

TUNKHANNOCK BOROUGH COUNCIL
Regular Meeting
February 4, 2016

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 Ben Barziloski, Marshall Davis, Stacy Huber, Joseph Myers, Robert Robinson, and Lisa Tesluk; and Borough Manager Dawn Welch. Absent: Council Members Scott Douthett and Ruth Vincenti.

Others present: Wyoming County Press Examiner (WCPE) Reporter C.J. Marshall; Police Chief Roger Hardy; and Citizens Ned Slocum, Mark Monsey, Patti Mead, Rick Huffsmith, Mike DiStadio, Rick Hiduk (Tunkhannock Historic Walking Tour Project Coordinator), Jean Ruhf (Executive Director of the Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau), and Erica Rogler (Executive Director of Wyoming County Cultural Center and Dietrich Theater).

On motion by Joseph Myers, seconded by Lisa Tesluk, move to approve the minutes of the meeting held on January 4, 2016. Motion carried unanimously.

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

Historic Tunkhannock Walking Tour:

Rick Hiduk, Project Coordinator, discussed the 2016 Tunkhannock Historic Walking Tour (under the joint sponsorship of the Wyoming County Cultural Center, the Wyoming County Historical Society, and the Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau), featuring approximately 30 historical structures within the Borough, including homes, churches, and businesses. The “roll-out” date of the project is set to coincide with this year’s Founders’ Day (June 25th). The Mayor and Council expressed support for the project and willingness to assist.

Public Privilege of the Floor:

Attorney Rick Huffsmith inquired about the status of the Zoning Ordinance rewrite. President Huber noted that a meeting of the Borough Planning Commission and Zoning Consultant Carson Helfrich, to address these matters, has been rescheduled for February 8, 2016 at 7 p.m.

On motion by Robert Robinson, seconded by Ben Barziloski, move to go into executive session, for discussion of labor-related contractual matters, at 7:20 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

On motion by Robert Robinson, seconded by Joseph Myers, move to go back to regular session at 7:30 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Finance and Administration:

President Huber reported that on January 20th, an advertised informational meeting, consisting of representatives of the three townships for which Triton Hose Company provides fire protection, along with the Borough, was held. The purpose was to provide general information and to answer questions related to the management and oversight of the Fire Fund and possible changes thereto. The next meeting (with representation from these municipalities and Triton) will be held on February 24, 2016 at Triton.

The accounting and auditing firm of Murphy-Dougherty has served the Borough very well for 6 years now, based on which the Finance Committee has recommended that the firm be retained for an additional three year commitment.

On motion by Marshall Davis, seconded by Robert Robinson, move to re-appoint Murphy-Dougherty as the Borough's accounting/auditing firm, for a three year term. The motion carried unanimously.

Transportation & Streets Committee:

Discussions with the Eaton Township Supervisors, with regard to upgrading or possibly replacing the poles and lights on the Susquehanna River Bridge, are continuing. Grants to help offset the cost of the project are being researched; and, we hope to have (by the end of the month) more definitive information as to funding availability and suitability of the options available to help us make an informed recommendation and decision.

Building and Property Committee:

At last month's meeting, it was stated that we were working with Triton Hose Company on issues such as roles and responsibilities related to their fire siren and related support equipment, which are located in/on the Borough Building. There are a few details and items (cost, need for this system, etc.), for which we need additional information. Based on this, a letter was recently sent to Triton requesting this data, which (upon receipt of their response) will help us both to arrive at the best decision for the equipment.

Riverside Park Commission:

Mayor Ball reported that the ice skating rink has been in use off and on, due to the weather.

Police Committee:

Mayor Ball reported that calls for police service were down from 99 in January, 2015 to 38 during January, 2016.

Chief Hardy presented a summary of the Police Report for the month of January 2016. Note: a copy of the report will be placed on file in the Police Department.

Also last month, Robert Robinson inquired about the noticeable increase in the number of Non-Reportable Crashes. Chief Hardy was unable to find a distinctive factor to explain the increase. There was a slight increase in reported "private property" crashes (parking lots, etc.); and the majority of the crashes occurred on either Tioga or Bridge Street, at various times of the day.

With regard to health care coverage, Chairman Marshall Davis explained that the recent acquisition of Blue Cross of Northeast Pennsylvania by Highmark, Inc., had resulted in higher copayments for our employees. As this increase was not in consonance with the provisions of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) with the Tunkhannock Borough Police Officers Association (TBPOA), a Copay Side Agreement to the CBA (to offset these increases/resolve the issue) was drafted, to be forwarded to the TBPOA, through its President.

On motion by Marshall Davis, seconded by Lisa Tesluk, move to authorize the Council President to sign the draft Copay Side Agreement and forward it to the President of the TBPOA for review and consideration by the Association. Motion carried unanimously.

Planning and Zoning:

On February 17, 2016, two zoning hearings are scheduled:

- A. Grace Fellowship Church, 155 Bridge Street, is requesting a variance to allow a pre-school facility.
- B. Bridgewater Church, 2 Church Street (formerly the Baptist Church) is seeking a variance to remove three parking spaces from its parking lot.

Council of Governments (COG):

Ben Barziloski reported that the COG is still trying to work out the details of the draft contract with Bureau Veritas.

Resolutions:

On motion by Robert Robinson, seconded by Joseph Myers, approve Resolution 1-2016 appointing Ruth Vincenti to serve (without compensation) as Assistant Borough Secretary. The motion carried unanimously.

On motion by Joseph Myers, seconded by Marshall Davis, approve Resolution 2-2016 allowing participation and voting by telecommunications devices, provided that a physical quorum has been established, not including the member intending to participate via the

telecommunications device. (Note: the absent member would have to meet one or more of the following criteria to participate: illness, disability, care of a newborn in the immediate family, emergency, and family or business travel.)

Other Business: N/A

Council Privilege of the Floor:

Robert Robinson reported that Punxsutawney Phil had not seen his shadow.

On motion by Robert Robinson, seconded by Joseph Myers move to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Welch,
Borough Manager