

Borough of Northumberland
175 Orange Street, Northumberland, PA17857
Northumberland Borough Council Meeting
May 6, 2014

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, Paul Ruane, and James Troup. Others present were Mayor Zboray; Marc Demshock, Esq., substituting for Solicitor Ryan Tira; Jeremy Deitrick, Sewer Department Superintendent; Theodore McCollum, Street Supervisor/Code Enforcement Officer; and Janice Bowman, Borough Secretary. Council members Ty Sees and Harry Wynn were absent.

Public Comment

Ms. Carol Updegrove, a resident of Water Street, stated that in the recent Pineknoller News there was no mention of a schedule for disposal of yard debris. She has emailed the Borough to request that the residents be provided with one and would like council to discuss it. She added that she could use it on a weekly basis.

Janet Metzger stated that she would like to discuss Burkenbine Alley. It is between Priestley Avenue and Water Street and is in poor condition.

Victoria Rosancrans requested permission on behalf of the Priestley-Forsyth Memorial Library and the Fire Companies to use the King Street Park for a function in October.

Council member Ty Sees arrived at 7:14 p.m.

Mr. Klock stated that in the past, residents were permitted to drop off yard debris. Mr. Reed stated that he thinks dates will be made available at the end of the month. Ms. Updegrove requested that the Borough provide more dates and also requested that the Borough pick up leaves in the spring because she has a number of trees that do not drop leaves until spring. Mr. Reed agreed that council could consider running the leaf picker in the spring for the leaves that do not come down in the fall. Ms. Updegrove stated that she also has trimmed a branch from a tree and has nowhere to take it. Mr. Reed stated that if a branch falls off a tree, the Borough crew will pick it up. Mr. Klock explained that in the past, residents were permitted to drop off brush when the recycling center was open; however, people were dropping off items that were not accepted. Ms. Updegrove said that

she would be willing to pay a fee for a permit to drop off yard waste more frequently. Mr. Klock said that there is not enough space to accept yard waste like grass clippings at the recycling center. Mr. Troup said that residents could use a mulching blade and leave grass clippings on the lawn or start a compost. Ms. Updegrove said that she does have a compost, but she has clippings from her shrubbery, etc. Mr. Troup noted that the Borough does not have the manpower to provide additional services. Ms. Updegrove questioned if the Borough would go to another community and ask to use their services. Someone responded that the other neighboring communities require proof of residency for brush drop-off. Mr. Troup said that residents can bag the debris and put it out for the garbage hauler. It was suggested that volunteers could oversee the drop-off. Mr. Troup noted that while people offer to volunteer; they do not show up when needed. Examples given were to help with the bowl slide and the dog park.

Ms. Updegrove asked whether Act 101 states that every municipality must provide for the disposal of yard waste. Mr. Demshock stated that he did not have the statute in front of him and would have to research the topic.

Ms. Metzger stated that the Burkenbine Alley is in bad disarray. The alley was paved long ago but is now dirt and stones. Last year, stones were put down. Ms. Metzger said that the alley has potholes and that with baseball season, many people use the alley. Mr. McCollum stated that he would go to the alley tomorrow to evaluate the situation and let her know.

Mr. Troup checked on Act 101 and stated that it applies to municipalities with over 10,000 people.

Ms. Rosancrans stated that she is the “supports unit coordinator” for the firemen and explained that the unit goes to the fire scene and helps hydrate the firemen. The purpose of the supports unit is to get all the firemen home safely. She said that the group is seeking funds. They would like to use the King Street Park and street around the park on October 4th to start an annual craft fair. The Priestley-Forsyth Library has a teen club with about 35 teens. They would like to have a fall family fun night on October 4th at the King Street Park. The activities would be held following the craft fair. Ms. Rosancrans requested permission to close off the park from 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. The teens help the Rotary and Kiwanis Clubs and volunteer during Pineknotters’ Days. They are also helping with the upkeep of the grounds at the Northumberland Historical Society. Upon motion by Mr. Klock, seconded by Mr. Troup, council voted unanimously to permit the Fire Department and the Priestley-Forsyth Memorial Library use of the King Street Park and streets on October 4, 2014 for the day.

Council Meeting Minutes

Upon motion by Mr. Reed, seconded by Mr. Troup, council voted 5-0-1 to approve the council meeting minutes of April 1, 2014. Mr. Sees abstained.

Upon motion by Mr. Reed, seconded by Mrs. Rees, council voted unanimously to approve the council meeting minutes of April 15, 2014.

Northumberland Sewer Department Report

Mr. Klock informed the council that the committee met with representatives from Nottingham Village earlier this evening. No action is required at this time.

Mr. Klock stated that a resolution is presented for the council to adopt. It is to approve an application for a \$150,000 grant from the PA Small Water and Sewer Program for the Financing Authority for rehabilitation and repair work to remove infiltration and inflow in the sewer system. There is an application fee of \$100 which is nonrefundable. Upon motion by Mr. Klock, seconded by Mr. Troup, council unanimously voted to adopt Resolution C-2014.

Mr. Brian Book explained the three milestones that must be met by the Sewer Department. The timeline was looking at the Northumberland Sewer Authority going back to 2009. March of 2012 is when the 537 plan disappears from the record and the consent order replaces it. The consent order has three milestones which are 1. The categorical exclusion from the 537 plan, which was done; 2. A date of May 30, 2014 to authorize the construction project which the Borough is in jeopardy of missing, and 3. A date of August, 2015, when construction should be done.

Hazen & Sawyer was contracted to study, very preliminarily, the idea of an interconnect between Northumberland and Sunbury. This was not done in a 537 plan which is what PennVest is now objecting to. In January 2014, the Borough came very close to being approved for PennVest funds which required DEP to approve the categorical exclusion for 537 planning and say that the Borough is eligible for PennVest Funding. It is now surprising that the Borough has been told by PennVest that it is not eligible. Mr. Book also noted that Point Township Sewer Authority's solicitor had submitted a letter to the Borough that they would not participate in an Act 537 Plan study. Mr. Klock stated that the Borough was not opposed to doing an Act 537 plan study; it was in the correction action plan with DEP. The NSA had decided to build a new treatment facility. The Borough was encouraged to sign an exemption from having to conduct the study by DEP and state that the new treatment facility is the best option. Now PennVest is stating that because the Borough did not do the Act 537 plan study, they cannot fund the project without more information. Mr. Klock said a meeting with DEP, PennVest, Representative Culver, and Senator Gordner is scheduled to discuss the issue and to obtain a final opinion from the state agencies. Mr. Klock recommended delaying the bid notice for the project. He noted that PennVest loan is 1% interest; local funding is 3.75% to 4.25% so the lower interest rate would save the Borough around \$1.5 million. Mr. Book explained that PennVest can provide up to a 50% grant and will do a 1% loan. The county interest rate is 1.8%, which is the highest rate it can be.

Mr. Klock moved to delay putting the sewer project out for bid until further notice. Mr. Ruane seconded the motion which was approved unanimously.

Mr. Klock stated that a letter from DEP was received regarding the consent order revision. Mr. Klock moved to accept DEP's consent order revision which provides a one year extension on the time line due to the archaeological studies, contingent upon the solicitor's review. Mr. Ruane seconded the motion which council approved unanimously.

Mr. Klock informed the council that they are still searching for nutrient credits for next year.

The committee is still waiting for information from the Pennsylvania American Water Company in order to continue with the rate study for changing over the billing system to water usage in 2015.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Zboray received an offer from Bud and Peg Feaster to donate fish to the Borough. The street employees went to the Feaster's home, caught the fish, and moved them to the pond in King Street Park. The Mayor wanted to publicly thank the Feasters for the donation. He also thanked Sammy Lleras for donating fish for the pond, adding that there was a picture of Sammy in the Daily Item.

Mayor Zboray stated that on April 24th, he swore in the three new part-time officers, Patrolman Samantha Ortona, Patrolman Scott Kerstetter, and Patrolman Rachel Shear. He said that they have been doing all the testing and have been riding with the other officers and are completing their final certifications. He hopes to have them up to speed in June.

Memorial Day Parade is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on May 26th. The band of the St. Louis de Montfort Academy will be here again. Mayor Zboray thanked the American Legion Post 44 for paying for the band to play.

Mayor Zboray thanked Bass Scullin for donating fifty free car washes from the Flood Zone in Sunbury.

Mayor Zboray stated that Attorney Lemon's office contacted the Borough Office to report that Joe Epler has left \$50,000 to the 2nd Street Community Center to be used for recreation and/or historical purposes.

Shikellamy School District has sent a letter informing the council that the Tennis Court lease agreement can no longer be in effect due to the construction of the new middle school.

Patrol Officer Ed Hennessey has submitted a letter to the Mayor and Chief Kriner resigning his position as a part-time officer in the Police Department as of May 14, 2014. Upon motion by Mr. Klock, seconded by Mr. Reed, the council voted unanimously to accept Officer Hennessey's resignation as a part-time officer.

Code Enforcement Officer's Report

- Mr. McCollum stated plans will be submitted for a 4,000 square foot addition at the Northumberland Hook and Ladder Company.
- Mr. McCollum has noticed that a number of houses do not have house numbers. Letters will be sent to the residents.
- Mr. McCollum stated that he expects to be busy with the high-grass season coming up.

Street Supervisor's Report

- Mr. McCollum stated that the drain bases have been cleaned out.
- Mr. McCollum coordinated with the volunteers to work at the dog park. Benches were put together and set in place.
- Most of the potholes have been patched.
- Water was turned on today for Liberty Splashland. Some pipes were repaired.
- Mr. McCollum is in the process of implementing a program for all of the vehicles and equipment in order to monitor costs to try to keep them down.
- Mr. McCollum addressed concerns in the Savidge Community Room in order to obtain an occupancy permit.

Emergency Services Board Report – no report

Committee Reports

Community Development

- Liberty Splashland
Mr. Reed stated that some toilets will be replaced; carpet will be cleaned professionally; the concession stand is cleaned up and in order; and pipes at the pool have been repaired. The committee is working to get the pool ready.
- Community Center
We are close to getting an occupancy permit for the Savidge Room in order to be able to rent it out.
- Girl Scout House
The United Way volunteers took down the ceiling and cleaned the gutters.
- Mr. Reed stated that Ann August and Jan Bowman arranged a ride around the Borough with Representative Culver, Senator Gordner, Pat Mack, Phil Dunn, and the Mayor to show them the projects that are going on in the Borough in order to obtain funding.
- Mr. Klock asked if a date could be set for brush drop-off at the Recycling Center. Mr. Reed said that dates had been set, and that Harry Wynn would have them. Mr. Klock requested that the information be posted.
- Requests have been made that a port-a-potty be placed out on the playground. When the office is opened, the restrooms in the Community Center may be used. The cost is \$125 per month for a handicapped port-a-potty. The topic was tabled.
- It was noted that the purple tunnel is broken on the playground.
- BINGO – the Pineknotters' Days Committee has asked if the Borough Council is going to oversee the BINGO stand at Pineknotters' Days this year. Mr. Reed stated that he has a meeting at his church next Wednesday and they are interested in becoming involved in the community. He plans to ask them if they would be willing to help. It was noted that the proceeds, minus the 10% for Pineknotters' Days, is earmarked for the 2nd Street Community Center. Mr. Sees and Mr. Troup were in charge of the volunteers and the stand last year.

Finance

Mr. Sees informed the council that he and Mrs. Rees picked up the audit and he would like to meet with the Finance Committee on May 15th at 6:30 p.m. Mr.

Klock stated that he would be out of town and not available that evening. The meeting was postponed until May 16th at 1:00 p.m. The change will be posted.

Personnel

Mr. Troup stated that the council will meet in Executive Session to discuss a personnel issue with the street employee.

Public Safety

Mrs. Rees stated that the committee will meet at 6:00 p.m. on May 19th.

Mr. Ruane reported that H&N has provided a quote of \$562 to install a connection for a generator for traffic light at King & Water Streets. If they also provide a generator, the total cost is \$2,900. Mr. Ruane obtained a price of \$449 plus shipping for a portable generator. Discussion ensued. Mr. Klock moved, and Mrs. Rees seconded the motion to accept H&N's quote to install the connection and to purchase the generator from Northern Tool Company. Council approved unanimously.

Rules

Mr. Ruane said that Jim Soos has brought up an issue about the BOCA codes. These codes require that a permit is obtained for any construction work that is done inside the house. Mr. Ruane stated that he is not in favor of the BOCA codes. The state code is the Uniform Construction Code. This code does not require permits for work that is done inside the house.

Mr. Klock provided an update on the cat licensing. He stated that the company is in the final stages of the website development for the online payments for cat licenses and their representative will be coming into the office to train the office staff on how to use the website. Mr. Klock spoke with KayAnn Busshaus. She will provide a \$4.00 coupon for veterinary services at her office to anyone who purchases a cat license for \$4.00.

Streets – no report

Old Business – none

New Business

1. Upon motion by Mr. Reed, seconded by Mr. Klock, council voted unanimously to approve payment of the bills. Bills to be paid from the General Fund total \$39,514.62; General Contingency bills total \$1,104.45; Norry Playground fund bills total \$47.50; bills to be paid from the DEP grant total \$20,995.80; Park and Recreation fund bills total \$94.03; Donations Account bills total \$282.29; and Liberty Splashland bills total \$483.56.
2. Upon motion by Mr. Reed, seconded by Mrs. Rees, council voted unanimously to approve a handicapped parking space request from Chester Querry at 273 Queen Street. Mr. Klock asked if the council must approve the handicapped parking

spaces every year. The Borough Secretary responded that the office reviews the list every year and checks with anyone they don't know to see if the space is still needed.

3. Mr. Klock has obtained quotes for Health Insurance for the Borough employees. He had requested that the plans be similar or better than the current plan. He noted that the prices look great, providing that the plans are equivalent. The Capital Blue Cross quote is almost \$83,000 less than the current insurance rate and the Geisinger Plan is approximately \$128,000 less. The current coverage is Capital Blue Cross through Benecon. The Borough Secretary is creating a spreadsheet to show the comparisons. Benecon must be informed six months in advance if the Borough is not going to contract through them. Mr. Klock stated that he spoke with Ed Hovenstein, the manager at Shamokin Dam, and he recommended an insurance broker. He said that Shamokin Dam also purchased gap coverage, which Mr. Klock has not yet discussed with the insurance broker. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Sees made a motion to send a letter to Benecon informing them that the Borough may not contract with them for health insurance for 2015. Mr. Klock seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.

Executive Session 8:45

Mr. Troup announced that the council would adjourn for an Executive Session to discuss a personnel issue for the street department and sewer department and a negotiation for the rental of this room. The council adjourned for the Executive Session at 8:45 p.m.

The council meeting was reconvened at 9:08 p.m.

Mr. Klock moved and Mr. Reed seconded the motion to offer Joshua Kurtz a part-time sewer operator position at a rate of \$12 per hour. Mr. Sees questioned if he should vote on the hiring since he is affiliated with the local Teamster Union. Mr. Demshock responded that he could abstain. Council voted 5-0-1 to approve. Mr. Sees abstained.

Mr. Troup moved to authorize the Borough Secretary to negotiate the rental of the Savidge Room to the church group for a six-month period at a rate of no less than \$3,900. Mr. Reed seconded the motion. The agreement is not binding if the group wishes to end their use of the room. All other conditions of the agreement remain the same. Council voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Mr. Troup adjourned the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice R. Bowman
Borough Secretary