

Borough of Northumberland

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**Borough of Northumberland
175 Orange Street, Northumberland, PA 17857
Northumberland Borough Council Meeting
December 3, 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 Gregory Carl, Adam Klock, Stephen Reed, Ty Sees, James Troup, and Harry Wynn. Others present were Mayor Zboray; Ryan Tira, Borough Solicitor; C.L. Kriner, Chief of Police; Jeremy Deitrick, Sewer Department Superintendent; Ted McCollum, Code Enforcement Officer; and Janice Bowman, Borough Secretary. Council member Ellie Rees was absent.

Public Comment

- Mr. Tom Fitzgerald addressed the council about a problem with a property he is renovating. Mr. Fitzgerald had been given a building permit for the remodeling. His wife had paid for and picked up the permit. The Borough utilizes the 2009 building construction code and contracts with Building Inspection Underwriters for the inspections. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that he has no issue with the company or with Jim Soos, the inspector. During one inspection, Mr. Soos informed Mr. Fitzgerald that the seventeen windows which were installed would not pass inspection because the u-factor is a 4.7 and the acceptable u-factor for the Borough is 3.5. The retail company and the manufacturer claim the windows are adequate and will not accept the windows as returns. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that had he not replaced the original windows, there would be no problem even though the original windows aren't as energy efficient as the ones he's installed. He is requesting that the council inform BUI and Jim Soos that his windows are acceptable. Mr. Fitzgerald said that Mr. Soos told him that he had informed him about the problem with the windows on his approved drawings. He said that he had not received the approved drawings or the two pages of comments that mentioned the windows. Mr. Soos discovered that the drawings were in the files in the Borough and delivered them to Mr. Fitzgerald. Mr. Fitzgerald said that had he known this, he would have ordered the acceptable windows. Mr. Tira advised that the council should speak with Mr. Soos and that the appeal would be presented to the COG. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that Mr. Soos had told him that he would not contest the appeal. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that he cannot sell the house until he receives an occupancy permit. Mayor Zboray stated that he has known Tom and Suzanne for a long time and that Tom has done this to improve the Borough property. Mayor Zboray stated that he feels the council needs to act upon this quickly and take care of our good citizens. Mr. Klock asked if two weeks would be acceptable.

Mrs. Groninger stated that, as a neighbor, she is so grateful that Mr. Fitzgerald was able to purchase the property and that he has been a wonderful neighbor so far. She stated that she does not see the windows blowing out soon so she requested that the council “give them a break.”

Council will respond in two weeks. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that the house is for sale.

- Mr. Dan Berard stated that he read a disturbing article in the Daily Item today concerning Ed Hennessey’s retirement and that the council has no plans to replace him. He asked what the council plans to do about it. Mr. Troup stated that the Borough has been running on this number of officers since Tim Fink resigned. Mr. Berard stated that the average property owner pays about \$174 a year. He said that to cut the police force is to reduce the safety of the people of this Borough. Mr. Carl stated that he feels that the fifth officer should be included in the 2014 budget.
- Judy Groninger stated that she came because of the police situation. She said that she knows the police have struggled and she hopes that these people will support the police. She said that if Chief Kriner retires, we are up the creek. She agrees with Dan and Greg, and thanked Greg for putting something in the paper. She noted that the police always have time for the residents when needed.

Northumberland County Community Development Block Grant Task Force

Jamie Shrawder from SEDA-COG was introduced by Ted McCollum. She informed the council that the county has allocated funds from 2011 to 2012 for blighted properties. The county is also applying for a Keystone grant. The county is looking for properties to demolish or through the Keystone grant, to rehab. Mr. Sees asked about the process for applying for the funds. Ms. Shrawder stated that the CDBG funds may be used to address blighted properties because the funds do not have to be used for low to moderate income. The municipality does not have to be an entitlement community. Ms. Shrawder explained that the municipality would bid on the properties agreed upon with the county at auction. The municipality would pay for the sale price and additional fees and the county would reimburse the municipality for half the total costs. Act 137 money is used for acquisition of the property. The county would then pay with the CDBG funds to demolish the property. Ms. Shrawder stated that the property would then be placed on the market. Proceeds from the sale of the property would be returned to the county to repay the CDBG fund. If the property does not sell, Ms. Shrawder stated that the municipality would be responsible to maintain it. She also explained that if someone else bids on the property at the auction, the municipality should not bid on the property. Mr. McCollum stated that two other properties are approaching sheriff’s sale. One of the properties is located on Front Street. But it has an issue with getting a clear title. The second property is on Queen Street.

Code Enforcement Officer’s Report

- Mr. McCollum reported on the activity of the code office for the past month.
- Mr. McCollum stated that there is a pending Zoning Board hearing for the Shikellamy Middle School.
- The Exchange Hotel demolition has begun. The asbestos has been removed professionally. The remainder of the building will be demolished piece by piece.

- The street cut on 7th Street will be repaired with cold patch. A permanent fix will be done in the spring.
- Mr. McCollum informed council that the Assistant D.A. will be representing the Borough at a hearing for violations at a rental property.
- The gas company has repaired the street cuts on Prince Street.

Northumberland Borough Sewer Department Report

Mr. Klock reported that the committee met this evening at 5:30 and received drawings from the engineer.

Mr. Book stated that they would like to advertise for bids on December 18th. They will be using PennBid and the Borough must also advertise through the local paper. Mr. Klock moved to advertise for bids for General construction, HVAC construction, and electrical construction with bid submission deadline of 5:00 p.m. on February 14, 2014. Mr. Troup seconded the motion. Council voted unanimously to approve.

Jeremy and Brian plan to start to work on billing by water meter for 2015. Everything must be finished by October 2014 for the budget to be sent to the other municipalities. Mr. Book explained that the total income from billing by water usage must be the same as the income from the current billing method. The water usage information is purchased from PAWC.

Mr. Book informed the council that a consultant has been located to conduct the Phase 1b Study required by the Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission for much less than the original quote of \$28,000. The lowest estimate of approximately \$5,600 was received from Mindy LaBelle of Christine Davis Archeological Consultants. The company will begin work tomorrow.

Mr. Klock reported that the sewer committee met with the Point Township Sewer Authority and has another meeting scheduled for December 18th.

Mr. Book stated that there are just a few permits and approvals necessary before the construction may begin. A building code permit and plan approval are required in addition to the clearance from the PHMC. The Northumberland Borough Planning Commission will meet on December 26th to review the plans.

Liberty Hollow Study

Mr. Book informed the council that the draft study is being completed and another meeting will be scheduled for public review.

A copy of the engineers report is provided as an addendum to the minutes.

Mayor's Report

- Mayor Zboray thanked the volunteers who decorated the trees in the King Street Park. He noted his appreciation for the street department for finishing the decorating.
- Mayor Zboray attended a memorial service for former Mayor Gretchen Brosius. He noted that the service was well attended and he extended his sympathies to the family.

- Mayor Zboray recently attended a PennDOT meeting. He informed council that in April 2014 the bids are to be let out to construct the bridge for the bypass. The whole project is to be completed by 2024.
- On November 27th, Wendy Reigel and the Mayor removed most of the parking meters that will be recalibrated during December. Ms. Reigel has become certified to conduct the calibrations. The few meters that were recalibrated this year were not removed.
- Mayor Zboray stated that Santa arrived by fire truck last night in King Street Park. The Sunbury City Band performed and over eighty children met with Santa. Hot chocolate and cookies were provided to those in attendance.
- The “Wreaths for Warriors” service is scheduled for December 8th at 2:00 p.m. at the Riverview Cemetery “wreaths for warriors”.

Police Chief’s Report

Chief Kriner reported on the police department activity for the past month. The police department is collecting toys for the annual Martin Concini Toy Drive.

Street Supervisor’s Report – no report

Emergency Services Board Report – no report

Committee Reports

Community Development – no report

Finance

It was announced that the budget would be considered following the Executive Session.

Personnel

It was announced that personnel issues would be discussed in the Executive Session.

Public Safety – no report

Rules

Mr. Sees stated that the committee will meet Monday, December 9th at 6:00 p.m. to discuss the licenses for cats.

Mr. Klock added that other municipalities are interested in the Borough’s animal ordinance.

Streets

The downtown crosswalks are completed. Mr. Reed thanked the street department and office staff.

Old Business

1. Committee Appointments

Upon motion by Mr. Carl, seconded by Mr. Klock, council voted unanimously to appoint Russell “Buzz” Meachum to a three-year term on the Zoning Hearing Board.

Upon motion by Mr. Carl, seconded by Mr. Troup, council voted unanimously to appoint Susan Morroni to the three-year term on the Shade Tree Commission.

It was noted that no applications have been received for the vacant position on the Planning Commission.

New Business

1. Upon motion by Mr. Wynn, seconded by Mr. Carl, council voted unanimously to approve payment of bills. Bills to be paid from the General Fund total \$42,997.80; bills to be paid from the Donations Account total \$1,180; bills to be paid from the Parking Meter fund total \$684.19; Liberty Splashland bills total \$154.55; and bills to be paid from the Chesapeake Bay Trust Grant total \$8,850.

Executive Session

Mr. Troup stated that the council would adjourn for an Executive Session to discuss personnel issues and the budget. The meeting was adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

The meeting was reconvened at 9:57 p.m. The following actions were taken:

Upon motion by Mr. Troup, seconded by Mr. Wynn, council voted 5-1 to approve Resolution O-2013. Mr. Sees voted no. The resolution is as follows:

"RESOLUTION NO. O-2013

BOROUGH OF NORTHUMBERLAND RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION OF THE NORTHUMBERLAND BOROUGH COUNCIL AMENDING CERTAIN BENEFITS POLICIES FOR THE NON-UNION EMPLOYEES OF THE BOROUGH OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

WHEREAS, the Northumberland Borough Council ("Borough Council") has determined that it is in the best interest of the Borough of Northumberland and its employees that certain benefit policies be stated in writing; and

WHEREAS, the Northumberland Borough Council has determined that the benefit policies for its non-union employees should be amended going forward as contained in this resolution; and

WHEREAS, Borough Council desires to amend its benefit policies for non-union employees related to the stipend paid in lieu of an employee receiving health care insurance through the Borough; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Northumberland Borough Council that the following benefit policies shall be effective January 1, 2014 for the Borough's non-union employees.

1. Non-Union Health Care Policy

Health Insurance will be provided to full-time non-union employees in accordance with the terms and conditions set forth in this policy. All references to employee(s) shall mean permanent full-time non-union employee(s). In order to participate in the health insurance coverage, employees are required to pay 7% percent of the total premium cost of their health insurance coverage. This percentage will be deducted from the employee's paycheck each pay period. In the event the Borough receives money back at the end of the year, the employee will receive his proportional share of the money received back by the Borough.

Effective January 1, 2014, Employees declining coverage under the Borough's Plan ("opting out") shall not receive any type of stipend from the Borough for declining coverage under the Plan.

ADOPTED as a resolution of the Borough of Northumberland, Northumberland County, Pennsylvania, this day of _____, 2013.

ATTEST:

BOROUGH OF NORTHUMBERLAND

By: _____
Janice Bowman, Borough Secretary

By: _____
James Troup, Council President

Passed this ____ day of _____, 2013.

Len Zboray, Mayor

Upon motion by Mr. Klock, seconded by Mr. Sees, council voted unanimously to increase Ann August's hourly pay rate to \$16 as of January 1, 2014. The amount in the proposed budget had been \$15 per hour.

Council discussed the 2014 budget items. Mr. Klock stated that the increase in the Police Chief's pay rate should be 2%, not 3% as in the proposed budget. It was noted that the Finance Committee did not change the salary that was in the budget during the Finance Meeting and that the list of employees provided by the Personnel Committee to have a 2% increase did not include the Police Chief. The increase for the other police officers is 3%. Mr. Wynn moved to include a 3% raise for Chief Kriner in the 2014 budget. Mr. Carl seconded the motion. Mr. Carl, Mr. Reed, and Mr. Wynn voted yes; Mr. Klock, Mr. Sees, and Mr. Troup voted no. Mayor Zboray voted yes to break the tie, noting that Chief Kriner deserves the 3% raise.

Council discussed the elimination of one full-time police officer. The budget includes hiring four part-time officers instead of replacing Officer Hennessey when he retires in January with a full-time officer. Mr. Troup stated that the council does not want to raise taxes. Mr. Sees noted that because of the mandated change in the radios for the police and fire departments, additional funds had to be budgeted for those costs. He noted that the fire department radios could cost the Borough over \$40,000 if the county does not provide funding toward the costs. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Wynn moved to advertise for multiple part-time police officers. Mr. Troup seconded the motion. Council voted 5-1 to approve the motion with Mr. Carl voting no.

The following line items in the proposed 2014 budget were revised to these amounts:

405.145 Salary - Part-time clerks	31,225.60
405.155 Eye care/Dental – office	400.00
405.156 Hospitalization – office	26,326.55
405.158 Life Insurance – office	146.12
410.131 Part-time Police	47,000.00
486.161 Social Security – Employer Share	18,670.54
486.162 Medicare – Employer Share	7,028.84
489.000 Contingency	12,986.14

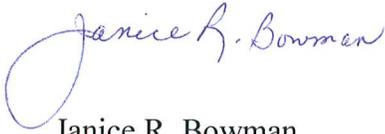
Mr. Klock stated that the liability insurance for the bowl slide should be broken out of the line item for the borough liability insurance. The general liability line item is changed to \$6,417.50 and a new account, 452.548, is added for the bowl slide liability insurance of \$5,582.50.

Mr. Klock moved to advertise the 2014 budget with the general liability for the bowl slide broken out along with the other items discussed. Mr. Wynn seconded the motion. Council voted 5-1 to approve the budget with Mr. Carl voting no.

Mr. Klock moved to advertise for a part-time clerk for the sewer department. Mr. Reed seconded the motion. Council voted 5-1 to approve with Mr. Carl voting no.

Mr. Klock moved to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 10:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Janice R. Bowman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

Janice R. Bowman
Borough Secretary

December 3, 2013

Borough of Northumberland
175 Orange Street
Northumberland, PA 17857

**RE: Engineer's Status Report
December 2013 Meeting**

Dear Council Members:

The following is a status report of Engineering Activities for the Borough of Northumberland. We will focus on the most significant of these as part of my verbal report. Please feel free to ask questions of anything here.

RETAINER (90135.001)

Intermunicipal Agreement Revisions:

There was a meeting between the Northumberland Sewer Committee, WWTP Operator, Engineer and Solicitor with representatives of the Point Township Sewer Authority. At that meeting, I believe, we made some headway regarding the Intermunicipal Agreement. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for December 18, 2013. Prior to the meeting we owe a description of our approach to billing related to bulk customers and creating a reserve account. In return, PTSA, via their lawyer, is to report on the 2012 Reconciliation. The meeting is to follow payment of the 2013 bills.

Support on Northumberland Sewer Bills:

It was agreed that the NBSD will surcharge PTSA for the 3rd Quarter and 4th Quarter of 2013. Likewise, it was agreed that NBSD will issue a surcharge bill to Bimbo Bakery based upon the tentative agreement reached at the meeting between staff in early October. Finally, we have been evaluating some of the questions about individual bills received from Borough customers. It would seem as if conversion to a flow based billing starting in 2015 is achievable. In the interim, we will continue to work to maintain a fair EDU billing methodology.

Nutrient Credits 2013:

I believe we have completed all paperwork associated with the purchase of Nutrient Credits for Water Year 2013.

WWTP BNR Upgrade Project (90135.003)

Bidding:

Our planned advertisement is for December 18, 2013. The Borough should take appropriate action to publicize the bidding as required in the Borough Code, and authorize Staff and Hazen and Sawyer to take similar actions.

PennVEST Application:

The PennVEST application has been submitted with a total funding request of \$13,787,287. We have received an Email request for additional information and clarification from Dave Henning (PennVEST), and we are working on a reply that is due 12/7/13.

Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission:

We have discussed the results of the Phase 1a Study and there is general agreement that a Phase 1b Study is required. As a result, we contacted and ultimately got four estimates for completing the Phase 1b Study. The lowest estimate was from Mindy LaBelle of Christine Davis Archeological Consultants at approximately \$5,600. They are to be on site tomorrow to work on the study.

Local, State & Federal Approvals for Start of Construction

We have "in hand" all permits and approvals believed to be necessary except for the following:

- Northumberland Borough Planning Commission, LDP Approval
- Northumberland Borough, Building Permit
- The previously mentioned PHMC Clearance

LIBERTY HOLLOW GI-SW STUDY (90135.004)

We are finishing up the draft study and will be providing it to staff review in the next two weeks. We also will be coordinating with your staff to set up another meeting with concerned citizens.

We look forward to discussing these issues with you. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask me.

Very truly yours,

HAZEN AND SAWYER, P.C.



Brian L. Book, P.E.
Senior Associate