

The Tamaqua Borough Council held its first Regular Council Meeting for the month of July on Tuesday, July 21, 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, Brian Connely, George Haldeman, Jay Hollenbach, and Kyle Oliphant. Absent was councilwoman Kathy Kunkel. Officials present were Mayor David Clemson, Chief Michael Hobbs, 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 President Connely. The invocation was given by President Connely followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. The roll was called with six councilmembers present and one absent.

The reading of the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held on June 16, 2026 was ordered suspended, and with no additions or corrections, the minutes were approved as written on motion of Bowman, seconded by Hollenbach, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Tamaqua Senior Citizens thanking Council for the help and support over the years. The group is looking forward to using the new Tamaqua Community Center when it is complete.

Communication was received from Nate MacDonald announcing his resignation as Executive Director of Eastern Schuylkill Recreation Commission (ESRC), effective June 19, 2026. A recommendation was made to accept the letter of resignation of Nate MacDonald from Eastern Schuylkill Recreation Commission (ESRC). 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 Haldeman, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Eastern Schuylkill Recreation Commission (ESRC), announcing that Michael Ouly has been selected to serve as Executive Director of ESRC, effective June 20, 2026. A recommendation was made to accept the appointment of Michael Ouly as Executive Director of ESRC. 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 unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Kathy Kunkel of the Tamaqua Civil Service Commission, requesting Council to consider the following changes for the current testing Cycle:

1. Eliminate the \$35.00 application fee
2. Provide a minimum cash incentive of \$2,500, payable on a successful applicant's anniversary date over a five-year period

A recommendation was made to table action on 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 Amentler, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Kristy Schmick, Tamaqua American Legion Auxiliary, requesting to close the parking lot, adjoining streets and the north side of Broad Street for their 3rd Annual Bike Run on Saturday, August 29th. 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 Hollenbach, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Thomas Isleib, Commander of the American Legion Post 173, requesting permission to close off one block of Nescopec Street, also known as Memorial Avenue, and the parking lot adjoining the American Legion in order to host a bike stop for the Raising Awareness for FATCO Syndrome event on August 15 from 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. The communication is also requesting the bagging of parking meters and assistance from Tamaqua Fire Police. A recommendation was made to grant the requests. 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 Oliphant, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Paul Dodson, Tamaqua Area Faith Fellowship Network, requesting permission to hold the Annual Hunger Walk on Sunday, November 1 from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. The walk would start at the Community Art Center and proceed to Griffiths Funeral Home and then back to the Community Art Center. 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 Haldeman, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Secretary/Treasurer Macalush asking council to consider a motion to open an escrow account for fire loss insurance proceeds received for the property at 539 East Broad Street, in accordance with the Tamaqua Fire Escrow Ordinance No. 568, as amended. A recommendation was made to open a new account for the fire loss insurance proceeds received for the property at 539 East Broad 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 Amentler, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Officer Anthony Stanell announcing his intention to retire. Officer Stanell stated that his last working day will be December 2, 2026, at which time he will use accumulated paid time off and his last day of employment will be on or around June 22, 2027. A recommendation was made to accept the resignation of Officer Anthony Stanell. 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 Hollenbach, and unanimously approved.

Under Special Business, Council recognized Micah Gursky of the Tamaqua Area Community Partnership, who expressed his gratitude to the borough for all the support and hard work with the Liberty Tree Park project, and for the July 4 dedication ceremony. Mr. Gursky presented the borough with a "Declaration" of thanks from the Liberty Tree Park Committee. President Connely thanked Mr. Gursky and the committee for their work on the project as well.

Manager Steigerwalt reported that he had a Subgrant Agreement between the Borough of Tamaqua and Tamaqua Area Community Partnership for the Historical Building Façade Grant to present for Council's consideration. The amount of the grant is \$79,444.00 for restoration of Tamaqua Historic District building facades at 117 and 119 West Broad Street. A recommendation was made to approve the Subgrant Agreement between the Borough of Tamaqua and Tamaqua Area Community Partnership for the Historical Building Façade Grant. 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 Hollenbach, and unanimously approved.

Manager Steigerwalt reported on the extension of the River Walk Project connecting East Broad Street and Cedar Street that will extend through a borough property and through the Hi- Rise property. The project is being funded with a \$420,000.00 grant from PennDOT. Manager Steigerwalt stated that inspector proposals for the project are due on Friday, July 24. Council recognized Dave Mace who asked for a copy of the list of inspectors.

Manager Steigerwalt also reported on the following: a grant for the Ambulance Association; bids for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Hunter Street paving project are due August 12; possible demolition of 27 East Vine Street and 17, 19, and 21 North Greenwood Street; the ongoing sewer plant upgrade; pool construction and the new police station and community center.

Manager Steigerwalt reported that he had a proposal from Alfred Benesch Co. of Pottsville, PA in the amount of \$5,500.00 for the annual inspection of the Upper and Lower Owl Creek Dams. A recommendation was made to approve a proposal from Alfred Benesch Co. of Pottsville, PA in the amount of \$5,500.00 for the annual inspection of the Upper and Lower Owl Creek Dams. 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 Haldeman, and unanimously approved.

Under the Public Safety Committee report, Chairman Amentler reported that the Fire Chief and Borough Solicitor are currently reviewing the Fire Department Mutual Aid Agreements to determine if any updates or changes are needed.

Under the Public Safety Committee Report, President Connely reported on the fire department's response time to the recent garage fire at 525 East Broad Street. President Connely stated that despite what was posted on social media regarding the removal of East End Fire Company, the fire department's response was not delayed and within 7 minutes from notification of fire, firefighters had water on the fire. President Connely stated that the fire department responded in 4 minutes and had water on the fire in 7 minutes, exceeding the 9-minute response time standard set by NFPA (National Fire Protection Association).

Chairman Haldeman of the Parking & Traffic Committee reported that he had an ordinance amending and restating Chapter 326 of the Code of Ordinances which establishes regulations for vehicles, traffic, and parking to present for council's consideration:

ORDINANCE NO. 757

AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA, SCHUYLKILL COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, RESTATING CHAPTER 326 OF THE BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA CODE OF ORDINANCES ESTABLISHING REGULATIONS FOR VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC, SECTIONS 326-1 THROUGH 326-40 GOVERNING TRAFFIC REGULATIONS (INCLUDING ONE-WAY STREETS AND NO TURN ON RED REGULATIONS), PARKING, PARKING METERS, AS WELL AS PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS THEREOF.

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

Under the Parking & Traffic Committee report, a recommendation was made to place a "No Outlet" sign on North Railroad Street (Pleasant Row) at the intersection of North Railroad and West Elm Streets. 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 Oliphant, and unanimously approved.

Mayor Clemson reported on the great response received by the community on the arrival of “Big Boy” and the July 4 dedication ceremony at Liberty Tree Park. Mayor Clemson also announced that National Night Out is scheduled for August 4, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Tamaqua High School.

The meeting was opened to the floor.

Dave Mace of the Tamaqua Criz Authority requested an executive session with council to discuss real estate matters.

Jack Sakusky of Owl Creek Road asked about repainting the lines and an electronic speed sign in Owl Creek.

Holly Kuhn of 33 Pine Street expressed her concern and issues with a neighbor’s overgrown plants and bamboo invading her property, feeding feral cats, skunks and other animals digging holes. Ms. Coombe was advised that the issue with the neighbor is a civil matter. Public Works Director Stidham will have Code Enforcement look into the matter.

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

Solicitor Odorizzi reported on ESRP revisions to a zoning ordinance to provide for data centers, warehouses and short-term rentals. Solicitor Odorizzi stated that after 4 months of meetings, the revised ordinance to regulate data centers and warehouses is finalized and is being forwarded from ESRP to the respective planning commissions for review.

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 Bowman, seconded by Haldeman, and unanimously approved.

Under Unfinished Business, President Connely reported that a letter was sent requesting more information on the ICE 287 (g) program, but nothing has been received back yet. President Connely also reported that Socrates is no longer interested in developing a charter school at Rabbit Run.

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 Haldeman, and unanimously approved.

A recommendation was made to hold an executive session to discuss real estate 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 Amentler, and unanimously approved.

The council meeting was recessed at approximately 7:30 p.m. while council met in executive session.

The council meeting was reconvened at approximately 8:00 p.m.

President Connely announced that an executive session was held to discuss real estate matters.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:00 p.m. on motion of Bowman, seconded by Oliphant, to meet again at the call of the President.

ATTEST:

Amy Macalush, Borough Secretary/Treasurer