

The Tamaqua Borough Council held its first Regular Council Meeting for the month of June on Tuesday, June 16, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers at the Tamaqua Municipal Building, 320 East Broad Street, Tamaqua, PA.

Present were Councilmembers Robert Amentler, Ronald Bowman, George Haldeman, Jay Hollenbach, Kathy Kunkel, and Kyle Oliphant. Absent was councilmember Brian Connely. Officials present were Mayor David Clemson, Sergeant Thomas Rodgers, Borough Manager Kevin Steigerwalt, Public Works Director Jay Stidham, Solicitor Anthony Odorizzi, and Borough Secretary/Treasurer Amy Macalush.

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Bowman. The invocation was given by Councilwoman Kunkel followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. The roll was called with six councilmembers present and one absent.

Vice President Bowman reported that there was an executive session held before the meeting to discuss legal and personnel matters.

The reading of the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held on May 20, 2026 was ordered suspended, and with no additions or corrections, the minutes were approved as written on motion of Kunkel, seconded by Amentler, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Amber Yanus and Ron Bridygham of TFC Grit & Grace, requesting permission to host a block party/picnic style fundraiser on July 4, 2026 at the Bungalow Park and Pavilion. The event would include food, games, prizes, vendors, food trucks, and music. There were questions regarding insurance, the pavilion rental fee, parking for food trucks, and ongoing construction at the pool. A recommendation was made to approve the request contingent upon proof of insurance and event coordination with the borough manager. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Hollenbach, seconded by Amentler, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Nate MacDonald, expressing his interest in serving as a Citizen Representative on the ESRC Board of Directors. 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 Kunkel, seconded by Hollenbach, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from The Tamaqua Elks #592, requesting permission to close Nescopec Street from Broad Street to Rowe Street, and for no parking on both sides of West Broad Street from Nescopec Street/Memorial Avenue to Hunter Street for a bike run on Saturday, July 11, 2026. 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 Kunkel, seconded by Oliphant, and unanimously approved.

Manager Steigerwalt reported that he had an Easement for East Rowe Street Stormwater Main to present for council's consideration. A recommendation was made to approve the Easement Agreement for East Rowe Street Stormwater Main. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Kunkel, seconded by Haldeman, and unanimously approved.

Manager Steigerwalt reported on the following: Liberty Tree Park improvements including the Liberty Bell and banner, thanked Steve Matalavage for work on the sidewalk, and a Liberty Tree Park dedication ceremony scheduled for July 4 at 10:00 a.m.; a Schuylkill County America 250 Celebration Weekend planned for June 26 and June 27 in Pottsville; the pool is currently under construction; the sewer plant upgrade is ongoing; and reminded council to think of projects that will qualify for CDBG funding.

Under the Parking & Traffic Committee report, a recommendation was made to approve a handicapped parking space application for 643 Arlington Street. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Haldeman, seconded by Amentler, and unanimously approved.

Under the Parking & Traffic Committee report, a recommendation was made to amend the agenda to include a motion to approve a handicapped parking space application for 216 Bowe Street. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Haldeman, seconded by Kunkel, and unanimously approved.

Under the Parking & Traffic Committee report, a recommendation was made to approve a handicapped parking space application for 216 Bowe Street. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Haldeman, seconded by Kunkel, and unanimously approved.

Under the Parking & Traffic Committee report, a recommendation was made to approve a handicapped parking space application for 324 Hazle Street. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Kunkel, seconded by Amentler, and unanimously approved.

Under the Finance, Wage & Salary Committee report, a recommendation was made to hire Adam Bachert, Joshua Hadesty and Robert Swenson as part-time maintenance workers at a pay rate of \$12.50 per hour. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Kunkel, seconded by Haldeman, and unanimously approved.

Councilwoman Kunkel of the Finance, Wage & Salary Committee reported that she had a resolution appointing Hometown Municipal Services LLC as an alternate building code official, plan reviewer and inspector under the Pennsylvania Uniform Construction Code to present for council's consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-6

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA, SCHUYLKILL COUNTY,
PENNSYLVANIA, APPOINTING THE THIRD-PARTY AGENCY FOR THE
BOROUGH**

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 Kunkel, seconded by Hollenbach, and approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Councilwoman Kunkel of the Finance, Wage & Salary Committee reported that she had a resolution approving a fee schedule from Hometown Municipal Services LLC for plan review, permit and inspection services to present for council's consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-7**UNIFORM CONSTRUCTION CODE (UCC) FEE SCHEDULE**

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 Kunkel, seconded by Oliphant, and approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Councilwoman Kunkel of the Finance, Wage & Salary Committee reported that she had a resolution appointing a primary and alternate Sewage Enforcement Officers to present for council's consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-8**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA BOROUGH COUNCIL FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF SEWAGE ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS FOR THE BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA, SCHUYLKILL COUNTY, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA**

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 Kunkel, seconded by Amentler, and approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Councilwoman Kunkel of the Finance, Wage & Salary Committee reported that she had a resolution approving a fee schedule for sewage permits and sewage enforcement services to present for council's consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-9**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA BOROUGH COUNCIL, COUNTY OF SCHUYLKILL, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, ESTABLISHING THE FEE STRUCTURE FOR SEWAGE ENFORCEMENT WORK AND SEWAGE PERMITS WITHIN THE BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA**

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 Kunkel, seconded by Amentler, and approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Under the Finance, Wage & Salary Committee Report, a recommendation was made to amend the agenda to include a motion to approve the budgeted appropriations for the borough fire companies. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Kunkel, seconded by Amentler, and unanimously approved.

Under the Finance, Wage & Salary Committee Report, a recommendation was made to approve the budgeted appropriations for the borough fire companies. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Kunkel, seconded by Amentler, and unanimously approved.

Under the Police and Community Building Committee report, a recommendation was made to approve Change Order #7 and Change Orders #24 and #25 for the Tamaqua Police Station and Community Center Project. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Oliphant, seconded by Kunkel, and unanimously approved.

Mayor Clemson announced that that Union Pacific Railroad's "Big Boy" will make a brief stop in Tamaqua on July 2 and warned residents that traffic and parking in Tamaqua is going to be a headache. Mayor Clemson also announced that a July 4th ceremony is scheduled for

10:00 a.m. on July 4, at Liberty Tree Park, and National Night Out is scheduled for August 4, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the High School.

The meeting was opened to the floor.

Michael Polyak of 409 North Railroad Street expressed his concern with development of data centers in the area. Mr. Polyak referenced a sample ordinance that could be used as a guideline that offers protections and regulations currently not in zoning and can be tweaked to address resident and council concerns. Mr. Polyak also referenced a curative amendment that allows municipalities 180 days to address inefficiencies in zoning. Mr. Polyak stated he hopes council will discuss the ordinance with the Eastern Schuylkill Regional Planning (ESRP) and agree to conditional use language into zoning. Solicitor Odorizzi thanked Mr. Polyak for the information and said that it would be passed on to ESRP. Solicitor Odorizzi stated that once the zoning ordinance is revised by ESRP, it will be passed on to the municipalities for review and approval.

David Mooney of 405 Mauch Chunk Street expressed concern with raw sewage in his basement that is coming from his neighbor's sewer line. Mr. Mooney stated that the issue is ongoing and that he has filed many complaints with Code Enforcement and with the Borough Manager and the response is unacceptable and the situation is still unresolved. There was much discussion about the matter. Vice President Bowman stated that it is a civil matter that should be handled by an attorney.

Susan Baddick of 415 North Nescopec Street commended the police department for addressing the dirt bike issue in her neighborhood. Ms. Baddick also asked about a No Parking sign on West Street and if a School Zone speed sign could be posted in the area near the Elementary School.

George Weaver of Leighton expressed his concern with development of a charter school at Rabbit Run and restrictions on access to the dam.

Cody Houser of 320 East Elm Street also expressed his concern with a charter school stating that membership to Rabbit Run may decline if hours are limited for fishing and that the state would no longer stock fish.

Vice President Bowman stated that despite of what is being said, no decision was made on the development of a charter school.

Jen Clinton of 55 Municipal Road, and a representative of the charter school, stated that nothing was set in stone regarding the school and that she would be attending the next Rabbit Run Commission meeting to talk more about the matter.

Elaine Ziegler of West Penn expressed her concern about not being able to fish at Rabbit Run.

David John of 409 North Nescopec Street asked if the borough could mow a grassy area on West Street. Public Works Director Stidham will look into the matter.

Kathy Quinn-Farber of Glenwood Avenue asked about the development of a charter school at Rabbit Run. Jen Clinton, a charter school representative, explained the school would be used for environmental, agricultural and animal sciences and would be built on 3 to 4 acres of land with minimal disruption to the environment.

Kathy Miorelli of 163 Owl Creek Road asked about the borough's participation in the ICE 287 (g) program and what is the benefit. Solicitor Odorizzi stated that nothing has been agreed to other than that council authorized him to send a letter to request more information on the program. Sergeant Rodgers explained that the program would expand authority to enforce immigration laws and provide training and resources for police officers. There was much discussion on the matter.

Tine Burns of Owl Creek asked if participation in the ICE 287 (g) program will be brought up for public comment.

Rob Jennings, Walker Township Supervisor, expressed concerns with the charter school being built on land zoned as woodlands preserved and how traffic on Hunter Street would increase significantly.

Cheryl Humes of Clamtown Road expressed her concerns with partnering with ICE and about the legal risks, liabilities and potential lawsuits that may occur.

Mike Zvalaren of 133 Kiehner Street, Schuylkill Haven, advised council to pay close attention to the language "may" and "up to" in the ICE program documents, and stated that there are a lot of risks with partnering with ICE.

Matt Koch, Walker Township Supervisor, expressed his concern about an increase in traffic and no supply of water and sewer to support a school at Rabbit Run.

Lavina Dean of Valley Road expressed her concern with a charter school with limited water available in the area.

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 the borough officials. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Kunkel, seconded by Haldeman, 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 Haldeman, seconded by Kunkel, and unanimously approved.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:40 p.m. on motion of Kunkel, seconded by Oliphant, to meet again at the call of the President.

ATTEST:

Amy Macalush, Borough Secretary/Treasurer