

TUNKHANNOCK BOROUGH COUNCIL
Regular Meeting
July 2, 2015

Council President Stacy Huber called the monthly Meeting of the Tunkhannock Borough Council to order in the Borough Building, 126 Warren Street, Tunkhannock, PA at 7:00 p.m. He led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Present were: Mayor Norman Ball; Council Members Marshall Davis, Stacy Huber, Joseph Myers, Robert Robinson, Wendy Sweppenheiser, Lisa Tesluk and Ruth Vincenti; and Borough Manager Dawn Welch. Absent: Council Member Scott Douthett.

Others present: Wyoming County Press Examiner (WCPE) Editor Bob Baker; citizens Susan DiStadio, Harold May, Patricia Mead, Linda Sherman, and Susann Barziloski.

On motion by Marshall Davis, seconded by Lisa Tesluk, move to approve the minutes of the meeting held on June 4, 2015. Motion carried unanimously.

On motion by Robert Robinson, seconded by Joseph Myers, move to approve payment of the bills. Motion carried unanimously.

Administration Remarks:

President Huber announced that: a) due to the annual Triton Hose Company Carnival, next month's Council Meeting will be held on Monday, August 3rd; and b) in observance of Independence Day, the Borough Office will be closed tomorrow. In addition, he stated that recent heavy downpours caused some clogged storm drains. One on West Street, in particular, resulted in a back-up; but our crew (with equipment assistance from the Municipal Authority) was able to remedy the situation in a timely manner. He then expressed his thanks to Authority Manager Roger Hadsall for his assistance.

Public Privilege of the Floor:

WCPE Editor Bob Baker requested to know if the Council had anything to do with the delay with the placement of the Veterans' banners on utility poles in the Borough. After considerable discussion, President Huber assured him that neither the Mayor, President, Manager, nor Council had any role in holding up placement of the banners.

Linda Sherman, 12 Pine Street, presented a petition (containing a total of 24 signatures) whose summary and background follow: Trehab [a 501(c)3/non-profit community action agency] is considering purchasing the house on the corner of Pine and Second Street for the purpose of housing four to five men undergoing rehabilitation related to drug and alcohol abuse issues. This action will significantly reduce the value of neighborhood properties and be a poor model to the children at the Day Care and children of the neighborhood. Because this is non-profit, our Borough loses tax dollars. County taxes support this program; so, your county tax dollars will

help purchase the house. The petition concluded with the following statement: We, the undersigned, are concerned citizens who urge our leaders to act now to discourage a rehabilitation residence in our neighborhood.

Ms. Sherman requested that the Planning and Zoning Commissions (*sic*) review the current zoning ordinance to deter this.

President Huber stated that he had spoken today with Wyoming County Commissioner Tom Henry, who assured him that the three Commissioners would not pursue this matter.

Marshall Davis added that a similar facility for women had already been established in the Borough, notification or coordination for which had never been brought to Council.

Susann Barziloski stated that she objected to the manner in which she heard about this. She also wanted to know if the Judge had to answer to a higher board. She feels that there should be some kind of notification or coordination process followed, as a courtesy, by which the needs of property owners are considered.

Mark Monsey, Tunkhannock Business and Professional Association (TBPA), who was unable to attend tonight's meeting, requested that the Manager extend his thanks to the Mayor, President, Council, Department of Public Works, Manager, and Police Department for making this year's Founders' Day "a wet success".

Finance and Administration Committee:

Robert Robinson, Civil Service Commission (CSC) Chairman, reported that he had received a letter from the Police Committee Chairman Marshall Davis asking to initiate procedures for filling the position of Police Department Sergeant. Mr. Robinson is in the process of setting up a meeting of the CSC.

Transportation & Streets Committee:

Chairman Robert Robinson reported that, with the exception of the back parking lot and the municipal parking lot across from the Post Office, the cross-walk/line painting is complete.

Chairman Robinson also reported that the Committee may be asking to purchase a new dump truck at the next Council Meeting.

Building and Property Committee:

President Huber reported that we expect that the Retaining Wall Project will be ready to be formally advertised with the next two weeks. Allowing approximately 30 days for the bidding process and the awarding of the contract, the Project could commence in the late August - early September time frame, with an anticipated completion date of about one month thereafter.

Recent rain events have delayed the start of the scheduled Borough Building roof repairs.

Mold was recently discovered in a small ceiling area upstairs (in the former Triton Hose Company Dining Room). A contractor, who was called in to assess the situation, stated that he believed it to be minor in scope and recommended that air sampling (which is considered the preferred practice) be completed prior to initiating abatement measures. The Manager contacted a separate contractor who will conduct this study early next week.

The back parking lot was partially excavated this past winter for required repair of a frozen sewer pipe. The majority of the restoration and paving work was done today by contractor Charles Corby, with the final touches to be completed tomorrow.

Riverside Park Commission:

Mayor Ball reported that the presentation of Shakespeare in the Park has been postponed. No make-up date has been set at this time.

Police Committee:

Mayor Ball reported that some shifts do not have coverage in July.

Chief Hardy was not here to present a summary of the Police Report for the month of June, 2015. Note: a copy of the report will be placed on file in the Police Department. (Note: the report was distributed on July 6th.)

Planning and Zoning: N/A

Council of Governments (COG):

The COG held a meeting concerning the contract (for construction code compliance matters with Bureau Veritas [BV]) on June 15th at the Tunkhannock Borough Council Chambers, at which 14 of 15 municipalities were in attendance. Three representatives from BV were here to respond to any questions or concerns. Some members of the COG requested the removal of the “Exclusivity” Clause (for BV’s services) from the contract. The BV representatives noted that removal the clause could possibly result in having no local service office within the County. After considerable discussion, it appeared that most of the municipalities are pleased with BV and did not wish to have the clause removed.

The next COG meeting will be held on August 11th at 7:00 p.m. Chairman John Keefe asked that, between now and then, each Municipality discuss the current contract and document those items that they would like to see changed.

Other Business:

President Huber stated that he had sent additional correspondence (concerning the FEMA Demolition Project Site at 22 McCord Street) to County Emergency Management Agency Director Gene Dziak, who has since advised that there are ongoing issues with the County’s

contractor and that there is potential for litigation over this matter and related FEMA contract issues. Among the remaining Borough items/issues are: placement of additional fill, grading, drainage, and actions related to the completion of an access easement between the Borough and Municipal Authority.

As regards the Walnut Hill Project, comments on the developer's latest proposal were provided (on behalf of the Borough by both the Borough Planning Commission (PC) and Engineer Mick Goodwin of Milnes Engineering) to the Wyoming County Planning Office. These comments will now be reviewed in conjunction with those of other agencies, e.g., Tunkhannock Township, the County Engineer (CECO Associates), Planning Office/Commission, and Conservation District.

It was noted last month that the remaining proposed (Wal-Mart Project) infrastructure and traffic pattern/signals changes at the intersection of the Bypass and Bridge Street were under review by PennDOT and the project sponsor's contractor-representative. It was further noted that these changes would require the approval of both entities. Since that time, Wal-Mart has reportedly declined making further payments. In this regard, the Manager learned of a grant which, if approved, would cover the anticipated residual costs. The grant was quickly forwarded, as the submission deadline was fast approaching. The results may not be know for some time.

A copy of the City of Scranton's Quality of Life Ordinance was previously distributed to Council for review. As there have been no specific comments or reommendations recieved, President Huber proposed that the issue and document be referred to the Environmental Committee for review and possible recommendations.

Council Privilege of the Floor:

Ruth Vincenti thanked Stacy, Dawn, DPW, and TBMA for the quick response to the clogged drains.

On motion by Robert Robinson, seconded by Joseph Myers, move to adjourn the meeting at 8:01 p.m.. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Welch
Borough Manager