

The Tamaqua Borough Council held its second Regular Council Meeting for the month of November on Tuesday, November 15, 2016 at 7:00 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 and David Mace. Absent was Councilmember Kerry Lasky. Officials present were Mayor Christian Morrison, Chief of Police Richard Weaver, Borough Manager Kevin Steigerwalt 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 President Mace. The roll was called with six councilmembers present and one absent.

The reading of the minutes of the last Regular Council Meeting held on November 1, 2016 was ordered suspended. Mayor Morrison questioned the placement of the No Parking signs on South Street. Mayor Morrison stated that the signs should be located at the 100 block of South Street and were placed on the wrong side of the street. The matter would be discussed later in the meeting. There were no additions or corrections, the minutes were approved as written on motion of Cara, seconded by Connely, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Earl H. Boettger stating that he is resigning from the Board of Health effective December 31, 2016. A recommendation was made to accept the resignation of Earl H. Boettger from the Board of Health effective December 31, 2016 and to send a letter thanking him for his 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 Connely, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Shirley L. Becker, secretary of the Tamaqua Board of Health, requesting a budget appropriation of \$2,500 for the year 2017. The communication also requested a \$25.00 per month raise in salary for the Secretary and Health Officer.

Communication was received from The Tamaqua Salvation Army and Safer Streets For Tamaqua's Little Feet stating that they are teaming up to collect and to give winter necessities, such as coats, hats, gloves, scarves, mittens and boots, on a "Giving Tree". The communication is requesting permission to place a "Giving Tree" in Depot Square Park from November 19, 2016 to February 28, 2017 that would be maintained by both organizations. A "Giving Tree" is also being set up in front of the old CVS building on Broad Street. A recommendation was made to grant the request. Council recognized Melissa Latham and Major Sharon Whispell of the Tamaqua Salvation Army, and Tammy Sienkiewicz of Safer Streets For Tamaqua's Little Feet, who discussed the "Giving Tree" project. 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 Cara, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Borough Manager Steigerwalt reported on the following: a preliminary budget; the demolition project for 13 South Lehigh Street and 15 South Lehigh Street has been completed; a bid opening for the 2017 Street Materials would be held on December 15, 2016; a Tamaqua Transfer flyer listing the prices for the disposal of tires, electronics, etc.; the street sweeper was still running weekly but would stop operating this week; and gave an update on the Family Dollar store sidewalk issue.

Director of Community Development Mary Linkevich reported that the streetlight purchase project is proceeding.

Director of Community Development Linkevich also reported on the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Rehabilitation Loan Program and asked council to consider approving the guidelines for the Tamaqua Rehabilitation Loan Program. There was some discussion regarding the following: pursuing the foreclosure process on a property; enforcement; delinquent accounts; work on getting the delinquent accounts up-to-date; and suspending the loan program. A recommendation was made to suspend the CDBG Rehabilitation Loan Program lending of funds for the rehabilitation of homes. 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 Cara, and approved by a 5-1 vote with President Mace opposed.

Under the Public Safety Committee report, a recommendation was made to issue accounts payable checks and 1099-MISC forms to council members, the mayor, fire chiefs and any other individuals who receive a monthly stipend effective January 1, 2017. The accounts payable checks would be processed monthly. 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 Gursky, and unanimously approved.

Chairman Gursky of the Finance, Wage and Salary Committee reported that he had an ordinance approving a flat rate schedule for sewage collection and treatment to present for council's consideration:

**ORDINANCE NO. 687  
BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA  
AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 577, ENACTED FEBRUARY 17, 2004,  
IMPOSING SEWER RENTALS OR CHARGES FOR USE OF SEWERS AND THE  
SEWER SYSTEM OWNED BY THE TAMAQUA BOROUGH AUTHORITY AND  
OPERATED BY THE BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA.**

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.

Chairman Gursky of the Finance, Wage and Salary Committee reported that he had an ordinance approving a metered rate schedule for sewage collection and treatment to present for council's consideration:

**ORDINANCE NO. 688  
BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA  
AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 576, ENACTED FEBRUARY 17, 2004,  
AMENDING SECTION 3B OF CHAPTER 20 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE  
BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA SEWAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL, IMPOSING SEWER  
RENTALS OR CHARGES FOR USE OF SEWERS AND THE SEWER SYSTEM OWNED  
BY THE TAMAQUA BOROUGH AUTHORITY AND OPERATED BY THE BOROUGH  
OF TAMAQUA.**

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.

Chairman Gursky of the Finance, Wage and Salary Committee reported that he had a resolution regarding property owners' responsibility for complying with the Borough of Tamaqua's

International Property Maintenance Code, Quality of Life, and garbage and refuse collection ordinances to present for council's consideration:

**RESOLUTION NO. 2016-14**  
**PROPERTY OWNERS' RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMPLYING WITH THE**  
**BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA'S INTERNATIONAL PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE,**  
**QUALITY OF LIFE AND GARBAGE AND REFUSE COLLECTION ORDINANCES.**

A recommendation was made to adopt the foregoing resolution. Council recognized Tammy Sienkiewicz of 215 Bowe Street who asked about the resolution. Councilman Gursky stated that changes were made to address rent to own situations and property owner responsibility. 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 the Finance, Wage and Salary Committee report, a recommendation was made to tentatively adopt and advertise the 2017 Budget and to advertise the 2017 Tax Ordinance setting the real estate tax rate at 21.75 mills with 20.25 mills for General Purposes, 1 mill for the Building and Equipment Fund, and 0.50 mill for the Wabash Capital Improvement Fund. Councilman Bowman expressed his concerns as follows: he understands where we are at with the budget, it is justifiable, but he cannot believe we got to this within one year; the sewer rates were increased and now the real estate taxes; and there are less fortunate people that cannot afford to absorb these increases. 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 Cara, and approved by a 5-1 vote with Councilman Bowman opposed.

Chairman Gursky of the Finance, Wage and Salary Committee reported that he had an ordinance amending the definition of "owner" in the International Property Maintenance Code to present for council's consideration:

**AMENDED ORDINANCE NO. 689**  
**BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA**  
**AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH**  
**OF TAMAQUA, SCHUYLKILL COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, AMENDING THE**  
**TAMAQUA BOROUGH PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE ORDINANCE NO. 641**  
**ADOPTED SEPTEMBER 15, 2009**

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 the Neighborhoods, Downtown and Historic District Committee report, a recommendation was made to approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for a Tamaqua Wayfinder Map at Depot Square Park at 1 East Broad Street. Council recognized Tammy Sienkiewicz who expressed her concerns about the following: she looks for used hypodermic needles in order to dispose of them; she sees a lot of cigarette butts; can the borough place a cigarette receptacle at the park. There was some discussion about smoke free areas. There was no one else 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.

Under the Neighborhoods, Downtown and Historic District Committee report, a recommendation was made to approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of garages at the rear of 21 North Greenwood Street. There was some discussion about code enforcement and the emergency demolition of the garages due to safety issues. 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 Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Under the Parking and Traffic Committee report, a motion was made by Evans and seconded by Bowman to sell 40 nickel and dime three-hour limit parking meters, and 40 nickel and dime two-hour limit parking meters which have been deemed surplus by the Borough. After some discussion, the motion and second were amended as follows: A recommendation was made to sell 40 nickel and dime three-hour limit parking meters, and 40 nickel and dime two-hour limit parking meters which have been deemed surplus by the Borough on the Municibid auction website. 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 Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Under the Parking and Traffic Committee report, there was some discussion about the following: the placement of the No Parking signs on South Street; the signs should be located at the 100 block of South Street and were placed on the wrong side of the street; reviewing the parking situation in the area of the 100 and 200 blocks of South Street; and reviewing the parking situation at the four corners of Green Street. A recommendation was made to have the Parking and Traffic Committee review the parking situation in the area of the 100 block and the 200 block of South Street and at the four corners of Green 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 Cara, and unanimously approved. President Mace asked that the Parking and Traffic Committee review the situation and have a decision made by the December 6<sup>th</sup> council meeting.

Mayor Morrison reported that the Police Pension and Non-Uniformed Pension Committees met with Blackford Ventures LLC of Lancaster, PA to discuss their solution to the municipal pension problem to provide municipalities with the funding necessary to stabilize their pension costs and significantly reduce their unfunded liability. Mayor Morrison discussed the program and stated that the pension committees agreed to send a letter to Blackford Ventures LLC requesting information regarding the program.

Mayor Morrison proclaimed November 29, 2016 as "Giving Tuesday" in the Borough of Tamaqua. Giving Tuesday was established as a national day of giving on the Tuesday following Thanksgiving. Mayor Morrison presented a proclamation to Major Sharon Whispell of the Tamaqua Salvation Army.

The meeting was opened to the floor.

Tammy Sienkiewicz of 215 Bowe Street stated that the Borough Facebook page is amazing and the Police Department should also have a Facebook page. Chief Weaver stated that it is coming in the future.

Mrs. Sienkiewicz also requested that a cigarette receptacle be placed at Depot Square Park.

Major Sharon Whispell of the Tamaqua Salvation Army stated that the Red Kettle Drive Kickoff would be held on November 19th at Depot Square Park. Major Whispell requested the use of power outlets for the event. Manager Steigerwalt would contact her regarding the matter.

Terry Kranch of 187 Owl Creek Road expressed his concerns about the following: an ordinance on hunting in the Borough of Tamaqua; discharging a firearm within the borough; and people hunting close to homes. There was some discussion about this matter, and contacting the

Game Commission for information. Manager Steigerwalt would give Mr. Kranch a copy of the ordinance.

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

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.

Under Unfinished Business, Councilman Connely referred to the Code Enforcement report regarding a violation for garages falling at 21 North Greenwood Street. The report lists the status as no response from the owner and citations have been issued awaiting court hearing. Councilman Bowman stated that two verbal quotes were obtained for the demolition of the garages at 21 North Greenwood Street. There was some discussion about this matter. A recommendation was made to send Code Enforcement to determine if an emergency situation exists at the 21 North Greenwood Street garages and if warranted to determine how to proceed with the demolition at the next council meeting. 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.

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 Gursky, seconded by Cara, and unanimously approved.

Under New Business, a recommendation was made to send a letter to Scott Novatnak, Project Manager, Planning Section, PA Department of Environmental Protection, Clean Water Program, Northeast Regional Office, expressing concerns about the Combined Sewer Overflows of the Coaldale-Lansford-Summit Hill wastewater treatment system and the negative impacts they have on the Panther Creek, the Little Schuylkill river and the residents of the Borough of Tamaqua with copies to Senator Dave Argall, Senator John Yudichak, Representative Jerry Knowles, Representative Doyle Heffley and Borough Council. There was much discussion about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Gursky, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved. Councilman Gursky stated that a copy of the letter should also be given to the Tamaqua Borough Authority.

A recommendation was made to hold an executive session to discuss real estate 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 Connely, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved.

The council meeting was recessed at approximately 8:12 p.m. while council met in executive session.

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

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

A recommendation was made to increase the hourly rate of part-time Patrolman Rick Bekesy to \$20.00 per hour based on longevity merit starting with the next pay period. 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.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:03 p.m. on motion of Bowman, seconded by Connely, to meet again at the call of the President.

ATTEST:

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Georgia Depos DeWire, Borough Secretary/Treasurer