

**BOROUGH OF NORTHAMPTON
PUBLIC WORKSHOP MEETING
MARCH 4, 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, March 4, 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., Thomas Gehringer, Kenneth Hall and Julia Kutzler. Anthony Pristash, Robert McHale and Mayor Reenock were absent. Also present were Solicitor Brian Panella, Borough Manager LeRoy Brobst, Police Chief Bryan Kadingo and Recording Secretary, Meaghan Case.

HEARING OF PERSONS PRESENT:

Robert James, 1960 Northampton Avenue, Northampton, PA 18067 was present to invite people to attend the crime watch meeting on Wednesday, March 10th at 7:00 PM. He also asked about the possibility of having the council meetings on ZOOM so they are more accessible to the community.

Consider Request to Hire a Part-Time Police Officer:

Police Chief Bryan Kadingo is requesting permission to hire Michelle Pagan as a part-time officer for the Northampton Borough Police Department. She would need to complete the M.P.O.E.T.C. application process.

Motion: A motion was made by Julia Kutzler, duly seconded by Thomas Gehringer and unanimously carried to approve Chief Kadingo to offer Ms. Michelle Pagan a part-time position as a patrolman.

Introduction of Newly Hired Police Officer:

Patrolman Geoffrey Perry was hired at a virtual meeting and Council did not have the opportunity to personally meet him.

Officers Geoffrey Perry, Ahmed Elkadousy, Michelle Pagan and John Shoemaker were present at the meeting and introduced to Council by Chief Kadingo.

Introduction of Ms. Rachel Puccio from Change on Main:

Ms. Rachel Puccio was in attendance to introduce herself as a representative of Change on Main. Mr. Brobst anticipates attending their meeting on Monday evening, March 1, 2021.

Rachel Puccio, a Certified Recovery Specialist (CSR) of Change on Main was present to introduce herself to Council. She discussed the organization's goals and programs. Change on Main's goal is to provide a safe environment for people in all stages of recovery from substance abuse. Also present was Maggie, the Center Director and two other CSR's Bobby and Talita. Bobby added they are trying to get involved with a Veteran's program. They have a total of five recovery centers in Northampton County.

Consider Request of Northampton Exchange Club:

We have received a request from the Northampton Exchange Club to grant them permission to conduct their annual Community Days Fair in the Municipal Park beginning on Wednesday, July 7, 2021 through Saturday, July 10, 2021.

Motion: A motion was made by Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr., duly seconded by Thomas Gehringer and carried to grant permission for the Northampton Exchange Club to conduct their annual Community Days Fair in the Municipal Park beginning on Wednesday, July 7, 2021 through Saturday, July 10, 2021.

REPORT FROM COMMITTEES:

Administration and Finance: Councilman Hall reported enclosed in your packet is a response received from a sympathy basket that was sent to Janet Dorshimer in memory of her husband Barry, who served on the Civil Service Commission.

--Mr. Edward Pany reports that he conducted a tour of the Atlas Museum with geologist Tom Newman of Fort Collins, Colorado. He was visiting the Lafarge cement plant and was very impressed with the museum.

--As of February 26, 2021, we collected \$993,098.07 in garbage payments.

Building, Land and Recreation: Councilman Gehringer reported that on Wednesday, February 24, 2021, Mr. Brobst participated in a pre-bid teleconference for the D&L Trail. Specifications are listed on PENNBID to complete the trail between North Catasauqua and Northampton. North Catasauqua has received a grant for the bulk of the work; Northampton Borough has received a smaller grant of \$25,000 that will be applied to this project.

--On Thursday, February 25, 2021, Mr. Brobst took part in the annual D&L Trail meeting. While this meeting centered on the entire length of the D&L Trail, a portion of it was dedicated to four major projects and the trail completion previously listed was one of them. He found it interesting that during these times of pandemic, recreational equipment purchases such as bicycles, kayaks and snowshoes had increased to a point of scarcity.

--March 1, 2021 marks the opening of park reservations for Borough residents. Mr. Brobst anticipates a normal response. All permit holders will be informed that they are responsible to observe CDC protocol.

Code and Police: Councilman Piescienski reported that the Planning Commission will meet on Wednesday, March 10, 2021, at 7 PM in Council Chambers. The meeting is two-fold: the commission will need to reorganize and secondly, they will review the final plan for Willow Brook Farm - Phase 2.

--Enclosed in your packet is the January police report.

--The return rate for rental unit registration is 56%. Returns must be received by March 31, 2021.

--With the passing of Barry Dorshimer, there is an open seat on the Civil Service Commission. Applications are available at the Borough office. The term would expire on December 31, 2025.

Fire and Health: Councilwoman Kutzler reported that the Board of Health met virtually on Tuesday, February 23, 2021. As of this date, Mr. Brobst does not have minutes for this meeting.

--Health inspections continue as in the past and Health Officer Veresink has not reported any failures.

--She reviewed the responses from the fire department and fire police.

Public Works and Sewer: Councilman Piescienski reported that work continues on the main pump station upgrade. The two pumps that were in place have been removed and the contractor is continuing bypass pumping. The project remains relatively on schedule.

--Catasauqua School District is constructing a new football field and the topsoil that is being removed has been offered to us at no cost. They will have the soil tested before delivery and we will store it temporarily just off Howertown Road to the south of Dry Run Creek but not in the MS4 target area.

--Gilmore & Associates have staked out an area of the MS4 project to enable members of our public works department to begin site preparation. This will probably begin once the snow is gone.

--After a year in which we had to pay a storage fee because we did not meet the minimum purchase for road salt, it would appear this year that we are nearing the maximum of what we can purchase.

REPORT FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Kenneth Hall asked if we are having the Easter egg hunt. Mr. said, probably not this year.

--He mentioned a few alleys that need patching. Mr. Brobst said to give him a list.

Keith Piescienski said that UGI is messing up the streets once again.

Julia Kutzler said that she spoke with Robert McHale about the storm water fee schedule. She asked the other council members if they received Mr. McHale's email with sample explanation of the storm water fee assessment. She said that Mr. McHale will be in attendance at the next meeting and will explain in further detail. She asked if this possible

fee is something we can turn over to N.B.M.A. She added that this is something that is not etched in stone.

--She suggested we hire an administrative assistant to help with the processing of this potential storm water fee and also to help Mr. Brobst. She suggested an executive session when all council members are present.

--She said she visited Mr. Rodite's and Mr. Veresink's office. She added that Mr. Rodite's (a part-time employee) office is huge and the code office department is stuck in a "closet". She suggested that the code office be moved to Mr. Rodite's office where there is plenty of space.

--She said that there is a mulberry tree in Osbourne Alley in a borough right-of-way that needs to be taken down.

Mr. Brobst added that he started as Gene's assistant in 1993. He has been the borough manager for almost five years and would love an assistant. He said they will schedule an executive session for the next meeting.

Thomas Gehringer mentioned that we hired the two newest employees at the sewer plant and asked if they are certified operators. Mr. Brobst said that they are all working towards their certifications.

Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr. said that he agreed with everything Julia Kutzler said in regards to moving the code office to Victor Rodite's office.

--He stands behind getting Mr. Brobst an assistant adding that Mr. Brobst did a great job as Gene's assistant.

--He said there is a lot that needs to be further discussed about the possibility of a storm water fee. He said he was asked by several residents about the storm water fee. He said by 2024/2025 we will have no choice but to either assess a storm water fee or increase taxes because these major projects are mandatory by DEP and EPA and we must be able to pay for these projects.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mr. Brobst said that we need an additional member on the Civil Service Commission.

--He spoke with Greg Morey and the King Street recycling center will be back open on Saturday, March 6th. He said that on Wednesday, March 17th, the hours will change from 2-5 PM to 4-7 PM due to daylight savings.

He thanked everyone from Change on Main and said that he will be contacting them for various projects throughout the borough.

--He met with "People Standing Up" about the community garden. He added that volunteers are welcome to help with the garden.

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Motion: Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr. moved, seconded by Thomas Gehringer and unanimously carried to pay the bills as listed on A/P Journal #2A, dated February 18, 2021, totaling \$474,390.07 and A/P Journal #3, dated March 4, 2021, totaling 257,511.61.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Keith Piescienski, duly seconded by Kenneth Hall and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:16 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Meaghan Case
Recording Secretary