

**BOROUGH OF NORTHAMPTON
PUBLIC WORKSHOP MEETING
OCTOBER 7, 2021**

CALL TO ORDER: A Public Workshop Meeting of the Northampton Borough Council was called to order by President Anthony Lopsonzski, Jr. at 7:30 PM on Thursday, October 7, 2021. The meeting was held in council chambers and began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: Council Members present at roll call were: President Anthony Lopsonzski, Jr., Julia Kutzler, Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr., Ronald Glassic, Anthony Pristash, Trevor Stone and junior councilperson Ryleigh Tillotson. Vice President Keith Piescienski and Kenneth Hall were absent. Also present were Solicitor Brian Panella, Mayor Thomas Reenock, Borough Manager LeRoy Brobst, Police Chief Bryan Kadingo and Recording Secretary, Meaghan Case.

Solicitor Panella started the meeting with an update on the borough's trash hauler, Republic Services. He stated that the trash and recycling services contracted with Republic Services has been terrible and they are not doing what is required and stated in our contract. He drafted a letter to Republic Services advising them of redacting payments in excess of \$40,000. This includes back charges for August and September. Copies of this letter were available to the public. He added that this is a serious issue and is not being taken lightly. He said this is not a slap on the wrist. He added that they are also required to provide our office with a list of complaints they receive in their office. He stated that if service does not get significantly better within a reasonable amount of time, the borough may be forced to legally terminate business with Republic Services and find a hauler that can meet our contractual obligations.

HEARING OF PERSONS PRESENT:

Mike Homishak, 442 McKeever Ln., Northampton was present to asked about a street light being out on his street for about a month. He asked how long was acceptable to wait for PPL to replace the light bulb.

Mr. Brobst explained that he faxes notices of street lights out on a daily basis, if necessary, to PPL. He mentioned that there are also other lights out in the borough for several weeks. He mentioned specifically the lights that have been out on Laubach Avenue since the tree fell on September 1, 2021. He said he will submit the request to PPL again.

Mr. Homishak also asked about the creation of a safe passageway from McKeever Lane to the D&L Trail.

Mr. Glassic said that he and Mr. Stone visited the site Mr. Homishak thought might be a good area. They specifically looked at Mr. Wolfel's property at 433 McKeever Lane.

Mr. Glassic added that there is an easement at the extension of Mr. Wolfel's property and then it becomes Horwith property. Mr. Glassic added that he will speak with someone at Horwith about accessing a path to the D&L Trail. He said this is something that will not happen overnight.

Mayor Reenock added that he also visited residents and properties on McKeever Lane to see where the best access point would be to the trail. He said that this may have to go through representatives of the D&L Trail or possibly Northampton County.

Casar Arcos, 446 McKeever Lane, Northampton was present to explain that he is having issues with people trespassing on his property to use a path to get to the trail. He mentioned trash and dog feces being left on his property. He has a family with small children and just wants peace and privacy.

Anthony Pristash asked Mr. Arcos to leave it up to borough council to make it right for him. He said that he and his family deserve that.

Consider Request of Moravian University:

We have received a request from Moravian University to use our portable band trailer for their awards ceremony on Saturday, October 30, 2021. Their event will take place in Bicentennial Park in East Allen Township. They will need to pay the delivery and removal fee as well as provide a Certificate of Insurance naming the Borough of Northampton as additionally insured.

Motion: A motion was made by Anthony Pristash, duly seconded by Julia Kutzler and unanimously carried to grant approval to Moravian University to use our portable band trailer for their awards ceremony on Saturday, October 30, 2021.

Consider Request for Cost-of-Living Adjustment - Police Pension Plan:

Officer Matthew Bennicoff, the police pension plan representative, has submitted a request to have an actuarial study completed to determine the cost and possible implementation of a 3% cost of living adjustment for the retired members of the police pension plan.

Motion: A motion was made by Julia Kutzler duly seconded by Ronald Glassic and carried to grant permission to have an actuarial study completed to determine the cost and possible implementation of a 3% cost of living adjustment for the retired members of the police pension plan.

Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr. abstained from this motion.

REPORT FROM COMMITTEES:

Administration and Finance: Councilman Lopsonzski, Sr. reported that Mr. Brobst has begun preliminary work on the 2022 budget and Code Enforcement Officer Keith Knoblach has expressed an interest and offered his assistance. It will be greatly appreciated.

--Mr. Brobst is asking the committee chairpersons to provide dates and times that they would be available to review the budget requests of the department heads. This practice was initiated last year, and he found it to be very helpful.

--Mr. Pany has reported receiving a \$2,000 check supporting the Atlas Museum. The donor was Lehigh Hanson, a subsidiary of Heidelberg Cement Group.

Building, Land and Recreation: Councilman Pristash noted that by the end of October, we will winterize all of the park facilities except Canal Street.

--He is continuing his pursuit of a community floral garden in the Canal Park. He had a meeting last week at Canal Street with a landscape company to start designing a plan for the grove area floral garden. The anticipated start date for this project is Spring of 2022.

--No one has indicated that they are willing to participate in the Jack Frost Parade. If anyone is still interested, Mr. Brobst needs to know now. He will not be available that evening as his wife is being honored by the Lehigh Valley Labor Council and blood is thicker than water.

--We have experienced a number of annoying incidents of vandalism in the parks. We may need to expand the locations of video surveillance cameras. Mr. Brobst will make an effort to include them in the 2022 budget.

Code and Police: Councilman Pristash reported that the Planning Commission will meet on Wednesday, October 13, 2021, to continue discussion with Richard Yost of Yost Hauling. Also, Edward Deichmeister will be on hand to submit his plan for the next phase of Quarry Hills Estates.

--Enclosed in your packet is a copy of the 2022-23 police agreement with the changes printed in red. The committee and the police bargaining unit have already approved the changes. Please review the paperwork and hopefully it can be listed on the October 21st agenda for approval.

Fire and Health: Councilwoman Kutzler reported that the Board of Health met on Tuesday, September 28, 2021. Minutes of the meeting will be provided when available.

--Don't forget the Fire Prevention Week activities, which will start on Sunday, October 3, 2021, until Saturday, October 9, 2021. The department will hold their Open House on Wednesday, October 6, 2021, from 5 to 8 PM. There will be equipment displays and live demonstrations.

Public Works and Sewer: Councilman Glassic reported that a crew of public works is working on Kingston Court with a technique that was suggested by our engineer. Once completed, they will move on to Barrington Drive with the same corrective process.

--UGI has subcontracted with a paving company, and they are busy at work on Main Street making repairs as needed.

REPORT FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Ryleigh Tillotson reached out to the biology club at school for possible interest in helping with the floral garden at Canal Street. She is still awaiting a response. They have a meeting scheduled for next week.

Anthony Pristash said that Main Street has some newly paved areas and is looking good. He acknowledged UGI and their contractors for their continued work on getting the roads back to their original condition. He added that he was grateful there are more secure and safer gas lines in town and is happy to see things moving forward. He thanked the residents for their patience during this project.

--He reminded everyone of the Jack Frost Parade coming up on Saturday, October 23, 2021. He added that this is the 72nd year for the parade and that it is the oldest parade in the Lehigh Valley.

Julia Kutzler said that the Fire Department open house was a success. She stated that the fire police had 48 incidents in the month of September, 235 responders and a total of 306 hours of service.

--She thanked our police department for an outstanding job. She added that not only do they fight crime, they also bring in money for the borough. In the month of August, they brought in \$5,732.07.

--She encouraged everyone to attend the crime watch meetings which are usually held on the second Wednesday of the month at the fire department.

--She said she can't go on Main Street because the weeds drive her nuts. She asked if the code office could please address the weeds at the 1400 block of Main Street.

--She asked about the status of the civil service test.

Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr. said that to this date they have received only four applications thanks to the political situation in this country. He said that he served as a police officer for 33 years and it is an honorable job and a wonderful profession that teaches a lot about character. He added that he did a lot of work for the local schools and several groups and organizations during his time as a police officer. He said, you get out what you put into

it. He said they will set a new date for the civil service test.

Julia Kutzler asked Chief Kadingo about reaching out to other police academies. Chief Kadingo said they have listed these job openings on the Chief of Police website. He said we will see how we do.

Julia Kutzler added that the police department is in dire need of two more police officers. She gave kudos to Chief Kadingo since scheduling lately has been a nightmare.

Ronald Glassic said that Main Street is looking good.

--He thanked Councilman Stone and Mayor Reenock for looking into a possible path from the McKeever Lane area to the D&L Trail and also for speaking with residents in the area. He thanked Cesar Arcos for bringing his concerns to borough council. He added that he wants to make sure we are doing the right thing and taking the right steps.

--He asked Mr. Brobst about the borough hosting an electronic recycling event. Mr. Brobst explained that electronic recycling events are sponsored by the County and there is usually at least one a year held in the borough.

--He said we need to hold PPL accountable for fixing burned out lights throughout the borough within a reasonable amount of time. The bills are paid in a timely manner, our issues should be handled in a timely manner.

--He asked about the possibility of an additional stop sign at E. 10th Street and Cherry Street (in the alley). He said there is a significant amount of school children who walk in that alley to and from school and he is concerned for their safety. Chief Kadingo will look into this to see if an additional stop sign is warranted.

--He asked about the automated phone assistant we have through RCN. He asked if we could make this happen and put the system to use to better direct the phone calls into the office.

Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr. informed everyone of a new business in town. Amazing Grace Grooming Salon located at 1631 Main Street, Northampton. He asked everyone to stop by and say hello and to patronize as many local businesses as possible. He said they truly appreciate it.

--He asked about the status of the one-way signs for Station Alley. Solicitor Panella said they were approved and are ready to advertise. Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr. also said that right-turn only signs should be placed at the bank drive-thru and ATM lanes coming out onto Main Street.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mr. Brobst said that Victor Rodite was interested in pursuing a hazard mitigation grant for the fire department. He said there was no cost for a letter of intent and he wanted council's blessing to proceed. The application is due on November 19, 2021.

Motion: A motion was made by Anthony Pristash, duly seconded by Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr. and unanimously gave a letter of support for Mark Laub to file for a grant for new garage doors and a new digital sign for the fire department.

Anthony Pristash asked Mr. Brobst where we were about a streaming service for council meetings. Mr. Brobst will account for this service in the 2022 budget.

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Motion: Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr. moved, seconded by Anthony Pristash and unanimously carried to pay the bills as listed on A/P Journal #9C, dated September 30, 2021, totaling \$101,762.57 and A/P Journal #10, dated October 7, 2021, totaling \$373,335.14.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Anthony Pristash, duly seconded by Julia Kutzler and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:34 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Meaghan Case
Recording Secretary