

Borough of Northumberland
175 Orange Street, Northumberland, PA 17857
Northumberland Borough Council Meeting
December 17, 2013

Council President James Troup called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and Mayor Len Zboray offered an Invocation.

Roll Call

Council members present were Adam Klock, Stephen Reed, Ellie Rees, Ty Sees, James Troup, and Harry Wynn. Others present were Mayor Zboray; C.L. Kriner, Chief of Police; Thomas Slodysko, Street Supervisor; Jeremy Deitrick, Sewer Department Superintendent; and Janice Bowman, Borough Secretary. Council member Gregory Carl was absent.

Public Comment

Four visitors from the public were present and introduced themselves.

Mr. Paul Ruane stated that he will not be able to attend the reorganizational meeting on January 6th because he will be out of the country.

Dick Simpson told the council that he had served on council years ago and is hoping that the council put a great deal of thought in the budget. He would not like to see police services cut.

Mayor's Report

- Mayor Zboray reported that the Wreaths for Warriors program at the Riverview Cemetery went well. The ceremony was well-attended.
- Mayor Zboray read the following Certificate of Excellence to be presented to council member Gregory Carl:

“Mayoral Certificate of Excellence awarded to Gregory Carl in recognition of his volunteer spirit that has been demonstrated over the past fourteen years by his faithful involvement for the betterment of Northumberland. He has served as a member of the Northumberland Recreation Commission, Chairman of the Community Development Committee, volunteer manager of Liberty Splashland, an exemplary member of the Northumberland Borough Council holding the offices of President and Vice President.
Presented on December 17, 2013. Len Zboray, Mayor”
- Mayor Zboray wished a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all member of Council, the Borough Employees and the residents of the Borough.
- Mayor Zboray also thanked Tom and the crew for helping to decorate the park for the holidays and for the great job they've done on the streets.

Emergency Services Board Report – no report

Committee Reports

Community Development – no report

Finance

2014 Proposed Budget – 2nd reading

Mr. Sees moved to accept the proposed 2014 budget, as is. Mr. Wynn seconded the motion.

Mr. Reed stated that as far as the police situation, he does not want to not have coverage. He thinks council should follow through on filling the part-time positions.

Mayor Zboray stated that he would like to clarify the statement in the paper which is that the article in the paper stated that the borough would be hiring a 5th police officer. The Borough would be replacing an officer who is retiring; not hiring an additional officer. There have been five full-time police officers.

Mr. Reed asked what plan B would be if we do not come up with any good part-time police coverage. Mr. Sees responded that plan B would be to possibly look to hire a full-time officer. Mr. Reed asked if the Borough would have money for that. Mr. Sees responded probably not. He added that it depends on the radios for the 911 upgrade. The other issue is paying health care for Officer Hennessey. He stated that this is budgeted, but is something that the Borough normally didn't pay. He will be getting insurance, but the Borough is not getting anything in return. By increasing the part-time budget to \$47,000, he is hoping that the Borough would be able to hire enough part-time officers to cover the shifts and be able to provide 24 hour coverage. Mr. Wynn stated that he understands that some applications have been received for the part-time positions. He asked if when it comes to interview time, it could be done by the Personnel Committee with Butch and the mayor. Mr. Tira responded that it should be done by the Mayor and Chief of Police first because the Mayor oversees the police department. He added that the council would approve the appointments. Mr. Sees stated that council's intention is not to not have full-time coverage. The intention is to watch the money this year because the Borough has a 911 upgrade for the police department of approximately \$14,000 plus the fire department that could cost anywhere from \$2,200 to \$44,000 depending on whether they get the grant money. The Borough is also responsible to pay approximately \$15,000 for health insurance for Ed Hennessey who is retiring, according to the police contract. This will be payable for ten years unless he takes another job that provides health insurance. He explained that these other costs to the Borough were the reasons that the fifth full-time officer was not included in the budget. He added that at some point, they may be able to hire another full-time officer. He would like everyone to work together and try to make this work.

Mayor Zboray stated that the police are on board with the part-time officers. He said that he wants 24-7. He explained that if there is a week where an officer is on vacation and someone calls off sick, and they call a part-timer and he is already working somewhere

else, there may be a time when the part-timers aren't available and there is not coverage. Mr. Sees questioned what the police are doing now to cover. Mayor Zboray responded that guys are working over and above their schedule. He stated that vacations and comp time are going to come up again next year. He said that the Chief has been working extra to cover the shifts. Mr. Troup asked how many full-time officers were working before Officer Hennessey retired. Mayor Zboray stated that there were four; however, Kevin Rushton, the part-timer, was working full-time hours because he wasn't working anywhere else. He said he would like to hire another officer like Kevin. He just wants the council to understand that it may be difficult to have part-time officers cover the times when needed. The Mayor said that he and the Chief want to make it work. They just need to find the people to fill the part-time positions. He said that they would conduct interviews and come back to the council for approval. Mr. Klock asked if the part-time positions have been posted on Facebook. The Borough Secretary responded that the positions have been advertised in the paper and are posted on the Borough website. She noted that Ann takes care of posting on Facebook and she has been very busy doing the work for the sewer department.

Council voted 5-1 to approve the 2014 budget. Mrs. Rees voted no.

Personnel

Mr. Troup stated that personnel issues would be discussed in Executive Session.

Public Safety

Mrs. Rees stated that the committee didn't meet because no one had any concerns.

Rules

Mr. Sees has contacted several companies for prices for cat licenses and is waiting for responses. One company, Pet Data, works with vets. They send the tags and the animals are in a database that a vet can access. Mr. Klock asked if there is a fee for adding the animal to the database. He stated that the ordinance is written that there is no fee for the chips or tattoos.

Mr. Klock said that at the Rules Committee Meeting, they discussed the information that they would like to have included on the license form and are considering a three year license instead of a yearly license. He has contacted the Northumberland County Treasurer about possibly piggybacking off of their process for issuing tags, but he hasn't heard back from him. He provided a rough draft of the application for council's review.

The cost of the fees is not determined since the costs for the licenses are unknown. Discounts may be given for multiple pets and for senior citizens. Mr. Sees stated that he has gone online to get sample applications and fees from other communities.

Mr. Klock added that a line item will be included for a donation to the TNR fund.

The outdoor feeding ban goes into effect on January 1st. He said that door hangers may be used before citations are given so residents are aware of the ban.

Streets

Mr. Reed thanked the street department for the job they did on the streets. He also thanked the volunteers who decorate the corners in the downtown area. He noted that it makes the downtown look nicer.

Old Business

1. No applications have been received for the vacancy on the Borough Planning Commission.

New Business

1. Upon motion by Mr. Klock, seconded by Mr. Reed, council voted to approve payment of the bills. Bills to be paid from the General Fund total \$40,266.42; Liberty Splashland bills total \$32.81; and 2nd Street Community Center bills total \$170.51.

Sewer Department

Mr. Klock stated that the council is ready to advertise for bids for the sewer project.

The committee wishes to invite Senator Gordner and Representative Culver to a meeting at 7:00 p.m. on January 9th to review the plans and to get their support for the project. Mr. Troup moved to invite the Senator Gordner and Representative Culver to the meeting. Mr. Klock seconded the motion. Council voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Mr. Klock informed the council that he continues to negotiate with municipalities for nutrient credits. He is currently negotiating with Mount Carmel Municipal Authority. Mr. Klock was authorized pay up to \$1.00 per credit.

Mr. Klock received correspondence from the engineer regarding how to handle insurance from the contractors. No action is required, per Mr. Tira.

Shikellamy School District has requested additional capacity from the sewer plant because the new school will house double the number of students that had previously been housed there. The engineer feels that the number of e.d.u.'s requested should be studied and additional information is required. Mr. Klock moved to authorize the Northumberland Borough Sewer Department or Sewer Committee to send a response letter to Larson Design Group indicating the NBSD has the capacity requested by their client (Shikellamy School District) but is unable to guarantee the capacity at this time without the submittal of further information. Hence, the Borough is not authorizing the requested post-card exemption from application for sewer capacity. The NBSD would like the customer to submit waste water engineering drawings. The Borough is also requiring that the customer establishes an escrow account with a minimum of \$1000.00 to cover NBSD legal and engineering costs anticipated for the review of their application for an increase in waste water treatment capacity. Mr. Wynn seconded the motion. Council approved the motion unanimously.

Hazen and Sawyer will hold a public meeting on January 16, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. for the Liberty Hollow Stormwater study.

Mr. Dick Simpson volunteered to serve on the Borough Planning Commission. Mr. Klock so moved. Mr. Troup seconded the motion. Council voted unanimously to approve.

Executive Session

The council meeting was adjourned for an Executive Session at 7:40 p.m. to discuss litigation and personnel issues.

The council meeting was reconvened at 10:11 p.m.

Upon motion by Mr. Klock, seconded by Mr. Troup, council voted 5-1 to approve the pay rate for Ann August of \$16 per hour for her work for the sewer department. She has worked 198.5 hours thus far. Mr. Sees voted no.

Mr. Klock requested that the Borough Secretary look into pricing for a new telephone system that is a prompt system for the various departments. He would like to include all the phone numbers on the same system, the office, the police, the garage, and the pool. Discussion ensued.

The reorganizational meeting is set for January 6, 2014. Mr. Reed stated that he would be out of town. The newly elected officers must complete an Affidavit of Residency before being sworn in.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice R. Bowman
Borough Secretary