

Borough of Northumberland
175 Orange Street, Northumberland, PA 17857
Northumberland Borough Council Meeting
July 17, 2012

President James Troup called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call

Council members present were Gregory Carl, Adam Klock, Stephen Reed, Ty Sees, and James Troup. Others present were Paul Ruane, Code Enforcement Officer; Thomas Slodysko, Street Supervisor; Timothy Fink, Police Chief; and Janice Bowman, Borough Secretary. Council members Jonathan Rees and Frank Wetzell and Mayor Len Zboray were absent.

Eighteen visitors introduced themselves.

Public Comment

Todd Snyder introduced himself as a Borough crew member, and stated that he did have issues that he would like to address. He stated that on 6/29/12, as a private citizen, he filed a right-to-know request and today he received a call at 1:30 from his supervisor requesting him to come to the office after hours, on his personal time, to be interviewed by Sgt. Kriner about his right-to-know request. When he did not show up, Mr. Slodysko contacted him at 3:22 p.m., asking if he went to see Mr. Kriner. When he responded no, Mr. Slodysko said that he would catch up with him on Thursday. The reason he is asking this question is because Sgt. Kriner has nothing to do with the request that he filed with Jan Bowman and Chief Fink. He would like to know why Mr. Kriner is involving himself and not following the chain of command while on the taxpayers' dime. He stated that apparently he (Sgt. Kriner) was talking to Mr. Slodysko about his right to know request and Mr. Snyder wants to know why. Mr. Snyder said that he (Sgt. Kriner) is supposed to be out patrolling the streets so what is he doing in here. Mr. Snyder would also like to know how Mr. Kriner became aware of his request and the contents of his request. Mr. Snyder said that it was not addressed to him; it was addressed to Jan Bowman and Mr. Fink. Mr. Snyder feels that he is being harassed and retaliated against by his supervisor and the police department for bringing up possible issues of wrong-doing. He said that he would like to schedule a meeting and sit down with the council to discuss the possible wrongdoing that he is talking about. He added that he would like some answers. Mr. Troup stated that it would be discussed in the Executive Session at the end of the meeting. Mr. Troup said that he is unaware of it. Mr. Snyder asked Mr. Carl if he was aware that Mr. Slodysko called him to meet with Mr. Kriner. Mr. Carl stated yes. Mr. Snyder asked the other council members if they were aware of it. Mr. Troup and Mr. Reed stated no; Mr. Klock and Mr. Sees stated that they were after Mr. Snyder contacted them. Mr. Snyder asked why it was only a select few who knew about it. Mr. Carl stated that he found out about it just minutes ago. The Borough Secretary stated that there is an explanation that has to do with his right to know request. Mr. Troup stated that he would like to know why, as head of personnel. Someone stated that Mr. Snyder could call Mr. Troup.

Mr. Snyder stated that he does not have anybody's phone numbers. Mr. Troup stated that he would give Mr. Snyder his phone number.

Mr. Lee Hopewell, a resident of the township, explained that yesterday, someone backed into his wife's car. The unlicensed driver of the other vehicle is in the country illegally. Mr. Hopewell stated that Chief Fink came to the accident and was going to cite the driver for driving without a license. The individual did have insurance. His wife asked about contacting ICE and Chief Fink replied that he wouldn't be contacting ICE. Mr. Hopewell said that he understands that there is a duty to contact ICE. Mr. Klock stated that after he spoke to Mrs. Hopewell's daughter on the phone, he contacted the Mayor to ask about the protocol. The Mayor spoke to Chief Fink and learned that Chief Fink had contacted ICE. Mr. Hopewell stated that he heard two different lengths of time that the man has been here; seven years and ten years. He noted that the illegals are probably using a lot of social services. Mr. Troup stated that unfortunately, enforcement is up to the federal government. Mr. Troup stated that the council would find out what the Borough's responsibility is.

Sue and Russ Palkendo stated that they are residents whose tree is affected by the Second Street project.

Ms. Robin Kieffer informed the council that she lives at 154 Duke Street, across from the Chinese Restaurant. Occasional she is blocked from getting into her driveway and garage by restaurant patrons who park in front of her driveway. She requested that the council install no parking signs on both sides of the alley. She has installed poles along the side of her house because her home has been hit several times. Her new deck was hit by a delivery truck and she didn't really get reimbursed for that. Mr. Klock said that if someone is parked in front of her driveway, she should call the police. Ms. Kieffer stated that she has gone to the restaurant and asked that the car be moved. She said that this has happened many times. Mr. Reed said that he would follow up on her request.

Ms. Fran Bogovich stated that she has been at the pool twice early in the day and the ladies' bathrooms have been a mess. Mr. Carl stated that the bathrooms are cleaned at the end of the day. Ms. Bogovich said that the Health Department could come in. Mr. Carl responded that the Department of Health was at the pool yesterday and found no problems with anything at the pool. They went through the records, they wanted to know about lifeguards; how the chlorine is hooked up, etc. However, he said that he knows there are times when the bathrooms are dirty because of the patrons. He said that he has spoken to the managers about checking the bathrooms. He said that he knows that there are times when people go in and make messes in the bathrooms. Ms. Bogovich also questioned why there is only one high lifeguard station at the pool. Mr. Carl said that the Department of Health says that the pool meets state code. He added that the state prefers that, at the shallow end, the lifeguards are on the deck, not on elevated stands because they can step right into the water. Ms. Bogovich said that she feels that it is a liability issue. Mr. Carl said that up to five lifeguards are scheduled to work each day. For the size of the pool, only two lifeguards are required by the state. Mr. Klock asked about the cost of the tall stands. Mr. Carl said that the tall lifeguard stands cost \$2,000 to \$3,000 per piece and that if someone wished to make a donation he would order them. He said that a lifeguard should not jump from a tall lifeguard stand into the shallow end of the pool; he would have to climb down and then jump into the water. Mr. Troup stated that the council will look into it for next

year. He also said that his wife has commented on the condition about the bathrooms. Ms. Bogovich requested that someone check the bathrooms each hour.

Ms. Elizabeth Lockcuff stated that if she sees something at the pool that she doesn't like, she tells someone who works there and they have always taken care of it. She also said that a microphone is needed during the council meetings because they cannot hear what council is saying.

Mr. Norman Minnier explained that he has a business at the other end of 2nd Street. He requested a time frame of when the street work will be done so he may schedule his patients around the work. He said that two weeks to a month would be helpful. He was told that the trees are to be removed next week and the curbing would be installed shortly after that. The paving would be done sometime in September.

Victoria Rosancrans informed that council that she has a business that provides candlelight walking tours through the community. She said that she is working with the visitors' bureau, the Historical Society and the library. The business name is Spirit Reachers, located on S. Front Street in Sunbury. The company is insured. She wants to bring the walking tour into Northumberland. One dollar for every ticket sold will be given to the library. She would like to teach the children the history of the town and encourages family involvement. The group is working with Bucknell and other colleges. She stated that there is nothing sinister about the business. The tours will begin at the King Street Park and go past the Priestley House. She has permission to go on the grounds at the Priestley-Savidge House. She stated that while the business is making money, they are also giving back to the communities. The tours would be conducted at dusk and would last for one to one and a half hours. Ms. Rosancrans was told that the borough would require a certificate of insurance, per the special events permit.

Upon motion by Mr. Carl, seconded by Mr. Klock, council unanimously approved the candlelight walking tours as requested.

Mr. Gary Klick stated that he understands that the council has a lot to do and he appreciates the time that they spend. He said he finds it disturbing, the attendance record of this council. He said that committee meetings after committee meetings are cancelled. There has not been a Rules Committee meeting since April. The Public Safety Committee meeting was cancelled. The Community Development Committee meeting was cancelled. He added that he appreciates anyone in public service who donates their time; but if they can't give 100%, resign the position, because there are other people in the Borough who are willing and able to do the job. He noted that council couldn't conduct a meeting in March because there were only three council members here. He said that, by comparison, he looked at Selinsgrove Borough's website and they had one member who missed two meetings all year. He said that the same can't be said for this council. The Rules Committee had said that they would present an ordinance in May. He questioned if they would meet in August. He added that there are things that need done for the residents and they are not getting done.

Mr. Klock said that he would like to speak to Mr. Klick after the meeting to tell him how much they have going on and that there are personal reasons why people have missed meetings. He said that he drove home from Philadelphia for this meeting. Mr. Klick asked why the Rules

Committee hasn't met since April. Mr. Klock said that it isn't that anything isn't happening; they are working on a draft of the ordinance. He added that there are other issues for the council to deal with and they must prioritize. He said that the Borough has a lawsuit with the sewer authority that he is dealing with. Mr. Klock said that he has put many hours into the ordinance, just because the committee has not met; the committee members are still doing research. He noted that the two committee meetings were taken up with public comment. Mr. Klock said that he has put many hours into the ordinance and there are many more hours to be spent. Because they are creating rules for the residents to live with for many years, they want to get it right. They are doing research on other communities' ordinances to see what works. Mr. Troup said that there is a lot of work after the meetings. Greg puts in countless hours at the pool, Steve is busy with streets, and he is busy with personnel issues. The meetings provide the residents a chance to voice their opinions.

Mr. Klick asked if the council is going to be pro-active with our rental ordinance, noting that Sunbury is adopting a rental ordinance. Mr. Klock said that he is watching to see what happens in Sunbury. He was informed that the Borough's rental ordinance requires that whenever the police are called to a rental property, the code office contacts the landlord and tells them that the police had been called to their property and that they may contact the police to learn the reason. If the police are called to a rental property three times in a one year period, the code office will assist the landlord in having the tenant evicted. Mr. Carl stated that there was a situation where the tenants were evicted and moved to another town. Within a year the man killed his girlfriend.

Mr. Klick stated that he has seen patrons at Chinese restaurant block the sidewalks.

Mr. Troup thanked everyone for their comments, adding that he appreciates everyone being here.

Council Meeting Minutes

Upon motion by Mr. Sees, seconded by Mr. Carl, council voted 4-0-1 to approve the council meeting minutes of June 26, 2012. Mr. Reed abstained.

Street Supervisor's Report

- Mr. Tom Slodysko stated that the crew is trimming trees. He asked if the Fire Department takes the trucks down the alleys. Mr. Troup responded that they do.
- There is a problem with the rubber matting on the playground. Mr. Slodysko has contacted Ely Associates. Mr. Ely came to examine the matting which has a 10 year warranty and the company is checking into the problem.
- Mr. Slodysko said that he attended the Community Development meeting to make a request which will be discussed under the committee reports.

Code Enforcement Officer's Report

- Mr. Paul Ruane reported on the code office activity for the month of June.
- He noted that the abandoned property at 572 Duke Street needs to have the grass cut.
- Mr. Klock requested that the sewer authority be contacted whenever a building permit is issued and there are changes to a building that would affect the sewer lines. Mr. Ruane stated that he would inform the sewer authority.
- Mr. Ruane stated that a resident may do anything he wants to do inside his house.
- Council said to cut the grass at the 572 Duke Street property.

Emergency Services Report – no report

Sewer Authority Report – no report

Committee Reports

Community Development

Mr. Carl reported that the committee met on July 9th. The following topics were discussed:

Fire Police Building

The Fire Police would like to move back into their building at Pineknotted Park. They would like to have the walls and floor painted. They would also like to have a bathroom installed with block walls. The Borough Secretary had contacted Career Link to see if workers could be obtained to paint the walls and floor and construct the block walls. Originally, they were to be available in October; however, they had a free week and started painting the walls yesterday. The painting will be finished this week and they will return in October to build the walls and paint the floor. Mr. Carl moved to approve the Fire Police move back into the building. Mr. Reed seconded the motion. Council approved unanimously.

Mr. Carl stated that the committee discussed Mr. Slodysko's request for permission to remove the trees in the alley at the playground. Mr. Carl moved to approve removing the trees, Mr. Reed seconded the motion. Council vote was 4-1 with Mr. Troup dissenting.

Pineknotted Park

Mr. Carl said that there were complaints about garbage being strewn at Pineknotted Park, the concession stand was not opened during the games, and the scoreboard was not accessible. Mr. Carl stated that he would contact Mr. Luden. Four teams have paid the permit fee; the Legion teams had paid Mr. Luden and the money came into the Borough Office last week; the Renegades and Little League fees were paid by Don Leitzel last week. Mr. Reed stated that Dick Simpson has offered to help with the ballgames at Pineknotted Park. Mr. Luden has contacted the office to see if there is money in the budget to purchase poles for the batting cage. There is funding to purchase the poles. It was suggested that he speak to the Community Development Committee to decide where to place the batting cage.

Dog Park at Jolly Hollow

Mr. Reed stated that approximately \$6,000 is needed to purchase a fence for a Dog Park at Jolly Hollow. Volunteers will install the fence. Letters have been mailed to business for donations for the dog park. Mr. Reed said that Phil Hallden is going to assist with the fund raising.

Jolly Hollow

Mr. Carl stated that Tom had told the committee that the head wall at Jolly Hollow is being undermined and estimated a cost of \$400 for rip rap to be installed under the head wall. The committee approved the repairs.

Liberty Splashland

Mr. Carl said that the tower is progressing and described what is being done. He thanked Adam Klock for the use of his lift and help, and also thanked Tom and Mary Slodysko, Phil Hallden, Joe Snyder, Sam Swinehart, and Taylor Carl for volunteering their time to help. He hopes to have the bowl slide opened in August.

Mr. Carl said that nine more lifeguards have been hired. He thanked Rebekah Kline for providing Life Guard training last week at a cost of \$75 per student. He noted that she only made \$10 per student and worked for five hours a day for five days. Mr. Carl has spoken with her about providing all of the lifeguard training and working at the pool next season. She is also willing to oversee swimming lessons at the pool next year.

A dog swim may be held at the end of the season. The closing date has not been set. It is typically the last Sunday before school starts which would be August 19th. Because there are a number of high school students who are lifeguards, the pool may be opened for one more week this year.

Municipal Directory and Map

Work for the Municipal Directory and Map is started. The company will obtain advertisements from local businesses. Information for the directory will be gathered by the office employees.

Lighting Upgrades

The lighting upgrades must be rebid. More information is needed before the bid documents can be completed.

Finance

Mr. Troup stated that the letters will be sent to the various departments and groups for the 2013 budget requests.

Personnel

Mr. Troup stated that personnel issues would be discussed in the Executive Session.

Public Safety – no report

Rules

Mr. Sees stated that although the committee has not met, they are working on the animal ordinance and hope to have something available in the near future. August 13th is the next scheduled committee meeting.

Sewer

Mr. Klock stated that the lawsuit is still pending. They are waiting for the judge's final ruling. Work continues on the upgrades for the facility. Mr. Klock stated that he has not received notice that the judge's injunction was vacated.

Streets

Mr. Reed announced that the Street Committee plans to pave Second Street from Orange Street to Prince Street. In order to install new curbing, eleven trees and 14 stumps must be removed. Mr. Reed said that quotes have been received to remove the trees and stumps. A meeting was held last night by the Shade Tree Commission. Many of the residents were here. Mr. Reed read the following letter from the Shade Tree Commission:

“To the members of the Northumberland Borough Council:

As you requested, the members of the Shade Tree Commission examined the tree sites listed on the following page. Tom Slodysko and Jan Bowman had explained the Borough’s plans to repave Second Street from Orange Street to Prince Street and replace the curbs, accompanied us. The trees we looked at were not in good condition. Many had been topped or are slowly dying. The roots are so close to the curb that removing enough roots to replace the curb will result in killing the trees at a later date. We concur that these trees need to be removed. As you finalize your plans for this project, we would hope you would take into consideration the following. Because of all of us who helped to take care of Northumberland know that this is a town of many senior citizens on a fixed income, retired persons, and unemployed persons with little extra disposable income, and because the residents of Second Street have had little warning and scant information as to what is going to take place, giving them little time to save to purchase new trees and old tree removal. It is the strong recommendation of the Shade Tree Commission that the cost of the removing of the trees and stumps and of replacing the trees with choices that the Shade Tree Commission would provide, would be included in the Second Street project bid with the cost of this whole project paid for by the Borough.”

Mr. Reed explained that originally they were going to try to cut the roots on the trees that were in question, but after talking to the tree man, he said that they would die relatively quickly if we did that. Mr. Reed said that the Shade Tree Commission has offered \$1,500 from their budget to be spent toward the purchase of new trees to replace those that are being removed. Mr. Reed made a motion that the Borough pay for the removal of the trees for the Second Street project at a cost of \$3,850 and for the Shade Tree Commission to pay up to \$1,500 for new trees. Mr. Carl seconded the motion. Discussion ensued. Mr. Reed amended his motion to state that the Borough paying for tree removal would be reviewed on a case to case basis in the future. Mr. Carl agreed to second the amended motion. Council voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Mr. Reed said that the low bidder for the curbing project was Robert Lytle’s Concrete of Sunbury with a bid of \$50,400. He moved to accept the bid. Mr. Carl seconded the motion. The other bids received were \$95,850 from Wolyniec Construction and \$144,810 from Mid-State Paving. Council voted unanimously to approve the bid of \$50,400 from Robert Lytle’s Concrete.

Old Business

1. Quotes were obtained by Mary Walden for the repairs to her vehicle. The quotes were \$155.51 from Sunbury Motors to repair the transmission pan and gasket pan, and \$511.98 from Nye’s Body Shop to repair the bumper. These quotes total \$667.49. The other quote was \$819.81 from Budman Auto Body to do the entire repairs. Mr. Klock moved and Mr. Reed seconded the motion to approve payment of \$155.51 to Sunbury Motors

and \$511.98 to Nye's Body Shop to repair Ms. Walden's vehicle. Council voted 4-1 to approve payment with Mr. Sees dissenting.

New Business

1. Mr. Reed moved and Mr. Carl seconded the motion to pay the bills. Discussion ensued. Council voted unanimously to approve the payments. Bills to be paid from the General Fund total \$71,373.27; Liberty Splashland bills total \$11,526.92; bills to be paid from the Park and Recreation Fund total \$1,026.81; and Parking Meter Fund bills total \$730.17. Mrs. Bogovich requested that the monthly income be provided at the council meetings. Mr. Klock requested that all correspondence be scanned and emailed to the council members since many times they do not get the correspondence until the night of the meeting. He said that he is unable to get into the office before the night of the meeting. He also requested that the agenda be and council correspondence be placed on the website whenever possible. Mrs. Bogovich questioned payment to the building inspectors. The response was that when a commercial property is constructed, the cost of the inspections is included in the building permit fee and the Borough contracts with Building Inspection Underwriters, Inc. to inspect the construction. Whenever a building permit is obtained for a residential property, Paul Ruane is certified to conduct all the inspections except for the electrical inspections which are contracted through Building Inspection Underwriters, Inc.
2. The Senior Action Center has requested that the Borough install a handicap parking space on Second Street. Mr. Klock moved and Mr. Reed seconded the motion to approve the request. Council voted unanimously to approve.
3. Mr. and Mrs. Reichner of 532 Queen Street requested that the Borough install a handicap parking space at their residence. Upon motion by Mr. Klock, seconded by Mr. Reed, council unanimously approved the request. The motion includes a clause that they reapply after one year. The Borough Secretary informed the council that the office does keep a listing of handicapped parking spaces and periodically checks with the residents to determine if the space is still needed. The office also checks the real estate transfers and when someone moves who had requested the handicap parking space, the sign is removed.
4. Susquehanna University Give – student volunteers are scheduled for August 25th. Council is requested to provide suggestions of work that can be accomplished by the volunteers, by the August 7th council meeting. Approximately ten volunteers will come to assist with the project(s).
5. Bob Long contacted the office with a request to purchase some of the slate chalkboards that were in the 2nd Street building. Council discussed keeping the chalkboards since they have historical significance. No motion was offered.
6. A request was received from Alyssa Zerbe for a donation toward her service trip to VietNam through the Brittany's Hope Foundation and the Social Work Department of Elizabethtown College. The cost of the trip is \$3,200. Council did not feel that it could donate to personal fundraising efforts such as this, but wished her well.

7. A correspondence was received from SEDA-COG that the property at 170 Orange Street is one of five Northumberland County Homes that will be rehabilitated with Community Development Block Grant funds. The letter requested that as part of an Environmental Review, the borough contact them if any planning, zoning, floodplain management, or other environmental issues, or any historical significance relating to the property exist. None were noted.
8. The Fire Police have requested permission to assist with traffic control at the Evangelical Community Hospital picnic on August 9, 2012, and at the 6th annual LARA Sprint Triathlon on August 18, 2012. Upon motion by Mr. Klock, seconded by Mr. Sees, council unanimously approved the requests.
9. The Borough Secretary provided information about the 2012-2013 Susquehanna Greenway Mini-Grant that has a deadline of September 27, 2012. The Borough has obtained a DEP grant to install riprap along the north shore of the Susquehanna River from the Priestley Bridge to the boat ramp. The grant requests may be up to \$5,000 for planning grants or \$10,000 for implementation grants. The match is at a ratio of 1:1 and may be cash or in-kind services. She stated that a webinar is being offered and that the office would learn whether any portion of the DEP grant could be used toward the match. Council members stated that they would like to obtain a copy of the webinar, if possible. The council will be provided with additional information at the August 7th meeting.

Mr. Troup announced that an Executive Session would be conducted to discuss personnel and litigation issues. Mr. Klock moved to adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice R. Bowman
Borough Secretary