

**BOROUGH OF NORTHAMPTON
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING
AUGUST 20, 2020**

CALL TO ORDER: A Regular Public Meeting of the Northampton Borough Council was called to order by President Anthony Lopsonzski, Jr. at 7:30 PM on Thursday August 20, 2020. The meeting was held in Borough Council Chambers and began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: Council Members present at roll call were: President Anthony Lopsonzski, Jr., Vice-president Keith Piescienski, Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr., Anthony Pristash, Robert McHale, Julia Kutzler, Thomas Gehringer and Kenneth Hall. Also present were Mayor Thomas Reenock, Solicitor Brian Panella, Borough Manager LeRoy Brobst, Police Chief Bryan Kadingo and recording secretary Meaghan Case.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A motion was made by Anthony Pristash, duly seconded by Kenneth Hall, and carried to approve the Minutes of the Public Workshop Meeting held on July 2, 2020 and the Regular Public Meeting held on July 16, 2020.

HEARING OF PERSONS PRESENT:

Kristen Olsen, 512 Banks Street, Northampton, PA 18067, was present to complain about the frequent flooding in her home due to the overflow of Dry Run Creek. She asked Borough Council if there was any solutions to alleviate the problem. Robert McHale said that they would discuss possible short term and long term updates later in the meeting.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT:

President Lopsonzski, Jr. had nothing to report.

MAYOR’S REPORT:

Mayor Reenock had nothing to report.

SOLICITOR’S REPORT:

Solicitor Panella had nothing to report.

RESOLUTIONS:

RESOLUTION NO. 9-20:

TITLE: A RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF NORTHAMPTON, COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA ADOPTING THE RIVER CENTRAL PLANNING SERVICES AGREEMENT ENTERED BETWEEN THE BOROUGH OF NORTHAMPTON, THE TOWNSHIP OF EAST ALLEN, THE TOWNSHIP OF HANOVER, THE BOROUGH OF CATASAUQUA, AND THE BOROUGH OF NORTH CATASAUQUA, TOGETHER AS "RIVER CENTRAL" AND THE LEHIGH VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION.

Resolution No. 9-20 adopts the River Central Planning Services Agreement between Northampton Borough, East Allen Township, Hanover Township (Lehigh County), the Borough of Catasauqua and the Borough of North Catasauqua and the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission for the purpose of developing a regional comprehensive plan.

Introduced By: Anthony Pristash

Seconded By: Keith Peiscienski

No. 9-20 passed unanimously.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES:

Administration and Finance: Councilman Hall reported that the Atlas Cement Memorial Museum received a \$2,000 donation from the Lehigh Hanson Heidelberg Cement Group. We appreciate their continued support.

--We received a communication from the Northampton County Board of Elections informing us that the Fourth Ward voting location will be at The Gospel Chapel located at 1769 Newport Avenue. The primary election had been held in the Northampton Memorial Community Center but henceforth, it will be at The Gospel Chapel.

--Mr. Brobst took part in a teleconference regarding weight restrictions on the Cementon Bridge. Several ideas were discussed. However, the PennDOT representative said that ultimately enforcement is in the hands of the municipal police departments. He told them that we do not have truck scales. However, they offered no solution.

--The MECAB meeting scheduled for August 26, 2020 has been cancelled.

Building, Land and Recreation: Councilman Pristash reported that we have received notification from a representative of the Northampton Area Chamber of Commerce that the Northampton Uptown Street Fair will not be held in September.

--We have received notification from the Northampton Area Exchange Club the Jack Frost Parade scheduled for October 22, 2020 has been cancelled.

--Mr. Brobst participated in a teleconference on Tuesday, August 11, 2020, with members of the River Central committee. Discussion centered on continuing organization and preparing necessary paperwork for involvement with the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission.

--Final steps are being planned to place the pavers at the Memorial Lot at 14th and Washington Avenue. The soldiers from Indiantown Gap, who painted the Howitzer, will come back sometime in September, and move the weapon to its new home.

Code and Police: Councilman Piesciensi reported that the Zoning Hearing Board met on Thursday, August 13, 2020, to hear the appeal of Heather Doll of 1345 Washington Avenue for setback requirements of a fence. Her appeal was unanimously granted.

--On Saturday, August 15, 2020, the remaining candidates for the patrolman position will have their oral interview. This will be conducted in town hall.

Fire and Health: Councilwoman Kutzler reported that Health Officer Ted Veresink has conducted several health inspections and reports that the business owners have been very cooperative and are following all CDC protocol.

--The fire department has ordered their materials for Fire Prevention Week, which is in October.

Mr. Brobst spoke with a number of residents who experienced flooding on Tuesday, August 4, 2020, and while they were upset with the conditions, they were highly complimentary of the service provided by the fire department working with the public works department. An adjuster from our insurance carrier will meet with all the parties that experienced basement problems.

Public Works and Sewer: Councilman McHale reported that a meeting with our environmental engineer will take place at 9 AM, Monday, August 17, 2020, at the wastewater treatment plant. The topic of discussion will be sludge handling.

--At 10 AM on Monday, August 17, 2020, Victor Rodite and Mr. Brobst will meet with staff members of Lehigh Engineering to further the study being conducted in connection with the CIPP grant.

--The sewer line repair in Line Alley has been satisfactorily completed. We are most appreciative of the service provided in an emergency situation by Joao and Bradley Construction Co. of Bethlehem, PA.

--Mr. Brobst is waiting to hear from the Northampton County Emergency Management Agency regarding an opportunity to file a claim with the PA Emergency Management Agency to cover some of our costs as a result of the flooding from the most recent tropical storm.

--He added that a public meeting will be held prior to the regular council meeting at the end of September, early October to discuss the MS4 project and the Dry Run Creek.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS:

There was not any new business.

REPORTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Kenneth Hall stated that he received an email from the school district regarding the football season. He said that things are still up in the air and he is not sure what assistance will be needed from the fire police.

--He asked Mr. Brobst if there was any update on PP&L updating their lights to LED. Mr. Brobst said that he has not received any update.

Robert McHale stated that he will contact PP&L to see what the process is for replacing the street lights with LED lights.

--He said that he and Mr. Brobst had a lengthy conversation about the trash bid specs and added some additional information.

--He asked for an update on the rental registrations/inspections for this year. Keith Knoblach responded stating that in 2019 the compliance rate was 97.9% and to date this year we are at a rate of 95.1%. The numbers are good considering we suspended inspections for over three months due to COVID-19. He added that certified letters went out to property owners who did not respond. Out of 515, 25 parcels did not respond. He added that most people are very cooperative.

--He asked what kind of additional sanitation measures can be used to help improve the collection of garbage at the Canal Street Park. Mr. Brobst said that the public works department put extra trash cans at Canal Street in the grove area.

Keith Piescienski stated that the condition of Main Street is still terrible. He also mentioned seeing several tractor trailers in areas where they should not be.

Anthony Pristash said that it was sad to see the Street Fair and the Halloween parade cancelled. He hopes we can still have Trick or Treat and the Christmas tree lighting.

--He gave kudos to Kathy Novegratz and everyone involved with the maintenance of the community garden. He said it looks great.

Julia Kutzler thanked Kathy Novegratz for the great email on the community garden. She gave kudos to her and everyone that is involved with the garden.

--She asked about the possibility of doing something about the weeds on the sidewalks on Main Street. Weeds in the sidewalks should be taken care of by the respective property owner.

--She asked about 105/107 Laubach Avenue. Mr. Brobst explained that we have been unable to locate the property owner after several attempts of sending certified letters. She asked about the possibility of condemning the property.

--She also asked about the home damaged by fire in the 2200 block of Main Street. Mr. Brobst said that a demolition permit was issued. They started work then stopped after a short while.

Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr. asked about gathering a list of curbs that are in disrepair and possibly use grant money to fix them.

--He said that the Civil Service Commission will meet on August 21, 2020 to discuss the final candidates for the police officer positions. He thanked Bonnie Almond for all of her hard work and said she was doing a hell of a job.

--He said he received phone calls about the line painting in W. 14th Street from Newport Avenue to Canal Street.

--He asked Keith Knoblach if he has seen a change in the balance or a major shift since changing the registrations by parcel instead of by address. Keith said there hasn't been any negativity or gripes with the change. He also asked if Sal Zangari could fill in for him as needed for code work. Keith said yes, Sal could fill in for him whenever necessary.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

--Mr. Brobst said that the sewer plant had some major flooding issues due to the heavy rains on August 4th. He said that everything was done the next day and everyone did a great job.

--He informed everyone that the voting location for the Fourth Ward has been changed to the Gospel Chapel located at 1769 Newport Avenue.

--He said that the final draft for the bid specs for refuse collection is complete. Final approval will be done on August 21, 2020. All bids are due on October 1st by 4 PM.

--He informed everyone that the community garden produced over 90 pounds of produce. He gave kudos to Kathy Novegratz and the team for all of their hard work. He said she sent an email update and gave great feedback.

--He said that letters were sent to all department heads for the 2021 budget.

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Motion: Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr. moved, seconded by Anthony Pristash and unanimously carried to pay the bills as listed on A/P Journal #8A dated August 20, 2020, totaling \$339,373.08.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Keith Piescienski, duly seconded by Kenneth Hall and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:29 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Meaghan Case
Recording Secretary