

# Borough of Northumberland

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**Borough of Northumberland**  
**175 Orange Street, Northumberland, PA 17857**  
**Northumberland Borough Council Meeting**  
**September 4, 2018**

President Paul Ruane called the meeting to order at 7:15 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, Paul Ruane, and Orlando Toro. Council member Jim Troup was on the telephone. Others present were Mayor Berard; Ryan Tira, Solicitor; Melissa Kelso, Labor Solicitor; C.L. Kriner, Police Chief; Jeremy Deitrick, Sewer Department Superintendent; MaryKay Clark, Code Enforcement Officer; Brian Probst, Street Department Supervisor; and Janice Bowman, Borough Manager. Council member Ty Sees was absent.

Mr. Ruane announced that the council held an Executive Session this evening from 6:00 p.m. to 7:10 p.m. to discuss police personnel matters.

### **PennDOT Update**

Mr. Ted Deptula informed the council that work is progressing on Duke and Front Streets. The contractor will be upgrading inlets, installing curbs and sidewalks. Plans are to pave on Duke Street next week if all goes well. Around the end of September, the contractor will pave Front Street.

The contractor is excavating under the railroad underpass, installing drains, and are working on the waterline. It will be a few weeks until they start working on the bridge.

Last week there was a potential for hazardous waste in the ground of the underpass. Samples were tested, and it turned out not to be hazardous. They then had to determine if the materials could be taken to a regular landfill. The delay has not impacted their schedule too much.

Dr. Cianflone asked if Duke Street in front of SUNOCO will be paved. Mr. Deptula replied that they will come back in the fall to do a temporary paving.

Ms. Sandy Miller asked if the paving will fix the bumps at the Front and Orange Street intersection. Mr. Deptula said that they will address it as soon as they can. Orange Street will be tapered back.

Mr. Boyer asked if any determination has been made as to how far they will work on Duke Street. They have determined to complete the work on Duke Street as far as Depot Avenue, where the concrete begins, except for the wearing course. The final paving will take place next year.

Mrs. Rees read a question from a resident who asked if the “no parking” on King Street could be changed from the residential side to the park side. Mr. Deptula stated that if they can do that, they will change the signs around. He feels that it is a good possibility.

The resident asked if there could be crosswalks at the ends of the park and at Park Avenue. Mr. Ruane said that the Front Street end of the park will be under construction next year. Mr. Deptula noted that the crosswalks at the other areas would be up to the Borough.

### **Halloween Parade**

Jim Groninger informed the council that the parade will be a go this year. The only change to the route is that the parade will come down Sixth Street instead of Seventh Street. The detour will be up Hanover and down Seventh Street to Duke Street. Jon Apple feels that he can get additional fire police to help block off the parade route.

### **Public Comment**

The thirteen members of the public introduced themselves.

Mr. Bob Rowe asked about the street lights near the Fire Police building. He was informed that the contractor has been contacted.

Mr. Boyer provided photos and a video of flooding on WestWay between Eighth Street and Sixth Street. There is no drain between these two streets and the water lays in his and neighboring properties. Mr. Ruane stated that the street committee would review the problem and consider putting drains in the area.

### **Northumberland Borough Sewer Department**

Mr. Ruane stated that the Borough would like to look into charging a fee for stormwater. Mr. Tira advised that there are different ways to charge for a fee. The charge could be a flat fee per tax parcel or based on impervious amounts or street frontage. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Boyer moved to pursue a plan to charge one dollar (\$1.00) per month per tax parcel surcharge on the quarterly sewer bills for storm sewer costs. Mr. Toro seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously. Mr. Troup was not on the telephone and did not vote.

### **Mayor's Report**

Mayor Berard reported that for the month of August, the police have issued 38 traffic citations and 3 non-traffic citations. They issued 17 parking tickets and 30 court appearances. Several people were arrested for felony and misdemeanor crimes, including unsworn falsification to authority and drugs. They answered 259 calls for service,

including 42 assist calls; nine to Point Township, 15 to Sunbury and 18 to other agencies. They logged 1167 miles on the vehicles. The interview room is complete. Cameras are set up and those who are being interviewed can now be recorded on camera. The camera server is hooked up, allowing for the in-car video to automatically download to the server inside the police station. The record management system has been upgraded.

Mayor Berard noted that a young man interned for the summer. His name is Brandon Walter. His internship is over. Shane Robuck, a senior at Bloomsburg University, majoring in criminal justice is interning this fall with the police department.

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

Ms. MaryKay Clark provided the report for the Code Office for the month. Three building permits and one zoning permit were issued with permit fees totaling \$273. One Certificate of Occupancy was filed. Eight complaints were received. Fourteen code violations and two citations were issued. There was one street cut permit with backfilling fees at \$57.50. Ten rental inspections were conducted with inspection fees totaling \$350. Forty-six miles were travelled for the month.

### **Street Supervisor's Report**

Mr. Probst provided a written report to the council. Mr. Ruane informed council that Mr. Probst informed him that the cost to repair the backhoe is \$16,000.

Mr. Probst informed the council that the boom needs to be inspected on the bucket truck.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Streets**

- Mr. Boyer reported that New Enterprise will complete the paving in the Borough by the end of October.
- Mrs. Rees had been contacted by a resident who asked if crosswalks may be painted at Park Avenue in addition to the ends of the park. Mr. Tira advised that it could be pursued, but typically crosswalks are at the ends of the blocks.
- Mrs. Rees said that the resident also asked if a study could be done for permanent traffic lights. Mr. Boyer stated that the cost to install traffic lights would be \$400,000, according to PennDOT. Mr. Ruane added that the amount of traffic would not warrant the traffic light. Mayor Berard noted that there's a safety issue because drivers speed up to make the green light.

#### **Community Development**

- Dr. Cianflone stated that John Herring has asked if anyone knows who spread the cracker dust at the field. No one had any information. Mr. Herring also asked if the lower gate could be locked.
- Liberty Splashland - Bob Long has a contractor looking at the pool for recommendations. The Bowl Slide has been advertised on Municibid.
- Cindy Diogo and Bill and Diane Merlavage came to the meeting to request that council support a bigger celebration for Pineknotters' Days in 2022 for the Borough's 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary. They would like to plan a parade, rides, etc.

Point Township will be asked to participate in the plans for the celebration. Preliminary plans for a fundraiser for next year include a corn hole tournament on Father's Day at the Route 11 soccer fields with the finals during Pineknotters' Days. 17857.org is spearheading the plans.

- 17857.org is hosting a meeting on Thursday regarding the Bike-Ped Audit that is being conducted by Brian Auman with grant funding. The public is invited to attend the 7:00 p.m. meeting.
- The Borough's electricity contract expires in January. Pricing is currently around five cents per kilowatt hour. Dr. Cianflone made a motion to approve a contract of not more than five cents per kilowatt hour for three years. Mr. Boyer seconded the motion. Council approved with a 5-0 vote; Mr. Troup was not on the phone call.
- Priestley Avenue Pipe – Representatives from the railroad have visited the site and are willing to contribute to the cost for fifty feet on each side of the railroad tracks. The emergency permit from DEP came today.
- Dr. Cianflone announced that anyone interested in helping with the Borough's anniversary celebration should contact 17857.org. The group meets the first Thursday of the month at 6:00 p.m. at the Little House.

#### Finance

##### 2019 Budget Meetings

The first meeting to discuss the 2019 budget was held last Tuesday and the next meeting will be the last Tuesday of this month at 6:30 p.m.

#### Personnel

Mrs. Rees made a motion to allow Shane Robuck to intern with the Police Department. Dr. Cianflone seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously. Mr. Troup approved via phone conference.

#### Streets (additional comment)

Mayor Berard stated that a resident on Fifth Street said that there are a herd of deer that cross Fifth Street and she asked if a "deer crossing" sign could be placed on Fifth Street. It was noted that deer are all over the hill section of the Borough. Deer are also seen at WestWay.

#### Public Safety

Several vacancies exist on the Emergency Services Board Vacancies. Mrs. Rees made a motion to appoint Kaitlyn Simmons to the Emergency Services Board. Dr. Cianflone seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.

#### Rules – no report

#### **Old Business**

1. Priestley Avenue Pipe

Mr. Tira explained that the plans from the engineer are to get DEP approval. The agreement with the property owners will be drawn up before the work would begin. The agreement will state that the Borough will do the work and the property owners will be responsible going forward. Mr. Tira stated that once he has the plans they will be shared with the property owners. Mrs. Walker stated that the other property owner lives in Harrisburg. She asked what would happen if they sell their property. Mr. Tira responded that the next property owner would be responsible.

### **New Business**

1. Two bills were added to the list of bills. The first is payable from the Liquid Fuels Account for \$45,700 to New Enterprise for the handicap curbing and ADA ramps that were installed. Also added is a bill of \$225 from Dr. Leitzel for the psychological exam for the new part-time police officer. Mr. Toro moved to pay the bills. Mrs. Rees seconded the motion. Council approved by a vote of 5-1 with Mr. Troup voting no. Bills to be paid from the General Fund total \$78,041.33; Park and Recreation Fund bills total \$3,000; Liberty Splashland bills total \$40.87; General Contingency bills total \$471.98; Liquid Fuels bills total \$45,700; and Sewer Department bills total \$94,648.41.
2. The Fire Police were invited to attend Bucknell University Football Hero Appreciation Day on Saturday. Dr. Cianflone made a motion to approve their request to attend the event. Mr. Boyer seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.
3. Truck loan  
Mr. Tira explained that in order to proceed with a loan to purchase the new truck, council must pass a resolution in accordance with the Local Unit Government Debt Act. For part of that, Jan will need to complete a debt payment and other documents. Council may approve the resolution contingent upon those documents being completed and compliant with the law. This will enable the ability to close on the loan. Mr. Boyer so moved. Dr. Cianflone seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously. This is Resolution B-2018.
4. Mrs. Rees stated that upon review of the information presented to council and the recommendation of the Police Chief, she moved to terminate the employment of Officer Dreisbach. Mr. Toro seconded the motion. Council voted 5-1 to approve with Mr. Troup voting no.

### **Executive Session**

Mr. Ruane stated that the council would adjourn for an Executive Session. Mr. Tira added that litigation matters would be discussed, and council would not return. The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

At 8:19 p.m. the public session was reconvened, and the public was invited back into the room.

Mayor Berard stated that in light of the termination of Officer Dreisbach, the police department is now an officer short. He requested that the Borough Council hire Officer Michael Vognetz at the same rate of pay that Officer Dreisbach was receiving, \$27.37 per hour. Mr. Tira asked if Officer Vognetz is on the valid Civil Service List. Chief Kriner stated that Officer Vognetz is the only person on the valid Civil Service List.

Mrs. Rees made a motion to hire Officer Michael Vognetz at a rate of \$27.37 per hour, beginning tomorrow, September 5, 2019. Mr. Boyer seconded the motion. Council voted 5-1 to approve the motion. Mr. Troup voted no.

Chief Kriner requested that the council empower the Civil Service Commission to start a new eligibility list.

Mrs. Rees made the motion to empower the Civil Service Commission to make a new eligibility list with all the testing that is required. Mr. Boyer seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.

**Executive Session**

Mr. Ruane stated that the council go into Executive Session for litigation issues and would not reconvene.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

  


Janice R. Bowman  
Borough Manager