

**Borough of Northumberland**  
**175 Orange Street, Northumberland, PA 17857**  
**Northumberland Borough Council Meeting**  
**December 20, 2011**

President Gregory Carl 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 Gregory Carl, Robert Long, James Orner, Stephen Reed, Jonathan Rees, and Frank Wetzel. Others present were Mayor Zboray; Ryan Tira, Borough Solicitor; Timothy Fink, Police Chief; Paul Ruane, Code Enforcement Officer; and Janice Bowman, Borough Secretary. Council member Judith Groninger was absent.

**Public Comment**

Three members of the public introduced themselves. No public comment was offered.

**Council Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Long moved to approve the meeting minutes of November 1, 2011. Mr. Wetzel seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.

Upon motion by Mr. Long, seconded by Mr. Reed, council voted 4-0-2 to approve the meeting minutes of November 15, 2011. Mr. Rees and Mr. Wetzel abstained.

Upon motion by Mr. Long, seconded by Mr. Wetzel, council voted 6-0-1 to approve the meeting minutes of November 28, 2011. Mr. Rees abstained.

**Mayor's Report**

Mayor Zboray reported that nine gingerbread and trees that covered the parking meters are missing; two were broken and one was left outside the Borough Office.

Mayor Zboray informed the council that pictures were taken for the police calendar, which will be coming out soon.

Chief Fink will be working with Point Township Chief VanKirk to present the DARE program at the Priestley Elementary School. Point Township will pay for all the supplies and shirts.

The contract for the tennis courts at the C.W. Rice Building was sent to the Shikellamy District office.

Mayor Zboray presented a Mayoral Certificate of Excellence to James Troup "in recognition of his volunteer spirit as demonstrated by his involvement as Chief of the Northumberland Fire Department for five years and as a firefighter for many years".

Mayor Zboray presented a Mayoral Certificate of Excellence to Robert Long “in recognition of his volunteer spirit as demonstrated during his tenure on Borough Council and his public service in numerous community projects & committees”.

Mayor Zboray presented a Mayoral Certificate of Excellence to James Orner “in recognition of his volunteer spirit as demonstrated during his tenure on Borough Council and his public service in numerous community projects & committees”.

Mayor Zboray read the Mayoral Certificate Excellence to be presented to Judith Groninger “in recognition of her volunteer spirit as demonstrated during her tenure on Borough Council and her public service in numerous community projects & committees”.

### **Code Enforcement Officer’s Report**

Mr. Paul Ruane reported that on December 9<sup>th</sup> he sent a letter to the people who live at 715 Queen Street. Today was the deadline to remove the garbage and take care of the cats. Mr. Ruane said that he would be visiting the property on Thursday to see if the residents had complied.

The Borough Secretary stated that she has obtained the ordinance from Selinsgrove that addresses cats as well as a sample ordinance from the Boroughs Association.

### **Northumberland Sewer Authority Report**

Mr. Orner reported that the authority had a short meeting yesterday. They discussed the delinquent withholding tax. A Harrisburg attorney is working on the penalties. The authority will review the debt and the first quarter income. Approximately \$13,000 has been collected from delinquent accounts. Upper Augusta has agreed to make monthly payments for the Queen Street project.

Mr. Wetzel stated that two businesses have spoken to him about the back bills that they have received because they had not been billed by the NSA. He said that these businesses said they may have to close. He added that it is not the businesses fault that the sewer authority had not been doing their job correctly and asked why these businesses must pay for their mistakes. Mr. Klock responded that the bylaws state that the customer is responsible to ask for a bill if one is not received. He noted that Emmanuel Homes had never received a bill; a beauty salon had not received a bill. He noted that not only did some businesses not receive a bill; some businesses had not received a bill for the correct amount. The sewer authority had sent out surveys to businesses to determine if they are being billed correctly. The authority made a ruling to bill from 2008 forward and not bill for the years before 2008. However, they reserved the right to go back further. The authority has set up payments for these businesses. They have also changed rates for businesses that are in homes from two times the rate to 1.5 times the rate. Some businesses are built on a seasonal basis. Eventually, the authority will bill on water usage. They must first determine what their earning potential is and what the base rate would be. He acknowledged that the authority did receive several complaints and they have tried to work with the customers.

Mr. Wetzel stated that it is not the residents’ fault for the problems that existed at the plant. Mr. Long asked if penalties are being charged. Mr. Orner replied that they are not.

## Emergency Services Board Report

No report.

## Committee Reports

### Community Development

Mr. Carl stated that the committee did not meet.

### Finance

Upon motion by Mr. Rees, seconded by Mr. Long, council voted 5-1 to adopt the 2012 Budget. This was the second reading. Mr. Rees cast the negative vote.

### Personnel

Mayor Zboray reported that eight applications for the Civil Service test have been picked up. Thus far, six have been returned. The written test will be conducted on December 27<sup>th</sup>; the physical agility test will be conducted on December 28<sup>th</sup> in the morning and the oral interviews will be held that afternoon. Mayor Zboray noted that Jim Bell is conducting the physical agility test and added that Bill Roll will be correcting the written tests.

### Public Safety

Mr. Wetzel reported that the committee did not meet.

### Rules

Mr. Long had nothing to report.

### Streets

Mr. Reed reported that he and Tom Slodysko are still working on the paving schedule for next year. He said that they are still searching for a truck for the department.

## Old Business

1. Mr. Long moved to approve the final payment of \$4,300 to G & R Charles for the Hanover Street storm water project. Mr. Wetzel seconded the motion. The payment will be made by the county with Community Development Block Grant funds. Council voted unanimously to approve the motion.
2. Upon motion by Mr. Long, seconded by Mr. Orner, council voted 5-1 to approve Ordinance 2011-7, the tax ordinance for 2012. Mr. Rees cast the dissenting vote. The ordinance follows:

### **ORDINANCE NO. 2011-7**

#### **AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF NORTHUMBERLAND, NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, FIXING THE REAL PROPERTY TAX RATES FOR THE YEAR 2012.**

*The Borough of Northumberland hereby ordains:*

#### **Section 1. Tax Levy.**

*That a tax be and the same is hereby levied upon all real property within the Borough subject to taxation for the fiscal year 2012 as follows:*

1. *Tax Rate for General Revenue Purposes, the sum of 18.500 mils on each dollar of assessed valuation.*
2. *Tax Rate for Debt Service, the sum of 2.300 mils on each dollar of assessed valuation.*
3. *Tax Rate for Fire Equipment Purposes, the sum of 2.700 mils on each dollars of assessed valuation.*
4. *Tax Rate for Special Road Fund Purposes, the sum of 4.500 mils on each dollar of assessed valuation.*

5. Tax Rate for Recreation Purposes, the sum of 1.000 mils on each dollar of assessed valuation.

**Section 2. Discounts.**

Pursuant to Pennsylvania's Local Tax Collection Law, a taxpayer subject to the payment of a tax levy by their ordinance shall be entitled to a discount of 2% from the amount of such tax upon making payment of the whole amount of such tax by or before April 30, 2012.

**Section 3. Penalties.**

A taxpayer subject to the payment of a tax levy by this Ordinance who shall fail to make payment of such tax by June 30, 2012 shall be charged a penalty of 10% (which penalty shall be added to the tax by the Tax Collector and shall be collected by the Tax Collector).

**Section 4. Effective Date.**

This Ordinance and the real estate tax shall take effect on January 1, 2012.

**Section 5. Severability.**

That any ordinance or part of Ordinance conflicting with this Ordinance be and the same is hereby repealed insofar as the same affects or is inconsistent with this Ordinance.

ENACTED AND ORDAINED into an Ordinance this 20th day of December, 2011 by the Borough Council in the lawful session duly assembled.

ATTEST:

BOROUGH OF NORTHUMBERLAND

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
President, Borough Council

Approved this 20th day of December, 2011.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

3. Mr. Carl noted that two vacancies will exist on the Emergency Services Board as of January 1<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Wetzel stated that he may have one volunteer.

**New Business**

1. The Borough Secretary added several bills to the list to be approved: \$211 to Rogers Uniforms for Officer Cope toward his uniform allowance; \$322.81 for a 2-bay disc-less network attached storage system and \$254.36 for two internal drives. Upon motion by Mr. Long, seconded by Mr. Wetzel, council voted unanimously to pay the bills. Bills to be paid from the General Fund total \$51,377.20, plus the bills noted above; bills to be paid from the Liberty Splashland account total \$2,565.34.
2. Upon motion by Mr. Long, seconded by Mr. Wetzel, council voted unanimously to approve transferring \$4,726.02 from the General Fund to the Liberty Splashland account for payroll reimbursement from the Degenstein and PHEAA grants.
3. Upon motion by Mr. Long, seconded by Mr. Wetzel, council voted unanimously to approve transferring \$6,000 from the General Contingency Fund to the General Fund toward the payment of the 2004 GMC truck that was recently purchased at auction. This money will be repaid in 2012 with money that is budgeted for the truck.
4. The camera attached to the traffic signal at Duke and Water Streets needs to be adjusted. TRA Electric, Inc. has provided their daily rates for maintenance. They've also provided a proposal to provide yearly maintenance for the traffic signal intersections. The wording in the proposal was ambiguous. Mr. Tira advised that the proposal be clarified. The proposal was tabled.
5. Mr. Carl moved to approve the request from the Fire Police for events that they wish to attend in 2012. Mr. Long seconded the motion. Council voted unanimously to approve.

6. Mr. Tira informed the council that he has provided a draft agreement to Service Electric and anticipates having a response by the meeting on January 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Mr. Carl announced that the council would adjourn for an Executive Session to discuss real estate issues and that no action would be taken. The meeting was adjourned for the Executive Session at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice R. Bowman  
Borough Secretary