

**BOROUGH OF SLATINGTON
COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES
12/9/19**

The Regular Meeting Minutes of Council was held on **Monday, December 9, 2019** at 7:30 pm., in Council Chambers, 125 S. Walnut Street, Slatington, PA 18080.

Presiding: Daniel Stevens: President of Council

Recording Secretary: Bryon Reed, President Pro Tem

The meeting was called to order by President Stevens at 7:00 pm following in attendance:

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT

Daniel Stevens
Jason Ruff
Bryon Reed
Ronald Kratz
Joseph Wechsler
David Schnaars
Thomas Bartholomew

ABSENT

OTHERS PRESENT

Mayor Niedermeyer
Ed Healy
Larry Turoscy
Chief Rachman

VISITORS

Ed Ziegler, Shirley Sedor
Miranda Sedor, Tony Gonzalez
Gwyneth Jones, Richard Schmoyer
Robert Herzog, Kris Porter
Robert Stettner

President Stevens requested that, as a courtesy, everyone turn off their cell phones, iPhone, and electronic devices off, or on vibrate. If you must take a call, please exit the council chambers so as not to disrupt the meeting. President Stevens announced that all public sessions of Borough Council are electronically recorded and such recordings are maintained as part of the meeting record until the minutes are transcribed and approved by the Board, at which time the recordings shall be erased.

President Stevens announced an executive session was held on November 18th, 2019, at 6:30 PM for the Sewer and Highway Committee to discuss personnel matters.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – None

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS – Councilor Schnaars made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Kratz, to approve the following minutes with the following corrections: Council Meeting – November 11, 2019 – page 2 A.1. – remove the word “with” after the word passed; page 5 F.3. – add \$1,295.00 to install relays; Committee Meetings - November 18, 2019 - page 1 A.b. – changed from evac to vac; November 25, 2019 A.a. – change committee to council, page 2 President Stevens has already called Bolenger for a quote; November 25, 2019; Joint Special Meeting with the Slatington Borough Authority – page 2 – A.3. remove the word from Ed Healy after the word ordinance. President Stevens declared the motion passed with following a Voice Vote, All in Favor.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (Agenda and Non-Agenda items) You will have three minutes to address Council from the podium. The three minutes applies to your time at the podium. If you exit the podium, you have yielded the floor, and any time you have remaining.

Ed Ziegler – Signed in and was recognized to speak. Ed said the flags were to be at half-mast in honor of Pearl Harbor Day. He had gone around town to put 8 flags at half-mast.

Randy Schmoyer- Signed in and was recognized to speak; however, he declined.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMUNICATIONS AND SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Councilor Schnaars inquired as to how many televisions/monitors were taken at the electronic recycling event. President Stevens told him that approximately 80+ were taken. Councilor Ruff said he will place the electronic recycling event for 2020 dates on the next committee meeting.

REPORTS

The reports of various committees, officials and officers were provided to Council and are on file in Borough Hall and are available for public inspection.

APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS PAYABLE/TRANSFER

Councilor Wechsler made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Reed, to approve payment of the bills and transfers as presented by the Treasurer. President Stevens declared the motion passed following a Voice Vote, All in Favor

MAYORS/POLICE CHIEF'S REMARKS

Mayor Walter H. Niedermeyer

Mayor Niedermeyer informed the council they had the tree lighting ceremony on Friday night, which was successful. He would like to obtain a taller tree and put it in the middle of the park, instead of in the gazebo. Kudos were given to Gene Chandler for his excellent work decorating the tree and gazebo.

Chief Rachman

Chief Rachman informed the council he would be sending a letter to the business owners on Main Street to remind them about the 2-hour parking ordinance. Councilor Ruff had suggested allowing business owners to apply for some sort of extended parking permit for the parking lots.

STANDING COMMITTEES

A. Highway

Councilor Bryon Reed

1. Councilor Reed informed the council the 2001 dump truck had a crack in the frame and was taken over to Hirschman's for repair.
2. Larry Turoscy mentioned that anyone who comes in for utilities next spring, he said they should upgrade their regulations – street cuts and berm requirements. This will be placed on the next committee meeting. Ed Healy has drafted an ordinance for this issue for the committee to consider.

B. Public Safety

Councilor David Schnaars

1. Councilor Schnaars made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Wechsler, to approve hiring Part-Time Police Officer Victor Alpizar effective December 9th, 2019. President Stevens declared the motion passed following a Voice Vote, All in Favor.
2. Councilor Schnaars made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Wechsler, to approve resignation, with regrets, from Officer Brian Stern effective December 13, 2019. President Stevens declared the motion passed following a Voice Vote, All in Favor.
3. The council discussed selling old Durango and 2001 Interceptor. Councilor Schnaars stated the Durango has been sitting idle for a long time and the borough is still paying for the insurance. Councilor Schnaars made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Ruff, to sell the Durango by December 31st, 2019, otherwise sell it for scrap. President Stevens declared the motion passed following a Voice Vote, All in Favor.

Councilor Schnaars stated the 2001 Interceptor is still running. Councilor Schnaars made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Ruff, to have Councilor Reed list the Interceptor on the Municibid with the reserve at his discretion. President Stevens declared the motion passed following a Voice Vote, All in Favor.

4. Councilor Schnaars wanted to discuss the winter maintenance for Fairview Ave. He said there is no real safe way for the highway crew to plow the street in the winter. The previous owner on Fairview would maintain it, with the support of the highway crew, to keep it clear of snow. Councilor Reed stated that the crew had helped last winter with the snow and ice. This will be placed on the next committee meeting.
5. The council reviewed the Thank you letter for support for the Child Abuse Investigator dated 12/3/19. Informational only.

Mayor Niedermeyer swore in Part-Time Police Officer Victor Alpizar.

C. Human/Community Services

Councilor Jason Ruff

1. Councilor Ruff made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Schnaars, to authorize President Stevens to sign agreement between LVPC and the Northern Comprehensive Plan Committee. The council reviewed the cost. The council agreed to table this till after executive session.
2. Thank you note from the Slatington Public Library for the borough's donation of \$5,000. Informational only
3. The council discussed the treatment release form for PA Spotted Lanternfly Cooperative Eradication Program. This release allows them to treat borough property. Councilor Ruff made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Wechsler, to have President Stevens sign the release for the Spotted Lanternfly Eradication Program. President Stevens declared the motion passed following a Voice Vote, All in Favor.

D. Finance

Councilor Thomas Bartholomew

1. Councilor Bartholomew made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Kratz, to authorize President Stevens to approve Exemption request from Statewide Tax Recovery Inc. for Delinquent Per Capita Tax for: Sally Hauser – non-resident - \$5.50. President Stevens declared the motion passed following a Voice Vote, All in Favor.
2. Councilor Bartholomew made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Wechsler, to approve advertisement of Slatington Borough's 2020 meeting schedule. President Stevens declared the motion passed following a Voice Vote, All in Favor.
3. The council discussed the appointment for Tax Collector position. Ed Healy informed the council that you only appoint the tax collector when the position is vacant, which is January 1st. This appointment can only last until the first Monday in January, that is the state statutory reorganizational period. At the re-organization meeting is when they could appoint the tax collector to serve the remaining 2-years of the term. The person who is nominated would have to be appointed by resolution by the borough council, bonded, and

resided in the borough for at least 1 year. Gwyneth Jones presented herself to the council and informed the council of her qualifications. However, she is not certified as a tax collector, but will attend the necessary training. Councilor Wechsler made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Schnaars, to pass a resolution appointing Gwyneth Jones as Tax Collector effective January 1st, 2020, through January 5th, 2020, provided she gives to the office her necessary bond and the residency affidavit. President Stevens declared the motion passed following a Voice Vote, All in Favor.

4. Councilor Bartholomew made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Schnaars, to advertise Ordinance 698, *An ordinance, of the Borough of Slatington, Lehigh County, Pennsylvania, further amending Chapter 141, Article II pertaining to residential rental, rooming and commercial units and all dwellings of the Borough Codified Ordinances of 2008, and restating the entirety of Chapter 141 of the Borough Codified Ordinances of 2008, as amended through this ordinance.* Councilor Bartholomew amended his motion to include Ed Healy's recommendations, 141-2 to strike B, C, and D, duly seconded by Councilor Schnaars to advertise Ordinance 698 with the changes. President Stevens declared the motion passed following a Voice Vote, All in Favor.

E. Sewer/Solid Waste

Councilor Joseph Wechsler

1. Councilor Wechsler made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Kratz, to advertise Ordinance 697, *An ordinance of the Borough of Slatington, Lehigh County, PA amending, Section 180-13.D (relating to the grease traps. etc.) of the 2008 Codified Ordinances of the Borough.* President Stevens declared the motion passed following a Voice Vote, All in Favor.

F. Water/Special Sewer Committee

Councilor Ronald Kratz

1. Water Test Statement - Water was tested and found safe for human consumption
2. Councilor Kratz reviewed the letter from PPL Electric Utilities informing them of their ongoing improvements to the electrical transmission lines. They are letting the borough know that between January of 2020 and July 2021, approximately 18 months, they will be improving this process. Informational only
3. Councilor Kratz informed the council that all the work for Shadow Oaks waterline project has been completed. They are now looking at installing storm sewer and blacktop over that. The council agreed to discuss change order costs for this project at the next committee meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

President Stevens informed the council of a special meeting on December 23rd, 2019, at 7:00 PM concerning the budget.

NEW BUSINESS: None

COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S REPORT: None

Daniel Stevens

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR – (Agenda Items Only – You will have two (2) minutes to address Council from the podium on Agenda Items Only.) **None**

EXECUTIVE SESSION – President Stevens recessed to executive session at 8:11 pm. At 8:44 PM, President Stevens reconvened the meeting. Matters of personnel, legal, and real estate were discussed in executive session.

The council reviewed the 2020 proposed budget. They first reviewed the police budget. Chief Rachman stated that salaries shown are in anticipation of the 3% increase, depending upon what happens with the contract. The salaries also depend on if they hire a full-time officer or a part-time officer next year. The general budget is based on the expenditures year-to-date. There will be an increase to the IT line item of \$3,000.

The next discussion was for the fire budget. Basically, the budget is the same as 2019. President Stevens will check to find out why the prior income line is zero. The fire department still owes 3 extra years on the ladder truck to the sewer budget, because it had not been paid for several years.

General budget – revenues – real estate tax \$41,000; earned income tax \$367,500; cable franchise tax is down; tenant inspections lowered; tenant registrations were lower for 2019; some rental increased for the Vigilant and municipal buildings; grant for the DCNR Small Community – amphitheater - \$30,000 – this money is administered by the borough and then the borough pays it out; refund of health insurance expenses – last year we received \$53,789, this year we received \$15,341; health insurance costs for families have gone up to 8 ½% this year; Expenses are standard, i.e., salaries, legal, engineering, auditing, insurances, maintenance, etc.; increase to \$37,500 in ordinance and zoning enforcement due to hours worked. Page 8 - Highway – Some new signs can be paid for by liquid fuels. Councilor Ruff will talk with Lindsey Taylor from NRLA to see if they can obtain grant money to pay for grass cutting through the NLRA. Questions were asked about the office rent for the NRLA and sewer authority. Capital projects for \$30,000 is a pass through for the DCNR grant; \$6,000 of that is half our contribution for the multi-municipal. The other \$10,000 is match to redo the bathrooms at Victory Park. NOVA donation remained the same. Adjustments had been to health insurance – percentages are now – general 35%, water & sewer 28% each, and garbage 9%.

Water budget – revenue – almost even with last year, except for the interest; doesn't include the CD's. The general expense includes the new \$6,500 fee for the DEP. \$80,000 for the Robert's panel. \$13,557 is the engineering charge which should be moved up to line 444.13 – engineering.

Sewer budget – revenue – reflects \$55,701 which wasn't drawn down on the grant. Expenses – there was an increase for contracted services – Ken Fulford and Sensus. Legal costs are down. A roof may be needed for the digester. Sludge hauling cost has been reduced due to the digester project.

Garbage budget – revenue – almost the same as last year; expenses – 2 electronic recycling events next year, split the cost with Washington Township for composting, recycling bins were purchased last year.

Liquid Fuels budget – salt and electric for the rest of the year, how much we are bringing in; last payment for the dump truck \$26,403; snow and ice removal upped \$1,000; fixing roads put in for \$20,000.

The council agreed to add \$3,000 to the police budget for IT. Councilor Schnaars will talk to the rec authority about the rent.

Councilor Schnaars made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Wechsler, to approve and advertise the 2020 preliminary budget.

ROLL CALL

AYES

NAYS

ABSTAIN

Jason Ruff
Bryon Reed
Ronald Kratz
Joseph Wechsler
Dave Schnaars
Thomas Bartholomew

Daniel Stevens – abstains because there is funding for a borough manager in the budget. I have been approached by the borough solicitor about the possibility that this position may be available next year.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, Councilor Schnaars made the motion, duly seconded by Councilor Wechsler, to adjourn the meeting. President Stevens declared the motion passed following a Voice Vote, All in Favor.

President Stevens declared the meeting adjourned at 10:46 pm.

Colleen Bresnak
Assistant Borough Secretary