough would like to know the values of these properties. There was no one else 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.

Mayor Gerace reported on the following: Chief Woods looked into the complaints about speeding along Owl Creek Road; and an upcoming 2020 census meeting.

Mayor Gerace requested an executive session prior to adjournment to discuss personnel matters.

The meeting was opened to the floor.

Kathy Kunkel of 420 Spruce Street expressed her concerns about the following: is there any movement on the consolidation of the fire companies; is there any chance that the Public Safety Committee would be looking into the matter; the two fire companies interested in consolidating should be able to do so; let the two fire companies not interested in consolidating stay independent; each year the borough must announce who their fire company is for the year; and at the last meeting South Ward Fire Chief Mark Bower expressed his concerns about people getting pushed or hurt at fire scenes. President Mace stated that he is not aware of any intent by the Public Safety Committee to look into to the matter of consolidation, but yes it is possible. President Mace stated that the concerns expressed about people getting pushed or hurt at fire scenes is an operational issue not a consolidation issue.

Mark Bower, Chief of the South Ward Fire Company, stated that for COSTARS purchases by the fire department, the fire department is considered an entity of the borough.

Dan Poncavage of 235 High Street stated that he is a member of the Board of Appeals. He stated that State Representative Doyle Heffley of Carbon County is sponsoring a House Bill that would amend the Pennsylvania Construction Code Act to require that municipalities provide at least two options for inspection services and fees should be based on costs. He stated that it is a good bill. President Mace stated that the borough does have a Code Enforcement Officer and also uses multiple third-party agencies to assist the Code Enforcement Officer.

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

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 Bowman, seconded by Linkhorst, and unanimously approved.

The council meeting was recessed at approximately 7:36 p.m. while council met in executive session.

The council meeting was reconvened at approximately 8:05 p.m.

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

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:06 p.m. on motion of Bowman, seconded by Linkevich, to meet again at the call of the President.

ATTEST:

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Georgia Depos DeWire, Borough Secretary/Treasurer