

BOROUGH OF NORTH WALES  
300 SCHOOL STREET  
NORTH WALES, PENNSYLVANIA

MEETING: September 12, 2023, 7:02 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
	Wendy McClure	Present
	Sally Neiderhiser	Absent
	Mark Tarlecki	Present
	Sarah Whelan	Present
	Mayor Neil McDevitt	Present

Also, in attendance were Gregory R. Gifford, Esq., Borough Solicitor, Alex Turock, Assistant Borough Manager, David Erenius, Chief of Police, and Timothy Konetchy, Montgomery County Planning Commission.

President Amato led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Public Hearing: Ordinance #823 – Repeal and Replace the Borough of North Wales Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map in their Entirety**

Andrew Berenson, 439 Washington Avenue, questioned the procedure for moving from public hearing to regular council meeting. Manager Hart confirmed the Public Hearing would precede the Council Meeting, as advertised, and then once the Public Hearing was complete the Borough Council Meeting would begin.

Public Hearing ended at 7:06 P.M., EST

**Public Comment**

Andrew Berenson, 439 Washington Avenue, asked how the date for Community Day is decided and what would happen if it were to fall on a holiday. Manager Hart confirmed that Community Day is planned by the Community Day Committee and is usually scheduled on the last Saturday in September.

**Consideration: Approval Ordinance #823 – North Wales Zoning Ordinance**

Member McClure made a motion to Approve Ordinance #823 – North Wales Zoning Ordinance. Member Tarlecki seconded the motion. Motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

Manager Hart thanked Mr. Konetchy for all the hard work done by Montgomery County Planning Commission and thanked Alan Guzzardo, former Assistant Borough Manager and Alex Turock, current Assistant Borough Manager, for their help in administering the new Ordinance. President Amato asked how long Council, administrative staff, and Planning Commission(s) have worked on this new Ordinance. Mr. Konetchy answered that this started around September of 2021.

**Consideration: Appeal of Shade Tree Commission Ruling – 334 S 9<sup>th</sup> Street**

Manager Hart reviewed that at the August Shade Tree Commission meeting, there was a motion from the Commission to deny the removal of the tree in question. The applicant has filed an appeal. Manager Hart reviewed that a Shade Tree is defined to be anything that is within 10 feet from the curb to the trunk. The tree in question is a conifer. Manager Hart reviewed that the applicant states the tree is causing quite a bit of debris on the neighbor's property and is also growing along power lines and the applicant would like to have it removed for safety reasons. President Amato asked if anyone was representing the applicant or Shade Tree, Manager Hart responded that Mr. Straub, an Arborist from Straub Tree Service was present on behalf of the applicant, and Shade Tree Commission did not have a representative at the meeting but had submitted their letter and decision to Council. President Amato commented that he and Member Tarlecki had gone out to look at the tree and were also concerned about the location and leaning of the tree with the power lines. Council discussed whether the tree would or would not be considered a shade tree, considering that it is a conifer and does not contribute to the tree canopy. Member Whelan asked if the owner was willing to replant another tree somewhere on the property or somewhere else in the Borough. Mr. Straub said he wasn't sure of the answer to that question. Manager Hart commented that the cost of the Shade Tree Permit is \$25 and that goes to a new tree for the Borough and confirmed this location would not be a good spot for a shade tree because the sewer lateral is in the front yard. Member McClure asked for confirmation that the tree in question is not a shade tree. Manager Hart confirmed that a conifer is a shade tree if it is within 10 feet from the curb.

Member Fazio made a motion to accept the Appeal of Shade Tree Commission Ruling for 334 S. 9<sup>th</sup> Street. Member McClure seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken to accept the removal of the tree from 334 S. 9<sup>th</sup> Street. Motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

**Consideration: Appointment of Borough Manager and Assistant Borough Manager to the Wissahickon Clean Water Partnership Management Committee**

Manager Hart commented that the Borough has standing appointments for these positions, but have specific names of employees versus titles, so we are updating to show as positions so future administrations do not need to change this.

Member Fazio made a motion to Appoint Borough Manager and Assistant Borough Manager to the Wissahickon Clean Water Partnership Management Committee. Member Whelan seconded the motion. Motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

**Consideration: Approval of Minutes: August 22, 2023**

Member Kohler made a motion to approve the minutes from August 8, 2023. Member Whelan seconded the motion. Motion passed 8 yes, 0 no.

**Old Business / Committee & Board Reports / Zoning Applications**

No old business at this time.

Manager Hart noted the most recent minutes from the Parks and Recreation Board and the Shade Tree Commission. Manager Hart commented that Parks and Recreation will be hosting a community carved pumpkin display on October 28<sup>th</sup> in Weingartner Park that will include voting, prize ribbons, cider, and donuts. Parks and Recreation will also be pulling prizes for the Summer Park Tour at their next meeting and are working on preparing for the Summer Kick-Off 2024. Manager Hart reviewed the open positions and vacancies for the Boards and Commissions.

Manager Hart reported there is one potential zoning application for a subdivision at 515 Prospect Avenue. The proposed building would require some variances. Andrew Berenson, 439 Washington Avenue, asked since the Zoning was passed this evening if the subdivision would be reviewed under the new Zoning or the current Zoning. Manager Hart confirmed that the subdivision and zoning would be reviewed under current guidelines because it was filed prior to the new Zoning going into effect. President Amato asked when this would come to Council. Manager Hart replied they have a 90-day window, but it depends on how long it takes the engineer to review. Solicitor Gifford commented that they would not be able to proceed without Zoning relief.

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

Solicitor Gifford commented that there would be an executive session regarding one matter of personnel, reporting on three potential legal issues, one matter regarding real estate that may require Council to reconvene to vote but there is a chance that Council will not need to reconvene at all.

Mayor McDevitt thanked the members of the planning commission and everyone who worked so hard on the Zoning ordinance. Mayor McDevitt commented that he was informed of a Borough resident competing in the show Buddy Games on CBS this week. Mayor McDevitt also thanked Member Fazio for working with him on a video to promote the Blue Envelope program that helps people who have difficulty communicating effectively with police during a routine interaction. He also thanked Chief Erenius, Manager Hart and Assistant Manager Turock for their perspective and feedback. Mayor McDevitt updated Council on the Homelessness Task Force that he sits on, and that though every community takes homelessness and affordable housing seriously, not all communities can use the same solutions to face these issues. Mayor McDevitt also welcomed students back to the district and reminded residents to drive safely.

Member Whelan wanted to acknowledge that yesterday was September 11<sup>th</sup> and shared quotes that stood out to her regarding 9/11. She reminded everyone to never forget and to honor our heroes and the heroes that were lost on 9/11. She also commented that Manna on Main Street

that in 2024 they are planning to open a new facility, which would be a service to support families that are in need.

Member Kohler thanked the planning commission and everyone who worked on the new zoning ordinance, including Manager Hart and Assistant Manager Turock.

Member Groce also thanked the planning commission and everyone who worked on the new zoning.

Member Fazio mentioned that the library is doing one-on-one computer training for people and the library is also doing a Meet-the-Author event to meet Brittney Morris on October 19<sup>th</sup>.

Member McClure wanted to remind everyone that there is a 9/11 memorial in Weingartner Park that is a Dawn Redwood Tree. She mentioned that she went to see it and the tree looks healthy, there is also a flag and a plaque there and it is a nice place to sit and reflect.

Member Tarlecki remarked that John Strobel is a former Council Member and a former President of the North Penn Volunteer Fire Company and is a longtime resident of North Wales. He is suffering from dementia and his medical costs are very expensive and there are a group of his friends putting on a fundraiser for his family. The event will be a Beef & Beer on Saturday, October 7<sup>th</sup> from 7pm to 11pm at the North Penn Volunteer Fire Company Social Club. Tickets are \$40 and will go to offsetting his medical costs. Member Whelan asked if they would be advertising this on Facebook and Savvy Citizen. Solicitor Gifford commented on how involved Mr. Strobel had been in the community. Manager Hart agreed to share the information on Facebook and Savvy Citizen.

President Amato commented that he appreciates the Boards and Commissions, and their relentless work in the background serving the Borough.

Manager Hart commented that Public Works is working diligently on cleaning up the parks and will be working to change decorations for fall fest and community day. They are also working on getting down and replacing any veteran banners that are worn, tattered or torn. Manager Hart also commented that Mr. Straub had done some minor tree work in the parks.

Manager Hart commented that Morton Salt has won the salt bid for the Montgomery County Consortium, and the cost is much lower than it has been at \$64.84 a ton for the 23-24 winter season. Manager Hart commented that the library asked to share that the Recorder of Deeds is doing a mobile fraud sleuth event on September 20<sup>th</sup> from 4:30 to 6:30pm at the library to educate homeowners on potential fraud. The library is also sponsoring flu shots on September 27<sup>th</sup> and will have their annual holiday marketplace in November. Manager Hart commented that the Montgomery County Borough's Association is having a dinner on Thursday, September 28<sup>th</sup> at the North Penn Volunteer Fire Company and it is open to Council Members, Volunteers, or anyone who would like to attend. It is \$10 at the door but they are asking for RSVPs. Manager Hart reminded everyone that Community Day is just over 2 weeks away. Manager Hart also commented that the library received their tax millage, and they wrote a letter to say how thankful they were for it.

**Adjournment**

Member McClure made a motion to adjourn. Member Whelan seconded the motion. Motion passed 8 yes, 0 no. Meeting adjourned at 7:45 P.M.

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Christine A. Hart  
Borough Manager