

BOROUGH OF NORTH WALES
300 SCHOOL STREET
NORTH WALES, PENNSYLVANIA

MEETING: November 14, 2017 7:00 PM, EST

CALL TO ORDER made by President McDonald.

ROLL CALL:	Salvatore Amato	Present
	James Cherry	Present
	John Davis	Present
	Michael McDonald	Present
	Sally Neiderhiser	Present
	Daniel O'Connell	Absent
	Paula Scott	Present
	Mark Tarlecki	Present
	James Sando	Present
	Mayor Gregory D'Angelo	Present

Also in attendance were Gregory Gifford, Borough Solicitor, Terry Hammerstone, Officer in Charge and Alan Guzzardo, Assistant Borough Manager.

President McDonald led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

Joanne Matthews, 421 Shearer Street, expressed concern that national politics played a role in local elections. She applauded the service of Council members who were not re-elected, and will be stepping down from office.

Andrew Berenson, 439 Washington Avenue, asked Manager Hart if a craft show is going to take place. Manager Hart explained there is not one scheduled at this time, due to lack of volunteers and time. However, she would look into trying to schedule one in the future. He also thanked Council members who are stepping down from office and urged new Council members to not make drastic changes.

Hebert Schlegel, 301 W. Montgomery Avenue, expressed his support for Joanne Matthew's comments and hopes that the new Council members will support Manager Hart.

Mayor D'Angelo hopes that the Council will continue to be bi-partisan in its decision making. He stated that Member Tarlecki and Member McDonald helped to create a bi-partisan balance over the past eight years. He thanked Council for this and their services to the Borough.

Consideration: Approval of Ordinance #810, Authorizing North Wales Borough to Enter into an Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement and Authorizing Participation in the Delaware Valley Health Trust

Member Amato asked about the process of selecting appropriate insurance policies. Manager Hart explained the Borough sought the insurance policies with the benefits set forth and defined in the current Collective Bargaining Contract. He asked what the process is if the Borough wants

to change its plan at the end of the contract. Manager Hart stated the Borough would renegotiate its policies if need be at the end of the contract.

Member Tarlecki made a motion to approve Ordinance #810, authoring North Wales Borough to enter into an intergovernmental cooperation agreement and authorizing participation in the Delaware Valley Health Trust. Member Amato seconded the motion. Motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

Consideration: Release of Escrow – 715 E. Walnut Street, #2

Member Tarlecki asked how escrow is released. Manager Hart explained there is typically two to three escrow releases over the course of a subdivision or land development. Member Davis expressed concern with the driveway turnaround areas for the new lots (711 E. Walnut Street and 709 E. Walnut Street). He felt that the driveway turnaround areas were not constructed to the size provided on the subdivision plan and asked that the Borough investigate the matter. Member Sando asked what the Borough will do with funds set aside for tree planting. Manager Hart explained the Borough will setup a fund account in 2018 to allow for “in-lieu of” funds.

Member Amato made a motion to approve release of escrow in the amount of \$21,243.15 for 715 E. Walnut Street Subdivision. Member Scott seconded the motion. Motion passed 7 yes, 1 no. Member Davis dissented.

Consideration: Release of Escrow – 912 E. Prospect Avenue, #2

Manager Hart explained the Borough had withheld \$10,000 for a stormwater issue which has since been rectified in included in this request for release.

Member Neiderhiser made a motion to approve release of escrow in the amount of \$21,439.81, contingent on written approval from the Borough Engineer for the 912 E. Prospect Avenue Subdivision. Member Scott seconded the motion. Motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

Consideration: Approval of Minutes: 10/24/2017

Member Scott made a motion to approve the minutes of October 24, 2017. Member Neiderhiser seconded the motion. Motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

Consideration: Support North Penn Volunteer Fire Co. as 2018 Recipient of Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program Funding

Mayor D’Angelo provided an overview of the program and the letter of support he wrote for the North Penn Volunteer Fire Co. (NPVFC). He encouraged residents to also write letters of support. Member Davis asked Mayor D’Angelo if the NPVFC is relying on this funding. Mayor D’Angelo stated they are not. However, it would be a bonus that could be put to good use.

Member Tarlecki made a motion to approve a letter of support from the North Wales Borough Council for the NPVFC. Vice-President Cherry seconded the motion. Motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

Discussion: Proposed Amendments to 2018 Fee Schedule

Manager Hart provided an overview of the fee schedule changes the Borough is recommending. The fee schedule has not been updated since 2014. Assistant Manager Guzzardo provided an overview of changes to “Code Enforcement” fees, including the addition of a sewer lateral

permit and an increase in the PA Uniform Construction Code (UCC) fee from \$4.00 to \$4.50. Manager Hart explained the need for reinstating the residential roof permit. Currently, contractors do not need a building permit to do residential roof work. Assistant Manager Guzzardo recommended the Borough increase its resale use and occupancy permit fee from \$80.00 to \$100.00 due to the time and effort spent administering the program. Manager Hart provided clarification for the accessory structure listing provided under the “Zoning Permits” section. Assistant Manager Guzzardo then explained the need to adopt an ordinance that requires accessory structures over 120 sq. ft. to be subject to the Uniform Construction Code.

Member Sando asked Manager Hart to define “dwelling”. Manager Hart explained it is defined in the UCC. Member Sando asked how this is being applied for the rental registration program. Manager Hart stated the Borough is trying to better enforce the program to ensure that rental units are in compliance. Member Scott asked if the Borough does define “dwelling”. Solicitor Gifford stated the definition as provided in the UCC.

Andrew Berenson, 439 Washington Avenue, stated each property is unique. Therefore, there is no one solution for all properties and the Borough will have to handle them on a case by case basis. He then asked why sheds are not listed under accessory structures. Assistant Manager Guzzardo indicated they are listed under a separate section.

Manager Hart explained the need to increase Zoning Hearing Board fees by 50 percent as a result of high advertising and legal fees. Currently, the rates are \$500.00 for residential and \$1,000.00 for non-residential. Manager Hart explained the need to add “zoning certification” to the fee schedule, which would be administered by the Zoning Officer.

She asked Council members to review the proposed changes and provide comments by the next Council meeting. Vice-President Cherry expressed concern with residential Zoning Hearing Board fees being the same for all residential appeal requests. Solicitor Gifford explained that the legal and advertising fees are expensive, regardless of the zoning relief requested. Vice-President Cherry asked why the Borough would increase its fees by 50 percent. Manager Hart explained the fees have not been increased in a long time and the Borough continues to lose money at the taxpayer’s expense whenever a zoning appeal occurs.

Manager Hart asked Council if they were satisfied with the changes. There were no objections. Manager Hart stated the Borough would provide a final fee schedule for Council to adopt.

Discussion: 2018 Preliminary Budget

Manager Hart provided a presentation overview of the 2018 Preliminary Budget. Member Sando asked why the Borough has a savings account that is much larger than the FDIC insurance amount of \$250,000 in the Ambler Savings Bank. Manager Hart explained the Borough has obtained collateralization for Ambler Saving Bank and Key Bank to allow greater protection of the Borough’s accounts. Member Davis asked if commercial accounts are insured by the FDIC program. Manager Hart answered yes, and the Borough is a government organization, not a commercial institution. Member Tarlecki asked if interest rates are starting to rise. Manager Hart explained they are and explained many of the CD’s were acquired by previous administration. She then completed her presentation.

Member Amato asked Manager Hart to explain how the fund accounts work such as the street lighting fund. Manager Hart explained she prepares the Budget by anticipating revenues and

expenses and looking at trends. Member Amato asked why real estate valuations differ from real estate values in the Budget. Manager Hart explained the difference between fair market value and actual real estate assessments used for taxation purposes.

Manager Hart began to review the budget line item by line item with Council.

Member Davis asked if the Borough receives 100 percent reimbursement for funds spent on school crossing guards. Manager Hart explained the Borough receives fifty percent reimbursement from the school district. Member Tarlecki asked Manager Hart to explain how the Borough plans to pay off debt service. Manager Hart explained how the Borough finances its large projects through loans, bonds and grants. Member Davis asked if the Borough can still collect for debt service even if there is no debt. Solicitor Gifford explained the Borough can because it is anticipated that debt will occur.

Member Sando asked if the Borough is setting aside funding for the Borough's 150th Anniversary Celebration. Manager Hart explained she is still trying to calculate how much the Borough will have to spend for the event. Manager Hart mentioned that part of the budget will be spent on a decorative clock tower that will be constructed within the elevator tower located at 141 S. Main Street at NPVFC.

Member Davis asked if the Borough has budgeted funding for special counsel. Manager Hart explained the budget does account for that expense. Vice-President Cherry stated that if the new Council members were to appoint different special services, the budget would have to be altered to account for the changes.

Manager Hart finished reviewing the Budget with Council and asked if there were any questions.

Member Sando asked why the Borough is only budgeting a small amount for tree removal services, when it is anticipated a large number of ash trees will have to be removed as a result of the Emerald Ash Borer. Vice-President Cherry explained the need for more funding as a result of both the Emerald Ash Borer and a new invasive species called the "Spotted Lantern Fly". Andrew Berenson, 439 Washington Avenue, asked if the funding for tree removal is enough. Manager Hart explained she would revise the budget to increase funding for tree removal.

Member Amato asked if investments from CD accounts are staggered, just in case the Borough needs to tap those funds. Manager Hart explained the Borough does have these funds staggered and the Borough can tap into their money market, whereas, they do not have to rely on the CD's at this time.

Manager Hart explained the schedule for adopting the budget, including advertisement, finalizing the changes. Anticipation of adoption of the budget should take place at the first Council meeting in December.

Member Scott asked why more funding is being budgeted for infrastructure improvements. Manager Hart explained it would go towards improvements as a result of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan update, the Borough's 150th anniversary and the clock tower that will be installed on top of the NPVFC.

Old Business/Committee & Board Reports/Zoning Applications

Manager Hart announced that the North Wales Historic Commission will hold a WWII artifact presentation at their next stated meeting on Tuesday, November 21, 2017. She then announced there is a fall classical concert being held at St. Luke's Church on Sunday, November 19, 2017. She then announced that the Tree Lighting Ceremony and Soldier's Christmas will be held on Sunday, December 3, 2017.

Manager Hart announced there are no board reports. However, the Borough has officially received two Zoning Hearing Board applications, one for 215 Church Street and the other for 107 S. Eighth Street.

Solicitor / Mayor / Council / Manager

Solicitor Gifford announced there will be an executive session to discuss the "Sunlight of the Spirit House" case and one personnel matter, neither requiring action at this time.

Mayor D'Angelo reminded everyone that the NPVFC will send its annual fund drive requests in the mail to collect donations from Borough residents. He then encouraged people to start thinking about participating for the Borough's 150th anniversary.

Member Tarlecki announced that a street light at the corner of 4th and Summit is still out. Manager Hart announced that street light will be updated with an LED bulb. Member Davis thanked Manager Hart for preparing the budget. Member Scott encouraged people to lock their car doors, due to a recent spree of car burglaries. Member Sando announced that the new PA Attorney General was questioned about helping municipalities to oversee sober living establishments. Member Amato stated a resident expressed concern about ADA compliancy in the Borough. Manager Hart stated improving ADA compliancy is part of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan update. Member Cherry announced that he and Assistant Manager Guzzardo had attended a Community Forestry Workshop at Montgomery Township. Joanne Matthews, 421 Shearer Street, encouraged people to attend the WWII Artifact Display. Vice-President Cherry explained to everyone the danger of the "Spotted Lantern Fly" on trees in the area. President McDonald thanked everyone for the honor to serve and encouraged everyone to support the new Council members.

Member Neiderhiser made a motion to adjourn. Member Scott seconded the motion. Motion passed 8 yes, 0 no. Meeting adjourned at 9:43 P.M.

Attest: _____

Christine A. Hart
Borough Manager