

The Tamaqua Borough Council held its second Regular Council Meeting for the month of November on Tuesday, November 21, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at the Tamaqua Municipal Building, 320 East Broad Street, Tamaqua, PA.

Present were Councilmembers Ronald Bowman, Thomas Cara, Brian Connely, R. Daniel Evans, Micah Gursky and David Mace. Absent was Councilmember Kerry Lasky. Officials present were Mayor Christian Morrison, Borough Manager Kevin Steigerwalt, and Assistant Borough Secretary/Treasurer Amy Macalush. Solicitor Michael S. Greek arrived later in the meeting.

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

President Mace announced that an executive session was held prior to the meeting to discuss personnel issues.

The reading of the minutes of the Regular Council Meeting held on November 8, 2017 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.

Communication was received from Jean Ann Towle, chair of the Tamaqua Spirit of Christmas Committee, stating that the annual Santa Claus Parade is planned for December 1, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. The parade will assemble at the Borough Garage on East Broad Street and travel west on Broad Street to Depot Square Park where Mr. & Mrs. Claus will turn on the lights. Santa and Mrs. Claus will then proceed to the Tamaqua Community Arts Center on Pine Street where they will greet the children. The communication requested police and fire police assistance during the parade. 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 Connely, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from John Handler requesting his reappointment to the Eastern Schuylkill Recreation Commission (ESRC) for an additional three-year term. A recommendation was made to reappoint John Handler for an additional three-year term on the ESRC. 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 Gursky, and unanimously approved.

Solicitor Greek arrived at the meeting at approximately 7:10 p.m.

Communication was received from Ken Fenstermacher, zoning officer of the Tamaqua Planning Commission, recommending the reappointment of Mark Conville to a four-year term on the Tamaqua Planning Commission, effective January 1, 2018. A recommendation was made to reappoint Mark Conville to a four-year term on the Tamaqua Planning Commission, effective January 1, 2018. 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.

Communication was received from Thomas Hartz Jr. announcing his resignation as Borough Fire Chief, effective December 1, 2017. Mr. Hartz stated that he and other officers feel that the

current system of two five-year terms is too long and hinders the advancement of other qualified and experienced firefighting officers. Additionally, Mr. Hartz suggested that council look into Act 172 regarding tax credits/breaks for volunteers. A recommendation was made to regretfully accept the resignation of Thomas Hartz Jr. as Borough Fire Chief and to send a letter of appreciation for his years of service. Councilman Connely discussed the terms of the fire chief and how they had been changed from the original borough ordinance and the possibility of changing the terms again if necessary. 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 Gursky, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Francis Betz, Secretary of Citizens Fire Co. #1, announcing that Jason Hartz was elected as Fire Chief, effective December 1, 2017. Councilman Connely stated that a copy of Mr. Hartz credentials need to be submitted for the borough's records, as established in Ordinance #678. Manager Steigerwalt will send a letter to Mr. Hartz.

A recommendation was made to appoint James Connely as Borough Fire Chief, effective December 1, 2017. 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 will send a letter to Mr. Connely.

Manager Steigerwalt reported on a revised agreement from PennDOT regarding sidewalk maintenance for the Center Street Bridge. Manager Steigerwalt stated that he had a resolution authorizing the appropriate officials to sign a Sidewalk Maintenance Agreement between the Borough of Tamaqua and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, acting through the Department of Transportation (PennDOT) to present for council's consideration:

**RESOLUTION 2017-25
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
SIDEWALK MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT**

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

Manager Steigerwalt reported that he had a Winter Maintenance Agreement from Schuylkill County for winter maintenance services at County Bridge 134 on Cedar Street and County Bridge 136 on Greenwood Street at a cost of \$50.00 per hour. Manager Steigerwalt stated that the borough maintains other bridges, but does not get reimbursed for the service. A recommendation was made to approve the Winter Maintenance Agreement presented by Schuylkill County to maintain County Bridge 134 on Cedar Street and County Bridge 136 on Greenwood Street at a cost of \$50.00 per hour. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Bowman, seconded by Connely, and unanimously approved.

Manager Steigerwalt also reported on the Schuylkill County Hazard Mitigation Plan and provided an Evaluation of Identified Hazards and Risk worksheet for Council to complete and return.

Manager Steigerwalt also reported on the following: the street sweeper is down for the season; the garbage collection schedule was changed due to the Thanksgiving holiday; and the list of authorities, boards and commissions and current vacancies.

Under the Building and Equipment Committee report, a motion was made by Evans and seconded by Bowman to purchase a Hoffman Geodyna 7200s wheel balancing machine at a cost of approximately \$4,300.00. After some discussion about the borough's old wheel balancing machine, the motion and second were amended as follows: a recommendation was made to purchase a Hoffman Geodyna 7200s wheel balancing machine at a cost of approximately \$4,300.00 and to advertise for the sale of the borough's old wheel balancing machine on the Municibid online government auction website. 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 Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Under the Public Safety report, a recommendation was made to hire Eddie Rodriguez as a part-time police officer, effective immediately. 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 report, Chairman Connely reported that the Borough and Fire Departments recently participated in an ISO (Insurance Service Offices) certification. Chairman Connely explained that the ISO program plays an important role in calculating insurance rates for municipalities based on public fire protection. Chairman Connely stated that after the re-evaluation, Tamaqua's ISO rating dropped from four to two, which is a great accomplishment, and commended everyone involved in securing the improved ISO rating. Chairman Connely stated that a lower rating could result in savings on insurance for property owners, and that everyone in the community should be made aware of this via some type of press release.

Under the Finance, Wage and Salary Committee report, a recommendation was made to tentatively adopt and advertise the 2018 Budget and to advertise the 2018 Tax Ordinance setting the real estate tax rate at 21.75 mills with 20.25 mills for General Purposes, 1 mill for the Building and Equipment Fund, and 0.50 mill for the Wabash Capital Improvement Fund. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Gursky, seconded by Cara, and unanimously approved.

Under the Neighborhoods, Downtown and Historic District report, a recommendation was made to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for a sign change at 109 West Broad Street. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Gursky, seconded by Cara, and unanimously approved.

Under the Neighborhoods, Downtown and Historic District report, a recommendation was made to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for a new signage change at 204 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 Gursky, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved.

The meeting was opened to the floor.

James Kemmerer of 409 Spruce Street expressed his concern regarding a sewer gas smell outside of his home. Mr. Kemmerer stated this is an ongoing issue and wondered if it could be coming from the grinder pump at the school. Councilman Bowman agreed that there is an ongoing

issue with the smell of sewer gas on Spruce Street as well as other areas in the South Ward. Manager Steigerwalt stated that he was aware of the problem and believes it may be a seasonal issue. Councilman Connely stated that he was not aware of the problem and this is the first time he is hearing of it. After some discussion on the matter, Council instructed Manager Steigerwalt to have Public Works Director Jones and crew look into the matter and provide a report at the next meeting.

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 Connely, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved.

Under Unfinished Business, Councilman Evans reported on the audit of the rehab loan program. Councilman Evans stated that a draft report was issued for review and that Manager Steigerwalt is checking on a few items, but there appears to be no significant issues on the program. Manager Steigerwalt will provide a copy of the report at the next meeting.

Under Unfinished Business, President Mace reported on the Codification of Borough Ordinances and asked Solicitor Greek to wrap up the project as soon as possible.

Under Unfinished Business, Councilman Cara stated that there are unused dehumidifiers at the Water Treatment Plant that will be placed in the basement at Borough Hall.

Under Unfinished Business, Manager Steigerwalt discussed the electricity procurement services offered by Penn State Facilities Engineering Institute (PSFEI) and COSTARS and asked if there was still interest in participating in the program. Manager Steigerwalt stated that he is getting good reviews and has information on the program which he will provide at the next meeting. Additionally, a presentation on the program will be scheduled for next 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 Gursky, and unanimously approved.

Under New Business, Councilman Connely welcomed newly elected Councilmember Ritchie Linkhorst, who was sitting in the audience.

Under New Business, Councilman Evans stated that the borough received and reviewed four RFP's (request for proposals) for engineering services to design the replacement of the existing HPS (high pressure sodium) streetlight fixtures with LED (light-emitting diode) streetlight fixtures. A recommendation was made to accept the bid from Systems Design Engineering, Inc. of 1032 James Drive, Leesport, PA for LED design services and construction for a lump sum of \$18,800.00. 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 Gursky, and unanimously approved.

Under New Business, Councilman Gursky announced that the Schuylkill Transportation System (STS) will add a new route to their schedule starting January 2, 2018, which will include regular stops at several locations in Tamaqua. Councilman Gursky asked that the Borough assist STS with the placement of bus stop signs and help spread the word of the new bus schedule. A recommendation was made to send a thank you letter to STS, with a copy to the Schuylkill County Commissioners, for the new bus service for Tamaqua. There was no one from the floor wishing to

address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Gursky, seconded by Bowman, and unanimously approved.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:15 p.m. on motion of Bowman, seconded by Evans, to meet again at the call of the President.

ATTEST:

Amy Macalush, Assistant Borough Secretary/Treasurer