

**BOROUGH OF NORTHAMPTON  
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING  
May 17, 2018**

**CALL TO ORDER:** A Regular Public Meeting of the Northampton Borough Council was called to order by Vice President Keith Piescienski at 7:30 PM on Thursday, May 17, 2018. The meeting was held in Borough Council Chambers and began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL:** Council Members present at roll call were: Vice-president Keith Piescienski, Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr., Anthony Pristash, Julia Kutzler, Edward Pany, Kenneth Hall and Robert McHale. President Anthony Lopsonzski, Jr. was absent. Also present were Mayor Reenock, Solicitor Steven Goudsouzian, Borough Manager LeRoy Brobst, Police Chief Bryan Kadingo and Recording Secretary, Meaghan Case.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** A motion was made by Mr. Pristash, duly seconded by Mr. Hall, and unanimously carried to approve the Minutes of the Public Workshop Meeting held on April 5, 2018, the Special Public Hearing held on April 19, 2018 and the Regular Public Meeting held on April 19, 2018.

**HEARING OF PERSONS PRESENT:**

**David Haberacker, 109 Candlewycke Lane, Northampton**, was present to ask about the fence behind his property on Borough property. Mr. Brobst explained that this was brought to Allen Township's attention and they were in contact with the owner who put up the fence. The owner's residence is located in Allen Township.

**Jason Boandl, 609 E. 19<sup>th</sup> Street, Northampton** was present to express his concern with the proposed rental ordinance. He stated that \$50.00 per rental unit was a little steep. He also asked if the property owners would receive a form or checklist prior to the start of inspections.

**Jim, Washington Avenue, Northampton** stated that he has to get his car inspected every year to ensure safety of the vehicle. He was in agreement that rental properties should be inspected as well to ensure safety of the residents.

**Ruth Miller, 1213 Main Street, Northampton** stated that you can't put a price on health and safety. She is all for the inspection of rental properties.

**Ettore Ceriano** stated he loves the area and has invested in Northampton, however, is not in favor of the rental ordinance. He currently has 10 units in the borough with 5 more being remodeled. It said it is in the best interest of the landlord to have properties safe and up to code. He also said that this ordinance should be applied to EVERY property, not just rental units. He said the court system is usually in favor of the tenant. He suggested a clean certificate of occupancy for every property and using moving permits to gather and maintain information. He stated that the ordinance should be more simplified.

**Timothy Teppes, Cherryville Road, Northampton,** he stated that the yearly licensing fees aren't necessary and that any fees incurred will be passed on to the tenant. He said there is a fair share of good and bad landlords and good and bad tenants.

**Robert McHale** stated that if the resolution passes, they will create a line item in the budget and monitor the costs. They will reduce or increase costs accordingly. He stated that open units will have to jump to the top of the list for inspection when tenants leave so the landlord can rent to the next tenant as soon as possible with minimal unoccupied units. He stated that basic safety items will be addressed and a check list with a form will be part of the literature when notices are sent out.

**Mayor Reenock** stated that there are a lot of problems with the ordinance and many questions have gone unanswered. He stated to council, "we currently have no code enforcement officer and you want to move on this now?"

**Anthony Pristash** stated that he agrees with the safety and wellness of borough citizens and inspections, however, does not agree with the fees and costs involved. He said there are a lot more good landlords that care and maintain their properties and very few that are non-existent. He said any additional costs will be passed on to the tenant. He suggested that this ordinance be looked at further before passing something that is already faulty.

**Edward Pany** said the ordinance is too lengthy and needs to be simplified. He said a borough of our size does not need "Big Government". He said the borough is not ready to collapse. He said he only agreed with inspections when tenants move in or out.

**Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr.** stated he has personal feelings about this ordinance especially as a code enforcement officer. He stated that this ordinance will protect the landlord, tenant and the Borough. The borough is doing its due diligence by protecting the people. If there are problems, anyone can call and report any issues. This will ensure that tenants are living in a clean, healthy and safe environment.

**ORDINANCE NO. 1207:**

**TITLE: AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING REGULATIONS FOR THE REGISTRATION, INSPECTIONS AND LICENSING OF RESIDENTIAL RENTAL PROPERTIES AND HOUSING OCCUPANCY WITHIN NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH, MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR RENTAL PROPERTIES, VIOLATIONS, PENALTIES FOR NONCOMPLIANCE AND APPEALS.**

Introduced By: Robert McHale

Seconded By: Julia Kutzler

Ordinance NO. 1207 passed with a four to three vote in favor of the ordinance.

Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr.	YES	Robert McHale	YES
Kenneth Hall	YES	Edward Pany	NO
Anthony Pristash	NO	Keith Piescienski	NO
Julia Kutzler	YES		

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT:**

President Lopsonzski, Jr. was absent.

### **MAYOR'S REPORT:**

Mayor Reenock had nothing to report.

### **SOLICITOR'S REPORT:**

Solicitor Goudsouzian had nothing to report.

### **REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES:**

**Administration and Finance:** Councilman Lopsonzski, Sr. reported that we are in receipt of the quarterly franchise fee from Service Electric Cable TV in the amount of \$6,334.85.

--The Atlas Museum will open on the second and fourth Sunday of each month starting on May 13 through September 23, 2018. The hours of operation will be from 1-3 PM.

--Fifth grade students have toured and are touring the Atlas Museum representing Siegfried Elementary, George Wolf Elementary, Lehigh Township Elementary and Moore Township Elementary schools. Representatives from Keystone Cement will also take the tour on Tuesday, May 15, 2018.

--Recently, laws have changed relative to tractor trailer use on roads. Attorney Goudsouzian has provided a brief explanation.

**Building, Land and Recreation:** Councilman Pristash reported that Mr. Brosbt has been contacted by a representative of the three local veterans' associations. This year for Memorial Day they are proposing to have a ceremony at the Northampton Memorial lot at 11 AM. There will be no parade as in past years. The members will gather; the public is invited.

--Just a reminder: the swimming pool is scheduled to open on Saturday, June 2, 2018. However, it will be closed on Monday, June 4, 2018. Season ticket sales have been extremely slow.

**Code and Police:** Councilman Piescienski reported that the Planning Commission met on Wednesday, May 9, 2018, to review a sketch plan submitted by Edward John Deichmeister. His plan would construct 45 rental townhouses and 60 apartment units in the area of Sipos Drive. Many local residents attended and had the opportunity to ask questions, most of which were answered to their satisfaction. This would be a gated 55+ community.

--Some neighbors living adjacent to the Central Building visited our office with concerns about various developments on the project. I called the developer and the questions the residents had were answered to their satisfaction.

--The new owner of 1540 Main Street is nearing completion on the renovations to the property enabling them to continue their development of various digital processes. Once completed, we have

been offered a look-see.

**Fire and Health:** Councilwoman Kutzler reported that Mr. Brobst has been told that the inspection group will be traveling to Wisconsin during or around the last week of May to inspect the new Pierce Enforcer Pumper truck. It will be driven by the manufacturer to our location shortly thereafter.

--Health Inspector Ted Veresink will be conducting inspections of the various Farmers' Market vendors. The Farmers' Market will open on Tuesday, May 15, 2018.

--She also reviewed the fire calls for April.

**Public Works and Sewer:** Councilman McHale reported that members of the Sewer Committee, wastewater treatment employees, Tom Duffy of Gilmore & Associates, and Mr. Brobst met on Friday, May 11, 2018, to review the wastewater treatment plant evaluation that was prepared by our environmental engineers. The report was well done and the proposals were spot on. However, they will be costly. It will be necessary to contact DEP before we proceed.

--The issue with our contracted waste hauler collecting yard waste has been resolved. Advanced Disposal will collect yard waste and grass. However, a limit of six containers will be enforced.

--A notification was received from the Allen Township Board of Supervisors notifying all concerned that an informational meeting will be held on May 24, 2018, from 6-8 PM, at the Allen Township Fire Company building. The detour of traffic on Route 329 to accommodate the removal of the small bridge where Route 329 intersects with Weaversville Road will be the main topic of discussion. The roadway is scheduled to be closed at 8 AM on Saturday, June 9, 2018.

--The public works department has been very busy trying to keep up with the grass cutting. This should ease somewhat once the seasonal employees come on board.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

There was no unfinished business.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

#### **Consider Request of Windward Pass Holdings, LLC:**

We have received a request from Dan Donnelly, the developer of 1796 Main Street, requesting a four-month extension to complete his reconstruction of the Tama building. He has made considerable recent progress. I recommend approving his request.

**Motion:** Mr. Pristash moved, seconded by Mr. McHale and unanimously carried to grant permission to Dan Donnelly, the developer of 1796 Main Street, a four-month extension to complete his reconstruction of the Tama building.

#### **Consider Request of Northampton Area Food Bank:**

Northampton Area Food Bank is requesting permission to conduct a coin toss on Sunday, May 20, 2018, on Held drive between the hours of 8 AM and 2 PM. The 2017 coin toss generated approximately \$1,200 for the food bank.

This request was withdrawn.

**Consider Request for Handicapped Parking Zones:**

Chief Bryan Kadingo has received and reviewed three handicapped parking requests. They are:

1. 357 East 11<sup>th</sup> Street – rejection recommended; does not drive/own vehicle.
2. 1264 Newport Avenue – approval recommended.
3. 160 Stark Street – rejection recommended; garage within 50 feet from home, neither resident drives.

In keeping with past practice, Council has the final determination on whether to accept or reject a request.

**Motion:** Mr. McHale moved, seconded by Mr. Pristash and unanimously carried to grant approval and rejections as stated above for the three handicapped parking requests.

**Consider Request to Hire Full-Time Police Officer:**

Chief Kadingo is requesting that Council hire Officer Matthew Bennicoff as a full-time patrol officer. Mr. Bennicoff placed at the top of the most recent Civil Service eligibility list. This will change the status of our roster to 12 full-time officers.

**Motion:** Mr. Pristash moved, seconded by Mrs. Kutzler and unanimously carried to grant permission to Chief Kadingo to hire Officer Matthew Bennicoff as a full-time patrol officer.

**Consider Request of Hammerhead Lounge:**

Hammerhead Lounge is requesting permission to hold an outside party in their parking lot on Saturday, June 9, 2018, from 1-10 PM. There would be live entertainment, food and alcohol. This is similar to events that they have had in past years.

**Motion:** Mr. Pristash moved, seconded by Mr. Lopspnzsiki, Sr. and carried to grant permission to Hammerhead Lounge to hold an outside party in their parking lot on Saturday, June 9, 2018, from 1-10 PM.

Julia Kutzler voted against this motion.

**Consider Request of Northampton Area Band Parents:**

The Northampton Area Band Parents have requested permission to hold their annual picnic for the Northampton middle and high school students and parents on Saturday, August 25, 2018. They are requesting the use of Municipal Park Pavilions “A” and “B” and have asked that Council consider waiving any and all fees.

**Motion:** Mr. Pany moved, seconded by Mr. Hall and unanimously carried to grant permission to the Northampton Area Band Parents to hold their annual picnic for the Northampton middle and high school students and parents on Saturday, August 25, 2018, using Municipal Park Pavilions “A” and “B”, waiving any and all fees.

**Consider Request to Close Deibert Alley:**

The resident at 2156 Lincoln Avenue has requested permission to close Deibert Alley on Sunday, June 3, 2018, between the hours of 1:30 and 8 PM. The closure would be one-half block long from Beil Alley to Lincoln Avenue. This closure would be to accommodate a

graduation party. The same property owners have done this in the past. The Borough would provide the barricades for the road closure.

**Motion:** Mr. Lopsonzski, Sr. moved, seconded by Mr. Pristash and unanimously carried to grant permission to the resident at 2156 Lincoln Avenue to close Deibert Alley on Sunday, June 3, 2018, between the hours of 1:30 and 8 PM. The closure would be one-half block long from Beil Alley to Lincoln Avenue.

**Consider Hiring Part-Time Code Enforcement Officer:**

We have received an application from Keith Knoblach, who is willing to serve as the Borough's part-time code enforcement officer. I recommend that he be employed.

**Motion:** Mr. Pristash moved, seconded by Mr. Pany and unanimously carried to grant permission to hire Keith Knoblach to serve as the Borough's part-time code enforcement officer.

Keith Piescienski abstained from this motion.

**REPORTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS:**

--**Anthony Lopsonzski, Sr.** congratulated the new code enforcement officer and the new police officer on their new positions.

--**Julia Kutzler** thanked Robert McHale for all of his hard work on the rental ordinance. She would like the fire department to file claims with the insurance company if need be. She said that Keith Knobloch will meet with the fire and health committee to discuss options in regards to Act 172. She also stated that she would like the fire chiefs and captains to be able to write citations when necessary.

--**Keith Piescienski** congratulated the new code enforcement officer and the new police officer on their new positions.

--**Robert McHale** congratulated the new code enforcement officer and the new police officer on their new positions. He stated that they will make changes to the rental ordinance if need be. He said that he looked into detailed information on three violations since August 2017 filed against Capp Glass. He also gave kudos to Officer Benicoff and the entire police force.

--**Ken Hall** stated that he received complaints from residents in the area of Walker Drive saying that it's a race track and people constantly blow through stop signs. He asked if there could be more police presence in the area.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Mr. Brobst stated that he attended a hazard mitigation meeting at Muhlenburg hospital. He said that he spoke with a representative at Trumbull Corporation and they will be bringing in the beams for the Coplay bridge in July. He stated that the Farmer's Market opening day was on Tuesday, May 15, 2018.

**APPROVAL OF BILLS:**

**Motion:** Mr. Lopsonzski, Sr. moved, seconded by Mr. Hall and unanimously carried to pay the bills as listed on A/P Journal #5A, dated May 7, 2018, totaling \$19,700.00, A/P Journal #5B, dated May 17, 2018, totaling \$134.68 and A/P Journal #5C, dated May 17, 2018, totaling \$259,770.24.

**ADJOURNMENT:** A motion was made by Mr. Pristash, duly seconded by Mr. Hall and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:27 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Meaghan Case  
Recording Secretary

