

The Tamaqua Borough Council held its first Regular Council Meeting for the month of April on Tuesday, April 16, 2019 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 Michael S. Greek, Assistant Borough Secretary/Treasurer Amy Macalush 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 Connely. The roll was called with all councilmembers present.

The reading of the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held on March 19, 2019 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.

Under Special Business, President Mace presented a Certificate of Achievement to 2019 District Band and Chorus Participants. The students included Laurisa Gruver, tenor saxophone; David Hull, tenor; and Nathaniel Noftz, bass. Emily Barrett, alto, was also recognized but was unable to attend the presentation.

Communication was received from James Connely, 2019 Convention Chairman, requesting permission to host the 65th annual Schuylkill County Firefighters Association Convention with a parade being held on Saturday, August 29, 2019. The communication stated that the parade route would be slightly different than in previous years, traveling the same streets but beginning in the west end of town and traveling east. A Certificate of Insurance and a parade map were provided with the communication. A recommendation was made to grant the request. Councilman Connely commented that the date of the parade is August 24, 2019 and not August 29, 2019 as stated in the letter. 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.

Communication was received from Robert Boyle, president of the East End Fire Company, requesting permission to close the streets of Broad and Columbia next to the fire company on June 7th, June 8th and June 9th for the their annual block party. 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 Robert Schlorf, captain of the Tamaqua Fire Police, stating they would be holding a Rubber Duck Race on the Little Schuylkill River on Father's Day, June 16, 2019. The communication is requesting permission to close Elm Street from Pine Street to Schuylkill Avenue on June 16, 2019 between 1:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. The communication is also requesting permission for use of the front end loader to drop the rubber ducks from the Elm Street Bridge. 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 Bowman, seconded by Linkevich, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from employee Charles Burrell requesting an extension of the Family Medical Leave Act per the Borough’s resolution no. 2011-16. 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 R. Daniel Evans, President of the CRIZ authority, requesting permission to remove six of the ten Tamaqua Borough owned parcels from the CRIZ Zone, as the CRIZ Authority feels their acreage can be part of a property swap in the future. The parcels are as follows:

65-12-0240.000	.10 acre	(Hunter and Broad parking lot)
65-12-0240.001	.05 acre	(Hunter and Broad parking lot)
65-16-0162.000	.03 acre	(Mahanoy Street lot)
65-16-0163.000	.03 acre	(Mahanoy Street lot)
65-16-0330.001	.19 acre	(Center Street)
65-17-0001.002	2.20 acres	(Willing Park)

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 Connelly, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Manager Steigerwalt reported that two bids were received for the sale of the Spruce and Hunter Street parking lot; one in the amount of \$14,600.00 from Tony Prudenti and Matt Hope and one from Tony Pieracini in the amount of \$12,000.00. A recommendation was made to approve the sale of the Spruce and Hunter Street Parking lot to the highest bidder, Tony Prudenti and Matt Hope in the amount of \$14,600.00. Councilman Cara stated he was surprised that Mr. Prudenti and Mr. Hope were bidding on the property as their property is located further away. Council recognized Tony Prudenti who stated that the purchase is purely a financial investment and the intention is to clean up the lot to create more parking spaces for area residents to rent. Council recognized Tony Pieracini who expressed concern regarding the use of the property as a CRIZ project and the misappropriation of CRIZ funding. Council recognized Holly Cadwallader of 21 Spruce Street who asked what the lot is being purchased for. Ms. Cadwallader stated that she is not opposed to additional parking in the area, but is concerned that the lot could end up being used for parking abandoned or junked cars. There was some discussion about this matter. There was no one else 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.

Manager Steigerwalt stated that he had a resolution authorizing the adoption of the 2019 Schuylkill County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update to present for council’s consideration:

**RESOLUTION 2019-4
A RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA,
COUNTY OF SCHUYLKILL, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA,
AUTHORIZING THE ADOPTION OF THE 2019 SCHUYLKILL COUNTY HAZARD
MITIGATION PLAN UPDATE**

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 Connelly, seconded by Bowman, and approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Manager Steigerwalt also stated that he had a resolution authorizing the adoption of an Official Sewage Facilities Plan for Tamarack Square-Phase Two to present for council's consideration:

**RESOLUTION 2019-5
RESOLUTION FOR PLAN REVISION FOR
NEW LAND DEVELOPMENT**

Manager Steigerwalt stated that the plan was approved by the Tamaqua Borough Authority and recommended by the Tamaqua Planning Commission. 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 Bowman, seconded by Connely, and approved by a 6-1 roll call vote with Councilwoman Linkevich opposed.

Manager Steigerwalt also reported on the following: the Eastern Schuylkill Regional Planning Commission will be conducting a public hearing on April 29, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.; ADA renovations to the Borough Hall bathrooms will begin on May 3, 2019; the Cable TV Franchise Agreement with SECV (Service Electric Cablevision) will expire on October 15, 2019; a draft franchise agreement was received and will be reviewed by the Finance, Wage and Salary Committee; and a County-wide litter cleanup is scheduled for April 25 – 27, 2019.

Manager Steigerwalt also reported that the Refuse and Recyclable Materials Collection Contract with County Waste expires in July. A recommendation was made to advertise for a Refuse and Recyclable Materials Collection Contract. 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.

Under the Borough Manager's Report, there was some discussion regarding PennDOT plans in regards to paving and patching the state highways as they are in need of repair, and status on the sale of the lot on South Railroad Street.

Under the Borough Manager's Report, Councilman Cara asked about an email received from McCann School of Business & Technology regarding a potential externship opportunity at the Borough for one of their business administration students, Debra Hosler. The externship would be for a ten-week period beginning on April 22, 2019. A recommendation was made to approve a ten-week externship at the Borough for Debra Hosler of 201 Hunter Street. President Mace asked if it would be a paid or unpaid position. Councilwoman Linkevich stated it would be an unpaid position. 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 Linkevich, and unanimously approved.

Director of Community Development Calabrese reported on the following: CRIZ penalty assessments were mailed; CRIZ filing information can be found on the borough's website and facebook page; and CRIZ filing notices will be mailed in May and June with deadline to file on June 15, 2019. There was some discussion regarding the ambulance building issue with CRIZ reporting and penalties.

Under the Parking and Traffic Committee report, a recommendation was made to approve a handicapped parking space application for 313 East Broad Street. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Linkhorst, seconded by Cara, and unanimously approved.

Under the Parking and Traffic Committee report, a recommendation was made to advertise an ordinance establishing a Loading/Unloading Zone, 15 Minute Parking Only, on West Cottage Avenue behind La Dolce Casa (Dimaggio's) restaurant. There was some discussion regarding the length of the loading/unloading zone, the size and location of the dumpster in the area and Dimaggio's following through on some of the recommendations offered to them to help alleviate the parking situation in the area. Councilman Linkhorst stated that the loading/unloading zone is for any business in the area and is not strictly for use by Dimaggio's. Council recognized Tom Hartz of 322 Market Street who asked if the loading/unloading zone could be used by personally owned vehicles or just for business. President Mace stated that the zone is for both. Mr. Hartz also asked who would be responsible for monitoring the time limit. President Mace responded that the time limit would be enforced by police. There was no one else from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Linkhorst, seconded by Cara, and unanimously approved.

Under the Finance, Wage and Salary Committee report, a recommendation was made to retain Ernest Shilko as a full-time Street Maintenance Worker effective May 2, 2019, contingent upon successful completion of his probationary period. 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 the Recreation and Youth Committee report, a recommendation was made to hire Megan Toth and Jacob Rudy as head lifeguards at a pay rate of \$9.00 per hour and \$10.00 per hour when acting as assistant manager. 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 Connely, and unanimously approved.

Under the Recreation and Youth Committee report, a recommendation was made to hire the 32 life guard applicants set forth on the list provided at a base rate of \$8.50 per hour with a \$0.25 per hour increase based on years of service, for the 2019 pool season. The part-time life guards are as follows: Nicole Agüero-Ramirez, Casey Akins, James Akins, Emily Andrews, Caroline Balogach, Emily Breslin, Makenna Carroll, Anthony Coccio, Emma Coccio, Kailyn Erbe, Brynn Gigli, Logan Hess, Ashley Jones, Kirstin Jones, Olivia Jones, Serena Jones, Carly Kosciolk, Jane Kupchinsky, Ian Machay, Gabrielle Markiewicz, Victoria Markiewicz, Emily Newton, Savannah Alfaro, Kaitlyn Shlanta, Michael Shlanta, Ember Starr, Sophia Susarchick, Hailey Toth, Ethan Turrano, Dominic Valentine, Rylee Wenzel and Edward Zukovich. 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 hire Christine Dover, Haley Macalush, Laura Mace, Sherry Shellhamer and Michael Shlanta as pool clerks at a pay rate of \$8.25 per hour plus \$0.25 per 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 Linkhorst, and unanimously approved with one abstention from President Mace for Laura Mace.

Mayor Gerace reported that the tour of the police station and police vehicles, along with ice cream, was well received with approximately 125 kids turning out for the event, and the tour of the police station with the Boy Scouts also went very well.

Mayor Gerace also stated that all is well in the Police Department and that Chief Woods is doing an excellent job.

The meeting was opened to the floor.

Holly Cadwallader of 21 Spruce Street asked if the contract with SECT (Service Electric Cablevision) was exclusive or non-exclusive. President Mace stated it was a non-exclusive contract.

Ms. Cadwallader also expressed her concerns regarding the installation of the handicap ramps on Spruce Street. Ms. Cadwallader stated that she has an elevator installed on her property allowing her and other family members access to her home, and although she is in favor of the ramps, she is concerned about losing accessibility to the elevator for a period of time during construction that will take place in the area of the elevator. Ms. Cadwallader stated that she spoke with the Project Manager and with the Borough Manager regarding the issue and can't get a straight answer. President Mace stated that installation of the ramps is a PennDOT managed project and the borough has no authority over it, but can express concerns for PennDOT to take into consideration. Manager Steigerwalt stated that he had conversations with the Project Manager regarding the issue, and was told the elevator would likely be unavailable for one week. Manager Steigerwalt also stated that when the original plan for the project was done, the elevator was not installed. President Mace suggested to continue working with the Project Manager to try to come up with an acceptable timeframe for the work to be complete.

Jeffrey Derr of 141 Pine Street expressed his concerns regarding a property in his neighborhood. Mr. Derr stated that the property owner is trucking in loads of garbage from other properties and piling it on the porches and sidewalk, forcing the tenants to put their own garbage in the back and the piles of garbage is accumulating everywhere. Mr. Derr stated that he and his wife are at the point of abandoning their own property due to the activity, which is unfortunate due to some of the good things that have recently come to the area such as the Tamaqua Community Art Center and Hope and Coffee. Mr. Derr stated that he contacted Code Enforcement about a week ago and he has pictures and a video clip of the activity. There was some discussion regarding violation of the Quality of Life Ordinance, cleaning up the garbage, calling the property owner directly rather than sending violation letters and contacting police to issue tickets. Holly Cadwallader expressed her concerns regarding a mold and mildew smell coming from a property at 81 Hunter Street, water running down and flooding her yard after a rainstorm, and bags of trash piled in front of a house on Cherry Street. Council agreed the matters were all code enforcement issues and will be referred to the Code Enforcement Officer.

Tom Hartz asked Council if a street light can be installed at the corner of Riley Avenue and Market Street as it is very dark in the area. A recommendation was made to purchase and install a new street light at the corner of Riley Avenue and Market Street. Councilman Connely commented that there were previous concerns about it being very dark in that area. 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.

Mr. Hartz also asked for an update on the tax breaks for volunteer firefighters, and allowing alcohol on borough property. There was some discussion about these matters.

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

Under New Business, President Mace reported that a meeting was held with railroad personnel to further discuss ideas and ways to move forward with the proposed train platform at the Tamaqua Train Station. President Mace stated that preliminary sketches and cost estimates were provided by the railroad, but seemed a bit on the high side. President Mace suggested asking the borough's engineer, Alfred Benesch & Company, to provide a cost estimate based on the sketches provided by the railroad at a price not to exceed \$1,000.00. A recommendation was made to request Alfred Benesch & Company to provide a cost estimate based on the railroad sketches at a price not to exceed \$1,000.00. Councilman Bowman cautioned council that he looked around the area and there is a little more to the job than they might think. There was some discussion regarding drainage, the condition of the storm drains, and the inlets. 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.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:45 p.m. on motion of Bowman, seconded by Linkhorst, to meet again at the call of the President.

ATTEST:

Amy Macalush, Assistant Borough Secretary/Treasurer