

The Tamaqua Borough Council held its second Regular Council Meeting for the month of November on Tuesday, November 17, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. through the Zoom video conference system. The public was able to participate in the council meeting using a computer, tablet or smart phone with an internet connection using the link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87870593417> and by entering Meeting ID 878 7059 3417. Individuals who did not have internet access were able to participate by telephone by dialing 1-929-436-2866 and entering Meeting ID 878 7059 3417#.

Present were Councilmembers Robert Amentler, Ronald Bowman, Brian Connely, Mary Linkevich, Ritchie Linkhorst and David Mace. Councilman Thomas Cara arrived later in the meeting. Officials present were Mayor Nathan Gerace, Chief of Police Michael Hobbs, Borough Manager Kevin Steigerwalt, Public Works Director Robert Jones, Solicitor Anthony Odorizzi, Borough Secretary/Treasurer Georgia Depos DeWire, Director of Community Development Ann Marie Calabrese and Zoning/Code Enforcement Officer Gregory Kurtz Jr.

The meeting was called to order by President Mace. President Mace stated that the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance would be waived. The roll was called with six councilmembers present and one absent.

The reading of the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held on November 4, 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 Tammy Sienkiewicz of Safer Streets For Tamaqua's Little Feet stating that this is the fifth year for The Giving Tree. Mrs. Sienkiewicz is requesting permission to use the large Christmas tree in Depot Square Park from December 4, 2020 until the middle to the end of February, depending on the temperatures, and to place a sign by The Giving Tree. 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 Bowman, seconded by Linkevich, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from James R. Connely, Fire Chief, stating that the American Hose Company No. 1, Inc. is requesting a waiver of the \$25.00 Zoning Permit Application fee. 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 Bowman, seconded by Linkhorst, and unanimously approved.

President Mace stated that communications were received for the following reappointments whose terms will expire on January 1, 2021: Christine Zizelmann to a five-year term on the Tamaqua Board of Health; Karl Smulligan to a five-year term on the Tamaqua Zoning/Hearing Board; Bill Harleman to a three-year term on the Historic Architectural Review Commission; Dale Freudenberger to a three-year term on the Historic Architectural Review Commission; Tim Stahl to a four-year term on the Tamaqua Planning Commission; Richard Hadesty to a five-year term on the Tamaqua Community Revitalization and Improvement Zone Authority; and Richard Hadesty to a five-year term on the Tamaqua Borough Authority. A recommendation was made to approve the foregoing reappointments. 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 Connely, and unanimously approved.

Manager Steigerwalt reported that he had a resolution extending the Mayor’s Declaration of Disaster Emergency of March 20, 2020 for a ninth thirty (30) day additional period to terminate on December 23, 2020 to present for council’s consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-18
A RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA, SCHUYLKILL COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 10A06 OF THE PENNSYLVANIA BOROUGH CODE, AND SECTION 7501 OF THE PENNSYLVANIA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SERVICES CODE, EXTENDING THE MAYOR OF TAMAQUA’S DECLARATION OF DISASTER EMERGENCY OF MARCH 20, 2020 FOR AN ADDITIONAL PERIOD OF THIRTY (30) DAYS.

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

Manager Steigerwalt reported on Request for Proposals for Janitorial Services as follows: four proposals were received; the lowest proposal was received from Mystic Cleaning Service LLC with a monthly cost of \$750.00 or an annual cost of \$9,000.00; Mystic Cleaning primarily serves St. Luke’s Hospital system; references were provided and called, including St. Luke’s Hospital system and a former councilman gave them a glowing review; also reached out to one of the owners of the company; and gave a brief synopsis of the scope of services. A recommendation was made to award a month to month contract to Mystic Cleaning Service LLC of Palmerton, PA at a cost of \$750.00 per month. 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 an Application for Traffic Signal Approval located at Center Street (SR 309) and Cedar Street to the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and a resolution authorizing the Borough Manager to sign the application. It was noted that the northernmost driveway for the property at 109 Center Street is being modified to reduce the driveway width and restrict the access to right turns out only. This is the Highway Occupancy Permit (HOP) update associated with the sidewalk improvement. A recommendation was made to approve a resolution authorizing the Borough Manager to sign a Traffic Signal Application for Center and Cedar streets:

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-19
A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE BOROUGH MANAGER TO SIGN A TRAFFIC SIGNAL APPLICATION FOR CENTER AND CEDAR STREET TO THE PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION.

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 Connely, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Manager Steigerwalt also reported on the following: a 2021 Street Materials bid package and bid opening before the second meeting in December; a resolution for Bituminous Materials; the 2021 Budget; and a draft of the 2021-2024 Police Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Chief Hobbs requested an executive session prior to adjournment to discuss personnel matters.

Under the Parking and Traffic Committee report, a recommendation was made to advertise an ordinance prohibiting parking on the south side of Jerome Street from Nescopec Street to Lincoln Street. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council at this matter. The

recommendation was so ordered on motion of Linkhorst, seconded by Linkevich, and unanimously approved.

Under the Finance, Wage and Salary Committee report, a recommendation was made to tentatively adopt and advertise the 2021 Budget. There was much discussion about a proposal for a Fire Tax. The discussion included, but was not limited to, the following: the budget is not reflective of the fire tax; same millage as present year; if there is an option to alter the proposed 2021 budget within the timeframe the borough has left in this calendar year; asked the group to see if there is a consensus for such a tax; the budget and tax ordinance must be available for public inspection for ten working days; if the borough modifies the tax ordinance it may have to be readvertised and a special meeting may be needed later in December; there is an alternate budget summary which includes the fire tax; and this budget still shows a deficit in the General 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 Amentler, and approved by a 5-1 roll call vote with Councilmember Connely opposed.

Under the Finance, Wage and Salary Committee report, a recommendation was made to advertise the 2021 Tax Ordinance setting the real estate tax rate at 22.50 mills with 21.00 mills for General Purposes, 1 mill for the Building and Equipment Fund, and 0.50 mill for the Wabash Capital Improvement Fund. There was some discussion that the budget reflects no tax increase and a deficit.

Councilman Cara arrived at approximately 7:34 p.m.

President Mace advised Councilman Cara that council is discussing the 2021 Tax Ordinance and is preparing to vote on the matter. 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 approved by a 6-1 vote with Councilmember Connely opposed.

Mayor Gerace stated that three separate residents commended the Police Department.

The meeting was opened to the floor.

Zoning/Code Enforcement Officer Gregory Kurtz Jr. requested an executive session prior to adjournment to discuss personnel matters.

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

Solicitor Odorizzi gave an update on the Improvement and Maintenance Agreement for M&M Storage. The agreement is drafted and in final with the developer right now. The developer is also setting up the bonding. The agreement is not ready to be signed yet by borough officials but possibly by next week. There was some discussion about this matter.

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 Cara, 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 Cara, and unanimously approved.

Under New Business, Councilmember Linkevich requested an executive session prior to adjournment to discuss personnel matters.

Under New Business, Public Works Director Jones advised Councilmember Cara regarding Highway Occupancy Permit for Burger King. There was some discussion about a 2021 PennDOT paving project.

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 Linkevich, and unanimously approved.

The council meeting was recessed at approximately 7:44 p.m. while council met in executive session.

The council meeting was reconvened at approximately 8:30 p.m.

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

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:30 p.m. on motion of Bowman, seconded by Connely, to meet again at the call of the President.

ATTEST:

Georgia Depos DeWire, Borough Secretary/Treasurer