

**BOROUGH OF NORTHAMPTON
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING
JULY 15, 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 July 15, 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 and Ronald Glassic. Mayor Reenock and Kenneth Hall were absent. Also present were 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 Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr., and carried to approve the Minutes of the Public Workshop Meeting held on June 3, 2021 and the Regular Public Meeting held on June 17, 2021.

HEARING OF PERSONS PRESENT:

Frank Garger, Manager of the Hungarian Hall, 1300 Stewart Street, Northampton, was present to complain about the large gatherings at Canal Street Park. He said he was unhappy to be at the meeting since he attended a council meeting in August of 2020 with the same concerns and still there is no resolution. He said many small businesses have suffered over the last 1.5 years due to the pandemic. He is a business owner trying to get back to normal business but the large groups at Canal Street Park are a major hinderance to his business. He is dealing with illegally parked vehicles in his private parking lot, people urinating on the property and using the porch as a changing room. He said that members of the private club have stopped visiting because of the disrespect they are encountering upon trying to park in the private parking lot and also while entering the club. He said he is speaking for several borough residents in area about how disturbing these groups of people are. He said there are signs posted at the park stating, “no open flames”, yet they are using grills, “no alcohol”, yet they are bringing in coolers full of alcohol. He understands that the police are trying to do their job but said more needs to be done.

Council President Anthony Lopsonzski, Jr. said that council is working on things to correct the situation such as possibly getting a dumpster, extra trash cans and install Wi-Fi cameras to monitor the situation. He added that there will be a round table discussion with all parties involved including

a representative from the Fish & Game Commission, police department, borough council, parks & recreation committee and a resident or residents of the 4th Ward.

Solicitor Panella added that they have discussed video surveillance and other items are being addressed immediately to rectify the situation.

Frank Garger added that he has heard these comments before and nothing has been done for almost ten years. He said he needs council to finally do something. He added that recently parents and coaches of baseball teams couldn't park anywhere near the baseball field for a game at Canal Street Park. He said that people parked as far away as the St. Joe's parking lot.

Jason Donahue, 1344 Stewart Street, Northampton, was present to complain about the large gatherings at Canal Street Park. He referenced Palmer Township stating that they closed their park for one year until they had ordinances in place to regulate these types of situations. He said that his home is approximately 469 feet from the park. He played an audio clip taken with his cell phone while in his pool of how loud the music is blasting and how loud these crowds of people are. He said that is disturbing the peace. He also showed everyone date/time-stamped pictures of several dates and times over the last few weeks of the amount of people in the park, vehicles parked anywhere and everywhere, open grilling and all of the trash left behind. He said that it's been an ongoing issue for several years and something has to be done.

Barbara Kluska, 313 E. 18th Street, Northampton, was present to complain about the large gatherings at Canal Street Park. She said she used to love walking her dog on the trail at the park but not anymore. She has witnessed people with tables and chairs in the river on several occasions. She added that it's a public safety hazard. She said that it's taxpayer's money that is being used for the cleanup of the mess left behind, not to mention the pollution to the river. She saw something similar at Saucon Park and they were all out-of-state people using the park and leaving a mess behind. She said these people are ruining it for the residents of the Borough. She said the police can't do everything but something more needs to be done.

Alexis Soltis, 1901 Lincoln Avenue, Northampton, was present to complain about the large gatherings at Canal Street Park. She has a teenage son who is autistic and legally blind. He loves to walk on the trail at the park. She said it's sad that she had to tell him that he couldn't walk down there after she witnessed tons of people all over the area and people in the parking lot urinating between cars. She added that after attending a crime watch meeting, she learned that this is not illegal. She does not feel safe allowing her son and family to walk the trail. She said this has gone on long enough and something needs to be done.

Carol Lockett, 1352 Main Street, Northampton, was present to complain about the trash and weeds in her area. She said she is fairly new to the area. She can't believe the amount of trash she picks up in her yard every day. She also mentioned how many pet owners do not clean up their dog's feces. She said the example should be set by the Borough for keeping the area clean and looking presentable for anyone driving through the borough, especially on Main Street. She referenced huge weeds at the

Chinese Restaurant on Main Street and in front of Turkey Hill. She said that there should be ordinances in place to regulate all of this.

Dawn Whittman, 1375 Washington Avenue, Northampton, was present to complain about the large gatherings at Canal Street Park. She said her son plays baseball weekly at Canal Park and the parking lots and surrounding area are full of vehicles with out-of-state plates. There is absolutely no parking and her mother can't even enjoy her son's baseball games anymore because she can't walk far distances due to a heart problem. She said it is beyond absurd what has been happening at the park. She said that various baseball teams travel here from all over the Lehigh Valley and it's an embarrassment to the home team when they play at Canal Street and the park is overrun with hundreds of people, loud music and downright disrespect.

Kathryn Novegratz, 1728 Main Street, Northampton, was present to complain about the large gatherings at Canal Street Park. She said she usually walks the trail with her sister on Saturday mornings. She couldn't believe she saw someone defecating at the boat slip area. She said this has been going on for years and something needs to be done.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

President Lopsonzski, Jr. had nothing to report.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Reenock was absent.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

Solicitor Panella had nothing to report.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES:

Administration and Finance: Councilman Lopsonzski, Sr. reported that Mr. Edward Pany reports receiving a \$2,000 contribution from Holcim.

--On Thursday, July 8, 2021, Mr. Brobst met with members of PennDOT, Norfolk Southern and the Public Utility Commission regarding the rail crossing on the Borough of Northampton side of the Cementon Bridge. There will be a time when this will be shut down to all traffic both rail and vehicular for a period of approximately 72 hours. However, this will not occur until the new bridge is completed.

--A meeting had been scheduled with U.S. representative Susan Wild. However, that meeting was postponed until a later date.

--Mr. Brobst had a meeting on Tuesday, July 13, 2021, with Mr. Dan Bauer of Lafayette University. They reviewed the report that was prepared by the Lafayette Technical Clinic.

Building, Land and Recreation: Councilman Pristash reported that it would appear that Community Days was very successful with the exception of Thursday, July 8, 2021, when all proceedings were rained out. The cooperation received from the police and public works departments was greatly appreciated by the Exchange Club. Personally, Mr. Brobst thought that the fireworks were among the best ever.

--Swimming pool receipts have been quite strong. Attendance at the pool may actually be too good. We have experienced some behavioral issues.

--We have received an email with suggestions directed at solving the Canal Street Park concerns and will be turned over to the committee for evaluation.

Code and Police: Councilman Piesciensi reported that the Zoning Hearing Board met on Thursday, July 8, 2021, to hear the appeal of Brian and Heather Hamilton of 108 Frank Drive. They were seeking a variance for side yard and rear yard setbacks for a swimming pool. The members of the board voted unanimously to grant the appeal.

--On Wednesday, July 14, 2021, the Planning Commission will meet to consider recommending preliminary and possible final plan review for the next phase of Quarry Hill Estates. The developer, Edward Deichmeister, is looking to construct one single, 12 duplexes and 14 townhomes on property located on Sipos Drive.

--The code office conducted an inspection of the rat-infested property in the 2400 block of Dewey Avenue. Code Officer Knobloch had obtained an administrative warrant to conduct the search and was accompanied by a member of the police department and an inspector from Key Codes. Upon opening the door, the inspector from Key Codes was not willing to enter due to structural shortcomings observed. The owner of the property has 15 days to have the property inspected by a structural engineer. In the meantime, an exterminator has placed vermin traps in the area in order to trap the rats.

Fire and Health: Councilwoman Kutzler reported that the Board of Health's next scheduled meeting will be on Tuesday, July 27, 2021.

--Enclosed in your packet is the fire police monthly report for June. As always, they are very busy. She added they had a total of 350 man-hours for the month of June.

--Thanks to the efforts of Mary Ellen Handlon, our paperwork has been completed to obtain a SAM number. So, it should be just a matter of time until we see the COVID rescue money show up in our account.

--The firemen's parade was an apparent success. Not only did it add to the festivities of Community Days but people throughout the Borough had an opportunity to thank our fire department and welcome members of other three-county fire brigades.

--She felt the fireman's parade really added something special to the Community Days Fair.

Public Works and Sewer: Councilman Glassic reported that the River Central Committee will meet virtually on Tuesday, July 13, 2021, at 7 PM. Mr. Brobst feels that as long as this group meets virtually, interest is waning.

--On Wednesday, July 7, 2021, Mr. Brobst met with Mr. Ben Kutz of Gilmore & Associates and Mr. Chris Harding of PADEP. The topic of our discussion was the recent MS4 permit application. Following a good deal of discussion and a visit to the project site, Mr. Harding gave approval to the permit and bid preparation for the project should soon be prepared.

--Public Works Supervisor Gregory Morey and Mr. Brobst have continued their discussion with UGI regarding repairs to the Borough streets on which they have been working. The repairs that were made to Washington Avenue are the permanent repairs. It appeared to be sufficient. They will mill and

overlay the disturbed sections of Main Street. We will not need to do the paving. They will handle the repairs in their entirety. They will also pave East 13th Street from Main Street to Washington Avenue and Line Alley from East 13th Street south to the dead end.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS:

Report from Paw Prints on the Canal:

Mr. Brobst anticipates a representative from Paw Prints on the Canal to be present and report on their event.

Candi Lynn, Beth Smith and two other representatives were present to give a report on the Paw Prints on the Canal event. They said that they started out by forming teams and all had their own responsibilities. Everyone worked hard to make the event extremely successful! They had 155 vendors participate in the event. They collected a grand total of \$9,313.00 which was donated to the Northampton Borough Police Department K-9 Unit. They are hoping to have next year’s event on June 12, 2022.

Ronald Glassic asked if they had any issues with the event. Candi Lynn said the only small issue was the exit area. She said they will work on this for next year. He congratulated them on an outstanding event.

Appointment to Northampton Borough Municipal Authority Board:

At the last Council meeting, the three candidates for the vacant seat on the Northampton Borough Municipal Authority board introduced themselves and answered any questions put to them. At this point, Council needs to choose one of the three.

Motion: A motion was made by Julia Kutzler duly seconded by Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr. to appoint Judy Haldeman to the Northampton Borough Municipal Authority Board for a five-year term.

They were not all in agreement which resulted in a roll call vote.

1st Roll call vote:

Julia Kutzler	YES	Anthony Lopsonzski, Jr.	NO
Keith Piescienski	NO	Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr.	YES
Anthony Pristash	YES	Ronald Glassic	NO

After the first roll call vote, there was a tie with three “yes” and three “no” votes. The Mayor would have been the deciding vote but he was absent.

Anthony Pristash asked about a 2nd nomination to the board.

Solicitor Panella suggested to table the appointment until the next meeting.

Ronald Glassic did not want to hold up the appointment of someone to the Northampton Borough Municipal Authority Board since the seat has been vacant for quite some time. This resulted in a 2nd roll call vote.

2nd Roll call vote:

Julia Kutzler	YES	Anthony Lopsonzski, Jr.	NO
Keith Piescienski	NO	Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr.	YES
Anthony Pristash	YES	Ronald Glassic	YES

Motion: A motion was made by Julia Kutzler duly seconded by Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr. to appoint Judy Haldeman to the Northampton Borough Municipal Authority Board for a five-year term.

Consider Requests (2) from The Gospel Chapel:

The Gospel Chapel has submitted two requests for use of park facilities. The first request is for the use of Pavilion "B" at the Municipal Park on Sunday, August 29, 2021, to conduct their church services followed by a picnic. They have asked that Council consider waiving any and all fees.

Motion: A motion was made by Julia Kutzler, duly seconded by Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr. and unanimously carried to grant permission to The Gospel Chapel to use Pavilion "B" at the Municipal Park on Sunday, August 29, 2021, to conduct their church services followed by a picnic, waiving any and all fees.

The second request is to use the Canal Street Park pavilion and rest rooms for a live Nativity scene on Saturday, December 11, 2021. Their program will consist of music, singing and the presentation of the Christmas Story. They have contacted Barnes Yard Petting Zoo to complete their presentation. Any donations they collect will be donated to the Northampton Food Bank. They have also requested a waiver of fees for this event.

Motion: A motion was made by Anthony Pristash, duly seconded by Ronald Glassic and unanimously carried to grant permission to The Gospel Chapel to use the Canal Street Park pavilion and rest rooms for a live Nativity scene on Saturday, December 11, 2021, waiving any and all fees.

Consider Request from the Northampton Area Food Bank:

The Northampton Area Food Bank is requesting permission to use the Municipal parking lot at 19th and Center Streets to sponsor a fundraising event. A food truck will be parked in the lot on Friday, July 23, 2021, from 3-7 PM. A portion of the food sales will be donated to the food bank.

Motion: A motion was made by Julia Kutzler, duly seconded by Anthony Pristash and unanimously carried to grant permission to the Northampton Area Food Bank to use the Municipal parking lot at 19th and Center Streets to sponsor a fundraising event on Friday, July 23, 2021, from 3-7 PM.

Consider Request for Handicapped Parking Zone:

We have received a request to consider creating a handicapped parking zone in the area of 1748 Washington Avenue. Chief Kadingo has reviewed the request and rejected it because there is a garage/parking area within 100 feet in the rear of the residence. However, Council has the final determination.

Motion: A motion was made by Julia Kutzler duly seconded by Anthony Pristash, and unanimously carried to reject the request of creating a handicapped parking zone in the area of 1748 Washington Avenue.

Consider Request of Puertorrican Culture Preservation Inc:

We have received a request from Puertorrican Culture Preservation Inc. to use our band trailer for their 9th Annual Cultural Festival scheduled on August 1, 2021, at 555 Union Boulevard, Allentown. As a 501 (c) 3 organization, they would be required to provide the delivery and removal fee and provide an insurance certificate naming the Borough as additionally insured, but the rental fee would be waived.

Motion: A motion was made by Julia Kutzler, duly seconded by Anthony Pristash and unanimously carried to grant permission to the Puertorrican Culture Preservation Inc. to use our band trailer for their 9th Annual Cultural Festival scheduled on August 1, 2021, at 555 Union Boulevard, Allentown. They would be required to provide the delivery and removal fee, but the rental fee would be waived.

Consider Approval of Cooperative Agreement:

We are required by the Northampton County Board of Supervisors that, in order to continue in the CDBG Grant Program, we need to complete an agreement informing them that we wish to participate with Council's adoption of this agreement. It will be signed by the council president and attested by the borough secretary.

Motion: A motion was made by Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr., duly seconded by Ronald Glassic and unanimously carried to grant permission to adopt the agreement with the Northampton County Board of Supervisors in order to continue in the CDBG Grant Program.

Consider Request of Northampton Area School District:

Each year Borough Council offers the recreation center as temporary mass care and sheltering for the Northampton Area School District. The emergency contact personnel in the event that this would be needed are Recreation Center Director Jason Kremus and Borough Manager LeRoy Brobst. As of this date, we have never needed to provide this service.

Motion: A motion was made by Ronald Glassic, duly seconded by Keith Piescienski and unanimously carried to grant permission to offer the recreation center as temporary mass care and sheltering for the Northampton Area School District.

Consider Request of South Whitehall Township:

We have received a request from our friends at South Whitehall Township requesting use of our band trailer on Tuesday, August 3, 2021. They will be billed for delivery and removal and will need to provide a Certificate of Insurance naming the Borough as additionally insured.

Motion: A motion was made by Ronald Glassic, duly seconded by Anthony Pristash and unanimously carried to grant permission to South Whitehall Township to use our band trailer on Tuesday, August 3, 2021. They will be billed for delivery and removal.

Consider Update to Police Department Procedural Manual:

Police Chief Bryan Kadingo has requested to update the Police Procedural Manual to include the installation and use of the new mobile camera system and server. The cameras that I speak of were provided by a COVID-19 grant from Northampton County and a generous contribution from the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Motion: A motion was made by Anthony Pristash, duly seconded by Ronald Glassic and unanimously carried to grant permission to Police Chief Bryan Kadingo to update the Police Procedural Manual to include the installation and use of the new mobile camera system and server.

Consider Awarding Engineering Study:

A recent PA-DCNR grant for an engineering study for the trail connection between the Nor-Bath Trail and the D&L Trail requires requests for proposals from at least three engineering firms. The proposals were received and reviewed by Victor Rodite and the Borough Manager, and we are recommending that the project be awarded to Michael Baker International. This will improve the trail connection along West 10th Street. A more thorough explanation is provided in Victor's report.

Motion: A motion was made by Anthony Pristash, duly seconded by Ronald Glassic and unanimously carried to grant permission to award the project to Michael Baker International for an engineering study for the trail connection between the Nor-Bath Trail and the D&L.

Consider August 5, 2021 Council Meeting:

It would appear that there are many items that Council may wish to address, including appointing a person to the vacant council seat in the Third Ward, which must be completed before the scheduled Council meeting on August 19, 2021. It would be to our advantage, then, to meet on August 5, 2021.

Motion: A motion was made by Ronald Glassic, duly seconded by Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr. and unanimously carried to have a council meeting on August 5, 2021.

REPORTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Keith Piescienski said the streets in the borough are getting better but most of them still need work.

Anthony Pristash said that our Community Days Fair was extremely successful, enjoyable and the Fireman's parade was a great addition.

--He acknowledged the concerns at Canal Street Park and knows these issues need to be addressed. He has contacted other townships to see how they have handled situations like this. He added that it will not be quick and easy but understands there needs to be a resolution sooner than later.

Julia Kutzler referenced Ms. Lockett's concerns. She said there is a rental ordinance in place and we have two code enforcement officers that address weeds/high grass complaints. She agreed that the weeds need to be addressed at the Chinese restaurant on Main Street and Turkey Hill. She said she sees it, it's in her ward.

--She said that she visited the pool a few times in the past couple weeks and said that the employees are wonderful. She said they are mostly younger kids and they are doing a great job. She added that the pool is about 70 years old and needs some updates. She also suggested the possibility of having people volunteer at the pool to check passes and coolers at the back gate.

--She would like to see the lifeguard program brought back to the recreation center.

--She attended the last crime watch meeting and encouraged others to attend to learn what's legal and not legal. She encouraged the public to work with Borough Council, not throw rocks. She said we have to find a way to work together as a community. She said that we have to remember that police have other matters to deal with. She encouraged the public to own their part.

--She checked on the rat infestation problem at 2424 Dewey Avenue. She said that she drove through the area and did not see any rats. She did see where the traps were set.

Ronald Glassic thanked Mr. Brobst and Scott Gillespie for allowing him to ride along to see certain areas of concern in the borough.

--He thanked everyone for the opportunity to serve on Borough Council.

--He agreed with Ms. Lockett's concern about the weeds in the sidewalks and curbing throughout the borough. He said these issues need to be addressed for both businesses and residences in the Borough.

--He said that the truck traffic is horrible on 10th Street.

--He addressed concerns of people running through stop signs. He suggested flashing lights on the stop signs.

--He acknowledged the severity of the issues at Canal Street Park. He said that borough council is working together to come up with a solution. He would like to see this corrected as soon as possible. He also suggested cameras be installed at Canal Street.

--He said that the Community Days Fair was a great event, adding that he and his family especially enjoyed the fireman's parade. He congratulated everyone involved.

Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr. addressed the public after listening to all of the complaints. He said that some resolutions to the problems may require a tax increase. He said to be careful what you wish for.

--He said that people have to understand that the police department has other serious situations that take a higher priority. He added that it takes time for certain things to be taken care of.

--He said we could close Canal Street Park but it will affect the borough residents who enjoy using the park and are respectful.

--He said unfortunately common sense is gone. The people that are coming from out of town/state do not care about leaving the grove area a mess, leaving trash everywhere and polluting the river.

--He said that he drove by there on July 14th and saw a huge cloud of smoke in the grove area. He said it looked like a campfire. He called the non-emergency number to report a possible fire. It turns out, the smoke was from people smoking hookah in the park.

--He commended Candi Lynn and everyone involved in the Paw Prints on the Canal event. He said it is the most successful event held in the borough. He said the event raises a significant amount of money for our police department's K-9 unit. He said he stood at 17th Street looking down Canal Street during the event and it reminded him of the Allentown Fair years ago. He said that it was extremely well attended and was a great time.

--He asked Mr. Brobst if the public works department could trim back some of the trees on the trail at Canal Street and also at 10th Street at Canal Street around the bend by the bridge.

--He said the Community Days Fair was wonderful and the Exchange Club did a great job putting everything together. He added that most of their member are getting old and they need help.

--He clarified that the noise ordinance in the borough is from 10:00PM until 6:00AM.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

--Mr. Brobst acknowledged the severity of the issues at Canal Street Park. He said that borough council is looking into solutions and there will be a round table discussion with a representative of the building, land & recreation committee, the police department, 4th Ward residents, and possibly the fish and game commission.

--He also informed everyone that he and Victor are looking into possible grant opportunities to have a pavilion installed at Canal Street Park in the grove area.

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 #7, dated June 29, 2021, totaling \$139,831.80 and A/P Journal #7A, dated July 15, 2021, totaling 232,745.77.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Keith Piescienski, duly seconded by Anthony Pristash and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:06 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Meaghan Case
Recording Secretary