

The Tamaqua Borough Council held its first Regular Council Meeting for the month of March on Tuesday, March 3, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at the Tamaqua Municipal Building, 320 East Broad Street, Tamaqua, PA.

Present were Councilmembers Brian Connely, R. Daniel Evans, Micah Gursky, Kerry Lasky and David Mace. Absent were Councilmembers Thomas Cara and Justin Startzel. Officials present were Mayor Christian Morrison, Borough Manager Kevin Steigerwalt, and Borough Secretary/Treasurer Georgia Depos DeWire. Absent was Solicitor Michael S. Greek.

The meeting was called to order by President Gursky. The invocation was given by President Gursky followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by President Gursky. The roll was called with five councilmembers present and two absent.

The reading of the minutes of the last Regular Council Meeting held on February 17, 2015 was ordered suspended, and with no additions or corrections, the minutes were approved as written on motion of Mace, seconded by Connely, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Helen Walters of Preceptor Alpha Upsilon Chapter of Beta Sigma Phi Sorority requesting permission to hold a community Easter Egg Hunt at the Bungalow Park at 12:00 p.m. on March 28, 2015, rain or shine. 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 Mace, seconded by Connely, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from C. Dina Depos stating that the Tamaqua Salvation Army would like to hold another youth-focused Kidz Karnival event in conjunction with National Night Out on Tuesday, August 4, 2015 from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. The communication is requesting permission to close and use the North Railroad Street Parking lot. 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 Mace, seconded by Lasky, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Tara Goho of 1012 Park Drive, Tamaqua requesting permission to use the Bungalow Pavilion for the Tamaqua/Panther Valley Area Girl Scouts annual Summer Camp on July 25, 2015 from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The communication also requested that the rental fee for the pavilion be waived. 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 Mace, seconded by Evans, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Leona M. Rega, Tamaqua Art Center and Safety Initiative Coordinator, stating that the Tamaqua Community Art Center is requesting the use and posting of several parking spaces in the Railroad Street parking lot on March 7, 2015 from 2 p.m. to 11 p.m. for tour bus parking of a Nashville Recording artist, Chad Reinert. 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 Mace, seconded by Connely, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Christine Zizelmann of 627 Fairview Street expressing an interest in filling the vacancy on the Board of Health. Mrs. Zizelmann stated that she has greater than thirty years experience as a registered nurse. A recommendation was made to appoint

Christine Zizelmann to serve on the Board of Health to fill the unexpired term of James Gormley. The term expires January 1, 2016. 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 Mace, and unanimously approved.

Manager Steigerwalt reported on a subdivision request known as the “Final Plan - Lot Line Revision for Lands of Elizabeth Ann Peper with Lands of Peter Trudich” to present for council’s consideration. Council recognized Timothy Stahl, a member of the Tamaqua Planning Commission, who stated that the Planning Commission has not held a meeting in at least 90 days to review these types of matters. Mr. Stahl stated that there is nothing of contention here with this request. Mr. Stahl also stated that he has a matter pending concerning the Family Dollar. A recommendation was made to approve the subdivision request known as the “Final Plan - Lot Line Revision for Lands of Elizabeth Ann Peper with Lands of Peter Trudich”. 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 Lasky, and unanimously approved.

Manager Steigerwalt also reported that Community Development Officer Daniel Schroeder finished the bid specifications for the seven demolition projects and the bid opening is scheduled for March 16, 2015 at 2:30 p.m.

Manager Steigerwalt also reported that the Schuylkill County Tax Claim Bureau has notified the borough that a bid was received from Bruce W. Ebert of Andreas, PA for the Repository sale of a property at 160 West Spruce Street. This property is listed as a demolition project. The borough would look into the matter and see if Mr. Ebert has any outstanding code violations in Tamaqua or West Penn Township.

Manager Steigerwalt also reported that he had a resolution that the Borough of Tamaqua declares its intent to follow the schedules and procedures for disposition of records as set forth in the Municipal Records Manual approved on December 16, 2008 to present for council’s consideration:

RESOLUTION 2015-3
MUNICIPAL RECORDS MANUAL RESOLUTION

A recommendation was made to adopt the foregoing resolution. 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 Mace, and approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Manager Steigerwalt also reported that the authorized representatives listed on the Pennsylvania Federal Surplus Property Program Purchasing Form needs to be updated.

Mayor Morrison reported that residents are placing chairs or cans in parking spaces to save the parking space after they had shoveled it out. Mayor Morrison stated that the practice is not legal. President Gursky stated that this issue is always left to the discretion of the police officers. There was some discussion about this matter.

Under the Public Safety Committee report, a recommendation was made to advertise an ordinance establishing the minimum qualifications for an Assistant Fire Chief. There was some discussion about this matter. 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 Mace, and unanimously approved.

Under the Neighborhoods, Downtown and Historic District report, a recommendation was made to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness to attach a rear exterior staircase from an off-street parking area on Mountain Avenue to the rear yard of 626 Arlington Street. Council recognized Andy Leibenguth of 429 Rear Mauch Chunk Street who had a question about the staircase. It was noted that the staircase would not be visible from the public right of way. There was no one else 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.

Under the Parking and Traffic Committee report, Councilman Evans thanked Manager Steigerwalt for providing the snow removal schedules and that the crews are doing a great job around town. Councilman Evans also stated that he gave Manager Steigerwalt a list of the dialysis patients who requested that their street be cleaned.

Chairman Mace of the Recreation and Youth Committee reported that the borough is accepting applications for employment for lifeguards and clerks for the 2015 pool season.

The meeting was opened to the floor.

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

There was more discussion about residents placing chairs or cans in parking spaces to save the parking space after they had shoveled it out.

Council recognized Andy Leibenguth who asked if a person wants to get rid of snow can it be put where the borough puts it. Manager Steigerwalt stated that the borough should be called first to discuss this matter.

Under Unfinished Business, there was some discussion about a motion on the agenda that was requested by Councilman Startzel.

Under New Business, President Gursky stated that borough officials met with UAW representatives to discuss the significant increase in health care copayments. The health care copayment discussion included, but was not limited to, the following: a significant increase in the copayments; the health care insurance premium increase was nominal; the borough was notified of the changes by its health care insurance provider; the borough is contractually obligated to reimburse the employees; the employees are requesting reimbursements for the difference in the copayments from 2014 to 2015 - office visits changed from \$10 to \$30, specialist office visits changed from \$20 to \$65, emergency room visits changed from \$50 to \$200, and urgent care visits changed from \$25 to \$100; paying the difference in the copayment amount would still be cheaper than the borough shopping for a new policy; the four-year UAW contract began in 2014 and the borough is in year two of the contract; the copayment increase was not expected; the copayment reimbursement requests would be given to the insurance broker; the broker would provide the borough with a list of reimbursements that need to be made; budget concerns; and the plan options for next year would be reviewed when they become available in October. President Gursky explained the reimbursement process as follows: the employee would need to pay the copayments upfront; then submit the receipt requesting the reimbursement; and the reimbursement check would be disbursed once a month after the monthly bills are reviewed and approved by council for payment.

Under New Business, Manager Steigerwalt stated that the sanitation collection contract expires at the end of May. In 2011, the borough awarded a three-year contract to Tamaqua Transfer and extended the contract for one year. There was some discussion about this matter.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:56 p.m. on motion of Mace, seconded by Connely, to meet again at the call of the President.

ATTEST:

Georgia Depos DeWire, Borough Secretary/Treasurer