

The Tamaqua Borough Council held its first Regular Council Meeting for the month of September on Tuesday, September 20, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers at the Tamaqua Municipal Building, 320 East Broad Street, Tamaqua, PA.

Present were Councilmembers Robert Amentler, Ronald Bowman, Jay Hollenbach Jr., Kathy Kunkel and Ritchie Linkhorst. Excused were Brian Connely and Mary Linkovich. Officials present were Borough Solicitor Tony Odorizzi, Mayor Nathan Gerace, Borough Manager Kevin Steigerwalt, and Borough Secretary/Treasurer Tonia Collevchio. Excused was Police Chief Michael Hobbs.

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Bowman. The invocation was given by Councilman Hollenbach. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilman Linkhorst. The roll was called with five councilmembers present with two councilmembers excused.

Vice President Bowman stated that the Council held an executive session on September 8, 2022 at 6:30 pm to discuss personnel and real estate matters.

The reading of the minutes of the first Regular Council Meeting held on August 16, 2022 was ordered suspended; and with no additions or corrections; the minutes were approved as written on motion of Kunkel, seconded by Hollenbach, and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from George Herring and Eugene Brode showing interest in filling the vacant seat on the employee pension committee. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Kunkel, seconded by Linkevich, to table letters of interest until further notice and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Tom Banditelli Jr, c/o OCRC Volunteers, requesting to use the borough property and borough insurance to hold a Fall Festival and Hayride on Saturday October 15, 2022 from 1 – 10 pm with a rain date of Saturday October 22, 2022. The event will include a hayride, food, games, campfire, kids crafts activities, and 2 hours of live entertainment at the beautiful lower reservoir. Mr. Banditelli is also requesting to have traffic/parking control on the Owl Creek Road provided by Tamaqua Fire Police, for which they would like to give a donation, between 5 – 10pm. They will need to park all vehicles to allow entrance/exit from the upper parking lot; any questions about this event can be directed to Roxanne Banditelli. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Hollenbach, seconded by Kunkel, to approve the requests for the Fall Festival and unanimously approved.

Communication was received from Matthew N. Goldstein of Goldstein & McHugh, P.C. advising council that their office represents Penn Jersey Tamaqua, Inc. (“Applicant”) who has entered into a License Acquisition Agreement to purchase Restaurant Liquor License No. R-12262 issued by the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board. Applicant would like to transfer the liquor license into Tamaqua Borough at the premises located at 101 E. Broad Street, Tamaqua, PA 18252. The license is currently issued for the premise located at 339 Claremont Avenue, Tamaqua, PA in Rush Township. As you are aware, Applicant must receive approval from Tamaqua Borough for the inter-municipal transfer of the license. Please accept this as a request for a hearing before the Borough Council for the inter-municipal approval of the transfer of Restaurant Liquor License No. R-12262 to Applicant. There was no one from the floor wishing

to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Kunkel, seconded by Hollenbach, to authorize borough solicitor to set up the hearing on October 18, 2022 at 6:30 pm prior to the next regular council meeting and unanimously approved.

Manager Steigerwalt reported on the large water break last week under 309 to which we had to restrict travel on 309 to one lane; the Water and Street Departments did a fantastic job – they kept at it and got outside help and got it repaired late last week; we had to implement a water boil advisory which was lifted this afternoon. Councilman Bowman commented on the vast operation and how complicated it was to get the work done and commends every one of the workers for their work and time just so the community has water.

Manager Steigerwalt also updated council on the insurance renewal packet with a total \$176,797.00 which is a \$9,105 increase from prior year, workman's compensation insurance was reviewed and our mode dropped below 1 which is a very good thing so the premium for the work \$116,746.00 with a decrease of just over \$28,000 from last year, work place safety committee has been in place for some time now and was just recertified which is done annually; the volunteer fire fighter's workman's compensation is through the state fund so it's separate from the work force which is estimated at \$21,902 which is increased by \$4,300; we are looking at a savings at around \$14,000 roughly; there also has been no change in coverage. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation to approve the renewal of insurance was so ordered on motion of Kunkel, seconded by Hollenbach, and unanimously approved.

Manager Steigerwalt noted he received an email correspondence from the Planning Commission engineer regarding 20 Center Street recommending additional land development approval for the plans at the property and recommending council grant one waiver. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation to approve the requests was so ordered on motion of Linkhorst, seconded by Hollenbach, and unanimously approved.

Manager Steigerwalt also made note that there will be a county public hearing on September 28, 2022 at the courthouse for CDBG funding and requested an executive session to discuss personnel.

Under Parking and Traffic Committee Report, a recommendation was made to deny a handicapped parking space application for 248 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 Kunkel, seconded by Amentler, and unanimously approved.

Under Parking and Traffic Committee Report, a recommendation was made to deny a handicapped parking space application for 204 West Cottage Avenue. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Kunkel, seconded by Hollenbach, and unanimously approved.

Under Parking and Traffic Committee Report, a recommendation was made to approve a handicapped parking space application for 309 North Elizabeth Street. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Kunkel, seconded by Amentler, and unanimously approved.

Under Parking and Traffic Committee Report, a recommendation was made to approve a handicapped parking space application for 126 Penn Street. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Kunkel, seconded by Hollenbach, and unanimously approved.

Under Parking and Traffic Committee Report, a recommendation was made to deny a request to allow monthly meter parking permits to be used on Broad Street between Greenwood and Nescopec Streets. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Kunkel, seconded by Amentler, and unanimously approved.

Under Parking and Traffic Committee Report, a recommendation was made to deny a request to place a stop sign at Columbia Street and Glenwood Avenue. Edith Trevorah, 316 N. Columbia Street, asked why it was denied to which Councilwoman Kunkel updated Ms. Trevorah on why it was denied. There was no one else from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Kunkel, seconded by Hollenbach, and unanimously approved.

Under Parking and Traffic Committee Report, a recommendation was made to authorize the solicitor to prepare and advertise an ordinance amending the weight limit on Owl Creek Road to 15 tons gross vehicle weight, except local deliveries. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Kunkel, seconded by Hollenbach, and unanimously approved.

Under Parking and Traffic Committee Report, a recommendation was made to authorize the solicitor to prepare and advertise an ordinance amending the street opening permit ordinance. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Kunkel, seconded by Amentler, and unanimously approved.

Under Finance, Wage & Salary Committee Report, a recommendation was made to retain Carl Yaccino as a full-time Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator effective immediately. 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 Amentler, and unanimously approved.

Under Finance, Wage & Salary Committee Report, a recommendation was made to retain Lonnie Ahner as a full-time Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator effective immediately. 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 Amentler, and unanimously approved.

Under Finance, Wage & Salary Committee Report, a recommendation was made to retain Carl Yaccino as a full-time Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator effective immediately. 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 Amentler, and unanimously approved.

Under Finance, Wage & Salary Committee Report, a recommendation was made to amend the agenda to include a motion to hire Lori Patrick as part-time Utility Clerk at a pay rate of \$15.00 per hour effective September 12, 2022. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The motion to amend the agenda, as well as the

recommendation to hire Lori Patrick as utility clerk were so ordered on motion of Linkhorst, seconded by Kunkel, and unanimously approved.

Under Neighborhoods, Downtown & Historic District Committee Report, a recommendation was made to approve the following six certificates of appropriateness; 200 North Lehigh Street to replace the present 6-foot high, pressure-treated fence around the property with a new fence of similar height and materials; 107 East Broad Street to place a new double-sided, oval sign to hang from the existing sign bracket on the corner above the entrance; 631 Hazle Street to replace the roof shingles on the house with a similarly designed new roof shingle; 606 Arlington Street to replace the roof shingles on the house with similarly designed new roof shingle; 219 Cedar Street to demolish the entire structure since the roof has already collapsed into the building; and 301 West Broad Street to install vinyl two over cardboard signs in the corner window to identify their new business which is a crystal shop. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Hollenbach, seconded by Kunkel, and unanimously approved.

Under Recreation & Youth Committee Report, a recommendation was made to adopt a resolution approving the filing of an application for a Community Conservation Partnerships Program Grant in the amount of \$125,000 for improvements to the North and Middle Ward Playground.

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 2022-16**

#### **NORTH AND MIDDLE WARD PLAYGROUNG REHABILITATION PROJECT**

A recommendation was made to adopt the foregoing resolution for the North and Middle Ward Playground project. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Kunkel, seconded by Amentler, and approved by unanimous roll call vote.

Under Mayor's Report, Mayor Gerace updated council that Trick or Treat night is scheduled for Saturday, October 29, 2022 from 6 – 9 pm and the Halloween Parade is scheduled for Tuesday, October 25, 2022 at 7 pm; updated council that there is an active parking enforcement officer now with high hopes for meter money for the borough; and requested an executive session to discuss legal.

The meeting was opened to the floor.

Karri Garber, 200 Pine Street, would like council to help make the pathways more handicapped friendly and accessible for everyone that wants to attend festivals and such in the borough that are held by the Historical Society. Ms. Garber stated she was in contact with Mayor Gerace and as of today still no updates on her proposal to help make everything accessible because she doesn't want to damage vendors' stands or even hit people by accident trying to get through. Mayor Gerace addressed Ms. Garber's concerns and would like to request a change of how the vendors set up their tables, tents etc. to be on the brick portion which would leave paths next to the buildings and open for everyone but has not heard back from the Historical Society. Councilman Bowman agrees that it is definitely worth a try to change how they are set up; Councilman Hollenbach asked Ms. Garber if she contacted the Historical Society

directly and Ms. Garber responded she has. Councilwoman Kunkel asked if council could reach out to the Historical Society to help with a solution. There was a brief discussion on the matter.

Marilyn Keip, 222 E Broad Street, asked why the parking permit was changed from Greenwood to Pine Street not Nescopec Street from the last meeting. There was a brief discussion on the update.

Tom Schlorf, 224 Orwigsburg Street, asked Council for a status update on the roof situation at the main building at the South Ward Playground. There was much discussion on the matter.

Dave Clemson, 226 Pitt Street, asked Council why nothing is being done about the lot across the street from him that's turning into a junk street; code enforcement isn't doing anything about it and Jim Connely was notified but nothing has been sited as of yet. There are cars out of inspection on the street, fluids leaking and running down the street, trailer with a tanker is parked there, etc. There was much discussion on the matter.

Mark Bower, Fire Chief of South Ward, updated Council that the opticom sensor not working properly on Spruce Street and Center Street which led to a brief discussion; it activates then loses signal once it gets to the intersection; and thanked Rob Jones for putting up the fire house signs.

George Haldeman, 247 Van Gelder Street, wanted to know the status of the Dan Evans streetlights that are purple, Manager Steigerwalt stated that he's been in contact with the manufacturer, and they are making good on the product, and we have to count how many lights are purple, the manufacture will pay for the replacement lights and the labor; which led to a brief discussion on the matter. Mr. Halderman also reported that there is an auto repair shop that blocks one lane of traffic on Spruce Street and stated that he spoke with Chief Hobbs about it, but nothing changed. There was a brief discussion on the matter.

Jack Sakusky, 331 Owl Creek Road, thanked the borough for the work at the reservoir and the cops for cracking down on the speeding; also hats off to the borough workers during the catastrophic water break. Mr. Sakusky also asked about the Owl Creek Road project which led to much discussion on the matter.

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 the borough officials. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Kunkel, seconded by Hollenbach, and unanimously approved.

No Unfinished Business.

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 Linkhorst, seconded by Amentler, and unanimously approved.

Under New Business, Borough Secretary/Treasurer Tonia Collevchio informed Council that the 2023 Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) for the Police Employees Pension Plan is \$261,763, the MMO for the Non-Uniformed Employees Pension Plan is \$151,726, and the MMO for the Non-Uniformed Defined Contribution Component Plan is \$45,000.

Secretary/Treasurer Collevchio stated that the borough would require state aid and/or borough contributions to meet the funding requirements for any or all pension plan(s).

Secretary/Treasurer Collevchio stated that if General Municipal Pension System State Aid monies were not available, the borough contributions in the year 2023 to meet the funding requirements for all pension plans would be approximately \$458,489. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. A recommendation was made to approve the certification for the Police Employees Pension Plan calculating the 2023 MMO as \$261,763, the certification for the Non-Uniformed Employees Pension Plan calculating the 2023 MMO as \$151,726 and the certification for the Non-Uniformed Defined Contribution Component Plan as \$45,000 . The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Amentler, seconded by Kunkel, and unanimously approved.

A recommendation was made to hold an executive session to discuss Personnel and Legal matters. There was no one from the floor wishing to address council about this matter. The recommendation was so ordered on motion of Amentler, seconded by Linkhorst, and unanimously approved.

The council meeting was recessed at approximately 8:08 p.m. while council met in executive session.

The council meeting was reconvened at approximately 8:48 p.m.

Vice President Bowman announced that an executive session was held to discuss personnel and legal matters.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:48 p.m. on motion of Linkhorst, seconded by Amentler, to meet again at the call of the President.

ATTEST:

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Tonia Collevchio, Borough Secretary/Treasurer