

**BOROUGH OF NORTHAMPTON  
PUBLIC WORKSHOP MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 3, 2020**

**CALL TO ORDER:** A Public Workshop Meeting of the Northampton Borough Council was called to order by President Anthony Lopsonzski, Jr. at 7:30 PM on Thursday, September 3, 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, Thomas Gehringer and Kenneth Hall and Julia Kutzler. Also present were Mayor Reenock, Solicitor Brian Panella, Borough Manager LeRoy Brobst, Police Chief Bryan Kadingo and Recording Secretary, Meaghan Case.

**HEARING OF PERSONS PRESENT:**

**Jennifer Shortell, 1914 Washington Avenue, Northampton** was present to complain about the sewage backup that occurs in their home when we have heavy rains. This happened on August 4<sup>th</sup> in 2018 and 2020. Mr. Brobst said that there is a meeting scheduled during the week of September 7<sup>th</sup> with Gilmore & Associates to assess the area.

**Lawrence Rhoads, 1906 Washington Avenue, Northampton** was present to complain about the flooding that occurs in his home when we have heavy rains. He specified dates of August 4, 2018 and August 4, 2020 when he experienced severe flooding in his home. He said he was contacted by the Borough's insurance company and gave them details of what happened. Mr. Brobst said that a meeting is scheduled during the week of September 7<sup>th</sup> with Gilmore & Associates to assess the area.

**Consider Request to Hire Two Full-Time Police Officers:**

The Civil Service Commission has completed their process and prepared an eligibility list of the six qualified candidates. Mr. Brobst shared the same recommendation of the chief of police that we hire the top two qualified candidates conditional on their passing a physical and psychological examination. The top two candidates are Brandon Reph and Emanuel Torres.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Anthony Pristash, duly seconded by Julia Kutzler and unanimously carried to approve the hiring of Brandon Reph and Emanuel Torres, conditional on their passing a physical and psychological examination.

Both officers were sworn in by Mayor Reenock.

Mr. McHale participated in the meeting via phone and left the meeting at this time.

**Consider Certification of Non-Uniform Defined Contribution Pension Plan:**

The Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) for the 2021 non-uniform defined contribution pension plan has been calculated to be \$19,636. It is anticipated that the state aid for this plan will be \$35,800. The overage of \$16,164 will be applied to the police and the non-uniform defined benefit plans as directed by the state auditor general's office.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Thomas Gehringer, duly seconded by Julia Kutzler and unanimously carried to approve the certification of the Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) for the 2021 non-uniform defined contribution pension plan for the Borough of Northampton.

**Consider Certification of Police Pension Plan:**

The Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) for the 2021 police pension plan has been calculated to be \$135,598. It is anticipated that the state aid for this plan will be \$108,000, leaving a shortage of \$27,598.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Keith Piescienski, duly seconded by Kenneth Hall and unanimously carried to approve the certification of the Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) for the 2021 police pension plan for the Borough of Northampton.

**Consider Certification of Non-Uniform Defined Benefit Pension Plan:**

The Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) for the 2021 non-uniform defined benefit pension plan has been calculated to be \$85,329. It is anticipated that the state aid for this plan will be \$72,000, leaving a shortage of \$13,329.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Anthony Pristash, duly seconded by Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr. and unanimously carried to approve the certification of the Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) for the 2021 non-uniform defined benefit pension plan for the Borough of Northampton.

**REPORT FROM COMMITTEES:**

**Administration and Finance:** Councilman Hall reported that we have received a copy of the 2019 audit of the Northampton Regional Emergency Medical Services. Mr. Brobst will make it available if anyone wishes to review it.

--We have received a notification of the estimated Liquid Fuels allocation for 2021. The amount we are expecting to receive is \$273,325.45.

--With the extensions provided for the garbage payments, we will not be sending delinquent garbage accounts to Portnoff Law Associates until the beginning of October.

**Building, Land and Recreation:** Councilman Pristash reported that the Delaware & Lehigh Trail Association will be providing a trailhead sign near the Canal Street Park at 14<sup>th</sup> and

Canal Streets. Members of our public works department will install the sign. A copy of the sign has been included in your packet.

--Admission at the recreation center is still by appointment only. With the schools opening, we may have to restrict the students walking in to use the rest rooms because we would not be able to control their activity.

--Even though the time is far off, Mr. Brobst is seeking your opinion on the Tree Lighting Ceremony. He has had several offers for trees. However, he has not yet refined the search.

**Code and Police:** Councilman Piescienski reported that the Planning Commission will meet on Wednesday, September 9, 2020, at 7 PM, to consider preliminary and final plan review for Yost Hauling, Inc./Lehigh Valley Refractories, Inc. at 75 West 21<sup>st</sup> Street. They wish to subdivide this parcel into three separate lots.

--Mr. Victor Rodite and Mr. Brobst have met several times with Larry Turoscy and David Lear of Lehigh Engineering to develop what Victor refers to as the "specific planning process". This is funded by the CIPP grant and has focused primarily on traffic in and around 21st and Main Streets.

--Two free school parking permits will be available to residents who live in a posted area. An additional permit will be available at the police station at a cost of \$2 with proper ID.

**Fire and Health:** Councilwoman Kutzler reported that enclosed in your packet are the minutes of the August 25 Health Board meeting and the bi-monthly report for July and August from Health Officer Ted Veresink.

--The fire department has received news that the new Pierce aerial ladder truck may be ready for departure from the manufacturer as early as September 25, 2020. It will not come directly to the Borough, so by the time we actually receive it, it should fit the parameters of the budget.

--She reviewed the fire police reports for August.

**Public Works and Sewer:** Councilman Piescienski reported that enclosed in your packet is a notification received from Cody Deal, PADCED, informing us of our success in obtaining a \$200,000 grant for our stream reclamation program. We will have to make some adjustments to our budget and proposal to accommodate a lesser amount than we applied for. This will be done in conjunction with Kent Baird and Mike Schwartz of Gilmore & Associates, as well as Victor Rodite.

--At 9 AM on Thursday, September 10, 2020, a pre-construction meeting will be held at the wastewater treatment plant to cover the sewer plant upgrade bids.

--Work will soon begin on paving Line Alley from 13th Street to the dead end. It was while we were preparing this alley for paving that we discovered the collapsed sewer line. So, with the repairs completed, the paving process can resume.

--A crew of the public works department has installed a storm water collection system to the rear of properties of Buckingham Drive. This has been an issue in recent years and a storm water easement does exist. So, we installed two small catch basins in the easement to collect the water.

**REPORT FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS:**

**Kenneth Hall** said that the fire police will assist with two home football games on October 16<sup>th</sup> and October 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Keith Piescienski** said that the new ladder truck should be finished around the end of September. It will then go to Glick for modifications. A few members of the fire department will be taking a trip to Hatfield, PA to see the truck.

**Anthony Pristash** asked everyone to please patronize small businesses and local restaurants, especially during a time like this. It is greatly appreciated by our local business owners.

**Julia Kutzler** gave kudos to “People Standing Up” for getting over 90 pounds of produce from the community garden, adding that it has been very successful.

--She said there is a crime prevention meeting scheduled on September 9<sup>th</sup>.

--She said thanked the two new officers that were sworn in and the rest of the police department for their service. She said that we believe in our police department and always have their back.

--She referenced Whitehall Township’s noise ordinance and gave a copy to Sal Zangari for the code enforcement office. She asked Mr. Brobst to review their ordinance.

--She thanked the Civil Service Commission for their work.

**Thomas Gehringer** stated that since we are now allowed to have in person council meetings, he feels going forward, the use of telecommunications should be suspended in meetings. He said that council members are elected officials and that they should all be present at the meetings as opposed to calling in on the phone. He said that they owe it to the residents of the borough to physically be in attendance at the meetings.

It was suggested by Solicitor Panella to table the request and list it as an agenda item for the next council meeting.

**Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr.** talked about the possible grant for the MS4 project. He stated that the borough spent \$450,000 to remove the dam years ago and now we are spending more than \$250,000 to fix it.

--He congratulated the two new officers on their employment.

--He said that we used to have two Christmas trees in the Borough for the holiday season.

He suggested that we get a tree for the fountain in the Uptown Park in addition to the one we have at Main Street and Laubach Avenue. He added that it would be a great addition to the Uptown Park for everyone to enjoy.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Mr. Brobst said that he met with Maggie Urban, the new director at Change on Main. She said that groups of people will begin weeding garden spots throughout the borough.

--He started preliminary work on the 2021 budget and will begin to schedule meetings with department heads to discuss their needs.

--He said there will be a River Central meeting on Tuesday, September 8, 2020 at 7 PM.

**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 #8B, dated September 3, 2020, totaling \$537.38 and A/P Journal #9, dated September 3, 2020 totaling \$72,445.41.

**ADJOURNMENT:** A motion was made by Keith Piescienski, duly seconded by Kenneth Hall and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Meaghan Case  
Recording Secretary