

The Tamaqua Borough Council held its second Regular Council Meeting for the month of April on Tuesday, April 21, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. through the Zoom video conference system. The public was able to participate in the council meeting using a computer, tablet or smart phone with an internet connection using the link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/79427311446> and by entering Meeting ID 794 2731 1446. Individuals who did not have internet access were able to participate by telephone by dialing 1-929-436-2866 and entering Meeting ID 794 2731 1446 #.

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, Public Works Director Robert Jones, Solicitor Anthony Odorizzi, Borough Secretary/Treasurer Georgia Depos DeWire, Director of Community Development Ann Marie Calabrese and Zoning/Code Enforcement Officer Gregory Kurtz Jr.

The meeting was called to order by President Mace. The invocation was given by Councilman Cara. President Mace stated that since the borough is using a video conferencing platform, the Pledge of Allegiance was waived. The roll was called with all councilmembers present.

The reading of the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held on April 7, 2020 was ordered suspended, and with no additions or corrections, the minutes were approved as written on motion of Connely, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved.

President Mace welcomed members and leaders of Boy Scout Troop 755 of Clamtown, who were participating in the meeting as part of their Citizenship in the Community Merit Badge Class. The Boy Scouts of Troop 755 participating via Zoom were Stephen Behun, Will Behun, Jack Tharp, Jathan Krall, Logan Betz, Zac Yenser, Brody Boyce, Seth Whitehead, Cole Knox, Angelo Greek and Alex Porambo. Also participating in the meeting were Assistant Scout Master Blake Tharp and Troop Leader Liz Pinkey.

Communication was received from Annette Weyant of 62 Mahanoy Street expressing her concerns about people going into their trash cans in the middle of the night before the sanitation company picks up the trash creating an annoyance and disturbance. Manager Steigerwalt stated that he received a message from the Tamaqua Transfer Station asking the borough to let people know that it is not their employees making the mess with the garbage. Chief Woods would notify the night shift to look into the matter. Chief Woods advised residents to call the police department non-emergency numbers to report anyone going through trash. There was some discussion about this matter.

Manager Steigerwalt had a resolution extending the Mayor's Declaration of Disaster Emergency of March 20, 2020 for a second thirty (30) day additional period to terminate on May 27, 2020 to present for council's consideration:

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-3
A RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF TAMAQUA, SCHUYLKILL COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, PURSUANT TO SECTIONS 10A06 OF THE PENNSYLVANIA BOROUGH CODE, AND SECTION 7501 OF THE PENNSYLVANIA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SERVICES CODE, EXTENDING THE MAYOR OF TAMAQUA'S DECLARATION OF DISASTER EMERGENCY OF MARCH 20, 2020 FOR AN ADDITIONAL PERIOD OF THIRTY (30) DAYS.

A recommendation was made to adopt the foregoing resolution. There was some discussion about what would need to be done, if anything, if there is a limited statewide reopening of the

Commonwealth starting May 8th. 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 approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Manager Steigerwalt reported on the following: the borough employees are going about the day-to-day operations of the borough; various operations are unchanged from the last meeting due to the public health emergency; and employees are encouraged to wear masks and sanitize work areas.

Under the Borough Manager's report, there was some discussion about the following: if anyone has tested positive within the borough; COVID-19 data for Pennsylvania is available on the Pennsylvania Department of Health website; cases are now reported by a zip code level map; and additional Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding is available for COVID-19 response.

Manager Steigerwalt stated that he received a request for four waivers of the Eastern Schuylkill County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO) for the proposed Solar Photovoltaic Ground Mount System at the Tamaqua Elementary School from Michele A. Aukerman, PE, Project Manager, RETTEW of State College, PA on behalf of the Tamaqua Area School District and Solar Renewable Energy, LLC. The waivers were discussed and recommended by the Schuylkill County Planning Commission and the Tamaqua Planning Commission. A recommendation was made to grant four waivers to the Tamaqua Area School District as follows: a waiver of the requirement to provide a field survey of the property boundaries, closed to an error not exceeding 1:10,000 - Property Line Boundary Information (SALDO Section 503.C.4); a waiver of the requirement to set markers at the property corners where markers do not currently exist - Boundary Line Monuments and Lot Markers (SALDO Section 503.C.4); a waiver of the requirement for a maximum slope of 14% - Private Driveway Maximum Slope (SALDO Section 605.C.4); and a waiver of the requirement to provide additional shade trees on the subject property - Shade Tree Requirement (SALDO Section 703.L). 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 Linkevich, and unanimously approved.

Manager Steigerwalt reported that with the hiring of an assistant to the Code Enforcement Officer there has been vigorous enforcement of the Quality of Life (QOL) Ordinance. The borough has received backlash from residents via Facebook and telephone calls. Manager Steigerwalt reported that he, Public Works Director Jones, Code Enforcement Officer Kurtz and Assistant to the Code Enforcement Officer Linkhorst had a discussion regarding these matters. Manager Steigerwalt discussed a property maintenance education program spelling out the QOL violations and using various methods, such as the borough's Facebook page and website, to notify residents. There was much discussion about the following: QOL enforcement; types of QOL violations; slowing down on issuing QOL tickets; continue enforcement but not pursuing as vigorously in the next week or two; leaving a warning for the first time; and concerns about issuing warnings.

Manager Steigerwalt also reported that robocalls were sent out to residents reminding them to complete the 2020 Census. Tamaqua is behind the state average on census reporting. Manager Steigerwalt explained that it is important for residents to complete the census information in order for the borough to qualify for federal funding programs. There was some discussion about sending out a weekly robocall to residents.

Manager Steigerwalt also reported on the Owl Creek Road Oil and Chip Project. He has been in contact with the contractor and sent the contractor a notice of award. A pre-construction meeting would be held before the project starts.

Councilman Bowman discussed the positive response to the robocalls that are being sent notifying residents about which streets are being posted for the street sweeper.

Director of Community Development Calabrese reported on the following: CDBG funding is available for COVID-19 response; a CDBG public hearing would be held on May 19th at 6:30 p.m.; the CDBG allotment to the borough is approximately \$124,884.00; she placed the COVID-19 zip code information on the borough website; the 2020 Census information is on the borough Facebook page and website; and the first round of Tamaqua Community Revitalization and Improvement Zone (CRIZ) letters would be going out to businesses in the zone; and the annual CRIZ reporting for businesses and tenants with businesses is due by June 15th.

Chief Woods reported on the following: the call volume is the same; all officers are healthy; and the department is short on masks. There was some discussion about obtaining masks for the department.

Under the Building and Equipment Committee report, a recommendation was made to purchase a vibratory plate compactor from Medico Construction Equipment in the amount of \$1,535.00. 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 Building and Equipment Committee report, a recommendation was made to reimburse Jeffrey Hartz for using his personal vehicle scanner in the amount of \$50.00 per scan. There was some discussion about the expensive cost of a scanner and the constant program updates. 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 Building and Equipment Committee report, a recommendation was made to purchase a new drinking water fountain with bottle filling option for the office. 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 Bowman, seconded by Connely, and unanimously approved.

It was noted that Mark Bower just texted Chief Woods and told him that his work purchased some masks from NAPA.

Under the Finance, Wage and Salary Committee report, a recommendation was made to hire Tavio Agosti as a seasonal summer employee at a rate of \$10.00 per hour. Manager Steigerwalt stated that the position was advertised and applications were collected. Public Works Director Jones stated that the position is a year round part-time position not just for the summer season. President Mace said to keep seasonal but to drop summer for the 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 Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Mayor Gerace reported on the following: Coronavirus relief; additional information on small business relief would be given to Manager Steigerwalt; Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) funding ran out; and some banks are accepting PPP applications in anticipation of the SBA receiving more funding.

The meeting was opened to the floor.

Councilman Connely asked if any of the Boy Scouts had anything to say. Liz Pinkey thanked council for allowing Boy Scout Troop 755 to participate in tonight's meeting.

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

Solicitor Odorizzi gave an update on the Tamarack Square Subdivision project. He reported that all the agreements were signed by the developer but the agreements were not able to be notarized. A recommendation was made to approve the Tamarack Square Subdivision Agreements pending final review by Solicitor Odorizzi and to authorize President Mace to sign the agreements. 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.

Solicitor Odorizzi stated that he has a lease agreement with Reading, Blue Mountain and Northern Railroad that needs to be signed. The purpose of the agreement is to lease a property on East End Avenue. A recommendation was made to authorize President Mace to sign a lease agreement with Reading, Blue Mountain and Northern Railroad pending review by Solicitor Odorizzi. Solicitor Odorizzi stated that the lease payment is \$100.00 per year. 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 Cara, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Under the Solicitor's report, President Mace asked about a starting time for the construction of the train platform at the Tamaqua Train Station. Public Works Director Jones stated that the curbing needs to be put in by the contractor; however the contractor cannot put the curbing in yet due to the state COVID-19 restrictions.

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 Bowman, seconded by Linkhorst, and unanimously approved.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:03 p.m. on motion of Bowman, seconded by Linkhorst, to meet again at the call of the President.

ATTEST:

Georgia Depos DeWire, Borough Secretary/Treasurer