

The Tamaqua Borough Council held its first Regular Council Meeting for the month of February on Tuesday, February 18, 2020 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, Thomas Cara, Brian Connely, Mary Linkevich, Ritchie Linkhorst and David Mace. Officials present were Mayor Nathan Gerace, Chief of Police Henry Woods, Borough Manager Kevin Steigerwalt, Solicitor Anthony Odorizzi, Borough Secretary/Treasurer Georgia Depos DeWire and Director of Community Development Ann Marie Calabrese.

The meeting was called to order by President Mace. The invocation was given by Councilman Cara followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Councilman Linkhorst. The roll was called with all councilmembers present.

The reading of the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held on January 21, 2020 was ordered suspended, and with no additions or corrections, the minutes were approved as written on motion of Cara, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Kathy Kunkel, secretary, stating that the Tamaqua Civil Service Commission has completed the testing process for the position of full-time police patrolman. Two candidates applied for the position, but only one successfully completed all the requirements. The successful candidate, Andrew J. Seip, has also undergone the required background checks. The commission has created a current civil service list which will be valid until January 21, 2021.

Communication was received from Zach Rubin, branch executive director of the Tamaqua YMCA, requesting permission to use the H.D. Buehler Memorial Pool every Tuesday and Thursday morning from 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. from June 16, 2020 through August 27, 2020 for their summer day camp and swim program. 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 Linkevich, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Aimee Dotson, outreach and office administrator of the Tamaqua Area Chamber of Commerce, requesting permission for one food truck to set up on borough property for each scheduled Chamber Summer Concert Series event. These dates include May 27th through the end of the season. Most concerts are on Thursday evenings with the exception of a few on Wednesdays and Sundays. The communication is also requesting the use of the two parking spaces closest to the pedestrian walkway in the North Railroad Street Parking Lot to be occupied by a food truck for each event. Although the Chamber will not be making any money from this, it will be offered as a service to hopefully draw more people to these concerts. Since the food truck will be a for-profit business, the borough can collect a solicitation fee. Each truck will be responsible for any applications, permits and insurance that the borough requires. A motion was made by Linkevich to approve the request. The motion died for lack of a second. President Mace asked council to consider the request and to take the matter up at a later time.

Manager Steigerwalt reported that a bid opening was held for the 2020 demolition of properties at 200-202 Pitt Street and 209-211 Lombard Street.

A recommendation was made to award the contract for the demolition of 200-202 Pitt Street to the lowest bidder, Brdaric Excavating Inc. of 913 Miller Street, Luzerne, PA at a cost of \$35,200.00 and to award the contract for the demolition of 209-211 Lombard Street to the lowest

bidder, Daniel J. Farber, 105 West Union Street, Tamaqua PA at a cost of \$17,200.00, as recommended by 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 Connely, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Manager Steigerwalt also reported on an annexation plan of lands of Leonard P. Fritzinger and Sabrina D. Matsago Fritzinger located at 325 Willing Street and 327 Willing Street as follows: the plan has been reviewed by the Tamaqua Planning Commission; the plan has been reviewed and endorsed by the Schuylkill County Planning Commission; and the purpose of the plan is to combine both lots into one single lot and combine both halves of two semi-detached homes into one single family detached dwelling. A recommendation was made to approve the annexation plan of lands of Leonard P. Fritzinger and Sabrina D. Matsago Fritzinger located at 325 Willing Street and 327 Willing Street. President Mace asked what the new address would be. Manager Steigerwalt would look into the matter. 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.

Manager Steigerwalt also reported that the position of a part-time Assistant Code Enforcement Officer was advertised. Manager Steigerwalt stated that he prepared a job description and that there were approximately 40 applicants for the position. President Mace referred the hiring of a part-time Assistant Code Enforcement Officer to the Finance, Wage and Salary Committee.

Manager Steigerwalt also reported that the 2020 census is approaching and he is encouraging people to reply to the census. There was some discussion about this matter.

Director of Community Development Calabrese reported on the Pool Feasibility study as follows: public meetings must be held to hear the results of a pool study prepared by Aquatic Facility Design Inc.; inviting the public to offer comments on the pool study findings and pool surveys; and the meeting would include a presentation of the proposed renovations for the pool.

Director of Community Development Calabrese also reported on the following: she submitted an entry for the HGTV Home Town Takeover contest; a welcome basket; a DCNR webinar; and the borough's appointed auditors, Maillie LLC would be performing a CRIZ audit.

Chief Woods reported that Officer Michael Weaver's probationary period ended on January 15, 2020 and Officer Corey Herring's probationary period ended on February 3, 2020. A recommendation was made to retain Officer Michael Weaver effective January 15, 2020 and to retain Officer Corey Herring effective February 3, 2020 as full-time officers. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Connely, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Chief Woods asked council to consider sending Corporal Michael Hobbs to the Police Executive Development (POLEX) training program through Penn State's Justice and Safety Institute. POLEX is designed to aid law enforcement supervisors and managers in their transition into positions of greater leadership and responsibility. The POLEX training program would be held from March 23, 2020 to April 3, 2020 at the Lehigh Township Municipal Building in Walnutport, PA at a cost of \$1,240.00. A recommendation was made to send Corporal Hobbs to the POLEX training program at a cost of \$1,240.00. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Connely, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Under the Building and Equipment Committee report, a recommendation was made to approve a proposal from McNulty's Building Supply Inc. to remove the old carpet and install new carpet tiles in the District Magistrate Office at a cost of \$7,130.00. 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 Connely, and unanimously approved.

Under the Recreation and Youth Committee report, a recommendation was made to hire Beth Jones as pool manager for the 2020 season at a pay rate of \$17.50 per hour. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Linkevich, seconded by Linkhorst, and unanimously approved.

Chairwoman Linkevich of the Recreation and Youth Committee reported that Nathan Steigerwalt was offered the position of Assistant Pool Manager for the 2020 season but has declined to accept the position since he has obtained other employment. A recommendation was made to advertise for the position of Assistant Pool Manager for the 2020 season. 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 Linkhorst, and unanimously approved.

Under the Recreation and Youth Committee report, a recommendation was made to advertise for part-time lifeguards and pool clerks for the 2020 season. 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 Linkhorst, and unanimously approved.

Under the Recreation and Youth Committee report, a recommendation was made to open the pool on Saturday, May 30, 2020 and to close on Sunday, August 23, 2020. 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 Linkhorst, and unanimously approved.

Under the Recreation and Youth Committee report, a recommendation was made to change the pool hours by opening at 11:00 a.m. and closing at 7:00 p.m. daily with the hours subject to change. 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 Linkhorst, and unanimously approved.

Under the Recreation and Youth Committee report, a recommendation was made to advertise for a vendor 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 Linkhorst, and unanimously approved.

Chairwoman Linkevich of the Recreation and Youth Committee reported that the borough would hold a public meeting to hear the results and offer comments on the Pool Feasibility study. A recommendation was made to advertise a public meeting to be held on March 10, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. to discuss the Tamaqua Pool Feasibility Study. 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 Linkhorst, and unanimously approved.

Under the Recreation and Youth Committee report, a recommendation was made to approve the season and daily pass fees for the H.D. Buehler Memorial Pool for the 2020 season. 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 Linkhorst, and unanimously approved.

The pool rates for 2020 are as follows:

	<u>SEASON PASS</u>
TAMAQUA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT RESIDENTS	\$ 10.00 per person
OUTSIDE OF TAMAQUA SCHOOL DISTRICT	\$ 100.00 per person
TEMPORARY GUEST PASS	\$ 20.00 per person per week
(Visitors staying with season pass holders)	(2 weeks maximum)

	<u>DAILY PASS</u>
TAMAQUA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT RESIDENTS	
Monday thru Friday (6 years and older)	\$ 5.00 per person
Saturday and Sunday (6 years and older)	\$ 6.00 per person
Pre-school (under 6 years old)	\$ 1.00 per person

OUTSIDE OF TAMAQUA SCHOOL DISTRICT	
Monday thru Friday (6 years and older)	\$ 15.00 per person
Saturday and Sunday (6 years and older)	\$ 20.00 per person
Pre-school (under 6 years old)	\$ 1.00 per person

Mayor Gerace discussed the 2020 census. Mayor Gerace also discussed a Parking and Traffic Committee matter regarding stop signs at the elementary school and a problem with traffic flowing in and out of the area. There was some discussion about this matter. Councilman Linkhorst would look into the matter.

The meeting was opened to the floor.

Mark Bower, Chief of the South Ward Fire Company, expressed his concerns about the following: closed door meetings being held with councilmembers regarding the consolidation and closures of the fire departments; he has not heard from the Public Safety Committee regarding this matter; the South Ward Fire Company manpower pool is stable; the South Ward Fire Company is financially stable; a study done by Pennsylvania regarding the consolidation of fire companies; some consolidations have been successful others were not; incidents that have occurred at fire scenes where fire department personnel have been treated like idiots; something has to be done before situations get out of control which could lead to violence, lawsuits and people getting hurt; membership; trying to avoid a bad situation; this is a power play; approximately eight to ten trains go through town in a day; and he mentioned a case about Williamsport where the fire companies sued the borough but the borough lost the lawsuit and had to reinstate the fire companies. President Mace responded to Mr. Bower’s concerns as follows: as he understands it, all four fire stations formed a committee to discuss consolidation among themselves, with one department choosing not to participate, one department decided to pull out later in the discussions and two fire companies remained in the committee; he was approached by the two remaining fire companies and invited to a meeting; he attended the meeting, independently, to assess the situation and gather facts; he attended only one meeting; determining council’s role in this matter if any; and he made no decisions. There was some discussion about this matter.

Christopher Andersen and Gina Andersen of 227 Owl Creek Road expressed their concerns about the excessive speeding and safety issues along Owl Creek Road, especially in the morning when the school buses are picking up children. There was some discussion about this matter.

Mr. and Mrs. Andersen also expressed their concerns about firearms being discharged in the woods in Owl Creek. They were told by police officers that the firearms being discharged were at the FOP range. Mr. Andersen stated that the firearms are not being discharged at the FOP and he fears that the gunshots may get misdirected. Mrs. Andersen stated that the gunshots are happening

on a daily basis and that it is more prevalent in the mornings and weekends. She has the dates when she heard the gunshots and has contacted the 911 Call Center. Mrs. Andersen also expressed her concerns about ATVs riding on the road and open burning. There was some discussion about these matters. Chief Woods would talk to them after the meeting.

Joseph Salla of 204 Owl Creek Road stated that the gunshots are coming from the south side of Owl Creek Road by the hatchery. He also expressed his concerns about the following: vehicles that are speeding along Owl Creek Road, including the Tamaqua Transfer trucks; a zoning issue regarding a two car garage that was being built; and he asked that the FOP stop shooting at 6:30 a.m. on a Sunday morning. Manager Steigerwalt would refer the zoning issue to Code Enforcement Officer Kurtz. Chief Woods asked Mr. Salla to call the police if he hears shooting at 6:30 a.m. There was some discussion about these matters.

Thomas Schlorf of 223 Orwigsburg Street expressed his concerns about the parking behind DiMaggio's La Dolce Casa Italian Restaurant. Mr. Schlorf thinks the area should be a no parking area. There was some discussion about this matter.

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

Borough Solicitor Odorizzi stated that he has four ordinances to present to council for advertisement.

A recommendation was made to advertise an ordinance changing the billing cycle to 25 days for sewer bills. 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 Connely, and unanimously approved.

A recommendation was made to advertise an ordinance changing the billing cycle to 25 days for garbage bills. 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, and unanimously approved.

A recommendation was made to advertise an ordinance limiting vehicle length to 40 feet on Hazle Street from Greenwood Street to East Broad Street and to change language restricting truck traffic with a gross weight of 10,000 pounds or greater on Owl Creek Road beginning at Route 309 proceeding to the Carbon-Schuylkill County line. 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 Connely, and unanimously approved.

A recommendation was made to advertise an ordinance adopting the 2015 edition of the International Fire Code. 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 Connely, and unanimously approved.

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 Connely, seconded by Bowman, 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 Cara, and unanimously approved.

Under New Business, Councilman Connely reported that the Tamaqua Area Water Authority met and effective April 1, 2020 the water rate would increase from \$93.00 to \$102.00 per quarter which is an increase of \$9.00 per quarter or \$36.00 per year.

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 Connely, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved.

The council meeting was recessed at approximately 8:09 p.m. while council met in executive session.

The council meeting was reconvened at approximately 9:06 p.m.

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

A recommendation was made to approve appraisals for the Magistrate building, the Water Department garage and the two lots adjacent to the garage, and a lot off of West Cottage Avenue between Lehigh Street and Route 209. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Connely, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:07 p.m. on motion of Bowman, seconded by Linkevich, to meet again at the call of the President.

ATTEST:

Georgia Depos DeWire, Borough Secretary/Treasurer