

The Tamaqua Borough Council held its first Regular Council Meeting for the month of July on Tuesday, July 16, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at the Tamaqua Municipal Building, 320 East Broad Street, Tamaqua, PA.

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

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Vice President Bowman. The invocation was given by Councilwoman Linkevich followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Councilwoman Kunkel. The roll was called with five councilmembers present and two excused.

The reading of the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held on June 18, 2024 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 Adam Gallagher expressing interest in serving on the Tamaqua Planning Commission. A recommendation was made to appoint Adam Gallagher to the commission. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Amentler, seconded by Kunkel, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Micah Gursky, executive director of Tamaqua Area Community Partnership, requesting to have the land development process waived for the new police station and community center project at 133 East Broad Street. A recommendation was made to waive the land development process. 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.

Borough Manager Steigerwalt reported on the following: There was a preconstruction meeting with the contractor that was awarded the project at the North and Middle Ward and South Ward playgrounds, and the contractor has a tentative start date of mid-August. There was an issue with the steel certification for the fence project for the North and Middle Ward Playground and it must be rebid. Everyone on council received a copy of the advertisement for bids. The due date for bids is August 14, 2024, and the bids will be submitted through the PennBid online bidding system. The results of the bids should be received for the second council meeting in August. Manager Steigerwalt stated that bids for renovations to the wastewater treatment plant are also due August 14, 2024. There will be a pre-bid meeting for the wastewater treatment plant upgrades at the end of July. Results from that bid opening will also be available for the second council meeting in August. Manager Steigerwalt distributed a financing schedule for the \$27 million wastewater treatment plant upgrade. The Sewer Authority received PENNVEST funding consisting of a \$12 million grant and a \$7 million loan. The authority will also seek additional funding to cover whatever costs are above and beyond the PENNVEST funding. The PENNVEST closing is November 19, 2024, and at the September authority meeting there will be a discussion on the ordinances for financing. Manager Steigerwalt also reminded council that the

county needs a list of the borough's projects for the Community Development Block Grant application by the end of August 2024.

Manager Steigerwalt also stated that a private sale notice was received from the county for three properties at 135 Gay Street, 256 Cottage Avenue and 76 Hunter Street. Information on the bidders was requested to see if they have any outstanding code violations and, depending on the response, the borough may want to challenge the sales. Manager Steigerwalt then asked Public Works Director Stidham to give an update on the paving project on Cedar Street and Clay Street. Public Works Director Stidham said both streets will be paved soon. He spoke to the project engineer, and he is waiting for some paperwork that he needs to be submitted and then a tentative start date will be determined.

Under the Finance, Wage and Salary Committee report, a motion was made to proceed with hiring the next eligible full-time police officer on the civil service list. 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 award a contract to Gaver Industries Inc. dba Barker & Barker Paving for paving Cedar Street and a section of Clay Street at a cost of \$90,108.00. 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 Linkhorst, and unanimously approved.

Under the Recreation and Youth Committee report, a motion was made to hire Zoe Katona as a part-time lifeguard at a pay rate of \$10.00 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 Linkevich, seconded by Kunkel, and unanimously approved.

Under the Recreation and Youth Committee report, a motion was made to authorize the borough solicitor to prepare and record a new deed for the H. D. Buehler Memorial Pool including the deed restrictions required by the Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant. 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, Public Works Director Stidham stated that he and councilwomen Linkevich and Kunkel met with a forester regarding the trees along Broad Street. There are many trees that are damaging the sidewalks, and some are being destroyed by beetles. The forester suggested taking some of them down and replacing them with trees that will not grow as large.

Mayor Nathan Gerace reported that the National Night Out will be held on Tuesday, August 6 from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. in the parking lot next to the American Hose Fire Company. There will be hotdogs, popcorn, ice cream and a bounce house along with several vendors available. Mayor Gerace said the public is welcome to come out for free food and activities.

The meeting was opened to the floor.

Mark Bower of 213 West Spruce Street expressed concern about trees that are hanging down from the last storm. He stated that there are some heavy branches on a paper street near his

house and asked if the borough can have them looked at and possibly trimmed so they do not break off and fall onto his garage. Borough Manager Steigerwalt said he would have it looked at.

George Haldeman of 247 VanGelder Street asked if the borough heard anything from Lehigh Carbon Community College regarding the work that was being done to stop the drainage from running down High and Coal streets. Councilman Bowman said that the fiscal year for the school starts July 1, 2024 and it will be a July project. They have removed the mulch, and it appears there is river rock there to be put down. The borough will follow up to ensure it gets completed.

Rich Kennedy of 333 Hazle Street had concerns about a property next door to him at 335 Hazle Street that has been condemned. He just replaced his roof and there is water leaking in from the house. He is worried that it will begin leaking into his home and there are also rats in the property. Borough Manager Steigerwalt said the borough will make code enforcement aware of the issues and have them look at the property and told Mr. Kennedy to contact code enforcement.

Kathy Nunemacher of 322 Mahanoy Street asked where she could find our town ordinances. Borough Manager Steigerwalt directed her to the borough website and to click on the link for the General Code website.

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 Amentler, 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 Kunkel, seconded by Linkhorst, and unanimously approved.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:36 p.m. on motion of Kunkel, seconded by Linkhorst, to meet again at the call of the President.

ATTEST:

Timothy M. Ziegler, Borough Secretary/Treasurer