

The Tamaqua Borough Council held its first Regular Council Meeting for the month of May on Tuesday, May 21, 2024 at 7:02 p.m. in the Council Chambers at the Tamaqua Municipal Building, 320 East Broad Street, Tamaqua, PA.

Present were Councilmembers Robert Amentler, Brian Connely, Jay Hollenbach Jr., Kathy Kunkel, Mary Linkevich and Ritchie Linkhorst. Officials present were Mayor Nathan Gerace, Chief of Police Michael Hobbs, Borough Manager Kevin Steigerwalt, Public Works Director Jay Stidham and Borough Secretary/Treasurer Trainee Timothy M. Ziegler. Solicitor Anthony Odorizzi & Councilmen Ronald Bowman were excused.

President Connely called for a moment of silence for George B. "Woodie" Woodward Jr., former Tamaqua Chief of Police. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family.

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by President Connely. The invocation was given by Councilwoman Linkevich followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Councilman Amentler. The roll was called with six council members present.

The reading of the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held on April 16, 2024 was ordered suspended, and with no additions or corrections, the minutes were approved as written on motion of Kunkel, seconded by Linkevich, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Brent Confer, Captain of the Tamaqua Fire Police requesting permission to hold a boot drive fundraiser on May 25, 2024 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the vicinity of the Five Points intersection. 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 Linkevich, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Thomas Isleib, Commander of the American Legion Post 173, requesting permission to close off one block of Nescopeck Street, also known as Memorial Avenue, and the parking lot adjoining the American Legion in order to host a bike stop event on June 1, 2024 from 12:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. to support the Frackville Borough Sesquicentennial Celebration. Mr. Isleib is also requesting assistance from Tamaqua Fire Police. 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 Linkevich, seconded by Amentler, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Secretary/Treasurer Trainee Timothy M. Ziegler asking council to consider a motion to open an escrow account for fire loss insurance proceeds received from Nationwide Insurance Company for the property at 110 Pitt Street in accordance with the Tamaqua Fire Escrow Ordinance No. 568. A recommendation was made to open a new account for the fire insurance proceeds for the property at 110 Pitt Street. 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 Dale Freudenberger, president of the Tamaqua Historical Society requesting permission to hold the 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Tamaqua Summerfest on Father's Day, Sunday June 16, 2024 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and is requesting to close several streets and also asked for parking restrictions the day of the event. The communication also requested the use of a borough dump truck and wooden stairs. 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 Kunkel, seconded by Linkevich, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Francis Betz, secretary of the Citizens Fire Company No. 1, requesting permission to hold their annual Bazaar on Saturday June 29, 2024. The communication is requesting permission to close Hegarty Avenue from Friday June 28<sup>th</sup> to Sunday June 30<sup>th</sup>. The 100 block of Rowe Street would only be closed during the hours of the Bazaar from 12:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. The communication also requested their annual Fire Apparatus parade on June 29<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. The parade would start at the high school and proceed through town and end back on West Broad Street at South Railroad Street. The communication is also requesting permission to close Hegarty Avenue on Saturday October 5<sup>th</sup> to host their annual Pig Roast. 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 Linkevich, seconded by Amentler, and unanimously approved.

Manager Steigerwalt reported on the following: a hearing regarding the Community Development Block Grant allocation; and a current project to replace fences at the South Ward and North Ward playgrounds, but there was a glitch with the decorative fencing for the North Ward playground. The fence that was chosen is not made primarily with American steel. The engineer is working to find something similar that does meet the “Buy American” requirements and once it is found, that portion of the project will need to be rebid. There was also some discussion with the engineers regarding street resurfacing projects on Center and Cedar streets. They should be completed shortly and ready to be advertised. The Borough employees have been busy getting the Bungalow Pool ready. The pool should be ready for opening day Saturday May 25, 2024. Manager Steigerwalt also stated that a letter was received by Joan Rottet of Mircale Ford, (formerly known as Rottet Motors) regarding ground water testing from Liberty Environmental and she is requesting permission to drill some wells on borough property; one on the lot of Miracle Ford and the other on the lot housing the Water Department garage. Manager Steigerwalt will pass this on to Solicitor Odorizzi to review.

Under the Public Safety Committee report, a motion was made to hire Phoenix Ritchie as a part-time police officer effective immediately. 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 Kunkel, and unanimously approved.

Under the Public Safety Committee report, a motion was made to amend the agenda to purchase a vehicle from Miracle Ford at a cost not exceeding \$20,000.00. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on the motion of Linkhorst, seconded by Kunkel and unanimously approved.

Under the Public Safety Committee report, a motion was made to approve the purchase a police vehicle from Miracle Ford up to and not exceeding \$20,000.00. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on the motion of Linkhorst, seconded by Hollenbach, and unanimously approved.

Under Parking and Traffic Committee report, a motion was made to approve a handicapped parking space application for 202 Center 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 Linkevich, and unanimously approved.

Under Parking and Traffic Committee report, a motion was made to approve an agreement with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Wilkes-Barre VA Medical Center, allowing the organization to park on borough property. 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.

Under Parking and Traffic Committee report, a recommendation was made to adopt an ordinance regulating dumpsters on public streets. The following ordinance was presented for council’s consideration:

**ORDINANCE NO. 741  
BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA  
SCHUYLKILL COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA ADDING, AT CHAPTER 273 (SOLID WASTE), AN ORDINANCE REGULATING BULK REFUSE CONTAINERS WITHIN THE BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA, AS WELL AS, AMONG OTHER THINGS, ESTABLISHING PERMIT REQUIREMENTS AND FEES RELATED THERETO, RULES REGARDING PLACEMENT AND USE OF SUCH CONTAINERS, INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING, WITHOUT LIMITATION.**

A recommendation was made to adopt the foregoing ordinance requiring permits to have bulk refuse containers. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on the motion of Kunkel, seconded by Hollenbach, and approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Under Parking and Traffic Committee report, a motion was made to amend the agenda to approve a handicap parking space application for 400 West Broad 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 Parking and Traffic Committee report a motion was made to approve a handicapped parking space application for 400 West Broad 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 and Salary Committee report, a motion was made to hire Michaelene Trubilla as a part-time Utility Billing Clerk at a pay rate of \$17.00 an hour. 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 Linkevich and unanimously approved.

Under the Finance, Wage and Salary Committee report, a motion was made to approve the transfer of Shane Young to the Mechanic/Street Worker position. 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 Amentler and unanimously approved.

Under the Finance, Wage and Salary Committee report, a motion was made to approve the transfer of Lonnie Ahner Wastewater Treatment Plant Work Leader Trainee position. 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 Kunkel and unanimously approved.

Under the Finance, Wage and Salary Committee report, a motion was made to approve the transfer of Todd Macalush to the Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator position. 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 Kunkle and unanimously approved.

Under the Finance, Wage and Salary Committee report, a motion was made to approve the permanent transfer of Timothy Ziegler to the Borough Secretary/Treasurer position. 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 Amentler and unanimously approved.

Under the Finance, Wage and Salary Committee report, a motion was made to approve the permanent transfer of Lori Patrick to the full-time Utility Billing Clerk position. 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 Amentler and unanimously approved.

Under the Finance, Wage and Salary Committee report, a motion was made to retain Frank Staines as a full-time Building Custodian effective June 6, 2024. 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 Amentler and unanimously approved.

Under the Finance, Wage and Salary Committee report, a motion was made to hire Zane Bynon, Gavin Clouser, Lauren Hill, Nathan Milkovits and Michael Styka as part-time maintenance workers at a pay rate of \$12.50 per hour, plus \$0.25 per hour for each year of service. 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 Amentler and unanimously approved.

Under Neighborhoods, Downtown & Historic District Committee Report, a recommendation was made to approve Certificates of Appropriateness for the following: a project to fix a retaining wall at 104 North Lehigh Street; to repaint a large sign at 14 West Broad Street; permission to demolish the end house at 233 Cedar Street; and permission to install a vinyl sign for the new business in the display window at the front of the building at 237 West Broad Street. 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 Linkevich, and unanimously approved.

Under the Recreation and Youth Committee report, a motion was made to hire part-time lifeguards at a pay rate of \$10.00 per hour plus \$0.25 per hour for each year of service. The lifeguards are Andrea Betz, Alexis Bowman, Ben Klingaman, McKenna Ehrig, Nicole Mushock, Marcus Roseland, Sophia Sitlinger, Destiny Steinmetz, Sean Wall and Edward Zukovich. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Linkevich, seconded by Kunkel, and unanimously approved.

Under the Recreation and Youth Committee report, a motion was made to hire part-time pool clerks at a pay rate of \$9.00 per hour plus \$0.25 per hour for each year of service. The clerks are Destini Denning and Griaahny Santos. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Linkevich, seconded by Kunkel, and unanimously approved.

Under the Recreation and Youth Committee report, a motion was made to approve a lease agreement with Debra Sebelin for the pool concession stand. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Linkevich, seconded by Kunkel, and approved.

Under the Recreation and Youth Committee report a recommendation was made to adopt a resolution accepting a \$60,000.00 grant from John E. Morgan Foundation. The following resolution was presented for council’s consideration:

**RESOLUTION NO. 2024-2**

**Resolution of the Borough Council, Tamaqua, Pennsylvania  
Regarding Grants from the John E. Morgan Foundation, Inc.**

Under the Recreation and Youth Committee report, a motion was made to adopt a resolution accepting a \$60,000.00 grant from the John E. Morgan Foundation Inc. for pool operation and maintenance expenses. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Linkevich, seconded by Kunkel, and approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Under the Recreation and Youth Committee report, a motion was made to award a contract to H&P Construction Inc. for improvements to the North and Middle Ward Playground and South Ward Playground at a cost of \$99,799.11. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Linkevich, seconded by Kunkel, and unanimously approved.

Under the Cable Franchise Committee report, a motion was made to adopt an ordinance granting a non-exclusive cable television franchise to Service Electric Cablevision Inc. The following ordinance was presented for council’s consideration:

**ORDINANCE NO. 742**

**ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA AUTHORIZING THE  
EXECUTION OF THE EXTENSION OF A CABLE FRANCHISE AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN THE BOROUGH AND SERVICE ELECTRIC CABLEVISION INC.**

Under the Cable Franchise Committee report, a recommendation was made to adopt the foregoing ordinance granting a nonexclusive cable television franchise to Service Electric. 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 Linkevich, and approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Mayor Gerace reported that call volume has been up due to the warm weather, and he noted that police are patrolling parks and making rounds to make their presence known to the public and they will continue to patrol the areas throughout the summer.

The meeting was opened to the floor:

John Scalia of 539 Arlington Street had concerns about cars driving in the opposite direction on and around the 600 block of Arlington Street. The issue was referred to the Parking and Traffic Committee to see about signage in the area.

Linda Miller of 407 Willing Street wanted to know when painting will continue for handicap spots. Painting will begin shortly with summer help.

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 Kunkel, seconded by Linkevich, and unanimously approved.

Under Borough Solicitor's report, a motion was made to amend the agenda to include a resolution to extend the Tamaqua Borough Authority for an additional 50 years. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on the motion of Kunkel, seconded by Linkevich and unanimously approved. The following resolution was presented for council's consideration:

**RESOLUTION NO. 3-2024**  
**BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA**  
**SCHUYLKILL COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA, SCHUYLKILL COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA ("BOROUGH"), AUTHORIZING AN INCREASE IN THE TAMAQUA BOROUGH AUTHORITY'S TERM OF EXISTENCE FOR AN ADDITIONAL FIFTY (50) YEARS FROM THE DATE IMMEDIATELY SUBSEQUENT TO ITS INITIAL TERM OF EXISTENCE, AND ALSO AUTHORIZING FILING OF ARTICLES OF AMENDMENT WITH THE PENNSYLVANIA SECRETARY OF STATE IN CONNECTION THEREWITH.**

A motion was made to adopt the foregoing resolution extending the Tamaqua Borough Authority for an additional 50 years. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Linkevich, seconded by Kunkel, and unanimously approved by roll call vote

Under Unfinished Business, President Connely explained about residents at a previous meeting having concerns regarding the owners of 236 North Columbia Street and also 238 North Columbia Street and concerns about the condition of the property. President Connely explained that council spoke with the owners and the owners agreed to turn over the properties to the borough as they will not be able to bring the properties up to code to be habitable.

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 Kunkle, seconded by Linkhorst, with Councilman Hollenbach abstained from Voucher numbers 50632, 50640, 50641, 50642 and 50643.

Under New Business, President Connely explained that the Tamaqua Borough Authority was awarded a 12.2-million-dollar grant for the Sewer Plant upgrade with the remainder of the money coming from a loan.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:48 p.m. on motion of Amentler, seconded by Linkhorst, to meet again at the call of the President.

ATTEST:

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Timothy M. Ziegler, Borough Secretary/Treasurer