

# Borough of Northumberland

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**Borough of Northumberland**  
**175 Orange Street, Northumberland, PA 17857**  
**Northumberland Borough Council Meeting**  
**December 7, 2021**

President Paul Ruane called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and Mayor Dan Berard offered an Invocation.

### **Roll Call**

Council members present were Ann Boyer, Denise Guilbault, Ellie Rees, Paul Ruane, Kaitlyn Simmons, Orlando Toro, and Frank Wetzel. Others present were Mayor Berard; Melissa Kelso, Borough Solicitor; Allen Page, Sewer Department Legal Counsel; C.L. Kriner, Police Chief; Jeremy Deitrick, Sewer Department Superintendent; Vern Morgan, Street Supervisor; MaryKay Clark, Code Enforcement Officer; and Janice Bowman, Borough Manager.

### **Public Comment on Agenda Items**

Mr. Tom Mowery informed council commented about the street supervisor's report. He said that the police department has not been enforcing the street no parking for about four months. He added that people moved in across from his house and they do not move their vehicles. He stated that he has off-street parking so it doesn't affect him. He thinks that people feel that the signs don't mean anything since they aren't ticketed. Mr. Mowery noted that if cars are parked in front of leaves, the leaves are not picked up.

Chief Kriner responded that Ashley (Klopp) has been in and out of the office. Mrs. Simmons asked if any ticketing is being done. Chief Kriner replied that it is when she is in. Mrs. Simmons questioned if there is a solution for this. Chief Kriner responded that there will be by the end of the month.

Mr. Mowery stated that leaves were not picked up the past two weeks.

Mr. Morgan responded that leaves have been picked up every week except for last week. A large stone or brick that beneath a pile of leaves was vacuumed into the machine and damaged it. The machine goes into the shop on December 21<sup>st</sup>. He added that he contacted rental companies; however, they don't have leaf vacuums to rent.

Mr. Wetzel questioned if the street department could load leaves in the trucks and tarp the trucks.

Mrs. Simmons asked if the Borough could provide biodegradable leaf bags to the residents. The cost is fifty cents per bag, and they are available. Discussion ensued.

Mrs. Simmons made a motion to provide up to 1,000 biodegradable bags for residents. Mrs. Boyer seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.

### **Council Meeting Minutes**

Upon motion by Mrs. Boyer, seconded by Mrs. Rees, council unanimously approved the minutes of the November 1, 2021 council meeting.

### **Mayor's Report**

Mayor Berard reported on the activity of the Police Department for the month of November 2021. The police issued thirteen traffic citations, two non-traffic citations, and twenty-nine parking tickets during the month. They answered 192 calls for service and had 34 court appearances. Twenty-five hours were spent training. Several people were arrested for misdemeanor and felony crimes of simple assault and DUI. There were 24 assist calls during the month. Ten were to Point Township, seven to Sunbury and seven to other agencies. 1,211 miles were traveled for the month.

Mayor Berard reminded everyone that the Police Department is conducting the Martin Concini Toy Drive. Toys may be dropped off at the Borough Office, Police Department,

Mayor Berard announced that he has performed seven marriages in the four years that he has been Mayor.

Mayor Berard noted that two council members, whom he adores completely, are coming to the end of their terms.

Ann Boyer has served on council for two plus years. She had been appointed to fill her husband's unexpired term. Paul Boyer had served on council for six years before he passed away. Mayor Berard noted that Paul loved Northumberland and serving the residents of the Borough. He stated that Ann has done a wonderful job in taking Paul's place. He thanked Ann for her service as a council person.

Mrs. Boyer noted that it has been a privilege. She stated that she was blessed to have 46 years with Paul, and he did not like to leave things undone so this was the last thing she could do for him. She added that she has enjoyed it and has learned a lot.

Mayor Berard noted that Ellie Rees has served on council for eight and a half years. She was appointed to fill an unexpired term, and then served for two full terms. Mayor Berard noted that Ellie has devoted eight and a half years of her life to the Borough. She was on personnel and other committees. He thanked her for her thoughtful and intuitive questions, noting that she wanted to make sure that she had every "i" dotted, and every "t" crossed when she made a decision on how to move forward in the Borough. He added that he totally appreciates everything she has done and wished that her next adventure is as wonderful as she is.

Mrs. Rees stated that she loves the Borough of Northumberland. It was a great place to raise her children. She has always had a great interest in government and because of

different circumstances in her life, she couldn't serve until now. She feels it is a privilege to be able to serve in this way. She added that this appreciates all the help she has received and especially this council has been a joy to work with and she appreciates the opportunity.

Mayor Berard stated that council positions are full. But anyone who has an interest should consider serving on council in the future as a way to serve your community and fellow residents.

Mayor Berard has received an application from a senior at Bloomsburg University student, majoring in criminal justice, who would like to have an internship with the Borough. She has submitted her resume but has not yet had a background check.

Mrs. Rees made a motion to approve the police department internship pending a favorable background check. Mr. Wetzel seconded the motion. Dr. Guilbault noted that it didn't appear that any of her references were job related. Mayor Berard responded that he called one of them, a long-time friend, who gave her a glowing reference. Chief Kriner added that her professor also provided a favorable reference. Council voted unanimously to approve the internship.

#### **Northumberland Borough Sewer Department**

Mr. Jeremy Deitrick informed council that there are two items on the agenda for council to consider.

Upon motion by Mrs. Simmons, seconded by Dr. Guilbault, council unanimously approved the Nutrient Credit Agreement with the University Area Joint Authority for 550 total phosphorus credits at \$4.00 per credit. Mr. Ruane explained that it would cost \$20,000 for chemicals to treat the nutrients so it is cost effective to purchase the credits.

Mr. Deitrick explained that in order to satisfy the permit from DEP, council must approve the filing of paperwork in the Northumberland County Register and Recorder's Office by legal counsel that if the Borough no longer owns the property, the bio-retention basin must continue to be maintained. Upon motion by Mrs. Simmons, seconded by Dr. Guilbault, council unanimously approved the filing of the legal document relating to the bio-retention basin at the sewer plant.

#### **Code Enforcement Officer's Report**

Ms. MaryKay Clark reported on the activity of the Code Enforcement Office for the month of November 2021. Two building permits were issued with fees totaling \$294.50. Ms. Clark received nine complaints, issued five code violations, and filed three citations. There was one street cut permit for \$350.00, 8 rental inspections for \$400, and two Quality of Life notices. Forty-six miles were driven for the month.

As Health Officer, she issued two health permits for a total of \$150.00.

**Street Supervisor's Report** – no report

## Committee Reports

### Community Development

- Mrs. Simmons stated that the committee met at the Kiwanis Building last month. She noted that the building is in worse shape than they had anticipated. If anyone has any suggestions about what to do with the building, they are open to hear them.
- The committee heard from a gentleman who is very informative about the trees for the area of the Point and Pineknott Park. She added that the committee tried to make sure that he understood that the council would like to keep it simple.
- Pineknott Days Association would like to make a donation for something in the Borough, maybe at the Point. She is hoping that the donation could be used for something at the pool area, possibly a basketball court for older players so the younger players would have more access to the court at the playground.

### Finance

Mrs. Rees made a motion to approve the second reading of the proposed 2022 budget. Mrs. Boyer seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.

Mr. Wetzel made a motion to approve Resolution H-2021 which sets the real estate taxes for 2022. Mrs. Simmons seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously. The resolution follows:

**"BOROUGH OF NORTHUMBERLAND  
NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, PA  
RESOLUTION NO. H-2021**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF NORTHUMBERLAND, NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY,  
PENNSYLVANIA, FIXING THE REAL PROPERTY TAX RATES FOR THE YEAR 2022.**

*The Borough of Northumberland hereby resolves:*

**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 2022 as follows:*

- 1. Tax Rate for General Revenue Purposes, the sum of 27.500 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 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 resolution 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, 2022.*

**Section 3. Penalties.**

*A taxpayer subject to the payment of a tax levy by this resolution who shall fail to make payment of such tax by June 30, 2022 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 resolution and the real estate tax shall take effect on January 1, 2022.*

**ADOPTED** as a resolution of the Council of the Borough of Northumberland, Northumberland County, Pennsylvania, this 7<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2021.

ATTEST:

BOROUGH OF NORTHUMBERLAND

\_\_\_\_\_  
Borough Manager

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

Approved this 7<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2021.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor"

#### Personnel

1. Mr. Ruane read, with regret, the following letter from Council member Orlando Toro:

*"It is with regret that I render my resignation from the Northumberland Borough Council, effective December 8, 2021. I am grateful to have served our community during my tenure and offer my best wishes for its continued success. Sincerely, Orlando Toro."*

Mr. Ruane stated that it has been a pleasure to work with Mr. Toro, adding that he appreciates his help, especially on the street committee.

Mrs. Simmons made a motion to accept Mr. Toro's resignation, with regret. Mr. Wetzel seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.

Mrs. Rees commented that she that she thinks that Orlando Toro has been an exceptional council person and she appreciates what he has brought to the council.

2. Mr. Ruane stated that the Personnel Committee wants to hire a laborer/operator for the Sewer Department. Mr. Wetzel explained that the committee conducted five interviews and are recommending Bryan Bloom for the position. Mr. Wetzel moved to hire Mr. Bloom at the rate of \$14.50 per hour, as set by the union contract. Mr. Toro seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.

#### Public Safety

Mrs. Boyer stated that there was no committee meeting. However, she encourages council and the residents to support the Fire Department, Fire Police, and Police Department as they are our Public Safety.

#### Rules

Dr. Guilbault reported that the committee has finished the review of the Code Book and are looking to move forward. They have some procedural issues to ask the solicitor.

Streets – no report

**Old Business - none**

### **New Business**

1. Upon motion by Mrs. Simmons, seconded by Mrs. Boyer, council voted unanimously to approve payment of the bills. Bills to be paid from the General Fund total \$92,811.03; General Contingency bills total \$10,110; Park and Recreation Bills total \$2,101.72, River Valley Training Center bills total \$34.95, and Northumberland Sewer Department bills total \$137,380.36.
2. The Borough's 24-year-old backhoe is no longer operable. The loader can only be used to load salt. A backhoe is available from Five Star Equipment, Inc. for \$117,634.58. This quote includes a CO-STARS discount of \$70,128.10 and a Five Star additional discount of \$14,992.90. Loan information has been obtained from the Northumberland National Bank. The interest rate would be 2.5 percent. Because of the low rate, the recommendation is to borrow \$100,000 from the Northumberland National Bank to be used toward the backhoe and/or other equipment. The Borough currently has \$50,000 in the Liquid Fuels account that may be used to purchase equipment. Future Liquid Fuels allocations may be used toward the loan payback. Mrs. Boyer moved to purchase the backhoe at the price of \$117,634.58. Mr. Wetzel seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.
3. Mrs. Simmons made a motion to obtain the \$100,000 loan from the Northumberland National Bank for five years at an interest rate of 2.5 percent. Mr. Wetzel seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.

### **Public Comment**

Mr. Chuck Stroup informed council that he has looked into obtaining Level-2 inmates to help with projects in town. He has gotten the information from the Muncy and Coal Township prisons. Mr. Stroup provided the application to the Borough Office. The "Community Work Detail" program may start in April. Usually, the crew is comprised of six to ten inmates. They will call us when the program opens in April. A point person should be chosen as the contact with the prisons. If the inmates use a machine, Mr. Stroup recommends that the Borough has them read the manual and sign a statement that they are trained on the machine so if they are injured, the Borough would not be liable. A supervisor comes with them. The application has a phone number to call to determine if the inmates would be available and capable of helping with the specific projects.

Mayor Berard noted that Mr. Stroup and Winston Ortiz will become new council members in January.

Mr. Ruane stated that the council must appoint a new council member within thirty days. The opening will be advertised, and applications will be available at the Borough Office.

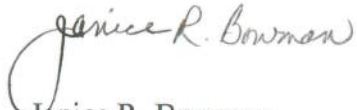
### **Executive Session**

Mr. Ruane stated that the council would adjourn for an Executive Session to discuss litigation involving the sewer department. He added that the meeting may be reconvened. The meeting was adjourned for the Executive Session at 8:04 p.m.

Mr. Ruane reconvened the meeting at 8:35 p.m. Mr. Wetzel made a motion to authorize Attorney Allen Page to negotiate with Fulkroad at the amount determined during the Executive Session. Mrs. Boyer seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.

Mr. Ruane adjourned the meeting at 8:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Janice R. Bowman  
Borough Manager