

The Tamaqua Borough Council held its first Regular Council Meeting for the month of November on Tuesday, November 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, Brian Connely, R. Daniel Evans, Micah Gursky, Kerry Lasky, and David Mace. Councilman Justin Startzel arrived later in the meeting. Officials present were Mayor Christian Morrison, Chief of Police Richard Weaver, Borough Manager Kevin Steigerwalt, Solicitor Michael S. Greek and Assistant Borough Secretary/Treasurer Amy Macalush.

The meeting was called to order by President Gursky. The invocation was given by Councilman Cara followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Boy Scout Ahn Griffin. The roll was called with six councilmembers present and one absent.

President Gursky introduced and welcomed newly elected Councilman Ronald Bowman.

The reading of the minutes of the last Regular Council Meeting held on October 20, 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.

President Gursky turned the meeting over to Chairman Mace of the Recreation and Youth Committee. Chairman Mace recognized Tamaqua's Junior High Football Team who went undefeated this season, and presented each member of the team with a Certificate of Achievement. Members of the Junior High Football team include: Nate Hope, Cam Schilling, Tyler Hazlett, Logan Hess, Tyler George, Brayden Knoblauch, Randolph Steigerwalt, Cody Hamm, Matthew Kistler, Pierce Demetriades, Joel Schellhammer, Bobby Duncan, Michael Minchhoff, Barron Stauffenberg, Nate Boyle, Nicholas DiMarco, Zeno Zukovich, Nicko Bolletino, Nathan Wickersham, Ian Machay, Jake Barron, Dakota Zakashefski, Sean Lavine, Alexander Zeigler, Lucas Schickram, Ryan Adams, Jared Reed, Nathaniel Curvey, Braydan Hess, Bronson Strouse, Jerome Balliet, Logan Kromer, Lucas Gregoire, Coach Terry Knoblauch and Coach Brad Murphy.

Councilman Mace also recognized the 8th Grade Blue Raiders Girls' Basketball Team who went undefeated this season, and presented each member of the team with a Certificate of Achievement. Members of the 8th Grade Girls' Basketball Team include Baylee Reinhardt, Maxine Beers, Rebekah Hromyak, Jen Frederickson, Emily Titus, Emma Kuczynski, Jamie Zuber and Coach Steve Zuber.

Councilman Startzel arrived at approximately 7:10 p.m.

President Gursky welcomed members of Boy Scout Troop 777 who were attending the meeting as part of their merit badge project. In attendance from Boy Scout Troop 777 were Derek DeAngelo, Ahn Thomas (AT) Griffin, Colby Kistler, Jordan York and Scout Leaders Anne Girard and Pete DeAngelo.

Chairman Mace of the Recreation and Youth Committee introduced and welcomed newly hired Executive Director of ESRC, Sarah Connely. Ms. Connely announced that she is currently working on three projects: Breakfast with Santa scheduled for December 5 at the Salvation Army; Bidy Basketball, which will start on January 7; and a Men's Basketball League, which is expected to start in February.

Communication was received from Steven Gintz of 123 Pine Street, expressing an interest in serving on the Citizens Advisory Board (CAC). President Gursky stated that there is currently one vacancy on the CAC and that there were other letters received from those interested in serving on the CAC.

Communication was received from Robert B. Derr, Chief & Director of No. 1 Emergency & Rescue, requesting assistance from Council with the completion of the digital radio project. Mr. Derr stated that all emergency services and police departments had to switch to a digital based system making all current analog based radios inoperable and obsolete. In order to secure all the radios needed to equip their personnel and emergency vehicles, they are requesting \$26,808.14 for 12 portable and 2 mobile radios. President Gursky referred the matter to the Building and Equipment Committee.

Communication was received from Paul H. Fridirici, secretary of the Tamaqua Community Revitalization and Improvement Zone Authority (CRIZ), recommending the reappointment of Richard Hadesty Sr. to a five-year term on the Tamaqua Community Revitalization and Improvement Zone Authority (CRIZ), effective January 1, 2016. A recommendation was made to reappoint Richard Hadesty Sr. to a five-year term on the Tamaqua Community Revitalization and Improvement Zone Authority (CRIZ) effective 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 Mace, seconded by Startzel, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Matthew Meyers, Zoning Officer, recommending the reappointment of Dan Evans to a four-year term on the Tamaqua Planning Commission, effective January 1, 2016. A recommendation was made to reappoint Dan Evans to a four-year term on the Tamaqua Planning Commission, effective 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 Mace, seconded by Startzel, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Matthew Meyers, Zoning Officer, recommending the reappointment of Karl Smulligan to a five-year term on the Tamaqua Zoning/Hearing Board, effective January 1, 2016. A recommendation was made to reappoint Karl Smulligan to a five-year term on the Tamaqua Zoning/Hearing Board, effective 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 Evans, seconded by Connely, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Linda J. Yulanavage stating that she is resigning as a member of Tamaqua's Historic Architectural Review Committee due to personal commitments and other obligations. A recommendation was made to accept her letter of resignation. 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.

Communication was received from Tracy Wiedt, Program Director Health and Community Wellness, National League of Cities, congratulating the Borough of Tamaqua for successfully earning gold medals in all five *Let's Move!* Cities, Towns and Counties goals. The borough received a plaque which will be displayed in Council Chambers.

Communication was received from Rev. John A. Frink, Pastor, St. John XXIII Church requesting permission to place two permanent signs indicating specific Handicap Parking

instructions, which he will purchase. According to the letter, the signs will designate “Handicap Parking Only – Sat. from 3:00 to 5:00PM and Sun. 8:00AM to 12:00PM. One sign will be placed on an existing post at the southeast corner of West Broad and Swatara streets, and the other sign will be attached to an existing sign post located outside the elevator entrance. A recommendation was made to refer the matter to the Parking and Traffic Committee. 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 Startzel, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Dale W. Freudenberger of 31 Pine Street, expressing an interest to serve as a member of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). Mr. Freudenberger stated that he attended the October meeting of the CAC in order to meet the members and to learn more about the role of the CAC within the borough. A recommendation was made to appoint Dale Freudenberger to the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). 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 Connely, and unanimously approved.

Manager Steigerwalt reported on the bid results for the sale of used equipment. A recommendation was made to accept the following bids from John M. Selby: \$2,625.00 for the 1997 International Dump Truck (110,383 miles) and \$1,200.00 for the 1994 GMC Sierra 3500 Dump Truck (36,351 miles). 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.

A recommendation was made to accept the following bids from Mike Veneziano: \$1,501.00 for the 1997 International Dump Truck (135,066 miles); \$801.00 for the 1994 GMC Sierra 3500 Dump Truck (26,940 miles); \$201.00 for the 1989 Chevrolet Silverado Pickup Truck; and \$6,000.00 for the 1985 Ford L8000 Camel Sewer Vacuum Truck. 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 also reported on the following: the new sewer vacuum truck has arrived and the two new dump trucks are expected to arrive on December 7th; a repository sale notice was received from the Schuylkill County Tax Claim Bureau on bids received for 241 Lafayette Street and 20 East Spruce Street, and a response from council must be submitted to the Tax Claim Bureau on or before December 18, 2015; The Department of Environmental Protection awarded a contract for the Brew Street groundwater project; the first draft of the 2016 budget is complete; the street sweeper will continue to operate until it gets too cold; and a notice will be placed in the newspaper when the sweeper shuts down for the season.

Under the Chief of Police report, a recommendation was made to hire Jeremy Sborz as a part-time police officer. 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 Startzel, and unanimously approved.

Under the Public Safety Committee report, a recommendation was made to approve three proposals from Communication Systems Inc. totaling \$15,478.53 for the installation of cameras at various locations downtown. Councilman Startzel asked where the cameras will be located. Chief Weaver stated that the existing camera located on 309 near Mermon Motors will be relocated to

Mauch Chunk Street to replace a broken camera, a Panoramic Camera will be located at the Cedar and Center Street intersection, and two license plate cameras will be located at the south end of town, one facing north and one facing south.

Under the Public Safety Committee report, Councilman Connely stated that Council received a list of options in their packets regarding part-time police, including salaries, benefits, etc., and asked that Council review this information as he feels it is worth discussing in the New Year.

Under the Public Safety Committee report, Councilman Connely reported that the digital radio project will cost each of the four fire companies and the rescue squad approximately \$82,000 dollars. Councilman Connely stated that although money was received from the county and from grants, there is still a shortage of about \$26,000 for each company. Councilman Connely stated that later in the meeting, he would be making a motion to redirect the 0.5 mill intended for the Wabash fund to the Building and Equipment fund (for just this one time) in order to reimburse \$15,000 to each of the four fire companies and \$10,000 to the rescue squad to help offset the remaining cost of the radios. President Gursky expressed his concern with dipping into the Wabash fund because when problems arise, it's usually hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of expenses. President Gursky advised council to make sure the money gets put back into the account.

Under the Parking and Traffic Committee report, a recommendation was made to deny a handicapped parking space application for David R. Bowman of 325 North Columbia Street since it would exceed the number of handicapped spaces allowed in that block. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Lasky, seconded by Cara, and unanimously approved.

Under the Parking and Traffic Committee report, a recommendation was made to deny a handicapped parking space application for Frances J. Troxell of 241 Clay Street since it would exceed the number of handicapped spaces allowed in that block. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Lasky, seconded by Evans, and unanimously approved.

Under the Parking and Traffic Committee report, a recommendation was made to approve a handicapped parking space application for Stephen Hill of 63 Bowe Street. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Lasky, seconded by Evans, and unanimously approved.

Under the Parking and Traffic Committee report, a recommendation was made to approve a handicapped parking space application for Gail R. Green of 221 Orwigsburg Street. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Lasky, seconded by Evans, and unanimously approved.

Under the Parking and Traffic Committee report, a recommendation was made to remove a handicapped parking space at 619 Arlington Street. There was some discussion about this matter. Councilman Mace asked if there is a waiting list for handicap parking spaces in the 600 block of Arlington Street. Manager Steigerwalt stated that he would check into it and inform the Parking and Traffic Committee. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Lasky, seconded by Mace, and unanimously approved.

Mayor Morrison reported on the recently held pension meeting. Mayor Morrison stated that although they did not have a quorum, a discussion was held regarding the loss of state aid money due to officers in the DROP program and the possibility of hiring a new officer in order to bring more money in to the plan. Mayor Morrison did not have exact numbers regarding unit values, etc, but stated he would gather more information for the next meeting.

Mayor Morrison left the meeting at approximately 7:51 p.m.

The meeting was opened to the floor.

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

Solicitor Greek stated he reviewed the contract from Robert O’Gurek regarding the development of a web site for the borough. Solicitor Greek stated he found no issues with the contract, however his concern is with the borough’s passwords, once the web page is formed and registered. Solicitor Greek stated he would prefer to have language in the contract stating that the borough can have its passwords without having to wait until termination to get them back. Councilman Mace asked Solicitor Greek to provide the language that he would like incorporated into the agreement so it can be forwarded to Mr. O’Gurek.

Solicitor Greek also stated he received an email from Chief Weaver regarding increasing the working hours for part-time officers. Solicitor Greek stated that the part-time officers can work up to 32 hours scheduled and the borough would not have to provide medical benefits. There was some discussion about this matter. A recommendation was made for Solicitor Greek to create a memorandum of understanding for the bargaining units explaining that the hours for part-time officers will be changing from 29 hours to not more than 32 hours scheduled. 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.

Councilman Mace commented that he had been pursuing different options for a borough website and feels that we now have a viable option at a low cost. Councilman Mace stated that he will be making a motion at the next council meeting to enter into an agreement with Robert O’Gurek for development of the borough website.

Mayor Morrison returned to the meeting at approximately 7:55 p.m.

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 Connely, seconded by Mace, and unanimously approved.

Under Unfinished Business, President Gursky reported on the recent meeting with the UAW and Higgins Insurance regarding health insurance renewal changes. President Gursky stated that the insurance plan from this year is not available next year, and the plan in the contract no longer exists, therefore the committee is trying to work through some issues in order to avoid an increase in premium. President Gursky stated the committee is planning to meet again in December prior to the next council meeting, and will hopefully have a recommendation for Council as to how the health insurance benefits will be handled going forward in the New Year.

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 Lasky, and unanimously approved.

Under New Business, Manager Steigerwalt advised Council that the rates for the 2016 Tax Ordinance were incorrect on the agenda, and stated that the correct numbers are as follows: 18.25 mills for General Purposes; 1.0 mill for the Building and Equipment Fund; and 0.50 mill for the Wabash Capital Improvement Fund for a total of 19.75 mills. Manager Steigerwalt apologized for the error.

Under New Business, a recommendation was made to tentatively adopt and advertise the 2016 draft Budget and to advertise the 2016 Tax Ordinance setting the real estate tax rate at 19.75 mills, with 18.25 mills for General Purposes and 1.5 mill for the Building and Equipment Fund per the earlier request of Councilman Connely to redirect 0.50 mill originally intended for the Wabash Fund to the Building and Equipment Fund. Council recognized Herbert Curvey of 118 Clay Street who thanked council for no tax increase. There was no one else 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, Councilman Mace announced that as a result of the recent election, Councilman Connely won both a 4 year and 2 year seat on Borough Council. Councilman Mace stated that Councilman Connely's intention is to resign the 2 year seat in lieu of the 4 year seat, leaving an open seat on council for next year. Councilman Mace added that anyone wishing to serve on Council beginning next year should send a letter to the borough.

Under New Business, a recommendation was made to reimburse \$15,000 to each of the four fire companies and \$10,000 to the rescue squad, taking the 0.50 mill originally intended for the Wabash Fund and redirecting towards the Building and Equipment Fund, to help offset the remaining cost of the digital radios. 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 Startzel, and unanimously approved.

Under New Business, Councilman Evans asked for Council's input on the letter received from PPL regarding the potential purchase of streetlights. There was much discussion regarding LED lights, upgrading to more energy efficient fixtures, PUC approved rates, the upfront cost to purchase the lights, and installation and maintenance. Manager Steigerwalt will draft a letter to PPL stating that the borough is still interested in possibly acquiring the streetlights, which council will review at the next meeting.

Councilman Mace requested an executive session to discuss personnel and legal matters.

The council meeting was recessed at approximately 8:18 p.m. while council met in executive session.

The council meeting was reconvened at approximately 8:50 p.m.

President Gursky stated that an executive session was held to discuss real estate, personnel and legal matters.

Chief Weaver introduced newly hired part-time Patrolman Jeremy Sborz

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:52 p.m. on motion of Mace, seconded by Connely, to meet again at the call of the President.

ATTEST:

Amy Macalush, Assistant Borough Secretary/Treasurer