

Borough of Northumberland
175 Orange Street, Northumberland, PA 17857
Northumberland Borough Council Meeting
November 20, 2012

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, Jonathan Rees, Ty Sees, and James Troup. Others present were Mayor Zboray; Ryan Tira, Borough Solicitor; Thomas Slodysko, Street Supervisor; Paul Ruane, Code Enforcement Officer; and Janice Bowman, Borough Secretary. Council members Gregory Carl and Frank Wetzel were absent.

Patricia Young, CPA

The Borough's auditor, Patricia Young, explained that she conducted the 2011 audit found no errors or omissions in the Borough's control or in any of the work that was checked. No questions were asked of her. She said that if any council member has any questions, he may contact her at any time.

Public Comment

Seven visitors introduced themselves. No public comment was offered.

Approval of Council Meeting Minutes

Upon motion by Mr. Rees, seconded by Mr. Klock, council voted 3-0-2 to approve the council meeting minutes of November 5, 2012. Mr. Reed and Mr. Sees abstained because they were not present at the meeting.

Old Business

1. Mr. Tira advised that the deed for the sale of the former Borough Building is completed. He recommended that council take action on the sale. Upon motion by Mr. Rees, seconded by Mr. Klock, the council voted unanimously to accept the \$73,000 from the Northumberland Fire Company #1's as the successful bidder at the October 20, 2012, auction for the property at 219-221 Second Street.
2. Mr. Tira stated that he has reviewed the proposal for professional services from Hazen & Sawyer adding that council may act to approve the proposal this evening.
3. Mr. Tira informed the council that in order to take over the operations at the NSA, the Borough must assume the outstanding debt. The original debt was \$750,000 which was for the Queen Street pumping station. The engineer has provided a certificate regarding the fact that the debt is self-liquidating which means that the rates charged

will be sufficient to pay off the debt by the time it becomes due. Mr. Book stated that the debt comes due in 2025, but may be paid off in about 3½ years. Mr. Tira said that the Borough must file the information with the state. Mr. Tira stated council must move to advertise an ordinance that states that the Borough will assume this debt as the debt of the borough and that it is self-liquidating. Mr. Book stated that he received information from Michele Cope that the payoff amount as of today is \$471,900.50. Mr. Klock moved to advertise an ordinance to accept the debt of the sewer authority in the amount of 471,900.50. Mr. Rees seconded the motion. Council voted unanimously to approve the motion.

4. Upon motion by Mr. Klock, seconded by Mr. Troup, council voted unanimously to accept the contract from Hazen & Sawyer for all phases of the sewer project based on the fee schedule on page 7 of the proposal.

New Business

Upon motion by Mr. Rees, seconded by Mr. Klock, council voted unanimously to approve payment of the bills. Bills to be paid from the General Fund total \$20,445.55; Norry Playground Fund bills total \$30.41; Liquid Fuels bills total \$1,316.00; and bills to be paid from the DEP Grant account total \$10,000.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Zboray thanked those who helped decorate the King Street Park. He also thanked Tom Slodysko and his crew for their help. Twenty live trees have been set up in the park and community groups and school classes are decorating the trees.

17857.org met this morning with Brian Auman, the senior development specialist with Rettew Engineering. The group discussed making the entrances to the Borough more aesthetically pleasing and ideas for the parks.

Monday, November 26th, the Sunbury City Band will begin playing in the gazebo at 6:30 p.m. and Santa will arrive at 7:00. Free cookies and hot chocolate will be provided. The lights will be lit.

Code Enforcement Officer's Report

Mr. Ruane reported on the activity of the Code Enforcement Office for the month of October. Mr. Klock asked if Puff's Tobacco had opened. Mr. Ruane stated that he does not think the business was given a Certificate of Occupancy. Mr. Klock stated that the Sewer Authority should be notified whenever there is new construction in the Borough. Mr. Ruane stated that he told Mr. Fasso that he was to contact the Sewer Authority.

Street Department Report

Mr. Slodysko reported that the street department has been busy collecting leaves. They also helped decorate for the holidays. Mr. Slodysko informed the council that the street lights in the downtown area are over twenty years old and are starting to go bad. He is experimenting with 65 watt fluorescent bulbs. The original bulbs are mercury vapor. The globes have faded to yellow. The Borough owns the downtown street lights. The meters will be covered tomorrow for the holidays and Mr. Slodysko will work to try to secure them.

Emergency Services Board Report – no report

Northumberland Sewer Authority Report

- Mr. Klock stated that W & L Subaru has agreed to pay their bill.
- A new contract for electricity was entered into with Washington Gas for 24 months at a rate of 6.449¢ per kilowatt hour. They used Uni-Tec as the broker for the contract. Mr. Klock questioned if the Borough would like to use them to obtain quotes and was told that the Borough Secretary has sent an email to the contact.
- Mr. Klock stated that Michele Cope is going to shop around for insurance quotes. He suggested that we should investigate combining insurances for the sewer plant and the Borough. Both entities have their insurances through Pfeiffer-Naginey and Keystone Insurance.
- Jack Fasold has submitted his resignation, effective December 31, 2012. Dean Paul's term also expires at the end of the year.
- Mr. Book stated that relative to Brian Auman, Pat Mack, Director of the Northumberland County Planning Commission, has arranged a contract with KPI, through SEDA-COG, to conduct a 167 stormwater study. Mr. Book has spoken with Mr. Mack about the planned study and suggested that the Mayor may want to contact Mr. Mack.

Committee Reports

Community Development

Mr. Reed stated that he has ordered the fence through Apollo and it will be delivered to the gym. A work party is being organized to install the fence. Mr. Klock suggested that a date be selected to keep things moving. The date chosen was December 1 at 10:00 a.m. Mr. Klock stated that if the posts could be installed on December 1st, the fence could be erected anytime. Mr. Reed will contact Phil Hallden and Mr. Klock said that he would provide information to the office so the information could be posted on FaceBook. Mr. Klock stated that he would contact Central Builders.

Mr. Klock moved to authorize the use of the remaining dog park fund to purchase concrete and other materials to complete the project. Mr. Reed seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously. The total in the fund is \$8,194; Mr. Reed estimated that the remainder would be about \$600.

Mr. Tira asked if there are rules in place for the dog park. Mr. Reed stated that the park would not be opened until the spring and that council would establish rules.

Finance

Mr. Rees stated that the committee has completed the 2013 budget with a 1 mil tax increase. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of the former borough building is to be designated to balance the budget. The budget will be presented for a vote at the December 4, 2012 council meeting.

Personnel

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

Public Safety – no report

Rules

Mr. Sees stated that the solicitor is reviewing the animal ordinance and the rules committee will be developing rules for the dog park.

Streets

Ten trees have been planted; the others are at the recycling center and will be planted as time allows.

Sewer

Mr. Klock said that the council met last week to discuss the process of transferring the NSA employees to the Borough and determined that the employees would become Borough employees as of January 1, 2013. He said that there are items to discuss in the Executive Session. Mr. Klock asked if the NSA employees had any comments or questions.

Keith Mull stated that employees would like to be informed about what is going on. He said that there are some issues about equipment for the sewer plant and asked if new equipment would be purchased as part of the project. Mr. Book stated that a “wish-list” could be developed as part of the capital project. Some of the equipment could be purchased as part of the project; other items could be purchased through normal budgeting. Mr. Book said that fixing the fence will be part of the capital design. Mention was made of a bridge from the railroad into the back of the building so they wouldn’t have to use a boat. Mr. Book said that he would be working with the NSA employees to develop the design plan.

Mr. Mull asked if the plan from Brinjac for the SBR or if that would change. Mr. Book responded that DEP has ordered that a new plant must be built to treat 1.125 million gallons of wastewater. Contracting with Sunbury is no longer an option. Mr. Book stated that the SBR is more than 50% likely to be the chosen design; however, they will look at other options and check pricing.

Mr. Mull stated that when the water rises, they do not have much time to get to the pump station once the pager goes off. Mr. Book stated that the pump station will be reconfigured so there is a different type of bypass or there is more pump capacity so the employees have more time. It will be addressed as part of the project.

Dakota Wiand asked if he would be given a notice if Ken Smith is coming back. Mr. Tira stated that the council would discuss that in the Executive Session.

Mr. Klock stated that he does not have anything else to discuss until after the Executive Session.

Mr. Troup adjourned the meeting for an Executive Session at 7:57 p.m. to discuss personnel and budget issues.

Mr. Troup reconvened the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Mr. Klock stated that in the Executive Session, the council discussed hiring the NSA employees as Borough employees. They also discussed their hourly rates. The hourly rates include an increase to offset the 7% contribution that will be required for health insurance. Anyone who has the family plan will be compensated an additional \$.84 per hour; and anyone who has a single plan will be compensated an additional \$.37 per hour. There will also be an additional raise on top of the increase for the health insurance adjustment.

Mr. Klock moved to hire the following NSA employees as Borough employees at the corresponding hourly rates, effective January 1, 2013: Dan Wiand - \$23.84, Keith Mull - \$17.84; Budd Reader - \$19.85; Dakota Wiand - \$11.73; Michele Cope - \$16.00; and Ken Smith - \$14.85. Mr. Troup seconded the motion. Mr. Mull said that whenever the employee has the pager, he is committed to the Borough for that week. Mr. Troup replied that he has the same with his job. Mr. Sees asked how often they are called out. Mr. Mull stated that they may be called out twice in one day or they may not be called out for a month. But he said that having the pager for a week limits what they may not be called out for a month. But he said that having the pager for a week limits what you are able to do. If called out, the employee is paid a minimum of two hours. Council voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Council discussed the health insurance coverage for the employees. Mr. Sees is obtaining quotes from other companies. Mr. Tira has reviewed the contract with Benecon. He advised notice must be provided to the company by June 30th if the contract is not being renewed for the following year. If notice is not given, any cross-share funds must be repaid.

Mr. Klock stated that the sewer department budget includes a 5% increase in the rates. He moved to increase the EDU rate by 5% to \$420 for residential customers for 2013, and to increase the current rate to the bulk customers by 5%. He explained bulk customers pay by flow. The rates are estimated at the beginning of the year and settlement is made at the end of the year based on the actual usage. The Borough receives a tapping fee from new customers. Discussion ensued. The municipal agreement covers capital projects. The other municipalities will be invoiced according to their share of the costs of the capital project. The tapping fees should go in the capital account. Budgeting was discussed. Mr. Klock changed his motion. He moved to increase the current rate by 5% to bulk customers for 2013. Mr. Sees seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.

Mr. Troup said that an Executive Session would be held to discuss negotiations and personnel and that the meeting would not be reconvened. The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice R. Bowman

Borough Secretary