

The Tamaqua Borough Council held its first Regular Council Meeting for the month of August on Tuesday, August 15, 2023, 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, Mary Linkevich and Ritchie Linkhorst. Councilmembers excused were Jay Hollenbach Jr. and Kathy Kunkle. Officials present were Police Chief Michael Hobbs, Borough Solicitor Tony Odorizzi, Borough Manager Kevin Steigerwalt and Borough Secretary/Treasurer Tonia Sakusky. Mayor Nathan Gerace was absent.

The meeting was called to order by President Connely. The invocation was given by Councilwoman Linkevich. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilman Bowman. The roll was called with five councilmembers present and two excused.

The reading of the minutes of the first Regular Council Meeting held on July 18, 2023, was ordered suspended; and with no additions or corrections; the minutes were approved as written on motion of Bowman, seconded by Amentler, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Amber E. Zuber, LCCC, updating Council that the Morgan Center at LCCC Tamaqua will celebrate their 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on Tuesday September 26, 2023. The event will be held outdoors and will need additional parking along High and Van Gelder Streets; kindly request that parking be restricted to our students and guests along High and Van Gelder Street between Swatara and Spruce Streets on the date of the event until 4pm with a rain date scheduled for September 27<sup>th</sup>. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered to grant the requests on motion of Bowman, seconded by Linkevich, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Albert L. Gricoski, Director of the Schuylkill County Voter Registration Election Bureau, requesting the use of the Tamaqua Municipal Building as a Polling Site for November 7, 2023 General Election. The State requires all Election Facilities to be handicapped accessible with narrows the option available. They tried to accommodate the Borough of Tamaqua's request to move the polling site to another location in the Primary Election combining with another location in the borough, it did not work out as well as we had hoped. With limited locations to use within the precinct and the inability to return to the High Rise we wish to return to the Borough Building; your building is proven safe and secure as a Polling Site and as a county entity we are fully insured. We would need access to your facility on Election Day from 6:00 am for set up till 9:00 pm for closing as the polls are open from 7am till 8pm. 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 Linkevich, to approve the Election Bureau to use the Municipal Building as a Polling Site for the General Election and unanimously approved.

Communication received from Liz Pinkey, Blue Waves head coach, requesting the use of the Bungalow Pavilion for the Tamaqua Blue Waves end of season party to be held on Friday August 11<sup>th</sup> from 4-6pm; has verified with the borough personnel that the pavilion is available at this time, please let me know wait fees we will need to provide. 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, to waive the fees and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Tammy Sienkiewicz, Safer Streets for Tamaqua's Little Feet, requesting permission to use Depot Square Park for an overdose awareness event and would like to use it again this year on August 31<sup>st</sup> from 8 am – 8 pm and also have use of the electricity; flags will be put out again in the morning and taken down before we leave. 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 Linkevich, to approve the request for the use of Depot Square Park and electricity and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from the Tamaqua Community Ambulance Association, updating Council that there will be an EMS round table discussion on Thursday September 4<sup>th</sup> at the Hometown Fire Company beginning at 7pm to discuss the nationwide crisis of Emergency Medical Services and requesting presence to migrate this healthcare crisis so when seconds count your family and friends will continue to receive quality and professional pre-hospital healthcare.

Communication was received from Tonia Sakusky, Borough Treasurer, requesting approval to close out the Fire Loss Escrow fund for 139 Mahanoy Street due to all matters being paid and disbursed under direction of the Borough's Code Officers; also requesting approval to update all the Borough's signature cards to reflect married name to which I hope to have the documents ready to sign for next meeting. 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 Linkhorst, to approve the request to close out the Fire Escrow account and unanimously approved. Borough Treasurer Sakusky does not, however, need approval nor a motion of approval, per Council President, to update signature cards due to marriage.

Borough Manager Steigerwalt reported on the 2023 Community Development Block Grant application and provided Council with an itemized CDBG allocation listing Administration receiving \$22,864 (18%), Clearance/Demolition – 1 property TBD at max \$31,248 and Street Reconstruction & Accessibility TBD \$72,912 for a total estimated project cost of \$127,025 which is slightly higher than 2022. There will be a meeting set up with Council members Bowman, Linkhorst and Amentler to discuss street resurfacing and will be reported at next council meeting.

Borough Manager Steigerwalt also provided a resolution to Council for consideration. The Fair Housing Resolution is an equal housing opportunity that lets all persons know that discrimination in the sale, rental, leasing, financing of housing or land to be used for construction of housing, or in the provision of brokerage services because of race, color, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), national origin, religion, familial status, or handicap, is prohibited by Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 Federal Fair Housing Act and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act adds the additional protected classes of age, ancestry and use of guide or support animals due to blindness, deafness or physical handicap of the user or because the users is a handler or trainer of support or guide animals; etc.

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-8**  
**FAIR HOUSING RESOLUTION**

The recommendation to adopt the resolution was so ordered on motion of Linkevich, seconded by Bowman, unanimously approved in a roll call vote.

Borough Manager Steigerwalt updated Council that St. Luke's is beyond the 90 day time frame and asked Council to conditionally approve a plan for final land development for 600-602 Pine Street. A recommendation was made to amend the agenda to include a motion to get a final land development plan. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The motion to amend the agenda, as well as the recommendation to get a final land development plan for 600-602 Pine Street were so ordered on motion of Bowman, seconded by Linkhorst, and unanimously approved. Manager also informed Council that insurance renewal applications are in process and hopefully ready for September meeting; Spruce and Railroad repairs are going on schedule; PennDOT project is progressing with on change, the contractor is asking to remove the brick from the street on Mauch Chunk St etc with no change in deadline and no change to order and directed anyone that had complaints to contact PennDOT directly due to it being their project; also demolition at 423 Willing Street will be provided notice to proceed and the other demolition projects are officially done except for 161 Penn Street.

Under AD HOC Cable Franchise Committee Report, a recommendation was made to adopt an ordinance granting a non-exclusive cable television franchise to Comcast.

### **ORDINANCE NO. 739**

#### **ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA, SCHUYLKILL COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A CABLE FRANCHISE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA AND COMCAST OF FLORIDA/MICHIGAN/NEW MEXICO/PENNSYLVANIA/WASHINGTON D.C.**

Council members Amentler, Linkevich, Kunkle and Manager Steigerwalt met with Comcast and the internet agreement is good; the borough will have two cable providers in town for residents to choose from ( Comcast or Service Electric ). One resident from 306 Gay Street asked if it was comparable service to which he was directed that he'd be able to pick what he wanted, and Mary Jo Moss, Orwigsburg, stated that she's been at multiple council's meetings and can tell the Borough of Tamaqua that Pottsville is doing the same thing. With no one else from the floor wishing to address council about this matter the floor is closed. The recommendation was so ordered on roll call motion of Linkevich, seconded by Amentler, and unanimously approved.

The meeting was opened to the floor.

Melissa Wilmont, 330 Mahanoy Street, reported to Council that her son's car has repeatedly been vandalized including windows being shot out and spit on and is asking that the borough send out a letter and post on social media that the parking is public with no reserved spots. There was a brief discussion on the situation resulting in Council President Connely stating that public parking is public parking no one has reserved spots in the borough; every spot is public even the handicapped spots.

Steve Kincade, 242 W. Broad Street, has issues with the street sweeping signs and wanted to know why there are no specific dates listed and requested that the Borough not sweep

the streets every week. Manager Steigerwalt responded that there are no specific dates due to weather and Council President Connely responded that it is noted/posted in multiple locations to avoid towing vehicles for the street sweeper for the residents. Mr. Kincade also asked if there were any ordinances for homes to be rented that must have insurance; Council responded that the State law requires it however the Borough does not require it and cannot legally be able to get involved with that to which led into a lengthy discussion turning into a question if the Borough has an ordinance for pet waste; absolutely there are signs posted as well for pet waste around the Borough and if anyone sees waste not being discarded properly to contact the police.

Phillip Christman, Gay Street, reported to Council that his house has issues with a various selection of bugs and has been in contact with Seitz and asked if there's anything the Council can do because he feels it's coming from the neighbor's house. This led to a discussion resulting with Mr. Christman being directed to contact the code officer, Jim Connely, tomorrow.

John Handler, 246 W. Broad Street, asked if sidewalks/walkways were included in the future plans which led to a brief discussion on the matter. Mr. Handler also asked for an update on the sewage treatment plant renovation to which he was told that the engineer has the plans and almost ready to bid.

Wanda Kropp, 432 E Union Street, updated Council that she has been reporting to Chief Hobbs about a petition that was signed by residents due to a business being run in the neighborhood that has their patrons fighting in the streets, public urination, etc., the business name is Smitty's. Council President Connely told her he will gladly take her petition and will investigate it and also hand it over to the Chief for further review.

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

Under Borough Solicitor Report, Borough Solicitor Odorizzi asked for a motion to amend the agenda to include a motion to approve an Improvement and Maintenance Agreement for the St. Luke's Medical Office at 600-602 Pine Street. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The motion to amend the agenda, as well as the recommendation to approve an Improvement and Maintenance Agreement for St. Luke's Medical Office at 600-602 Pine Street were so ordered on motion of Bowman, seconded by Linkevich, and unanimously approved. Borough Solicitor also requested an executive session for legal and personnel matters.

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 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 Bowman, seconded by Linkhorst, and unanimously approved.

A recommendation was made to hold an executive session to discuss legal 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 Bowman, seconded by Amentler, and unanimously approved.

The council meeting was recessed at approximately 7:50 p.m. while council met in executive session.

The council meeting was reconvened at approximately 8:28 p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:28 p.m. on motion of Bowman, seconded by Linkevich, to meet again at the call of the President.

ATTEST:

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Tonia Sakusky, Borough Secretary/Treasurer