

Borough of Northumberland

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175 Orange Street, Northumberland, PA 17857
Northumberland Borough Council Meeting
August 7, 2018

Vice President Paul Boyer 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 Paul Boyer, Ralph Cianflone, Ellie Rees, Orlando Toro, and James Troup. Others present were Mayor Berard; Ryan Tira, Borough Solicitor; C.L. Kriner, Police Chief; Jeremy Deitrick, Sewer Department Superintendent; Brian Probst, Street Supervisor; MaryKay Clark, Code Enforcement Officer; and Janice Bowman, Borough Secretary. Councilmen Paul Ruane and Ty Sees were absent.

Penn DOT Update

Mindy Foresman informed the council that construction on Duke Street is in phase 6. Work is also being done on phase 15A on Front Street, east of W&L Sports Cars and west of Hanover Street. Rain has caused delays.

Ms. Margaret Weirick voiced concern that the drains will be low enough to drain the water off the street. Ms. Foresman stated that they would like to pave the street all at one time to avoid joints. They will make sure that there is positive drainage once the street is paved.

Mr. Boyer questioned if the intersection at Front and Orange will be fixed. Ms. Foresman replied that they will taper the road back further to minimize the humps.

Mr. Boyer stated that the "sidewalk closed" signs are still in place at Orange Street. Ms. Foresman said that she will look into it.

Mr. Drake Owen asked if the traffic lights could be permanent. Mr. Mike Krehel stated that he lives on the corner of Front and King Streets. He stated that he doesn't like the light at that corner because they now hear more noise. He feels that once Duke Street is completed, there will be less traffic and the lights will not be needed.

Jim Groninger, Groninger Insurance, asked about using King Street Park for staging the Halloween Parade. Ms. Foresman stated that PennDOT and the contractor will meet to discuss the schedule for the rest of Duke Street. After Phase 6, the underground utilities

are located deeper so they will not affect the project. She is unable to provide an answer now.

Ted Deptula said that they can finish this phase and the next phase on Duke Street this year. The dilemma is whether should they complete the final two phases this year or wait and impact work that will extend the timeline to 2020. They cannot do the work next year because they must stick to next year's plan. He noted that it will be a tight schedule to complete the work on King Street and Water Street. This means that they would have to come back and finish Duke Street in April or May of 2020.

Mr. Deptula was asked if it would be possible to direct traffic another way for the hours during the Halloween Parade. Mr. Troup suggested rerouting the parade from Queen Street to King Street.

The Borough Secretary stated that she has contacted PennDOT and a meeting will be held in early September to discuss the possibility of closing Route 147 during the parade. Other options to reroute the parade were discussed.

Mr. Pat McPherson questioned when the work will be done. Ms. Foresman responded that the work will take three to four more weeks on this phase.

Ms. Barbara Kistner asked if lights could be added at the underpass. Ms. Foresman said that this is the first she heard it and they will look into it. It was suggested that the lights could be placed on each side of the walkway.

Mr. Deptula asked if there are a lot of pedestrians, especially students, who cross Front Street at Orange Street. He said that PennDOT is considering the installation of pedestrian lights at the intersection. This would provide a delay on the traffic light to allow time for pedestrians to cross. If it is not done before school starts, it should be done soon after.

Mrs. Rees stated that she understands that this is a complex project and she appreciates PennDOT trying to work with the residents. She noted that they found the agreement with the Borough regarding Pineknotters' Days. Mrs. Rees read from the agreement, "The Department will coordinate and limit all construction in the Borough during the two-week period each year that the Borough designates to the Department as being related to Pineknotters' Days. The Department will take steps to ensure that King Street can be used for Pineknotters' Days." Mrs. Rees questioned why PennDOT would start the next phase if they couldn't be sure that it would be completed before Pineknotters' Days, when they've agreed to this. Unless they would come to council to request that council address this; change their minds about this. This is what they signed. She offered the form to Ms. Foresman and Mr. Deptula.

Ms. Foresman informed the public that they have a website and a hotline number. Their office is in the trailer at Duke Street and Pond Avenue.

Public Comment

The twenty visitors present introduced themselves.

Mr. Robert Rowe informed council that the two high lights along Water Street at the Fire Police building are not working. The Borough Secretary stated that she has called the contractor who said he would check on them.

Northumberland Borough Sewer Department – no report

Mayor's Report

- Mayor Berard reported that the Eighth Annual “See You in September”, featuring Memory Lane, will take place on September 2, 2018, at King Street Park from 3:00 to 6:00. Food will be available for sale.
- Mayor Berard reported that the S. Luther Savidge Community Trust has awarded the Borough \$6,000 for rewiring King Street Park. Another \$5,000 is being donated for decorations for the park and downtown area.
- The Joseph J. Anselmo Sr. Community Trust has awarded \$4,300 for the fence at Pineknott Park ballfield; \$1,000 for Lemonade Day; \$1,000 for the Fall Festival; and \$350 for Santa in the Park. He noted that there are funds out there that award money for worthwhile projects in the Borough and Point Township.
- Mayor Berard provide a police report for last month. Twenty-five citations and four non-traffic citations were issued. The police made 39 court appearances. Several people were arrested for felony and misdemeanor crimes. They include theft and aggravated assault. There were 291 calls for service for the month and 38 calls for assist – 14 from Point Township, 15 from Sunbury, and 9 from other agencies. The police travelled 1,550 miles during the month.
- Mayor Berard informed the council that the police department needs another part-time officer. He introduced Keaton Zarr who has graduated from the police academy in June. He has done summer intern work with the Borough. Mayor Berard said that he will ask during the Personnel portion of the meeting that a motion be made and seconded to hire him as a part-time officer in the Borough.

Ms. Kistner questioned if the police provide assistance to Sunbury, do they pay for the help? Chief Kriner stated that they do not. Mayor Berard answered that the assistance is reciprocal.

A resident asked about the parking tickets on King Street. The signs were posted on the wrong side of the street. Mayor Berard stated that the signs were up, the arrows were pointing in the direction of the no parking area. The “no parking” is on the right side for the detour. He added that it is apparent where you may park. He noted that the Borough may put notices on cars as a courtesy.

Code Enforcement Officer's Report

Ms. MaryKay Clark reported on the activity of the Code Office for the month. Six building permits and one zoning permit were issued for a total of \$827.50 in fees. She had twelve complaints; issued 15 code violations. There was one street cut permit and

\$350 collected for backfilling fees. She conducted 15 rental inspections for \$525 in fees and 1 reinspection at \$15. Total mileage for the month was 48 miles.

Street Supervisor's Report

Mr. Brian Probst provided pictures to council of Boyer's property on WestWay. Mr. Boyer contacted the Street Supervisor about water that pools in his yard. Mr. Boyer said that he will install a catch basin in his property if the Borough would install a pipe under WestWay to the ditch below Westway. The problem has become worse as the road has been raised. Mr. Tira cautioned doing anything to property that could impact the railroad property. An engineer may need to be consulted. Mr. Toro noted that this is private property and questioned who would pay for this. He suggested that the neighbors work together with the Borough. Mr. Boyer asked if the Borough could clean out the ditch that runs on the other side of West Way. It was noted that the Borough has cleaned it out in the past and that the Borough had an agility agreement with PennDOT years ago and they cleaned the ditch. PennDOT has been contacted about an agility agreement but will no longer make agility agreements. Mr. Probst stated that he had gone to the railroad and requested that they clean it out.

Mr. Probst also provided a picture of the lot where water crosses Old Danville Highway and goes into Villager Realty's basement. Mr. Troup noted that there are things that the homeowner and property owner are responsible for. Mr. Probst stated that he doesn't know if it happens all the time. It was discussed that the structure sits below grade.

Committee Reports

Streets

Mr. Boyer reported that he took the bucket truck out of service because the bucket has not been inspected. Mr. Boyer made a motion to list the bucket truck and red dump truck on Municibid. Dr. Cianflone seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously. Mr. Boyer asked Mr. Probst to get the descriptions and photos to the office.

Community Development

Dr. Cianflone stated that Jason Nichols came to evaluate the gymnasium for the HVAC system.

Dr. Cianflone reported that a survey was taken at the local schools to learn what the students would like to see at Liberty Hollow. Most would still like a pool; a skatepark was also listed. Brian Auman is working on a plan for the area and will attend another Community Development meeting.

The property insurance for the bowl slide is \$2,726. The best offer so far is \$3,500. Liability insurance for the bowl slide is \$5,185. Once the slide is sold, a refund from the date of sale would be received from the insurance company. It was recommended to pay for the liability insurance but not the property insurance.

Finance

The committee will begin working on the 2019 budget at 6:30 p.m. on August 28, 2018. Additional meetings will be on September 25th and October 23rd. Council will vote to approve the budget at the November 5th and December 4th council meetings.

Interest rates to finance the new truck have been obtained from Northumberland National Bank and West Milton Bank. The committee is recommending that council approve a 3-year loan at a rate of 3.38%. Mr. Boyer so moved. Mr. Toro seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.

Personnel

Mr. Toro stated that as the public and the council is aware, there has been an increase in the amount of activity with employees, including the police department. He feels that it is within the Borough and council's best interest to retain special counsel Melissa Kelso to work in conjunction with Ryan (Tira). He added that he is not saying the Borough needs a new solicitor; they are not going to be working at the same time. Melissa Kelso is a labor specialist. Ryan Tira would handle all other Borough matters. He feels that this would be in the Borough's best interest to take Melissa Kelso's advice as special counsel for personnel labor matters. Mr. Toro made a motion to retain Melissa Kelso until the end of the year to handle personnel and labor matters. The rate would be the same as Mr. Tira's; travel time, when needed, would be at \$75 per hour. Mrs. Rees seconded the motion. Council approved the motion 4-1. Mr. Troup voted no.

Mr. Toro stated that he would like to make a motion to change Jan Bowman's title from Borough Secretary to Borough Manager. He explained that reading the position description, she is doing everything that a Borough Manager is doing. She would also continue to do the duties of Borough Secretary-Treasurer. He added that there is no extra monetary fee for this year; her salary will be the same. She works under council's direction. She would handle all the business for the Borough. If there is an emergency, she may handle it without running to council since council members are all volunteers. This gives her the authority to dictate and pursue the best interests of the Borough. Mr. Boyer stated that the Borough Manager position was approved April 7, 1998 by Ordinance 455 and amended September 19, 2000 by Ordinance 2000-3. Mrs. Rees seconded the motion. Council voted 4-1 to approve. Mr. Troup voted no.

Mrs. Rees stated that the Personnel Committee met with Keaton Zarr. She made a motion to hire Keaton Zarr as a part-time officer on an as-needed basis. Mr. Toro seconded the motion. Mr. Troup stated that it would be nice if the Personnel Committee would let council know before the meeting. Mr. Toro responded that the committee meetings are open to all council members, so they are welcomed to participate at any time. Mr. Troup replied that he understands that; and that is why they have committees, so they don't have to attend every

meeting. Mr. Toro stated that being on council and on this committee, he has spent close to 15-20 hours a month trying to help this Borough. He added that he would like his labor to be noticed by the public. Council voted unanimously to hire Keaton Zarr.

Mrs. Rees stated that she would like to make a motion to join the TEAM program. Mr. Toro seconded the motion. Mr. Tira explained that since the council has approved retaining the labor specialist, they may want to consider whether this would be advisable. Mr. Troup said that since council has hired the specialist, he does not think it is necessary to join TEAM. Mr. Toro agreed and rescinded his second; Mrs. Rees rescinded her motion.

Public Safety

Emergency Services Board vacancies are one member from the Hookies and three openings at large. The board that helps to regulate the activity of the Fire Department. There are representatives from the Hookies, the Number 1's and the community at large. They have requested that a council member attend the meetings. Mr. Toro volunteered to attend the meetings. Their next meeting is at 6:00 on Monday, September 17th.

Rules – No report

Old Business

1. A meeting is scheduled for next Tuesday at 8:00 a.m. at the Priestley Avenue pipe. The engineer and representatives from NorthShore Railroad and SEDA-COG will be there. Mr. Walker informed council that PPL has cleaned out the open culvert above Priestley Avenue.

New Business

1. Upon motion by Mrs. Rees, seconded by Dr. Cianflone, council voted unanimously to approve payment of the bills, including \$5,185.75 for the liability insurance for the Bowl Slide. Bills to be paid from the General Fund total \$53,583.76; Liberty Splashland bills total \$38.08; Donation Account bills total \$16.07; General Contingency bills total \$684.26; and Sewer Department bills total \$92,164.84.
2. Upon motion by Mr. Troup, seconded by Mr. Toro, council unanimously approved the handicap parking request from Sandra Bickel at 669 Wheatley Avenue. The handicapped parking spaces are reviewed annually.
3. Mr. Toro informed council that he has looked into the public concern from the 500 block of Sixth Street concerning mold that they thought was coming from the bakery. He has received a summary of observations from a laboratory. The report indicates that the samples are primarily comprised of mold that are environmental not due to the bakery. He added that he considers the matter closed.

Ms. Weirick asked where the other council members are. Mr. Boyer replied that Paul Ruane is in Florida. Mr. Troup stated that Mr. Sees is at football practice. Ms. Weirick asked when the last time was that he was at a meeting. She was told that he was present at the first June meeting.

Executive Session

Mr. Boyer announced that the council would go into an Executive Session to discuss personnel issues and the meeting would not be reconvened. The meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,




Janice R. Bowman
Borough Manager