

**BOROUGH OF NORTHAMPTON
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING
JUNE 17, 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 June 17, 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, Julia Kutzler, Kenneth Hall and Thomas Gehringer and Robert McHale. 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 Julia Kutzler, and carried to approve the Minutes of the Public Workshop Meeting held on May 6, 2021 and the Regular Public Meeting held on May 20, 2021.
Robert McHale abstained from this motion.

HEARING OF PERSONS PRESENT:

David Haberacker, 109 Candlewycke Lane, Northampton, was present to ask about the status of the illegal fence in his area. He added that this has been going on for over three years. Both Solicitor Panella and Mr. Brobst explained that the litigation process is long and extensive. Mr. Brobst told him the Borough sold the small piece of land that the fence was on to the property owner. Mr. Haberacker asked why the property was not put up for bid and that he wanted to buy it. Mr. Haberacker was also upset about the agenda setup. He questioned why the public only has the opportunity to speak at the beginning of the meeting. He said there should be a second time the public is allowed to speak, possibly towards the end of the meeting. He referenced other municipalities that allow the public to speak more than once throughout the meeting.

Jillian Derr, 2411 Dewey Avenue, Northampton, was present to complain about a rat infestation on her block. She said they are coming from a vacant property located at 2424 Dewey Avenue, Northampton. She said that this is a major health hazard in the area. She said her children can't play outside due to rats being on other properties surrounding this vacant home. She, along with neighbors in the area, have set traps and caught a significant amount of rats to date. She added that the homeowners should not have to pay for these traps and extermination costs and that the Borough should be responsible for these costs.

Mr. Brobst informed her that the Borough is aware of the situation and code enforcement is involved. He said there are proper protocols and procedures that must be followed to combat the situation.

Ronald Glassic, 583 E. 10th Street, Northampton, was present to introduce himself to council. He is interested in filling the vacant seat on borough council left by Thomas Gehringer. He said he is a life-long resident of the borough. He worked for Laneco for several years as the store manager. He is now employed by BB&T Bank. He would like to see the borough move forward and help in any way that he can.

Judy Haldeman, 23 W. 27th Street, Northampton, was present to introduce herself to council. She is interested in serving on the Northampton Borough Municipal Authority Board. She is a life-long resident of the borough. She added that her uncle worked for the Northampton Borough Municipal Authority his whole life.

Jeffrey Odenwelder, 942 Dewey Avenue, Northampton, was present to introduce himself to council. He is interested in serving on the Northampton Borough Municipal Authority Board. He owns several rental properties in the borough and is a business owner of 35 years. He would like to give back to the borough.

Joseph Szerencsits, 633 E. 10th Street, Northampton, was present to introduce himself. He is interested in serving on the Northampton Borough Municipal Authority Board. He is also a life-long borough resident. He is a certified public accountant for 26 years. He said he believes his expertise would be a good fit. His father also served on the board for 35 years.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

President Lopsonzski, Jr. had nothing to report.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Reenock presented Robert McHale with a "key to the city". He thanked him for his many years of service on borough council. He told him he is always welcome to come back will have access to anywhere with his key.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

Solicitor Panella informed council members that they can appoint a person to fill the vacancy that was created by the resignation of Thomas Gehringer with a term that would have expired on 12/31/23. The appointee's service will only be good until 1/3/22.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES:

Administration and Finance: Councilman Hall reported that we have a group of volunteers from the First Baptist Church Youth Ministry group who have offered to provide trash pickup along Norfolk Southern railroad tracks. This will occur on Monday, June 28, 2021, between the hours of 1-5 PM. They will have adult supervision and we will provide equipment, trash bags, and removal.

--On Monday and Tuesday, June 7 & 8, 2021, Mr. Brobst participated in the PSAB virtual annual conference. He found it extremely disappointing; however, he did find one session that he will refer to the code enforcement office that deals with blighted properties. Most informative.

--We are in the process of completing our application through the System for Award Management (SAM) as a necessary step in receiving the American Recovery Act funding.

--On Monday, June 14, 2021, members of the Boy Scouts of America and Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 4714 conducted a flag retirement ceremony at the south end of Canal Street Park.

Building, Land and Recreation: Councilman Pristash reported that with the recent mini heat wave, the pool receipts provided a very promising beginning. Hopefully, it will continue.

--Plans are underway to coordinate our efforts with the Northampton Exchange Club to facilitate a successful run of Community Days.

--The Farmers Market continues to attract visitors every Tuesday. Mr. Brobst was pleased to see that people were there in the midst of a drenching rainstorm on June 8, 2021.

Code and Police: Councilman Piesciensi reported that there is still an opening on the Planning Commission. Applications are available in the Borough office.

--The Civil Service Commission will be scheduling a meeting at a time to be determined to begin the process of preparing a new eligibility list.

--A copy of the code enforcement officer's report is included in your packets. He has been kept quite busy of late.

Fire and Health: Councilwoman Kutzler reported that at recent fire department meeting, members of the Quota Club were on hand and presented each volunteer with a voucher redeemable at Galyean's Deli. The members were most appreciative.

--The Northampton Fire Department participated in the Walnutport 125th Anniversary Parade on Saturday, June 12, 2021, with the following equipment: engine, tower, water rescue, and fire police unit. Mr. Brobst was happy to report that all four units received first place prizes.

--The Board of Health will meet on Tuesday, June 29, 2021, at 7 PM.

Public Works and Sewer: Councilman McHale reported that on Friday, June 11, 2021, we discovered a collapsed sewer lateral serving a home on Canal Street. Repairs were not completed until Monday, June 14, 2021.

--A crew of the public works department will provide a helping hand to the electrician who will be modifying and upgrading the electric panel in the permanent bandshell in the Municipal Park. The cost of this will be borne by the Exchange Club.

--Mr. Brobst met with Mr. Kevin Beyer of Gilmore & Associates and they spent quite a bit of time working towards completion of our Act 537 upgrade. We have a number of priorities that need to be addressed for the wastewater treatment plant and he believes it is best to complete the 537 upgrade and then address the other concerns as best as we are able.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS:

RESOLUTIONS:

RESOLUTION NO. 5-21

TITLE: A RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF NORTHAMPTON (BOROUGH) APPOINTING A DULY QUALIFIED ELECTOR OF THE THIRD WARD TO FILL A VACANCY ON BOROUGH COUNCIL.

Resolution No. 5-21 will officially appoint the person selected to fill the Third Ward vacancy.

Introduced By: Anthony Pristash

Seconded By: Robert McHale

Ordinance No. 5-21 passed unanimously.

Swearing In of Newly Appointed Council Member:

Mayor Thomas D. Reenock will at this time swear in the newly appointed council member, after which time the new member may assume his seat.

Ronald Glassic was sworn in as the 3rd Ward council member by Mayor Thomas Reenock.

Appointment to Zoning Hearing Board:

We have received one application to fill the vacancy on the Zoning Hearing Board and it is Ms. Sandra Pudliner of 3025 Oakland Drive. She attended the last Council meeting and introduced herself to Council at that time.

Motion: A motion was made by Anthony Pristash duly seconded by Keith Piescienski and unanimously carried to appoint Sandra Pudliner to the Zoning Hearing Board for a three-year term.

Introduction of the Candidates for the Northampton Borough Municipal Authority Board:

Mr. Brobst invited the three applicants for the vacant seat on the Northampton Borough Municipal Authority Board. Mr. McHale's term on the Authority runs until June 30, at which time his resignation will create the vacancy. This will provide an opportunity for Council to meet the three candidates.

Consider Request of Delaware & Lehigh Heritage Trail Half Marathon Committee:

As in past years, the Delaware & Lehigh Heritage Trail Half Marathon Committee wishes to conduct their 10th Annual Delaware & Lehigh Half Marathon on Sunday, November 7, 2021. The run would begin near Northern Lehigh High School in Slatington and end near 14th Street in the area

of the Canal Street Park. They anticipate the first finisher will arrive around 9 AM and the last somewhere near Noon. They will have everything cleaned up by 2 PM.

Motion: A motion was made by Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr., duly seconded by Anthony Pristash and unanimously carried to grant permission to the Delaware & Lehigh Heritage Trail Half Marathon Committee to conduct their 10th Annual Delaware & Lehigh Half Marathon on Sunday, November 7, 2021.

Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr. mentioned that he was concerned with church traffic during this time.

Consider Summer Meeting Schedule:

In past years, Council met once in the months of July and August. Council can decide whether to meet on the first and third Thursdays in July and August or only on the third Thursdays.

Motion: A motion was made by Anthony Pristash duly seconded by Kenneth Hall and carried to hold only one council meeting on the third Thursday in July and August. Robert McHale, Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr, Anthony Lopsonzski, Jr. and Julia Kutzler voted against this motion.

Roll call vote:

Robert McHale	NO	Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr.	NO
Julia Kutzler	NO	Anthony Lopsonzski, Jr.	NO
Kenneth Hall	YES	Keith Piescienski	YES
Anthony Pristash	YES	Ronald Glassic	YES

Mayor Thomas Reenock was the deciding vote with a “yes” to hold only one council meeting on the third Thursday in July and August.

REPORTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Kenneth Hall welcomed Ron Glassic to borough council.

--He thanked UGI for moving into his neighborhood to do street cuts.

--He asked Mr. Brobst if public works could get rid of the weeds in the old Bridals by Carol parking lot.

Robert McHale welcomed Mr. Glassic to borough council. He said he had the pleasure of serving with Mr. Glassic on the Northampton Borough Municipal Authority board.

--He thanked everyone for the “key to the city”. He said he was confident in the council members and said he was sure they will do great. He mentioned special projects that were near and dear to his heart such as the MS4 Project and the possibility of a storm water fee schedule. He was sad that he wouldn’t be here to see them come to fruition.

--He asked that everyone embrace the new technology out there, such as ZOOM calls and video capability. He suggested that we consider a "live watch" for the public to access council meetings, adding that we want the public to be part of the solution.

--He referenced the sewer plant pump station upgrade. The last upgrade was 30 years ago. He was happy to see this project complete. He said they have increased capacity, and improved efficiency to take on additional customers.

--He thanked everyone and wished everyone good luck. He said change can be good if you embrace it.

--His only regret was not being able to finish some things/projects and not being able to work with the upcoming junior council person.

Mr. Brobst added that they loved to agree to disagree. He appreciated all of the opportunities to discuss the "what ifs" with Mr. McHale.

Anthony Lopsonzski, Jr. thanked Mr. McHale for his service on borough council and said he had a great debt of gratitude for all that he has done in his position. He wished him well on his retirement.

Keith Piesciensi welcomed Mr. Glassic to borough council.

--He said UGI is still tearing up the borough.

Anthony Pristash wished Mr. McHale all the best in his retirement.

--He welcomed Mr. Glassic to borough council.

--He said that the Street Fair, Paw Prints on the Canal were very successful events in the borough. He added that the Community Days Fair was coming up July 7th – July 10th and another Street Fair in September. He said that he appreciated the patrons coming from all over to attend our community events. He said it just enhances the community spirit.

Julia Kutzler said she has personally lived through a similar experience after listening to the Derr family about the rat infestation. She said this must be addressed!

--She referenced a possible Air B&B on the 1500 Block of Main Street. She actually called to get a price and was told \$40.00 per night. She is concerned that they are evading the rental registration process. Solicitor Panella explained that Air B&B's fall into gray areas. They do not have to follow the same rules as rental properties. He said we can address this by ordinance if we choose to do so. Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr. added that if we would adopt an ordinance for Air B&B's, we would need additional staff of three or four people for inspections and administrative work.

--She thanked Candi Lynn for doing a phenomenal job on the Paw Prints on the Canal event. She said it was extremely successful.

--She reminded everyone that the community garden needs volunteers to help with watering.

--She also reminded everyone about the open seat on the Planning Commission.

Ronald Glassic thanked everyone for the warm welcome. He said he listens more than he talks. He said if he falls, he wants to fall forward. He is looking forward for the opportunity to serve the community and will give it 150% of his effort.

--He wished Mr. McHale the best in retirement.

Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr. welcomed Mr. Glassic to the borough council panel.

--He said that the Paw Prints on the Canal event was great and a huge success. He said there were people in attendance from all over. It was very well run and everyone did an amazing job.

--He said that the Civil Service Commission will meet on June 22nd at 9:00 AM at the borough office to set up a new eligibility list for police officers.

--He asked Mr. Brobst if the borough is going to create a pickle ball court at any of the parks.

Mr. Brobst said yes, the best park to start with is the Alliance playground.

--He also asked Mr. Brobst about the possibility of a Christmas Tree for the Uptown Park fountain.

Mr. Brobst looked into the cost for a large artificial tree and it would be about \$8,000.

--He commented on the rat infestation at 2424 Dewey Avenue. He said they are dangerous and something needs to be done to protect the health and welfare of the residents. He added that sometimes there are not quick resolutions to certain situations. There are proper protocols and procedures that need to be followed.

--He thanked Chief Kadingo for the police presence at local stores, restaurants and banks. The residents are noticing they are stopping in places just to say hello and talk to people.

--He congratulated Mr. Glassic again and said hopefully it's everything you think it will be.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

--Mr. Brobst welcomed Mr. Glassic to borough council.

--He said Juliann, David Lear and himself met with representatives of Kay Builders. They will be building the next phase of homes at Willowbrook Farms.

--Mr. Brobst had a meeting with members of the Exchange Club. He said it was a great meeting discussing the upcoming Community Days Fair.

--He informed everyone that the borough is accepting applications for the Planning Commission board.

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 #6A, dated June 17, 2021, totaling \$250,088.50.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Keith Piescienski, duly seconded by Kenneth Hall and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:14 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Meaghan Case
Recording Secretary