

**BOROUGH OF NORTHAMPTON
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING
MARCH 17, 2022**

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 17, 2022. 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 Julia Kutzler, Kenneth Hall, Judith Haldeman, Bonnie Almond, Ronald Glassic, Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr. and junior councilperson Ryleigh Tillotson. Trevor Stone was absent. Also present were Mayor Anthony Pristash, Solicitor Brian Panella, Borough Manager LeRoy Brobst, Police Chief Bryan Kadingo and recording secretary Meaghan Case.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A motion was made by Ronald Glassic, duly seconded by Kenneth Hall, and unanimously carried to approve the Minutes of the Public Workshop Meeting held on February 3, 2022, and Regular Public Meeting held on February 17, 2022.

HEARING OF PERSONS PRESENT:

Victor Rodite, Borough Community Planner was present to review the CDBG grant opportunities. He said he is currently pursuing a grant for \$80,000 and the deadline to apply is May 26, 2022. He said that it is important to have input from borough council. He reviewed and referenced parts of the borough's comprehensive plan.

He introduced himself to council since there are many newly elected officials. He reviewed his education and work history and added that his focus throughout his career was economics, science and planning.

He encouraged council to review the CDBG packet and the comprehensive plan.

Kenneth Hall said that we need cameras at the Canal Street bathrooms. He asked about the possibility of a grant.

Ronald Glassic thanked Victor for his presentation.

Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr. said that 105/107 Laubach Avenue would be the perfect location for a tourist building once the borough takes over the property.

Mr. Brobst mentioned that at the last River Central meeting, there was a round table discussion about the farmers local to the area. At the next meeting they plan to discuss emergency services. He encouraged others to join the meeting. These meetings are still being held virtually.

Solicitor Panella reminded everyone that Canal Street grove area is still technically closed. He explained that the eminent domain process for 105/107 Laubach Avenue is a very costly and long process. He said it could take at least six months. He said we would have to show the court and give good cause of why the borough should take over the property.

Mr. Brobst added that remodeling would not be an option. The property is structurally unsafe and would have to be torn down.

ORDINACE NO. 1221:

TITLE: AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF NORTHAMPTON, COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO REGULATE SHORT TERM RENTAL UNITS WITHIN THE BOROUGH AND ESTABLISH PENALTIES AND VIOLATIONS.

In the interim since advertising the ordinance, some concerns have been raised that it would be to the Borough's advantage to table adoption until these matters have been addressed.

Introduced By: Kenneth Hall
Seconded By: Julia Kutzler

Unanimously carried to table Ordinance No. 1221 per suggestion of Solicitor Panella.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

President Lopsonzski, Jr. had nothing to report.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Pristash wished everyone a Happy St. Patrick's Day.

--He said that Anthony Lopsonzski's suggestion for a tourist center at 105/107 Laubach Avenue was a great idea.

--He spoke with the Mayor of Easton about their efforts in revitalizing downtown Easton. He said we have to raise Northampton's profile with more exposure, videos and media outlets. He said the D&L Trail is a huge attraction to the borough and so many people love and use the trail. He said it's about a total of 165 miles.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES:

Administration and Finance: Councilman Hall reported that we were notified that we received an additional \$852.69 for our calendar year 2019 Performance Recycling Grant. The original distribution was in excess of \$19,000.

--In the 2022 budget, we had allocated \$18,000 to the Northampton Area Public Library. That allocation has been completed and enclosed in your packet is a letter of thanks from new library director Veronica Laroche.

Building, Land and Recreation: Councilwoman Haldeman reported that on Wednesday, April 6, 2022, we will conduct our annual *Egg Stuffing Seminar* in the manager's office beginning at approximately 5:30 PM. This will put us in readiness for the Easter Egg Hunt scheduled on Saturday, April 9, 2022, at 11 AM in the Municipal Park.

--Beginning Friday, March 18, 2022, the St. Patrick's Day lighting will come down and the Easter lights will be installed.

--As of this date, park rentals are lagging behind the norm. Plenty of good dates are still available.

--Swimming pool passes will be available at the recreation center beginning May 1, 2022.

Code and Police: Councilman Lopsonzski, Sr. reported that the Planning Commission will meet on Wednesday, April 13, 2022, to review the Act 537 Plan update. This is a 500-page document that was prepared by Gilmore & Associates. This is critical as part of our compliance with the Department of Environmental Protection directive. Council will also have to approve this document. It will be available in an electronic format ONLY.

--He also reviewed the police reports and incidents for February.

Fire and Health: Councilwoman Kutzler reported that the Fire Committee met with members of the fire department on Monday, March 14, 2022. Representative Zach Mako was in attendance as well.

--The Board of Health is scheduled to meet on Tuesday, March 29, 2022, at 7 PM.

--The fire department purchased a utility truck with a COVID grant that they intend to refurbish. On Monday, March 21, 2022, they are having a new utility body installed. The old one will be given to the public works department and will be cannibalized for their use.

Public Works and Sewer: Councilman Glassic reported that the cyclone bomb storm that hit on Saturday, March 12, 2022, was handled expertly by the men of the public works department.

--Park preparation is only around the corner as is the municipal pool preparation.

--During the week of March 7, 2022, we had two sewer backups. Both were caused by tree roots in the line.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS:**Consider Request of Fire Police:**

We have received a request from the Northampton fire police to participate in a fundraising event by helping at a concession stand during Lehigh Valley Iron Pigs home games. They are requesting permission to participate at two games in April. The exact dates have yet to be established.

Motion: Julia Kutzler. moved, seconded by Judith Haldeman and unanimously carried to grant permission to Northampton fire police to participate in a fundraising event by helping at a concession stand during Lehigh Valley Iron Pigs home games and any other opportunities throughout the summer.

Ronald Glassic confirmed with Kenneth Hall that he was ok with this and that there will be sufficient coverage in the borough while fire police members participate in these events.

Approval to Prepare Bid Specifications for Road Materials:

Mr. Brobst is requesting permission to advertise road materials for bid. This year we are coordinating our bid request with the Northampton Borough Municipal Authority and the Borough of North Catasauqua. Bids would be opened at the April 7th Council meeting.

Motion: Judith Haldeman moved, seconded by Bonnie Almond and unanimously carried to grant permission to Mr. Brobst to advertise road materials for bid. Bids would be opened at the April 7th Council meeting.

Consider Request of the Community Planner:

Mr. Victor Rodite will be attending the annual American Planning Association Conference scheduled to be held in San Diego, California, beginning on April 30 and ending on May 3, 2022. He is willing to cover the costs of transportation, lodging and meals. He is asking that Northampton Borough covers his reduced planning conference fee of \$135.

Motion: Ronald Glassic moved, seconded by Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr. and unanimously carried to grant permission to cover Victor Rodite's reduced planning conference fee of \$135.

REPORTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Kenneth Hall said that the fire department had their annual banquet on March 5, 2022 and awards were given out for years of service with the fire department.

--He said he will get together a list of upcoming events where fire police assistance will be needed.

--He informed everyone the fire department is selling pizza until Monday, March 21, 2022.

--He also informed everyone that the Alliance Fire Hall is making and selling hoagies again.

Ryleigh Tillotson wished everyone Happy St. Patrick's Day.

--She said she met with the high school athletic director and they decided that mid-June would be the best time to have the high school athlete's parade.

Judith Haldeman informed everyone that she recently had meetings with Chief Kadingo, Mr. Brobst and Mayor Pristash. She wanted to get an idea of the day-to-day operations of each department.

Bonnie Almond said the weather has been nice.

--She noted complaints she has received about some of the playground equipment at Municipal Park and Canal Street Park. She also mentioned older kids on the playground equipment intimidating younger children. She said these older kids have no business being on the equipment. She suggested possibly hiring someone younger, such as a student to patrol the park areas.

Julia Kutzler agreed with Bonnie Almond adding that something needs to be done about the park issues.

--She informed everyone that she had a meeting with members of the fire department at the fire station on March 14th. They discussed mutual aid and regional aid throughout the area. She said the borough uses more aid than they give. She expressed the importance of having volunteers for the fire department and retaining them. She asked everyone to think about where the fire department might be in five years. She said that the fire police are in need of a vehicle. She mentioned the necessary safety items needed for each fire fighter, adding that it isn't cheap. She mentioned the possibility of them needing a new fire truck in 2027. She asked about where they can have a training tower in the borough or somewhere close in a surrounding area. She noted that the fire department receives about 65% of funding from the borough. She also noted that only 37% of landowners responded with donations from their mailer.

She couldn't express enough the need for volunteers. She said we are extremely fortunate to have a phenomenal fire department and also have Northampton Regional Emergency Management Services headquartered in our borough. She stressed the importance of safety equipment. She commended the seasoned members of the fire department for grooming those younger, just starting out. She thanked Mark Laub for securing grants for the fire department.

She thanked Kenneth Hall for all he does for the fire police and for retaining the volunteers. Lastly, she thanked Keith Knoblach for his involvement and all he does for the fire department.

Ronald Glassic commended Julia Kutzler for an outstanding report.

--He mentioned to Chief Kadingo that the raceways have started, specifically on Horwith Drive.

--He asked if the mirror was put up at the area of Dewey Avenue and 9th Street.

--He mentioned the \$80,000 grant that Victor is applying for and suggested that it be used for sewer infrastructure before anything else.

--He wished everyone a Happy St. Patrick's Day.

--**Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr.** noted that \$18,000 was donated/budgeted to the library. He understands their importance but asked everyone to think about who saves us. He expressed how near and dear the ambulance corp. is to him adding that he went in the first ambulance when they were first in the borough. He added how important first responders are and said we are extremely lucky to have them in the borough. He encouraged everyone to give donations to NREMS. He added that we have many departments that are well trained throughout the borough and added, we need to save what we have here.

--He asked about the progress of lifeguards for the pool.

--He also expressed the importance of having a "parade of champions" for the high school football team. He said they are the greatest football team since the 1937 high school football team and they deserve the recognition.

--He agreed with Bonnie Almond and Julia Kutzler about older kids intimidating younger children at the parks. He said that can't be tolerated and something must be done.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

--Mr. Brobst reminded everyone about the upcoming PSAB conference from May 22nd - May 25th, 2022 at the Hershey Lodge. He said at the next council meeting, a voting delegate and alternate voting delegate must be chosen. In the past, the voting delegate was the Mayor but council may choose who they want.

--The NBMA budget forecast is available for review in the borough office.

--He reminded everyone about the shredding event in the Community Center parking lot on April 30th from 10AM-12PM.

--He said the part-time code enforcement officer is scheduled to start on March 28, 2022.

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Motion: Mr. Lopsonzski, Sr. moved, seconded by Julia Kutzler and unanimously carried to pay the bills as listed on A/P Journal #3A, dated March 4, 2022, totaling \$478.00 and A/P Journal #3B, dated March 17, 2022, totaling \$250,581.41.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Kenneth Hall, duly seconded by Bonnie Almond and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:03 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Meaghan Case
Recording Secretary