

The Tamaqua Borough Council held its first Regular Council Meeting for the month of November on Wednesday, November 4, 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/88039991840> and by entering Meeting ID 880 3999 1840. Individuals who did not have internet access were able to participate by telephone by dialing 1-929-436-2866 and entering Meeting ID 880 3999 1840.

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 Michael Hobbs, Borough Manager Kevin Steigerwalt, Public Works Director Robert Jones, Solicitor Anthony Odorizzi, Borough Secretary/Treasurer Georgia Depos DeWire 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 October 20, 2020 was ordered suspended, and with no additions or corrections, the minutes were approved as written on motion of Bowman, seconded by Linkhorst, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Judy A. Hoppes, festival chairperson, stating that the Tamaqua Spirit of Christmas Festival Committee has been meeting and are planning to hold the 2020 Festival from December 3rd through possibly December 13th. Events are being planned with safety and social distancing taken into consideration. There will not be a Santa Parade this year. The communication is requesting permission to use Depot Square Park on December 4th for the Light the Park and "Meet and Greet with Santa" events and on December 6th for a Christmas Tree Lighting event. The communication also requested assistance of the fire police for the "Meet and Greet with Santa" event. A recommendation was made to grant the request, and to authorize the use of the Tamaqua Fire Police. 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 C. Dina Depos, Development Associate/Program Coordinator, stating that the Tamaqua Salvation Army is requesting permission to temporarily restrict parking along Rowe Street, directly behind the Tamaqua Salvation Army, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on the following holiday distribution days: Thanksgiving Food on Thursday, November 19th and Friday, November 20th; and Christmas Food and Toys on Thursday, December 17th and Friday, December 18th. The area from the Citizen's Fire Company to the parking lot should be sufficient. A motion was made by Bowman to grant the request for the Tamaqua Salvation Army's holiday distribution days. There was a discussion and clarification about the request. The motion was amended as follows: a recommendation was made to grant permission to temporarily restrict parking along Rowe Street on November 19th, November 20th, December 17th and December 18th from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. for the Tamaqua Salvation Army holiday distribution days. 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 Amentler, and unanimously approved.

Manager Steigerwalt reported that he has prepared a preliminary 2021 Budget for council's review that includes an alternate budget summary that takes into account a fire tax fund. The budget may be tentatively adopted at the November 17th meeting and then it would be available for public inspection. President Mace thanked Manager Steigerwalt for his hard work on this job.

Manager Steigerwalt also reported that the borough is accepting proposals for janitorial services. The proposals will be received until 1:00 p.m. on November 16, 2020.

Manager Steigerwalt also reported that the Tamaqua Area Water Authority's contract with Code Red, an automated phone notification system, expires on November 15th. Public Works Director Jones discussed the Rave Mobile service as follows: the County Communication Center has switched to the Rave Mobile service; he attended a web meeting to review their service; the service is comparable, if not better, than our present service; several municipalities are joining as a group which would decrease our cost significantly; and the borough would save approximately \$1,893.00 per year. A recommendation was made to use the Rave Mobile services automated notification system. 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 Linkevich, and unanimously approved.

Manager Steigerwalt also reported that the borough has advertised for part-time, seasonal employees for general maintenance at a pay rate of \$10.00 per hour and very few applications were received. The recommendation is to increase the pay rate to \$12.50 per hour. A recommendation was made to increase the pay rate to \$12.50 per hour for part-time, seasonal employees for general maintenance. 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.

Manager Steigerwalt also reported the following: the Safety Committee annual renewal was approved; and a bid opening for the 2021 Street Materials is planned for December.

Chief Hobbs extended a thank you to Jess and Mackenzie Estremera and Amber Hobbs for helping the Police Department distribute Halloween candy.

Chief Hobbs requested an executive session prior to adjournment to discuss personnel matters.

Under the Public Safety Committee report, a recommendation was made to hire Andrew "AJ" Seip as a full-time police officer, effective immediately. 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 Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Under the Public Safety Committee report, a recommendation was made to authorize the Civil Service Commission to conduct a Sergeant Promotion Exam. 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 Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Under the Public Safety Committee report, a recommendation was made to authorize the Civil Service Commission to conduct a Police Officer Exam and prepare an eligibility list including a minimum of three candidates. There was some discussion about this matter. President Mace stated that the Police Collective Bargaining Agreement is still under negotiation. 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.

Under the Public Safety Committee report, a recommendation was made to advertise for part-time police officers at a pay rate of \$17.00 per hour. 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.

Under the Public Safety Committee report, a recommendation was made to place Henry Woods on the part-time police officer availability list. 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.

Under the Parking and Traffic Committee report, a motion was made by Linkhorst and seconded by Cara to place “No Parking” signs on the south side of Jerome Street from Nescopeck Street to Lincoln Street. President Mace asked Solicitor Odorizzi if an ordinance is needed. Solicitor Odorizzi would look into the matter. A motion was made by Linkhorst, seconded by Cara, and unanimously approved to table the pending motion until further investigation.

Under the Neighborhoods, Downtown and Historic District Committee report, a recommendation was made to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness to install a fence at 39 Mauch Chunk 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 Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Under the Neighborhoods, Downtown and Historic District Committee report, a recommendation was made to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace the wooden front porch with a concrete porch at 35 Center 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 Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Under the Neighborhoods, Downtown and Historic District Committee report, a recommendation was made to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace the concrete front porch at 539 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 Cara, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Under the Neighborhoods, Downtown and Historic District Committee report, a recommendation was made to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness to install a carport with an earth brown roof in the rear of the property at 633 Arlington 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 Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Under the Neighborhoods, Downtown and Historic District Committee report, a recommendation was made to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace the front entrance stairs at 211 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 Cara, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Mayor Gerace welcomed Chief Hobbs to his first council meeting and congratulated Officer Seip on becoming a full-time officer.

Mayor Gerace discussed issues with speeding on Owl Creek Road. He stated that he has quotes for purchasing a speed limit sign and the cost is approximately \$2,000.00. The Building and Equipment Committee will review the quotes and discuss the matter with Mayor Gerace.

The meeting was opened to the floor.

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

Solicitor Odorizzi reported on an improvements agreement with Moyer Investments, LLC for the M&M Storage project. A recommendation was made to permit Borough Council President Mace to sign the final plans and improvements agreement with Moyer Investments, LLC for the M&M Storage project on Rose Street, upon review of and recommendation to sign the same by the Borough's solicitor and engineer. 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 hold an executive session to discuss personnel matters. 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 Amentler, and unanimously approved.

The council meeting was recessed at approximately 7:33 p.m. while council met in executive session.

The council meeting was reconvened at approximately 8:12 p.m.

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

President Mace stated that Councilman Cara notified councilmembers by email of his intent to resign in January 2021. President Mace also stated that council would be seeking letters of interest for the pending vacancy in January.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:14 p.m. on motion of Bowman, seconded by Amentler, to meet again at the call of the President.

ATTEST:

Georgia Depos DeWire, Borough Secretary/Treasurer