

Borough of Northumberland
175 Orange Street, Northumberland, PA 17857
Northumberland Borough Council Meeting
December 1, 2020

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

Public Comment

Mr. Ed Baker requested that the borough cut down the four pine trees along the pool area. He said that the area is covered with pine needles and he thinks the trees are dead. Mr. Ruane responded that the Borough would look into it.

Justin Strawser, Daily Item reporter, introduced himself.

Council Meeting Minutes - September 1, 2020 and October 6, 2020

Upon motion by Mrs. Simmons, seconded by Mrs. Rees, council voted unanimously to approve the council meeting minutes of September 1, 2020 and October 6, 2020.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Berard reported on the activity of the police department for November. During the month, the police issued 30 traffic citations, one non-traffic citation, and 80 parking tickets. They answered 270 calls for service and appeared at court 32 times. The police had 12 hours of training. Several people were arrested for felony and misdemeanor crimes, some of which included simple assault, sale and transfer of firearm, unsworn falsification, contempt, drug law violations, and DUI. The police answered 40 assist calls for the month, 15 to Point Township, 10 to Sunbury, and 15 to other agencies. 1,582.7 miles were traveled during November.

Mayor Berard noted that the Martin Concini Toy Drive has begun. Unwrapped toys may be dropped off at the Police Station and Borough Office. Toy collection barrels are located at the Northumberland National Bank on Front Street, the Pineknott Brewing Company, the Priestley-Forsyth Memorial Library, and the Surplus Outlet on Route 11.

Mayor Berard informed council that Gabe DeMarco is retiring at the end of the month. A candidate for the position was interviewed and Mayor Berard recommended that council hire Ashley Emiliano as the parking attendant/administrative assistant to Chief Kriner at a starting wage of \$12 per hour. The position is part-time, approximately 30 hours per week. Mr. Wetzel moved to hire Ashley Emiliano for the part-time position at \$12 per hour. Mrs. Rees seconded the motion. Mr. Toro asked for Chief Kriner's opinion. Chief Kriner responded that he is in favor of hiring her. Council approved unanimously.

Mayor Berard noted that this is the last meeting of 2020. He thanked everyone for all they have done for the Borough. He said that he is not sure how many people in Northumberland have contracted covid. He feels that the residents should continue doing what they are doing because they are doing well. Mayor Berard wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a blessed and healthy, happy New Year.

Northumberland Borough Sewer Department

Jeremy Deitrick requested that council approve a change order addendum in the amount of \$8,700 for bid and construction-related services from RETTEW for belt filter press agreement. Mr. Ruane noted that RETTEW will coordinate and conduct pre-construction meetings with the Borough and contractor. Mr. Wetzel moved to approve the change order; Mrs. Simmons seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.

Mr. Deitrick noted that there was a blower failure this month. The co-star price to purchase a blower replacement pump is \$11,325. Mr. Toro asked about the warranty and was informed that it has a one-year warranty. Mr. Wetzel moved to purchase the blower pump; Mr. Toro seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.

Mr. Ruane noted that the committee is recommending two new employees for positions at the sewer plant.

For the operator position, the committee is recommending Christopher Day. Mr. Ruane added that he was in the Air Force and currently is employed at the county prison. Mr. Wetzel moved to hire Christopher Day as an operator at the sewer plant at an hourly rate of \$14.50. Mr. Ruane added that the rate is set by the union contract. Mrs. Rees seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.

The committee recommends hiring Debra Jennis as the part-time clerk. Mrs. Jennis has retired from the Northumberland County Child Development office as a supervisor. The rate is \$15.00 per hour. Mr. Toro moved to hire Debra Jennis; Mr. Wetzel seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.

Mr. Deitrick noted that there is another item for the Executive Session.

Code Enforcement Officer's Report

Ms. MaryKay Clark reported on the activity of the Code Enforcement Officer for the month of November. Two building permits were issued for \$220. Three complaints were received, three code violations, one citation, and one quality of life ticket were

issued. She conducted six rental inspections with fees totaling \$300 and traveled 40 miles.

Street Supervisor's Report

Mr. Vern Morgan reported that the street department picked up 71 loads of leaves which is about 149,000 pounds of leaves. He added that tomorrow will be the last day for leaf pickup. On Thursday, the employees will prep the trucks for snow removal and, weather permitting, street cleaning will continue. Mr. Ruane stated that people appreciate what the employees in the street department are doing. Mayor Berard added that he lives across from King Street Park and when the guys came to collect the leaves, they cleaned up between the sidewalk and curb.

Margaret Weirick, a volunteer, sent a letter and requested it be read into the minutes:

"To the members of the Northumberland Borough Council

Greetings!

I have just finished getting the trees in the King Street Park ready for Christmas. I have been doing this project for the past five years, so I have had the opportunity to work with a number of people. I would like to say that this has been the best year yet. The Park looks beautiful in a year when we could all use some early Christmas spirit.

I started the project by working with Jan to update the schedule of what needed to be done when. She in turn passed this on Vern, our new Borough Supervisor. He actually read what we had prepared and made it a point to accommodate each part of the decorating project into the crew's work schedule. When it was time to actually put things up in the Park, the crew came with all the equipment, tools, and keys needed and stayed till the project was completed. Since each year I try to refine this project and make it a little easier to do, I am always open to suggestions on how we can do things better. Vern was very helpful in making suggestions and in implementing them. Nobody complained when the trees needed further drilling, or that it was 29 degrees out and cold, or that some of the trees needed to be staked because they had grown crooked. The work was done with a cheerful attitude and completed according to the schedule Vern had set.

I want to tell you how happy I am with this new crew. We all know how difficult things have been in the past. I am writing this letter to you to say this is the best crew yet and that you did a great thing hiring Vern to be Supervisor.

Please drive by and see how nice everything looks in the Park and be sure to tell the crew how much you appreciate what they do.

*Merry Christmas,
Margaret"*

Mr. Ruane added that he appreciates the work the street department is doing.

Committee Reports

Community Development

Mrs. Simmons informed council that John Herring has been volunteering as the coordinator at Pineknott Park ballfield for several years. The committee would like to formalize his position. Mrs. Simmons made a motion to give the title of

Pineknoller Park Coordinator to John Herring. Mrs. Rees seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.

Finance

Mrs. Rees noted that council had approved the first reading of the 2021 budget in November. She made a motion to approve the second reading of the 2021 budget. Mrs. Simmons seconded the motion. Mr. Ruane noted that the budget includes an increase of half a mil. Council voted unanimously to approve the 2021 budget.

Mrs. Rees made a motion to approve Ordinance 2020-3. Mr. Wetzel seconded the motion. Discussion ensued. Council voted 5-1 to approve. Mr. Toro voted no. The ordinance sets the tax rates for 2021.

Personnel

Council was informed that Mindy Martin, the part-time clerk in the Borough Office, has resigned. Mr. Wetzel moved to advertise the position. Mr. Toro seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.

Public Safety – no report

Rules – no report

Streets

The Borough received information that Zito Media plans to erect a pole for Wi-Fi communications in the right-of-way along Orange Street below Priestley Avenue. Mr. Ruane noted that the reason for the pole is for a Sunbury expansion project. The fiber will provide commercial businesses with networking and telecommunications. Internet speed will be faster. The Borough Office is looking into the costs for internet to the office.

Old Business - none

New Business

1. Upon motion by Mr. Wetzel, seconded by Mrs. Rees, council voted unanimously to approve payment of the bills. In addition to the bills on the list, the Sewer Department has a bill from PennVest for \$63,397.75 and the Borough received a bill from Mitchell Knorr Contracting for \$73,320.48 for the stormwater project below Priestley Avenue. In addition to these bills, bills to be paid from the General Fund total \$99,962.85, bills to be paid from the General Contingency Fund total \$30,300, Liberty Splashland bills total \$28.59, and Sewer Department bills total \$67,884.77.

Executive Session

Mr. Ruane announced that the meeting would be adjourned for an Executive Session to discuss litigation and personnel issues. He noted that the meeting would be reconvened. The meeting was adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

The meeting was reconvened at 8:31 p.m.

Mrs. Simmons made a motion to pay \$389,000 to Jay Fulkroad and Sons, Inc. Mr. Wetzel seconded the motion. This is part of the money that was held back. Council voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Mr. Wetzel moved to approve the proposal from Chip Adams to install a retention pond at a cost of \$6,930. Mr. Toro seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.

Mr. Wetzel made a motion to approve the agreement between the Borough and the Point Township Sewer Authority. Mr. Toro seconded the motion. The agreement provides that the Point Township Sewer Authority would pay \$574,000 to the Borough within ten days that the agreement is signed. Council voted unanimously to approve.

Mr. Wetzel moved to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice R. Bowman
Borough Manager