

**BOROUGH OF SLATINGTON  
COUNCIL MEETING  
MINUTES  
5/11/20**

The Regular Meeting of Council was held on **Monday, May 11, 2020** at 7:10 PM, at the Vigilant Fire Company, 110 S. Walnut Street, Slatington, PA 18080.

Presiding: Bryon Reed: President of Council

Recording Secretary: Daniel Stevens, Borough Manager/Secretary

The meeting was called to order by President Reed at 7:10 pm following in attendance:

**ROLL CALL:**

<u>PRESENT</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>	<u>OTHERS PRESENT</u>	<u>VISITORS</u>
Bryon Reed		Dave Rachman	Jeffrey Hausman, Robert Herzog, Jr
Jason Ruff		Ed Healy	Shawn Rios-SFD, Jason Nicholas-SFD
David Schnaars		Daniel Stevens	Ryan Schmoyer-SFD, Joshua Siegle
Thomas Bartholomew		Mayor Niedermeyer	Mark Pinsley, Ed Ziegler
Joseph Wechsler-via phone			
Ronald Kratz			
Kevin Steckel			

President Reed 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.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION – None**

**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS** – Councilor Ruff made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Schnaars, to approve the following minutes: **Council Meeting** – April 13, 2020; **Committee Meetings – Finance Planning/Zoning, Public Safety and Human/Community Services** – April 20, 2020; **Water/Sewer/Highway** – April 27, 2020 – **canceled due to Coronavirus**. President Reed 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.

**None**

**PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMUNICATIONS AND SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS**

Councilor Ruff introduced Joshua Siegel from Allentown City Council and Mark Pinsley as the County Controller for Lehigh County. Joshua provided a presentation to the council on how the Coronavirus will be impacting the economy. The proposal is called Regional Prosperity District. One suggestion is to move us away from property taxes, and instead diversify that revenue so they can invest in local municipalities. County-wide sales tax would be an option at 1% or 1.5%. Also, apply a very small earned income tax or EIT. Mark explained that the money would be divided in 4 quarters – half would go to municipalities, one-quarter would go back to Lehigh County, one-quarter would go to the regional prosperity district. This would give money to things like museums, zoos, symphonies, or places that draw big crowds. The reason for this is that people will be spending money. Sales tax is usually from out of town. Mark also stated that pension funds are diminishing. Mark is requesting a resolution from the council to show support for this proposal. A board would be created with people from each community to determine how the regional prosperity district funds are dispersed.

**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 Ruff made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Schnaars, to approve payment of the bills and transfers as presented by the Treasurer. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Roll call, voting as follows:

ROLL CALL	<u>AYES</u> Bryon Reed Jason Ruff Joseph Wechsler-via phone Dave Schnaars Thomas Bartholomew Ronald Kratz Kevin Steckel	<u>NAYS</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
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**MAYORS/POLICE CHIEF’S REMARKS**

**Mayor Walter H. Niedermeyer**

Mayor Niedermeyer stated that due to the uncertainty of the virus, meetings and gatherings have been canceled.

**Chief Rachman**

Chief Rachman stated that they are still working on the eligibility list. At this time there are 3 viable candidates. Two of the 3 are currently part-time police officers.

**STANDING COMMITTEES**

**A. Highway**

**Councilor David Schnaars**

1. Councilor Schnaars inquired if there was an update on the storm drain at Walnut and Main Street. Manager Stevens informed him that he spoke with Al Clark from PennDOT, and apparently, he looked at the wrong catch basin at the intersection. He informed Manager Stevens that he will go back out to look at it.

**B. Public Safety**

**Councilor Kevin Steckel**

1. Councilor Steckel made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Ruff, to approve Resolution R-11-20, concerning Gaming Grant for fire truck which rescinds the prior Resolution R-06-2019 and application for \$200,000. Fire Chief Nicholas presented his proposal to the Council. He is requesting commitment from Council for a maximum loan of \$201,907 of a \$663,000 project, and the fire department would commit to a maximum loan of \$250,000. The Council and Fire Chief Nicholas discussed options to obtain further funding. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Roll call, voting as follows:

ROLL CALL	<u>AYES</u> Bryon Reed Joseph Wechsler-via phone Thomas Bartholomew Ronald Kratz	<u>NAYS</u> Jason Ruff David Schnaars Kevin Steckel	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
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**C. Human/Community Services**

**Councilor Jason Ruff**

1. 2020 Electronic Recycling is scheduled for: Saturday, May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020, from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM. Informational only

**D. Finance**

**Councilor Thomas Bartholomew**

1. Councilor Bartholomew made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Kratz, to authorize Daniel Stevens to approve Exemption Report from Statewide Tax Recovery Inc. for Delinquent Per Capita Tax for: Kara Schlicher – non-resident - \$5.50; Shanna (Matthews) Koscinski – non-resident -\$5.50; Jennifer Yeakel - \$5.50; Shavannah Weller - \$5.50. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Voice Vote, All in Favor.
2. Councilor Bartholomew is trying to save money for the Borough. Councilor Bartholomew made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Kratz, to stop funding to the Northern Lehigh Recreation Association through the COVID19 pandemic and the inability of the Executive Director Lindsay Taylor to perform her job description until such time as the governor allows group gathering and it is deemed safe for Ms. Taylor’s program to restart. Councilor Schnaars stated that the Borough had made a commitment to them and it is not up to the Borough to furlough her, it is up to the Northern Lehigh Recreation Authority. Attorney Healy stated he would look into whether this could be done legally. Councilor Ruff interjected that Ms. Taylor is continuing her work on projects. This motion was withdrawn. Councilor Bartholomew made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Kratz, to modify the original motion and have Attorney Healy investigate the Borough’s exact obligations to the NLRA for now and the future. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Roll call, voting as follows:

**ROLL CALL**

<u>AYES</u>	<u>NAY</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
Bryon Reed	Jason Ruff	
Joseph Wechsler-via phone		
Dave Schnaars		
Thomas Bartholomew		
Ronald Kratz		
Kevin Steckel		

Attorney Healy requested from each of the Council members arguments in favor of or dissolving of the Northern Lehigh Recreation Authority by Friday, May 22, 2020. He will also review any other legal concerns.

**E. Sewer/Solid Waste**

**Councilor Joseph Wechsler**

We are waiting to hear about the grant for the digester lid removal.

**F. Water/Special Sewer Committee**

**Councilor Ronald Kratz**

1. Water Test Statement - Water was tested and found safe for human consumption

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

Councilor Ruff asked if all the signs have been replaced. Manager Stevens stated that all the new signs are either already erected or are on order.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS: None**

**NEW BUSINESS: None**

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S REPORT: None**

**Bryon Reed**

**COURTESY OF THE FLOOR** – (Agenda Items Only – You will have two (2) minutes to address Council from the podium on Agenda Items Only.)

Ryan Schmoyer – Signed in and was recognized to speak. He is a lieutenant with the Slatington Fire Department and a resident. He thanked the Council for everything they have done for the fire department.

Jeff Hausman – Signed in and was recognized to speak. He pointed out that the fire company equipment is very expensive and they can't control the cost factor. He said they definitely need a new rig because the current one is about 20 years old.

Councilor Schnaars made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Ruff, to accept the bid for \$15,000 for the old fire truck located at the sewer plant. Councilor Schnaars withdrew the motion.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION** – President Reed recessed to executive session at 9:10 PM. At 10:05 PM, President Reed reconvened the meeting. Matters of personnel and legal (and also to discuss with the solicitor concerning the potential obligations of the Borough under the grant application previously submitted in 2019 under Resolution R-06-19) issues were discussed in executive session.

Councilor Bartholomew made a motion that we rescind R-11-20 and reaffirm R-06-19. President Reed asked for a second three times. No second, the motion dies.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

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

President Reed declared the meeting adjourned at 10:07 PM.

Daniel L. Stevens  
Borough Secretary