

BOROUGH OF NORTH WALES
 300 SCHOOL STREET
 NORTH WALES, PENNSYLVANIA

MEETING: November 14, 2023, 7:00 P.M., EST

CALL TO ORDER made by President Amato.

ROLL CALL:	Salvatore Amato	Present
	Sherwin Collins	Present
	Anji Fazio	Present
	Alexander Groce	Present
	Brittany Kohler	Present, participated remotely
	Wendy McClure	Present
	Sally Neiderhiser	Present
	Mark Tarlecki	Present, participated remotely
	Sarah Whelan	Present
	Mayor Neil McDevitt	Present

Also, in attendance were Alex Turock, Assistant Borough Manager, Gregory Gifford, Esq., Borough Solicitor and David Erenius, Chief of Police.

President Amato led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

Andrew Berenson, 439 Washington Avenue, asked if the Borough has any law or code regarding support animals, and if so, is there any distinguishing between service animals vs. support animals. Manager Hart responded that she doesn't believe there is an ordinance regarding this, but she believes there is reference to service animals in the Borough's Special Accommodations Policy. Manager Hart offered to look into it with Solicitor Gifford.

Consideration: Approval to Advertise 2024 Budget

Manager Hart thoroughly reviewed goals met in 2023 and continuing goals for the Borough in 2024 and through the 2040 Plan, and how these relate to the proposed budget. Andrew Berenson, 439 Washington Avenue asked to confirm that the motion was made and also asked if the Manager or the Solicitor could explain the concept of re-advertising. Solicitor Gifford answered that if it is advertised and then changes are made, it would need to be re-advertised for the public and then a special meeting would need to be held prior to the years end. This would only be for something considerable, and not if a typo is corrected or a nominal change.

Member McClure made a motion to Approve Advertisement of the 2024 Budget. Member Fazio seconded the motion. Motion passed 9 yes, 0 no.

Consideration: Authorization of an Intergovernmental Agreement with North Penn School District to enforce violations captured by BusPatrol Systems

Manager Hart explained that several buses in North Penn School District are being equipped with a camera that will capture information when someone runs through the stop sign on a bus. Chief Erenius commented that the violation will be sent to the Police Department for review, and if they agree then a citation is issued and would go through the court process. President Amato asked if the fines are given to the Borough. Chief Erenius confirmed that the Borough would receive \$25 per violation. Solicitor Gifford confirmed the document has been reviewed and was modified to clarify the terms and is now acceptable to all of the municipalities included. President Amato asked where the funds were coming from for equipment and installations. Solicitor Gifford confirmed that everything will be handled by BusPatrol Systems, and there is no risk to the municipalities for expenses connected to this program. Andrew Berenson, 439 Washington Avenue, asked what oversight provisions are in the agreement for police departments to have over the company. Solicitor Gifford answered that it is part of the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code, this agreement is for the implementation of the program in our municipality and that each municipality controls how the program is run in their own municipality.

Member McClure made a motion to Authorize an Intergovernmental Agreement with North Penn School District to enforce violations captured by BusPatrol Systems. Member Whelan seconded the motion. Motion passed 9 yes, 0 no.

Consideration: Acceptance of Amanda Combs Resignation from the Zoning Hearing Board

Manager Hart confirmed that Amanda Combs would need to resign due to outside conflicts. President Amato asked what this means for the Zoning Hearing Board. Manager Hart confirmed that there is an alternate that would step up into this place, but the position will need to be filled for a full, active, Zoning Hearing Board.

Member Fazio made a motion to Accept Amanda Combs Resignation from the Zoning Hearing Board. Member McClure seconded the motion. Motion passed 9 yes, 0 no.

Discussion: Participation in the Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs Junior Council Person Program

Manager Hart explained that this has been a goal of previous councils to the current council and the program would invite a Junior or Senior resident of North Wales in High School to be part of the governing process. Assistant Manager Turock reviewed the information and noted that we are late to begin this year as it runs during the school year. The Junior Council Person would not be able to vote or attend executive sessions. Mayor McDevitt asked if there were guidelines in the program for background checks. Assistant Manager Turock answered there is nothing that is in the program that he saw but that attending council is a public meeting, but council can consider that information and decide if they'd like to put something in place.

President Amato asked if there was a way to screen candidates. Assistant Manager Turock confirmed there is an application requirement and council would need to review all applications

received. Manager Hart commented that this process would be similar to the selection process for an opening on council. Assistant Manager Turock commented that he believes the application packet is quite thorough.

President Amato asked if we bring a Junior Council Person in now, could we offer it to them for the following year as well due to the shortened time period this year. Assistant Manager Turock confirmed there is nothing against consecutive terms. Manager Hart commented that by the time the application is perfected and marketed, she is hoping someone would apply for the 2024-2025 school year. Member Whelan commented that her school recently had their elections for student council and that she thinks there might still be time to give students an opportunity to be involved for the current year. President Amato asked if Member Whelan had any ideas for getting students excited about this opportunity. Member Whelan suggested contacting teachers to promote the opportunity and making it an option for Seniors to do their Senior Project.

President Amato asked about the best way to get the word out. Manager Hart commented that there are multiple schools, not just North Penn High School. Member Whelan suggested using SavvyCitizen, Facebook and the website. Member McClure asked if we would be able to start in January. Manager Hart said that would work as long as someone is interested. Member McClure also suggested contacting the library to promote the program. Greg D'Angelo, 915 E. Montgomery Avenue, suggested that Council speak with Souderton Borough because they also have a Junior Council Person Program. Member Groce asked if it would be limited to residents. Manager Hart responded that yes, it would be a requirement that they are a resident of the Borough.

Consideration: Approval of Minutes: October 24, 2023

Member McClure made a motion to approve the minutes from October 10, 2023. Member Collins seconded the motion. Motion passed 9 yes, 0 no.

Consideration: Certification of Qualified Volunteers List for EIT Credit

Manager Hart reviewed the information in accordance with PA Act 172, the list of qualified volunteers was submitted by the North Penn Volunteer Fire Company for their tax credit on their Earned Income Tax. This must be filed by the end of the month. Manager Hart added that Lower Gwynedd recently enacted theirs and that perhaps the Borough would think about increasing this in 2024. President Amato suggested putting the increase on a future agenda. Member Collins asked if Lower Gwynedd Township also contributes to the North Penn Volunteer Fire Company. Manager Hart confirmed they do. She also commented that she has also reached out to the EMS Volunteer Services Medical Corp but has not received a list from them yet. President Amato asked what would happen if they have a list of volunteers to certify. Manager Hart confirmed it would absolutely be certified but she doesn't think it will be an issue.

Member Fazio made a motion to Certify the Qualified Volunteers List for EIT Credit. Member McClure seconded the motion. Motion passed 9 yes, 0 no.

Old Business / Committee & Board Reports / Zoning Applications

Manager Hart reported that she and Solicitor Gifford looked into the law regarding voting to increase the council stipend during an election year. It has not been increased since the late 1980's, the reason being that any time an increase is voted on, a member could not receive the increase until they were reelected. The reason it hasn't been done is because of the large council and varying terms, it would be tough to administer different rates for different council members. President Amato commented that he believes everyone is okay with tabling this issue for a future discussion.

Manager Hart commented that Parks and Recreation will be cleaning up Walnut Square Park this Saturday, November 18th. This year there was an arborist who offered to donate his company's services in exchange for the Borough purchasing new plantings and benches for the park. Volunteers are appreciated at 10am in Walnut Square Park.

Manager Hart reported that there are still multiple vacancies for several boards and commissions.

Manager Hart commented that the Chamber of Commerce is having an annual awards celebration locally, and the President's Award will be going to Duncan Reed at Edward Jones Investments located in the Borough. The Montgomery Township Community and Recreation Center is having a celebration of Community through the Chamber also. The library is having their 3rd Annual Holiday Marketplace this Saturday, November 18th from 10am – 3pm. This Saturday is also the Mardi Gras Parade in Lansdale Borough.

There is a Zoning Hearing tomorrow, November 15th which would have been held on November 7th, but was rescheduled due to Election Day. This is for 515 E. Prospect Avenue which is looking for some variances prior to a subdivision. Another Zoning Hearing is scheduled for December 5th for 501 E. Montgomery involving a tri-plex looking for variances on use.

Solicitor / Mayor / Council / Chief / Public Works / Manager

Solicitor Gifford announced there will be a long executive session after the meeting regarding 4 matters of personnel, 3 matters of legal, 1 matter of real estate, and will most likely need to reconvene to vote on the personnel matter. Andrew Berenson, 439 Washington Avenue asked if there will be a summary of the reconvene at the next meeting. Solicitor Gifford said he would make a comment.

Mayor McDevitt and Manager Hart attended VMSC's 90th Anniversary banquet this past weekend. It was a great celebration of a vital service that keeps our communities safe and healthy. Mayor McDevitt thanked everyone who ran for office this past election day and offered congratulations to those who would be starting new terms on Council. Mayor McDevitt wished all Borough Residents a happy and healthy Thanksgiving holiday and thanked police, fire, and EMTs who will be on duty during the holiday.

Member Whelan commented that the charity Ainsley's Angels will be attending the Lansdale Mardi Gras parade and if anyone is interested in volunteering they can reach out.

Member Kohler reminded everyone that Veteran's Day had just passed and wanted to thank anyone in the room who has served, and also to thank all of the veterans across the community.

Member Groce seconded Member Kohler's comments.

Member Fazio commented that the Borough website looks amazing and added that this Saturday the 18th is also when the Boy Scouts will be collecting the food donation bags on front porches early in the morning.

Member McClure commented that a friend of hers did not know the Borough had a museum on the 2nd floor of Borough Hall. She would like to suggest signage for the museum and also looking into including a history of the library.

Chief Erenius commented that there will be a North Wales Police car in the Mardi Gras parade. He also commented that the police started Donuts with a Cop in November, the police go in the elementary school and bring donuts and read to the students. He had previously looked into a program called Shop with a Cop which he will look to implemented in 2024.

President Amato extended thanks as a Veteran to local business owners that provide meals, and services to veterans on Veteran's Day. He also thanked the residents who acknowledge the services of veterans. He wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving. He also thanked everyone on council for their service to the Borough, thanked everyone who ran for a position, and thanked residents for voting in the recent election.

Adjournment

Member McClure made a motion to adjourn. Member Neiderhiser seconded the motion. Motion passed 9 yes, 0 no. Meeting adjourned at 8:30 P.M.

Council reconvened at 8:44 P.M.

Member McClure made a motion to Approve the Contract of Chief Erenius. Member Collins seconded the motion. Motion passed 9 yes, 0 no.

Adjournment

Member McClure made a motion to adjourn. Member Whelan seconded the motion. Motion passed 9 yes, 0 no. Meeting adjourned at 8:46 P.M.

Attest: _____
Christine A. Hart
Borough Manager