

BOROUGH OF NORTH WALES
 300 SCHOOL STREET
 NORTH WALES, PENNSYLVANIA

MEETING: January 27, 2015 7:01 PM, EST

CALL TO ORDER made by President McDonald.

ROLL CALL:	Jim Cherry	Present
	Michael McDonald	Present
	Sally Neiderhiser	Present
	Daniel O'Connell	Present
	Ed Redstreak	Present
	Christine Hart	Present
	Paula Scott	Present
	Mark Tarlecki	Absent
	Jim Sando	Present
	Mayor Greg D'Angelo	Present

Also in attendance was Gregory Gifford, Borough solicitor.

President McDonald led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

Mike Fellmeth, President of the North Wales Borough Business Alliance, said some members are concerned about the present and future of our community. We believe maintaining status quo, keeping it the same is not a successful model to move forward in the future. Change is inevitable and necessary. They would like to discuss this further in a forum. They invite Council and the community to meet to discuss positive ideas for moving toward the future. He will notify everyone when he has a date, time and location.

Jane Keyes, owner of Tex Mex Restaurant, said she and her husband own several properties and a business in the Borough. She has family and co-workers, who live in the Borough. Several of her co-workers introduced themselves and gave their address. She said progress is coming whether we want it or not. There have been many changes in the last 30 years. We use to have a lot of businesses in the Borough; a grocery store, a hardware store, a shoe store and a drug store. You need to reinvent yourself to keep going. We have a limited area to effect a change. We need a plan. She said many of her staff members and guests use public transportation and we should capitalize on that. We need a viable option for the McKeever parcel. She spoke to Greg Flynn and he said he was not given any direction at the Borough meeting. She thinks if he had received feedback he might be willing to make compromises. She is not here to support Mr. Flynn or his project. She said we have an opportunity to do something wonderful, instead of a hodgepodge of parking lot and vacant building. She suggested putting together a committee with longtime residents and new residents to envision a new use for a blithe in our community. A thriving business community is vital to our community. Until we know what we want, no

developer will continue to bring in proposals. Member Scott asked do you mean a task force. Ms. Keyes said some communities have a development program. We need a cross section of stores. The wave of the future seems to be that people are using public transportation and they want to walk to stores and shopping.

Member Redstreak said he went out on a limb by contacting Mr. Flynn and he was offered some ideas. It seems he does not have a plan B. Member Redstreak said he doesn't want to see it as a crumbling building and a vacant lot forever. Mr. Flynn needs to give some too. His response was he will turn out the lights and put the Re Max sign on it tomorrow. It cannot be just one way.

Ms. Keyes said he is looking for direction from the Borough. The only thing she knows for certain is whoever develops that property is going to want to make a profit. What he and any other developer is looking for is some direction as to what Council would allow. If we don't come up with something, developers will walk away because we do not have a direction.

Member Hart thanked Ms. Keyes for her comments. We do have a Comprehensive Plan and a Planning Commission that meets monthly. We had a Revitalization Committee that worked on a plan that listed what you are talking about. She urged everyone to get together to discuss the needs of our community. She said the Comprehensive Plan had emphasized walkability, more eateries along Main Street, and make Lumber Street like a court yard. The Planning Commission has worked hard in submitting the information to the county. She encourages everyone to look at it and become a participant in the community and come to this meeting and other board meetings. It is hard having the same volunteers because you lose sight of your goal and get in a rut.

Mayor D'Angelo said the Revitalization Plan was updated about a year ago and has a lot of ideas. The Comprehensive Plan is about ten years old and needs to be updated.

Member Sando said once the new manager is in place seems to be the appropriate time to have a discussion to see what possibilities he sees for the Borough. That will give us an opportunity to have a better dialogue.

President McDonald invited everyone to the Planning Commission meeting on February 4th to review the Revitalization and Comprehensive Plans. After viewing them, we can get an idea of what direction to go. Everyone wants growth.

Joanne Matthews, 421 Shearer Street, said as a longtime resident, growing up in this town was special; there were 5 grocery stores, 2 hardware stores, a shoe store, a dress shop, a gift shop and 2 drug stores. People walked all over town and knew each other. I know that times change but we could bring it together. We need to stand up and say what we want and what we don't want.

Perry Francis, 125 W. Walnut Street, said as far as McKeever's is concerned, when Mr. Flynn was here it was pointed out to him that it was zoned for certain things. He did not seem like he wanted to back down. Member Cherry said he did not want to entertain the idea of 1st level shops. His mind was set on apartments and a majority of the people said are you kidding.

Member Redstreak said keep in mind this is only a little over a ½ acre. Mr. Francis said he found Mr. Flynn's drawing on the internet. He is not against change.

Tiffany Maclean, 517 Summit Street, asked if there was any other way to communicate this upcoming meeting in February to the public. It is important to a lot of the public. Member Hart said we are on Facebook but right now we have no one to do Facebook. Mr. Fellmeth said the McKeever property is only a symptom. There are other things but he believes the Planning Commission meeting is a good forum.

Pat Graham, 324 S. Fourth Street, said if you put up signs can you put them in a good place and make sure they are big enough to see. The last time there was a big meeting a small sign was put up. President McDonald said that was for a zoning meeting. He will put stuff in the newsletter whenever he has the opportunity. I will do my best to get the information out.

Herb Kavash, 516 Summit Street, said he is a longtime resident and a member of the NWWA board and one of our members is up for reappointment. He wants to put a good word in for Donna Mengel. She is a valuable member and her performance and contributions are exemplary. Please consider keeping the board intact.

Joan Nagel, 236 S. Main Street, Chair of the NWWA, recommended that Donna Mengel be reappointed. Member Redstreak commented that Bob Bender, the Director, also supports Donna Mengel.

Al Tenney, 801 E. Walnut Street, a member of the NWWA Board, said you don't ask much of the authority. You just want all the water; want it as clean and as cheap as you can. The Board made decisions and Donna was supportive of those ideas. She is an integral part of those decisions and has maintained that record principally by the fact that we sell a lot of water outside of the area thereby maintaining a fixed cost.

Disbursements: \$54,035.97

Interim Manager Levy gave an overview of the bills to include Independence Blue Cross, insurance; Reamstown Excavating, retainage release; NWWA for hydrant fees; actuarial bill; PECO, electricity; SWAT, \$2,500.00; and the engineering bills.

Member Scott asked what the psychology and counseling bill was for. It is a small amount but that is what we have health insurance for. Interim Manager Levy said the person who is getting it is not covered by our health insurance.

Member O'Connell questioned the Reamstown bill. Interim Manager Levy said it was the retainage release. Member Hart explained that Reamstown was approved at the previous meeting and the bill is showing on the monthly report. The retainage was approved by the engineer.

Member Hart made a motion to pay the disbursements in the amount of \$54,035.97. Member Neiderhiser seconded the motion. Motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

Old Business/Committee Reports/Zoning Applications

There was no old business.

President McDonald said the Personnel Committee has interviews setup for next week. Ms. Graham asked if the manager was going to live in the Borough. President McDonald responded we did not mandate it because it would limit the pool.

Member Hart reported that the Keystone Grant that we applied for was denied. A brief discussion ensued regarding what the grant was for. Member Redstreak said it is also addressed to the library.

There were no zoning applications.

Member O'Connell asked about the engineer letter for 915 and 917 E. Prospect Avenue and who was following up on these reviews. A discussion ensued regarding the new homes at 915 and 917 E. Prospect Avenue. Member Hart said their escrow release was not approved pending the engineers plan review. She said evidently this is a review of the project.

Consideration: Appointments to Boards and Commissions

Donna Mengel, 427 S. Main Street, said have you considered making the manager part time. You have reduced the area of maintenance, the police department and made other changes. She thinks there are other ideas beside the traditional standard 40 hour a week employee.

Member Hart said having Alex as interim manager, has shown us how it works. The lack of communication and stumbling, done during the last couple of meetings, has changed her mind. She said it is imperative to have a full time manager. He is a manager, zoning officer, communicator, and finance director. President McDonald said the Personnel Committee was not advised to look for a part time manager. He thinks the Borough needs someone full time to take care of it. He said having someone part time is a step back and one he is not interested in.

Greg Lord, 327 S. Fifth Street, said he doesn't think you can get a competent person to work 20 hours a week.

Member Sando said when we make notice of vacancies does it make sense to have a time line on appointments. He is not comfortable with new names being summited hours before the meeting. We should have the opportunity to make an intelligent decision. Member Hart said she understands what he is saying. The letters went out late. Everyone received the exact same notice.

Joanne Matthews, 421 Shearer Street, thinks Mr. LeKites is a good choice for the History Commission. He has been in the Borough since the 1960's.

Member Scott made a motion to appoint Mr. Charles LeKites to the History Commission for a 5 year term. Member Redstreak seconded the motion. Motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

Mike Fellmeth asked how many people have applied for these appointments. Member Hart said we received two letters one from Ray and the other from Toni Hoffman. Ray is a founding member and preservationist and architectural specialist. It is important he remain on the board. Sometimes we get letters and sometimes we don't get any. Greg Lord said Mr. Tschoepe is chairman and it is a great asset to have him.

Member Hart made a motion to reappoint Mr. Ray Tschoepe to HARB for a 5 year term. Member Scott seconded the motion. Motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

Member Hart said she knows that Member Redstreak is on the Parks and Recreation Board and his term expired December 31, 2014. He is active and Ms. Hoffman has asked to be appointed. She asked Member Redstreak if he planned to run. He said he is not seeking reappointment.

Ms. Hoffman, 418 School Street, said she is excited to be more involved in the community.

Member Hart made a motion to appoint Toni Hoffman to the Park and Recreation Board for a 5 year term. Member Redstreak seconded the motion. Motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

Member Hart made a motion to appoint Joanne Rittenhouse to the NWWA Board. Member Scott seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken with Members Scott, Hart, McDonald and Cherry voting yes. Members O'Connell, Neiderhiser, Redstreak and Sando voted nay. President McDonald asked the mayor to break the tie. Mayor D'Angelo asked if he could vote since he is on the Board. It was stated that it was not a conflict of interest, therefore, he could vote. Mayor D'Angelo voted nay. Motion did not carry.

Member Sando made a motion to reappoint Donna Mengel to the NWWA board. Member Redstreak seconded the motion. Motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

Member Redstreak asked what the Vacancy Board is. Member Hart said if Council cannot appoint someone to a position, after 30 days the Vacancy Board chairman can appoint someone to that position.

Solicitor Gifford said the legislative body put this in place to pressure the municipalities to take action. Most government agencies would rather make appointments than let it go to the Vacancy Board Chairman. It is a tool to make legislative bodies act.

Member Hart made a motion to appoint Lynn Fitzgerald to the Vacancy Board for a one year term. Member Scott seconded the motion. Motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

Member Hart made a motion to appoint Greg Lord to the Zoning Hearing Board for a 5 year term. Member Scott seconded the motion. Motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

Mayor D'Angelo said he has enjoyed his 5 years on the Planning Commission, 3 ½ of which he was chairman. He said Pete Myers is the chair now. He has worked on the Revitalization Plan and the Zoning Ordinance.

Member Hart made a motion to appoint Greg D'Angelo to the Planning Commission for a 5 year term. Member Scott seconded the motion. Motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

Member Hart made a motion to reappoint Mr. McDonald to the Nor-Gwyn Pool Commission for a 5 year term. Member Neiderhiser seconded the motion. Motion passed 7 yes, 0 no. President McDonald abstained.

Member Hart made a motion to appoint Dan O'Connell to serve on the Police Pension Committee for one year. Member Cherry seconded the motion. Motion passed 7 yes, 0 no. Member O'Connell abstained.

Member Hart made a motion to appoint Officer Hammerstone to the Police Pension Committee for one year. Member Neiderhiser seconded the motion. Motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

Member Hart said we received a letter from Lisa Hollister for the Pension Committee. She said she was under the impression that they needed prior approval from the police department. Solicitor Gifford said it is common courtesy to have their approval. President McDonald said maybe Officer Hammerstone could contact Ms. Hollister and explain to her what is involved. Member Hart said the only vacancies left are on the Shade Tree Commission and the Pension Committee.

Solicitor/Mayor/Council/Manager

Mayor D'Angelo said he was reminded that he was going to have a "Mayor's Corner" on the web site but with the changes it has been put on hold. He also thanked Chief Levy for his work as Interim Manager.

Member Neiderhiser congratulated and thanked the new appointees and those who are continuing.

Member Scott thanked the mayor and public works for their efficient response to the monster storm we had. The streets were cleaned promptly and efficiently. The letter that went out was timely including the bicycle note.

Member Hart thanked the appointees for continuing and those who are new for serving. She encourages everyone to bring out a friend or neighbor to participate in this process.

Member Redstreak expressed his appreciation to the residents for being there.

Ms. Matthews commented that the website needs to be updated and the new people listed.

Solicitor Gifford said he has one matter for executive session and no action will be required.

Member Sando made a motion that Council oppose a proposed constitutional amendment to lower the standard for tax exemption. It will allow more organizations to be tax exempt. Member Sando said if he understands the process it has to go through two consecutive sessions

and be on the ballot twice to pass. Member Hart said she seconds the motion but she thinks a resolution is needed. The consensus was to have Interim Manager Levy prepare a resolution.

Ms. Graham said she walks her dog a lot and has seen a lot of feces in the park. She asked if anything can be done. She said the trash in the streets from apartments is horrendous. She also said the minutes on the website go to August 26th. Member Hart said the last she checked she thought they went to October. She said they are not posted until they are approved. Mayor D'Angelo said the question of unofficial minutes was raised before and the prior solicitor had said they must be approved before going on the website. Solicitor Gifford said it is good policy to have them approved before going on the website. Member Hart said we will get them updated.

President McDonald thanked everyone who came out in the rain to support keeping the Giant pharmacy open. It was good to see the public support.

Solicitor Gifford said the Land Development/Subdivision application for 912 E. Prospect has been submitted to the County and Borough Planning Commission, the engineer and zoning officer.

Member Scott made a motion to adjourn. Member Hart seconded the motion. Motion passed 8 yes, 0 no. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Attest: _____

Alex H. Levy
Interim Borough Manager