

The Tamaqua Borough Council held its second Regular Council Meeting for the month of February on Tuesday, February 17, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at the Tamaqua Municipal Building, 320 East Broad Street, Tamaqua, PA.

Present were Councilmembers Thomas Cara, R. Daniel Evans, Micah Gursky, and David Mace. Absent were Councilmembers Kerry Lasky, Brian Connely and Justin Startzel. Officials present were Mayor Christian Morrison, Chief of Police Richard Weaver, Borough Manager Kevin Steigerwalt, Solicitor Michael S. Greek, Assistant Borough Secretary/Treasurer Amy Macalush, and Fire Chief Thomas Hartz.

The meeting was called to order by President Gursky. The invocation was given by Councilman Cara followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Mayor Christian Morrison. The roll was called with four council members present and three absent.

The reading of the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held on February 3, 2015 was ordered suspended, and with no additions or corrections, the minutes were approved as written on motion of Mace, seconded by Cara, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from George Taylor of the Tamaqua Area Faith Fellowship Network (TAFFN) requesting permission to have a "Tamaqua Walk for Hunger" at 2:00 p.m. on May 3, 2015 with a rain-date of May 17, 2015. The purpose of the walk is to help the needy of Tamaqua Area by donating any canned goods/monies collected to the Salvation Army, Trinity Church and Primitive Methodist Church food banks. The route would begin at the St. Luke's Medical Center parking lot on South Railroad Street, walk north to Broad Street, turn right and walk east to the Tamaqua Insurance Center, cross Broad Street and walk to East End Avenue, turn left and walk west to Elizabeth Street, turn left and walk to Broad Street, turn right on Broad and walk to the intersection of Broad Street and South Railroad Street, cross Broad Street and walk on South Railroad Street back to the parking lot. The communication also requested the assistance of the Fire Police for this event. 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 Mace, seconded by Evans, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Linda J. Yulanavage, executive director of the Tamaqua Area Chamber of Commerce, regarding the breakfast seminar that was recently held on Tamaqua's new CRIZ program. Ms. Yulanavage stated the event was very well received and attracted over 80 people.

Communication was received from Peter J. Zug, Deputy Secretary for Community Affairs and Development, Department of Community and Economic Development, regarding the shift to county administration of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program for smaller boroughs and townships. Mr. Zug stated that the change will reduce the volume of contracts requiring DCED monitoring and oversight, improve the capacity and knowledge base of local administrators responsible for managing CDBG funds, promote inter-municipal cooperation in the administration and implementation of CDBG projects and activities and more importantly, bring the program into compliance with state Act 179.

Communication was received from Traud Law Offices on behalf of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Allentown, owner of St. John XXIII parish of Tamaqua, acknowledging receipt of a letter regarding the new Tamaqua CRIZ program. The Diocese thanked the borough for contacting them, but felt that CRIZ monies would not be applicable to religious institutions. President Gursky commented that he contacted the Roman Catholic Diocese of Allentown to inform them that nonprofit groups or organizations within the zone that pay qualifying taxes are eligible for the CRIZ program.

Council recognized Ed Nordahl of Ludgate Engineering, and Gary Winkleman, project engineer for Family Dollar, who were looking to get final approval on the land development plans for the new Family Dollar and to iron out any remaining issues in order to move forward with the project. Mr. Nordahl stated they had waited over ninety days to meet with the Planning Commission. President Gursky apologized for the delay in getting the project plans approved, noting that the Planning Commission had recently lost one of its members due to an unexpected death and had to cancel meetings due to lack of a quorum and weather related issues. A photo and land development plans were presented to Council for review. Mr. Nordahl stated the size of the store would be 8,320 square feet, with 16 parking spaces. Mr. Nordahl also stated the parking area would front Center Street with access to the lot from Spruce Street. There was much discussion regarding access to the parking lot from Spruce Street, the need for a sidewalk along Spruce Street, loading in the back of the building rather than from the side, storm water drainage issues, construction of curbs and sidewalks to match the Streetscape project, and the waivers requested to the plan. Mr. Winkleman stated they will do what they need to in order to get the approval and move forward with the project. A recommendation was made by Cara, seconded by Mace for conditional final plan approval contingent upon the construction of a sidewalk along Spruce Street from Center Street to beginning of loading area. After some discussion regarding the sidewalk and the requested waivers on the plan, the motion and second was amended as follows: a recommendation was made for conditional final approval contingent upon the construction of the sidewalk along Spruce Street from Center Street to the beginning of the loading area on the Applicant's plan with curbs and sidewalks matching the streetscape improvements of the borough with the waivers for the driveway to meet Penn Dot standards for sight distance granted, the receipt of a Letter of Adequacy for the Erosion and Sedimentation Pollution Control Plan, and receipt from the applicant of a Development Agreement and Performance Guarantee along with a completed amended plan to be approved prior to final plan approval. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Cara, seconded by Mace, and unanimously approved.

Manager Steigerwalt reported on the Codification of Ordinances and requested approval from Council on the Borough's responses to the Organizational Analysis questionnaire provided by General Code. A copy of the Organizational Analysis is attached for reference. A recommendation was made to approve the responses to the questionnaire. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Mace, seconded by Cara, and unanimously approved. Manager Steigerwalt stated the ordinances would be available in electronic format (Word/PDF) and would be searchable. Manager Steigerwalt also stated that temporary ordinances such as bond issues and contracts would not be included in the codification.

Manager Steigerwalt stated that an advertisement should be placed for part-time seasonal help. A recommendation was made to advertise for part-time seasonal help. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Mace, seconded by Evans, and unanimously approved.

Manager Steigerwalt reported on a phone notice that was sent out to customers from the water authority reminding them to protect their service lines and meters from the cold weather. Manager Steigerwalt stated that the borough does not thaw frozen water lines.

Under the Finance, Wage and Salary Committee report, a recommendation was made to hire Jordan D. Fegley as a full-time Water Distribution Worker at a pay rate of \$19.22 per hour. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Cara, seconded by Mace, and unanimously approved.

The meeting was opened to the floor.

Council recognized Michael Kon of 15 Woodside Drive, Dallas, a realtor representing a 9 unit property located at 301 West Broad Street in Tamaqua. Mr. Kon stated he had a potential buyer for the property; however the price offered is not much more than the outstanding water, sewer and refuse bills currently owed on the property, and because of large amount of outstanding bills owed, the bank is refusing to go through with the transaction. Mr. Kon asked Council if they would consider reducing the amount of the bills in order to help facilitate the deal. Council asked for more information on the buyer, as the property has been a nuisance property for many years. Mr. Kon stated that the potential buyer is a local resident and plans to make repairs to the property and rent out as apartments. President Gursky stated that Council would be willing to reduce the refuse bill by half; however, any reduction in the water and sewer bills would have to be discussed with the water and sewer authorities at their next meeting. A recommendation was made to cut the refuse bill by half for the property at 301 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 Cara, seconded by Mace, and unanimously approved.

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 Mace, seconded by Cara, 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 Cara, seconded by Mace, and unanimously approved.

Under New Business, President Gursky discussed the Dear Tamaqua project preliminary walk which will be held on National Night Out. The walk consists of a theatrical presentation, which will be based on the stories gathered from the Dear Tamaqua letter submissions.

Under New Business, Councilman R. Daniel Evans expressed his interest in serving on the Planning Commission. President Gursky stated that there are lots of things going on, but are now on hold due to lack of meetings held by the commission. A recommendation was made to appoint R. Daniel Evans to the Planning Commission to fill a vacancy. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Mace, seconded by Cara, and unanimously approved. Mayor Morrison added that other vacancies still exist on the committee.

Under New Business, Manager Steigerwalt presented a property demolition list for 2015. Manager Steigerwalt mentioned that there is approximately \$80,000 in CDBG money set aside for demolition and that he would like to start tackling some of the properties. A recommendation was made to advertise for bids for demolition of the top seven properties listed: 216 Pitt Street, 252 West Cottage Avenue, 202 Pitt Street, 162 – 162 ½ West Spruce Street, 160 West Spruce Street, 135 Gay Street, and 133 Gay Street. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Mace, seconded by Cara, and unanimously approved. Councilman Cara asked if this list includes all of the properties for demolition. Manager Steigerwalt stated that this is what was identified and listed for demolition by Barry Isett, but he will double check with them.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:25 p.m. on motion of Mace, seconded by Cara, to meet again at the call of the President.

ATTEST:

Amy Macalush, Assistant Borough Secretary/Treasurer