

Borough of Northumberland

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Borough of Northumberland 175 Orange Street, Northumberland, PA 17857 Northumberland Borough Council Meeting December 3, 2019

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.

Council members present were Ellie Rees, Paul Ruane, Kaitlyn Simmons, Orlando Toro, and Frank Wetzel. Council member Ralph Cianflone arrived at 7:03 p.m. Others present were Mayor Berard, Melissa Kelso, Borough Solicitor; C.L. Kriner, Police Chief; Jeremy Deitrick, Sewer Department Superintendent; MaryKay Clark, Code Enforcement Officer; Brian Probst, Street Supervisor; and Janice Bowman, Borough Manager. Council member Ty Sees was absent.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Berard introduced Melissa Kelso, the new borough solicitor. She is replacing Ryan Tira. He voiced his appreciation for Mr. Tira's his years of service as borough solicitor.

Mayor Berard noted that the Police Department is having their annual toy drive in memory of former police chief Marty Concini. Mayor Berard requested that the public bring unwrapped toys to the following locations: the Police Station, Priestley-Forsyth Library, the Northumberland National Bank, and Surplus Outlet.

Mayor Berard reported that for the month of November the police had 314 calls for service, 103 traffic citations and 21 court appearances. Several people were arrested for felony and misdemeanor crimes; some of which included criminal trespass, strangulation, recklessly endangering another person, simple assault, fleeing and attempting to elude police, and DUI. The police had 43 assist calls for the month; 18 to Point Township, 12 to Sunbury, and 13 to other agencies. The police logged 1,462 miles for the month.

Mayor Berard stated that he is going to present a proclamation for Horace H. Middleton. He explained that Horace H. Middleton was born on February 25, 1924, in the Borough of Northumberland. He lived at 467 Water Street. Horace went to Northumberland High School. On his 19th birthday, in February 1943, he enlisted in the U.S. Army and was assigned to the 5307th Composite Infantry. In June of 1943, Northumberland High School granted him his high school diploma. On July 12, 1944, Horace was killed in action in Burma. His body was never found, until this year. His remains were identified through DNA from relatives in Jacksonville, Florida. The great news here is that Horace is coming home. He will be buried in Milton, Pennsylvania. We are proud honored that Horace was found and is coming home.

Mayor Berard read the following Proclamation:

"WHEREAS, America has been blessed with an abundance of men and women who proudly and bravely serve their country sacrificing a great deal for the cherished causes of freedom and democracy; and

WHEREAS, we salute their bravery and dedication to the defense of our democracy and the sovereignty of freedom-loving nations around the world, recognizing it is an extraordinary person who willingly steps into harms way to protect others and to defend freedom; and

WHEREAS, as honored and respected citizens, our service men and women have learned the value of service, dedication, and discipline and know the worth of life and liberty; and

WHEREAS, America has found in our service men and women, the leadership, courage, and determination needed to overcome all forms of despicable threats to our nation and its freedom; and

WHEREAS, we owe our military personnel a debt of gratitude which can never be fully repaid and recognize our many local military heroes; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Northumberland is committed to recognizing and honoring the many fine individuals who make the world a better and safer place for new generations of Americans who will continue to reap the benefits of such a proud legacy of selfless service.

WHEREAS, in 1944, Horace Middleton, of Northumberland, was a member of Company E, 2nd Battalion, also known as Merrill's Marauders, as an infantryman in the China-Burma-India Theater. After taking the airfield in Myitkyina, Burma, from the Japanese on May 17, Middleton's battalion was tasked with holding the airfield and taking part in the siege of Myitkyina. Middleton was killed during fighting on July 12th. He is finally coming home and will be laid to rest in Milton. Private 1st Class Horace Middleton was 20 years old.

Now Therefore, I, Daniel Berard, Mayor of the Borough of Northumberland, as Representative of the Citizens of Northumberland, do hereby issue this Proclamation on December 3rd, 2019 in Honor of WWII Army Private 1st Class

HORACE H. MIDDLETON

and thank him for making the ultimate sacrifice for our country to ensure the freedom and liberties we enjoy as Americans.

Daniel J. Berard, Mayor"

Mayor Berard called on Dick Simpson, the 17th District Commander. Mr. Simpson said that he is fortunate to be a friend of one of Horace's relatives. He met John Bower several years ago and they have worked together on different projects. They are working diligently with Belinda Albright, the VA representative to obtain Horace Middleton's medals for his service. They expect this may happen in about two months. Private Middleton will be buried with full military honors. A large delegation of representatives from the 17th District which includes 18 posts from Dushore to Herndon and Watontown to Mount Carmel. Mr. Simpson requested that everyone rise while Taps was played.

Mr. Simpson thanked Mayor Berard for his Proclamation.

Mayor Berard introduced relatives of Horace Middleton and thanked them for attending.

Mayor Berard announced that tonight is the last meeting for a couple of the council members. Two council members will not return. Dr. Ralph Cianflone served four years on council. Mayor Berard thanked Dr. Cianflone for his service to the Borough of Northumberland. He added that his service is appreciated, not only on council, but as the leading dentist in Northumberland. Mayor Berard noted that Ty Sees is the other council member who is not returning. He stated that he cannot say the same for Ty as he did for Ralph. He added that Ty Sees is a bully, a manipulator, and he spent thousands of dollars needlessly on self-serving agendas; some of those agendas are on-going today. He said that he speaks for himself when he says that he will not be missed.

Mr. Ruane noted that in January, there will be four women serving on Borough Council, the first time this has happened.

Mr. Ruane thanked the Mayor and Mr. Simpson for the presentation.

Public Comment

Mr. Terry Walker asked about the status of the Priestley Avenue stormwater repair. He was told that the signed agreements have been sent to the solicitor to be recorded. The paperwork for the bank loan is being submitted and the contractor is ready to begin the work as soon as these items are completed.

Mr. Ruane thanked Nate Boyer for his postings on Facebook about the progress of the road construction.

Mr. Robert Rowe informed council that the bank on the other side of the railroad tracks below Queen Street should be cleared. He stated that the road going over the tracks is also full of ruts. Mr. Gerard stated that he had used a skid loader to grade his property and may have created some holes. Mr. Ruane stated that the Borough will look into it.

Council Meeting Minutes

Upon motion by Mrs. Simmons, seconded by Mr. Wetzel, council unanimously approved the minutes of October 1, 2019.

Upon motion by Mr. Toro, seconded by Mrs. Rees, council approved 5-0-1 to accept the minutes of November 4, 2019. Mr. Wetzel abstained.

Northumberland Borough Sewer Department

Mr. Ruane requested a motion to approve Resolution G-2019. This resolution is to submit a Pennsylvania Small Water and Sewer Program Grant application. Dr. Cianflone so moved; Mr. Wetzel seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously. The resolution is as follows:

Mr. Ruane requested a motion to sell 700 nitrogen credits to Pine Creek Municipal Authority at \$2.00 per credit. Mr. Wetzel so moved; Mrs. Simmons seconded the motion. Council voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Mr. Deitrick informed council that the panel at the Emmanuel Home pump station is thirty years old and the recommendation is to upgrade it. A professional proposal of \$20,800 has been received. Mr. Wetzel moved, and Mrs. Simmons seconded the motion to accept the proposal. Mr. Ruane noted that the Sewer Department has the money for the upgrade and that the panel at the Resilite pump station was upgraded not too long ago. Council approved unanimously.

Mr. Deitrick explained that additional cameras are needed at the sewer plant. The total estimated cost to complete the upgrade is \$15,900. This includes equipment and installation. The hard drive is tamper-proof. Mrs. Rees moved, and Mrs. Simmons seconded the motion to upgrade the camera system. Council approved unanimously. Mr. Toro noted for the public that this will be well worth it because anything that was not covered before could cost more than \$15,000.

Mrs. Bogovich asked what is to be done with the funds from the Small Water and Sewer Program Grant. Mr. Deitrick stated that the funds would be to line the pipe that goes up the hollow above Liberty Splashland. The pipe is terracotta.

Mr. Deitrick requested that council approve transferring \$105,195.82 from the Sewer Department General account to a Money Market account. Mr. Toro so moved; Mr. Wetzel seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.

Code Enforcement Officer's Report

Ms. MaryKay Clark reported on the activity of the Code Office for the November. There were two building permits and one zoning permit for a total of \$263 in permit fees. Six complaints were received. Five code violations were issued. One street cut permit was issued with \$500 in backfilling fees. Fourteen rental inspections were conducted with \$700 with inspection fees. The code officer had one court appearance. Thirty-one miles were traveled during the month.

Street Supervisor's Report

Mr. Brian Probst informed council that for the last month the department has been collecting leaves. Tomorrow will be the last day for the year. Mr. Probst thanked Jon Apple and the Fire Police for helping to post streets so they could collect leaves. The Santa House and Christmas trees were placed in the park.

Committee Reports

Streets – no report

Mr. Wetzel noted that when it rains, the water runs down the sidewalk at 5th and Orange Street at the Northumberland Christian School. He noted that the storm basin had been removed from that location. Mr. Ruane stated that the committee would remember that when the projects are let out for bid. MaryKay noted that water runs down Fifth Street from the alley above Orange Street.

Community Development

- Dr. Cianflone reported that \$2,500 was received from WalMart for the RiverValley Training Center which will be downstairs.
- Progress is being made on the gym floor.

- Jon Apple, from the Fire Police, attended the meeting to discuss the possibility of erecting a new building for the Fire Police for about \$25,000. The area in front of the recycling building or the Kiwanis building were discussed. Dr. Cianflone stated that the Fire Police are concerned about flooding at the present building. The committee did not accept or decline the request because right now, their equipment is stored in a garage owned by Mr. Amato. The Fire Police building has tables and chairs. The committee tabled the topic.

Finance

2nd Reading – 2020 Budget

The total budget is \$3,379,775.90. This amount includes the Sewer Department budget. Mr. Wetzel noted that there is no tax increase. He also stated that the budget includes a 3% raise for non-union employees and a \$3.50 raise for the part-time code enforcement officer. Upon motion by Mr. Wetzel, seconded by Mrs. Rees, council voted unanimously to approve the 2020 budget.

Personnel

Mrs. Rees noted that it has been a privilege serving on the council with Ralph Cianflone. She served on the Community Development and Personnel committees with Dr. Cianflone and she appreciates all that he has given the Borough.

Mrs. Rees stated that Bloomsburg University student Christopher Shiffor has requested to serve an internship with the police department. Mayor Berard added that it would be incumbent upon him to provide his background check to the Chief. Dr. Cianflone asked the length of the internship. Chief Kriner responded that the length of internships varies depending on the school and the class. Mr. Wetzel made a motion to approve the internship for Christopher Shiffor with the Police Department depending on his background check. Mrs. Rees seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.

Mrs. Rees made a motion to hire Officer Keaton Zarr full time as of January 1, 2020. Mr. Toro seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.

Mrs. Rees stated that she has a couple personnel things for the Executive Session and council will need to go back into session after that.

Public Safety – no report

Rules – no report

Dr. Cianflone stated that a resident had a handicap sign in front of their house that was removed during the construction. Mr. Probst responded that PennDOT replaced the post and the Street Department replaced the sign.

Mayor Berard stated that a new mailbox on Front Street has been ordered by the post office and will be installed once it is delivered.

Old Business

1. Priestley Avenue stormwater project

Ms. Kelso explained that financing information is being obtained from the bank. The project is to remove a collapsing pipe that extends from Priestley Avenue to the railroad.

New Business

1. Upon motion by Dr. Cianflone, seconded by Mr. Wetzel, council voted unanimously to approve the payment of bills. It was noted that some of the items are to transfer funds from the General Fund to the General Contingency Fund for future purchases. They include funds for the Fire Department, the Police Department, the Street Department, and the ballfield. An additional bill was received from WorkForce for \$201.60.
2. Priestley-Forsyth Memorial Library requested permission for the Countdown to Noon Celebration to be held in King Street Park on December 31st. They are requesting the area around the park to be posted as No Parking so participants can walk freely in the area between King Street and Christ United Methodist Church; the streets to be blocked so it is safe for pedestrian traffic from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., and the electricity turned on in the gazebo for a remote radio broadcast. Mrs. Rees moved to approve the requests; Mrs. Simmons seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.
3. 2020 Solvency Fee Relief from Charges
The Borough uses a reimbursable method to finance unemployment compensation coverage. Under state law, the employer may be relieved of charges for benefits paid to a claimant under various situations. Dr. Cianflone made a motion to pay the solvency fee of \$1,610.49 for 2020; Mr. Toro seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.
4. Committee Reappointments
Mr. Wetzel made a motion to reappoint William Roll to the Civil Service Commission, and JudyAnn Schmidt to the Planning Commission. Mrs. Rees seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.

Executive Session

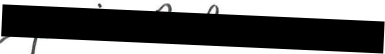
Mr. Ruane stated that the council would hold an Executive Session to discuss personnel issues. He added that the council meeting would be reconvened. The meeting was adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Mr. Ruane reconvened the council meeting at 8:39 p.m.

Mrs. Rees made a motion to hire Jason Alexander as a laborer with the Sewer Department at a rate of \$14.50 per hour. Mr. Toro seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.

Mr. Toro moved to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Janice R. Bowman
Borough Manager