

Borough of Northumberland

175 ORANGE STREET
NORTHUMBERLAND, PA 17857

Phone: (570) 473-3414
FAX: (570) 473-3986

E-Mail: office@northumberlandborough.com
www.northumberlandborough.com

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175 Orange Street, Northumberland, PA 17857
Northumberland Borough Council Meeting
February 4, 2020

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; Jason Kelso, Acting Solicitor; Jeremy Deitrick, Sewer Department Superintendent; MaryKay Clark, Code Enforcement Officer; and Janice Bowman, Borough Manager.

Public Comment

Nine visitors introduced themselves.

Council Meeting Minutes

Upon motion by Dr. Guilbault, seconded by Mrs. Boyer, council voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the December 3, 2019 council meeting.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Berard reported that for the month of January, the police department had 238 incidents; 22 traffic citations, 3 non-traffic citations, 7 assists to Point Township, 12 assists to Sunbury, and 9 assists to others. Mileage traveled was 1,642.9 miles.

Northumberland Borough Sewer Department

Mr. Deitrick informed council that there is one action item for them to approve. It is to accept RETTEW's Proposal for Engineer of Record for the Sewer Department. Their Scope of Services on an annual basis is the completion of the Annual Chapter 94 Report, telephone consultation, coordination and assistance as required by the Borough. Attendance at Sewer Committee meetings, Regular Borough Council and Special Meetings as requested would be for a lump sum fee of \$200 per meeting. RETTEW will notify the Borough and work together to develop a scope and fee to meet the Borough's needs for services and projects beyond the scope of routine consulting.

Mrs. Rees made a motion to accept the proposal from RETTEW. Dr. Guilbault seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.

Mr. Deitrick noted that the first quarter bills were mailed out today.

Code Enforcement Officer's Report

Ms. MaryKay Clark reported on the Code Office activity for the month of January 2020. One building permit and one zoning permit were issued for a total of \$49.50 in fees. The Code officer received seven complaints, issued ten code violations and one street cut permit. She conducted eleven rental inspections, had one court appearance, issued one certificate of occupancy and condemned one property. Excavation permits totaled \$350 and inspection fees totaled \$550. 25 miles were traveled.

Mr. Ruane announced that Nate Boyer has set up a camera to live stream the Borough Council meetings. Mr. Wetzel made a motion to have live streaming of Borough Council meetings, adding that he thanks Nate for doing this. He noted that he brought this up at the last meeting because he thinks that there are people in the community who would like to be able see the meetings but cannot get here, whether because of work issues or whatever, they would be able to see the meetings. Mrs. Boyer seconded the motion. Mr. Toro asked how long the meetings would be archived. Mr. Boyer stated that the meetings would be available until he deletes them. Mrs. Rees commented that she appreciates Frank's suggestion and can see the value of it. She added that she is not in favor of it because there are other ways they can view the minutes or could call the office. She thinks that we have so much of our lives live streamed that it interferes as a privacy thing; not that this is a private meeting, it's a public meeting. She added that it is nothing against Frank; she thinks in many ways, it's a great idea and it's the way things are going, but she is not in favor of it. Council voted 6-1 with Mrs. Rees voting no.

Mayor Berard noted that if someone watching the live stream has a question, they can communicate their question to Nate.

Committee Reports

Community Development – no report

Finance – no report

Personnel

Mrs. Rees made a motion to accept the agreement with the Teamsters Local Union No. 764 as of January 1, 2020. Mr. Wetzel seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.

Mrs. Fran Bogovich asked if council has hired a new supervisor. Mr. Ruane responded that council has not. She asked how many applications have been received. Mr. Ruane replied that he believes there are six applicants. He noted that the Borough has hired casual help through WorkForce as needed.

Public Safety – no report

Rules

Dr. Guilbault made a motion to advertise Ordinance 2020-2 (Quality of Life). Mrs. Rees seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.

Dr. Guilbault informed council that the committee discussed piloting a Trap/Neuter/Return program with volunteers from SUN Pets and other organizations that work to humanely reduce the feral cat population.

Ms. Robin Montgomery, a volunteer with SUN Pets, informed council that it is not a cat problem; it is a people problem. People let cats outside and do not have them fixed. Compassionate people feed the stray cats and should not be cited for feeding them. The group supplies traps to trap the animals to take them to be spayed or neutered. The SPCA in Danville charges \$40 to spay or neuter the cat, give it a rabies shot, flea and tick treatment, and an ear "tip" where they cut off the tip of the ear so people in the community know that the cat has been fixed.

Ms. Montgomery noted that other municipalities budget \$1,500 toward the program.

Dr. Guilbault has an article to be published in the Pineknoller newsletter that explains the Trap/Neuter/Return program. She added that the group discussed having fund raisers to raise money for the program.

Ms. Candy Willard explained that she started working with T-N-R last April. She has trapped 58 cats in the Borough; 40 cats were spayed or neutered, 10 were adopted; 11 were rescued and adopted; and 7 died. Ms. Willard trapped six cats this week. She stated that the group needs volunteers to help trap and transport cats.

Ms. Margaret Harvey recommended that the news article include a request for residents to contribute toward the costs of the program, noting that some people may not be able to be care givers, but would help to fund the program.

Mr. Wetzel asked how many people who feed cats participate in getting the cats spayed or neutered; or do they rely on others to pay. Ms. Montgomery responded that some people do pay, others rely on others to pay, and some pay for half the fees. Mr. Wetzel stated that the council has been dealing with the cat issues for many years. He added that years ago, a bus was brought in to spay/neuter cats. He felt this was a good idea. However, there were people who complained about the bus parking on the street. He noted that this issue has been going on for years. Ms. Montgomery stated that the T-N-R program is a solution. Mr. Wetzel explained that he is not against the program, he's for whatever can be done to get the cat population under control.

Mr. Toro stated that he is for anything that benefits the community. He recommended that the Code Enforcement Officer give the residents a chance to

apply for the program. If they are not interested in becoming part of the program, the Code Enforcement Officer should fine the individuals who aren't complying.

Dr. Guilbault added that when someone applies for the program, the Borough Office will contact Ms. Montgomery.

Streets

Mr. Toro stated that the street sweeper is back on the road. He requested that citizens adhere to the alternate side street parking. The council is looking to hire additional personnel.

Old Business

1. Priestley Avenue Culvert

The Borough Manager explained that she has been contacted by the attorney with McNerney Page. The agreement with the property owners was taken to the Register and Records office. However, the document was not recorded because there was a problem with incorrect names being crossed out and written in. The attorney is going to send out a new agreement to be signed by the property owners so it can be recorded.

Because the Borough needs to take out a loan for \$65,000 of the cost of the project, paperwork must be submitted to DCED and the loan must be advertised.

Mr. Kelso advised that the loan would require two advertisements; one notice is to advertise the ordinance to approve the note; the second is to advertise that the ordinance was passed.

Mr. Wetzel made the motion to advertise the ordinance approving and awarding the note that will be issued to fund the Priestley Avenue project in the amount of \$65,000 and an interest rate of 3.98% for 10 years, with the Northumberland National Bank. Mr. Toro seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.

2. Mr. Dan Mahoney asked if the solicitor has reviewed the information that his attorney has submitted regarding the unopened Fifth Street. Mr. Kelso stated that they have received information. He asked about the dimensions of the unopened street. Mr. Ruane added that the Borough can't transfer the property for \$1 because the Borough has expenses for the attorney. Mr. Mahoney stated that he wasn't told that. He asked if the Borough charged the neighbors on Jefferson Street when the property transferred to them. No one present was aware of whether the Borough had expenses or if the property owners were charged.

Dr. Guilbault asked if there was an original permit for the driveway. She was told that the house was built in the 70's and has changed hands several times.

Mr. Kelso asked about the neighbor's opinion. Mr. Mahoney replied that his neighbor has no interest in the property.

New Business

1. Mrs. Boyer moved to approve payment of the bills. Mrs. Rees seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously. Bills to be paid from the General Fund total \$57,796.03; 2nd Street Community center bills total \$3,725; Liberty Splashland bills total \$30.14; and Sewer Department bills total \$127,107.33.
2. Fire Police Events
Jon Apple, Captain of the Fire Police, sent a request for council to approve the Fire Police attendance at a list of events. Upon motion by Mr. Wetzel, seconded by Mrs. Simmons, council unanimously approved the list of events.

They are events in Northumberland, Sunbury, Selinsgrove, Milton, Danville, Watontown, Lewisburg Triathlon/Marathon, Freeburg Fireman's Parade, Riverside Toy and Pet Parade, Montandon Memorial Day Parade, Six County Fireman's Parade, Lycoming County Events (Little League World Series Parade and Candy Kane Lane), Middleburg Fireman's Parade, Union County 4th of July Parade, Halloween parades in Selinsgrove, Sunbury, Danville and Catawissa, Susquehanna Valley Mall Christmas Parade, and to take the Fire Police unit to the Fire EXPO in Harrisburg in May.

Mr. Wetzel moved to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Janice R. Bowman
Borough Manager