

**BOROUGH OF NORTHAMPTON
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING
MARCH 18, 2021**

CALL TO ORDER: A Regular Public Meeting of the Northampton Borough Council was called to order by President Anthony Lopsonzski, Jr. at 7:30 PM on Thursday March 18, 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., Vice-president Keith Piescienski, Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr., Anthony Pristash, Robert McHale, Julia Kutzler, Kenneth Hall and Thomas Gehringer. Also present were Mayor Thomas Reenock, Solicitor Brian Panella, Borough Manager LeRoy Brobst, Police Chief Bryan Kadingo and recording secretary Meaghan Case.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A motion was made by Anthony Pristash, duly seconded by Thomas Gehringer, and carried to approve the Minutes of the Public Workshop Meeting held on February 4, 2021 and the Regular Public Meeting held on February 18, 2021. Julia Kutzler abstained from the motion.

HEARING OF PERSONS PRESENT:

Dawn Wittman, 1375 Washington Avenue, Northampton, was present to ask if the pool will be open for the 2021 season. She stated that she is a long-time season pass holder and stated several reasons why it should be open.

Mr. Brobst stated that we are anticipating opening the pool this season pending the staffing of lifeguards.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT:

President Lopsonzski, Jr. had nothing to report.

MAYOR’S REPORT:

Mayor Reenock had nothing to report.

SOLICITOR’S REPORT:

Solicitor Panella had nothing to report.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES:

Administration and Finance: Councilman Hall reported that we have received the annual franchise fee from RCN Telecom Services in the amount of \$134,692.60.

--Our office was notified on Friday afternoon by PSAB that the American Rescue Plan COVID-19 Relief Package will yield Northampton Borough \$976,000. We can expect to receive the first one-half payment within 60 days of the notification and the remaining 50% a year from that date. It does not all come at once. A full summary of the bill is available. However, as of this date, Mr. Brobst did not have a chance to review it.

--Council President Lopsonzski, Jr. and Mr. Brobst had an opportunity to conduct an initial interview with a very promising candidate to serve as a junior council person. Accompanying her were her parents and they were all very enthused about the opportunity. There is a prescribed procedure that needs to be followed and that process will begin shortly. She will be a junior in high school next year and that is a requirement of the PSAB program.

Building, Land and Recreation: Councilman Pristash reported that Mr. Brobst has instructed Public Works Supervisor Gregory Morey to begin preparing the municipal swimming pool for operation. He is not convinced this is a good idea, but we can only delay the process so long if we decide to go ahead.

--We will not be holding the Easter Egg Hunt this year. Mr. Brobst had considered a drive-through distribution; however, he felt that we would be overwhelmed with visitors.

--We will be preparing all the baseball fields for spring use in the very near future.

--On Friday, March 12, 2021, Victor Rodite and Mr. Brobst met with Mark Wilson of Wilson Consulting to review disposition of a \$25,000 grant that the Borough had received to be applied to trail connectivity. The initial study will center on connecting the Nor-Bath Trail with the D&L Trail. A secondary project will be the creation of a trail surrounding the municipal park. Any remaining funds would be used for way-finding signage directing trail users with the best path to follow to reach our trails.

Code and Police: Councilman Piesciensi reported that as was previously reviewed, the Planning Commission met on Wednesday, March 10, 2021, to consider granting final approval to the Willow Brook Farm - Phase 2 development. This development will include 50 single unit homes to the east of Howertown Road and to the south of Fourth Street.

--Mr. Brobst has not received any applications for the Civil Service Commission. This position is supposed to be filled within 30 days. Since Mr. Dorshimer passed on February 4, 2021, it now becomes the responsibility of the Vacancy Board to attempt to secure a replacement. The Vacancy Board consists of one person - Ronald Spengler. He wanted Council to be aware of this prior to him contacting Mr. Spengler and directing him to proceed.

--As of Friday, March 12, 2021, the return rate for rental unit registration is 68.7%. The deadline is March 31, 2021.

Fire and Health: Councilwoman Kutzler reported that enclosed in your packet are the minutes from the February 23, 2021 Board of Health meeting and a summary of the health officer's report from January 27 through February 23, 2021.

--Any restaurant in PA that wishes to increase their indoor capacity to 50% can and must complete an online self-certification process. The state maintains a website for this purpose and the information is available through the Northampton Borough Health Department.

--In conjunction with Community Days, the fire department will hold its Annual Block Party Parade on Saturday, July 10, 2021, beginning at 5:30 PM. Parade route to be determined

--The River Central Committee met virtually on Tuesday, March 9, 2021, at 7 PM. Twelve letters were sent to members of the committee at large explaining a stakeholder Charette and offering them an opportunity to take part. There will be three information gathering sessions held and members of the Charette will be asked to attend at least one of them to offer their input. The ultimate goal is to prepare a regional Comprehensive Plan that would serve to benefit the community.

Public Works and Sewer: Councilman McHale reported that Scott Gillespie visited the Borough office on Friday, March 12, 2021. It was a pleasure to see him on his way to recovery.

--The main pump station changeover has been completed and we are now operating with the three new pumps online.

--The sludge bidding process is available online through PENNBID. Bids will be opened and reviewed by Tom Duffy of Gilmore & Associates at 10 AM on April 1, 2021. Following his review, he will make a recommendation which Mr. Brobst hopes to bring to the April 1, 2021 Council meeting for conditional approval pending review of the solicitor.

--Mr. McHale was at the MS4 project and said that Gilmore and Associates had staked out the area. Public works will begin to remove trees. He said that the entire project must be completed by the end of 2022.

--He reviewed the stormwater fee assessment that he put together to show examples of different parcels in the borough. He used several mapping systems and had help from Gilmore and Associates. He explained why the storm water fee would be advantageous as opposed to a 2 mil tax increase. He added that 95-99% of residential homeowners will save money with a storm water fee instead of a tax increase. This could be handled through N.B.M.A, adding an additional line item to the water/sewer bill, billed quarterly. He said that there is a large percentage of tax parcels that are tax exempt that contribute to storm water runoff. He said that everyone should pay their fair share, stating "if you are part of the problem, you should be part of the solution".

Anthony Pristash thanked Mr. McHale for all of his work and said he did a great job researching and collecting the information.

Julia Kutzler said that she would rather pay a small amount for a storm water fee as opposed to paying much more with a tax increase.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS:**Consider Granting Final Approval to Willow Brook Farms - Phase 2 Development:**

On Wednesday, March 10, 2021, the Planning Commission met to consider a request for final approval for Willow Brook Farms - Phase 2. The commission voted unanimously to accommodate granting approval with the following conditions that would need to be a part of the motion. At this time, Mr. Brobst asked the solicitor to read the conditions of the motion and answer any questions that may arise.

Motion: A motion was made by Anthony Pristash duly seconded by Robert McHale and unanimously carried to grant final plan approval pending solicitor review of Willow Brook Farm-Phase II Final Subdivision Plan entitled "Willow Brook Farm - Phase II" dated February 17, 2021 and Stormwater Management Calculations dated November 20, 2019, last revised on February 16, 2021:

1. Subject to meeting all the conditions and all review letters by Lehigh Engineering, including but not limited to the letters dated March 10, 2021, May 18, 2020, March 11, 2020, January 8, 2020, December 10, 2019.
2. The payment of all fees including but not limited to recreational fees, sewer fees, tapping fees, and all other fees imposed by the Borough of Northampton.
3. Subject to the approval of all outside agencies.
4. Subject to all the representations and agreements made by the applicant at all Planning Commission and Borough Council meetings.
5. Conditional on a restrictive covenant being signed by the Developer to the satisfaction of the preservation of trees in a form to the satisfaction of the Borough Solicitor and Borough Engineer as well as Borough staff.
6. Conditional on the execution of all applicable agreements including but not limited to a Developer's Agreement, Escrow Agreement, posting of appropriate security to the satisfaction of the Borough Solicitor and Borough Engineer as well as Borough staff.
7. Conditional on Developer dedicating Fuller Drive to the Borough upon the request of the Borough with Developer being responsible for all costs and expenses until dedication takes place. The dedication shall be done within 5 years and the Borough shall hold the option of extending the deadline beyond the 5-year time limit. This condition shall be memorialized in a separate Agreement between the Borough and the Developer. If a satisfactory separate Agreement cannot be reached, approval shall

- be conditioned on the immediate dedication of Fuller Drive to the Borough.
8. Conditional on Developer and the Developer of Phase 1 entering into agreements satisfactory to the Borough including releases, hold harmless and indemnifications agreements regarding storm water.
 9. Conditional on positing the appropriate security for the necessary conditions set forth in this Motion.
 10. Conditional on the installation of the required sidewalks, with Developer being responsible for all costs and expenses related to the installation of the sidewalks. Decisions concerning the installation of the sidewalks, including but in no way limited to the date of installation and places of installation, have been deferred and discussions concerning the installation of the sidewalks shall resume at the discretion of the Borough.
 11. Conditional on the Developer providing all of the appropriate Deeds of Dedication to the various requests of the Borough of Northampton, including but not limited to:
 - a. Roads;
 - b. Easements;
 - c. Stormwater; and
 - d. water mains to the Northampton Borough Municipal Authority.
 12. Conditional to Developer providing all requested cost estimates to be approved by the Borough Engineer prior to final execution of the documents.

Consider Creating Parking Restrictions:

Nearly a year ago, we had received a request from a resident at 2389 Washington Avenue to have a "No Parking Between Signs" erected at her driveway. Council did not consider that option. However, the public works department was directed to paint yellow lines on the driveway and the resident was instructed to contact the police if the practice continued. The practice has resumed and a request for the signage has been submitted.

Motion: A motion was made by Keith Piescienski duly seconded by Kenneth Hall and unanimously carried to grant permission to the public works department to only paint yellow lines across the entire driveway area on the street.

Consider Request to Attend Cellular and Social Media Records Seminar:

We received a request from Police Chief Bryan Kadingo to permit Detective Joseph Kicska to attend a course relating to cellular and social media records. The course is scheduled for April 5 & 6, 2021, and will be conducted at the Bucks County Public Safety Training Center. The cost is \$349.

Motion: A motion was made by Robert McHale duly seconded by Keith Piescienski and unanimously carried to grant permission to allow Detective Joseph Kicska to attend a course relating to cellular and social media records on April 5 & 6, 2021.

Consider Request to Attend a Glock Operator' s Course:

Chief Kadingo has also requested permission for Officer Robert Frantz to attend a Glock Operator 's Course at Lehigh Township Police Headquarters. The two-day course will begin on Wednesday, September 15, 2021 and the cost is \$360.

Motion: A motion was made by Keith Piescienski duly seconded by Thomas Gehringer and unanimously carried to grant permission to allow Officer Robert Frantz to attend a two-day Glock Operator 's Course at Lehigh Township Police Headquarters beginning on Wednesday, September 15, 2021.

Consider Request of KIDS Swim Club:

We have received a request from the Northampton KIDS Swim Club to use the municipal pool for morning swim practices, to offer swim lessons as well as evening swim meets on four Monday or Thursday evenings. They have outlined their request in the accompanying emailed correspondence. Mr. Brobst has mixed feelings about opening the pool to begin with and is uncertain how this specialized privatized usage would impact our operation.

After council's discussion, Mr. Brobst will contact Mr. Joseph Kovalchik to see if the Northampton KIDS Swim Club could use the pool at the middle school.

Motion: A motion was made by Anthony Pristash duly seconded by Kenneth Hall and unanimously carried to table the motion until the next scheduled council meeting on April 1, 2021.

REPORTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Kenneth Hall said he is glad to see the snow is gone and is happy for warmer weather.
--He said there are potholes everywhere in town.

Robert McHale said he was happy to see that we have someone interested in junior council. He thanked Mr. Brobst and Mr. Lopsonzski, Jr. for conducting the interview with her.

Keith Piescienski said that the potholes on Main Street are terrible, bad enough to take your teeth out. He asked Mr. Brobst if public works could possibly fill some of them.

Anthony Pristash said that he agrees with Mr. Piescienski about the potholes on Main Street.
--He is happy for warmer weather.
--He said that he will be meeting with Mr. Brobst and Mr. Kremus about the possibility of pickle ball courts in the borough.

Julia Kutzler asked Chief Kadingo to look into Nazareth Pallet trucks using Dewey Avenue. Chief Kadingo said he will speak to someone at Nazareth Pallet.

--She informed everyone about the new cupcake business at 929 Main Street, Cakes on Main and the proposed Rita's going in at the upper end of Main Street. She said these new businesses are exciting for the borough.

--She said in reference to the storm water fee, council should make a decision within the next month.

--She said she noticed the Support Northampton Facebook page had several complaints about the proposed storm water fee. Robert McHale added that we would have to have a special public meeting for the proposed storm water fee.

Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr. suggested the possibility of a small bicycle repair shop somewhere along the walking trail at Canal Street. He also thought a refreshment stand of some sort would be a great addition to the trail.

--He thanked Chief Kadingo for introducing the new police officers at the last meeting.

--He said he was happy to hear that the pool is opening. He added, if people don't want to use the pool they should stay home.

--He suggested that we refurbish the restrooms at all of the parks in the borough for sanitary reasons.

--He suggested that the "grove area" at Canal Street Park be split up into two or three areas since the area is so large.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

--Mr. Brobst said that we are opening the pool this season and he spoke with Greg Morey, public works supervisor, about beginning the opening process as soon as possible.

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 #3A, dated March 18, 2021, totaling \$320,464.40.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Keith Piescienski, duly seconded by Kenneth Hall and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:56 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Meaghan Case
Recording Secretary