

**BOROUGH OF SLATINGTON
COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES
2/8/21**

The Regular Meeting of Council was held on **Monday, February 8, 2021**, at 7:00 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 7:00 PM with the following in attendance:

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT

Bryon Reed
Jason Ruff
Joseph Wechsler via phone
David Schnaars
Thomas Bartholomew
Ronald Kratz
Kevin Steckel

ABSENT

OTHERS PRESENT

Dave Rachman
Ed Healy
Mayor Niedermeyer
Daniel Stevens
Larry Turoscy

VISITORS

Austin Berger, Amanda Maehrer
Jeralyn Schoch, Aaron Schoch
Robert Herzog, William Emery
Ciera Schoenberger, Jeff Hausman

NOTIFICATION:

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 Schnaars made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Ruff, to approve the following minutes: **Council Meeting** of January 11, 2021; **Committee Meetings** – January 18, 2021, and January 25, 2021; **Special Council Meeting** of January 25, 2021. President Reed declared the motion passed 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.

Jeralyn Schoch – 301 E. Church Street. Signed in and was recognized to speak. Jeralyn Schoch provided a petition, and pictures, to the Council. This petition states that she, along with her fellow neighbors, they are requesting that the Borough Council address the issues which are currently occurring at the property listed at 315 and 325 E. Church Street. Jerilyn stated that at this time they have a rat infestation, which is a safety and sanitary issue. Since rats’ chew through wires, they are concerned that one day there will be a fire on their property. Jeralyn gave Tony Lopsonzski kudos for working diligently to correct this issue. This petition is requesting that the Borough work on getting these properties condemned. Jeralyn described the condition of 325 E Church Street with garbage being all over the place, mold, and the stability of the structure. These properties are owned by the same landlord. Attorney Healy stated that an inspection would have to be done first to determine the condition. Jeralyn asked about her request at the meeting of June 15th to move the radar speed sign from Main Street to Church Street due to speeding. Chief Rachman asked where she would like to have it put. Jeralyn requested it be placed near her house. Chief Rachman has agreed to have the sign moved to Church Street. Councilor Bartholomew asked Attorney Healy if there is a time line for condemning the property. Attorney Healy stated, citations must be issued, then you must obtain an injunction, etc. This is not a rapid process.

Jeff Hausman – 46 So. Walnut Street. Signed in and was recognized to speak. Jeff Hausman wanted to thank the Borough crew for an exceptional job on snow plowing with the last storm. Jeff asked the Council if they would ever consider hiring an outside contractor to help with the snow removal.

Ciera Schoenberger – 323 E. Church Street. Signed in and was recognized to speak. Ciera Schoenberger lives next to 325 E. Church Street. Ciera also complained concerning the rat issue. Ciera provided items showing the damage the rats are doing to her childrens’ clothing. Ciera has requested a certified exterminator from her landlord. The landlord sends his own employee. Ciera is having multiple problems/concerns with her landlord. The Council agreed to discuss this with Tony Lopsonzski.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMUNICATIONS AND SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

None

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 Schnaars made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Ruff, 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:

<u>ROLL CALL</u>	<u>AYES</u>	<u>NAYS</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
	Bryon Reed		
	Jason Ruff		
	Joseph Wechsler		
	Dave Schnaars		
	Thomas Bartholomew		
	Ronald Kratz		
	Kevin Steckel		

MAYORS/POLICE CHIEF’S REMARKS

Mayor Walter H. Niedermeyer

Mayor Niedermeyer spoke to Cub Pack 66 at the Scout House concerning the duties of being mayor. Mayor Niedermeyer mentioned that spring cleaning is coming and he would like the carpet cleaned at the Borough Hall.

Chief Rachman

None

STANDING COMMITTEES

A. Highway

Councilor David Schnaars

1. The Council reviewed the bids from previous years and the current year for the traffic signal. The grant is for \$270,000.00, and the Borough budgeted \$30,000.00 from liquid fuels. The bids came in far above the total amount. Manager Stevens will contact Senator Browne’s office to see we can obtain any help with the traffic light. Councilor Schnaars made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Ruff, to rebid the traffic signal project and leave the current bids open for the traffic signal at Main and Church Streets. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Roll call, voting as follows:

ROLL CALL

AYES

NAYS

ABSTAIN

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

B. Public Safety

Councilor Kevin Steckel

1. Councilor Steckel asked President Reed if he has heard anything on sale of the fire truck. President Reed has not. Councilor Steckel stated the truck has not been relisted and was asked if we wished to reduce the reserve on it. President Reed will contact Chief Nicholas to discuss the reserve.

C. Human/Community Services

Councilor Jason Ruff

1. Response letter dated January 19, 2021, to Robert Berger, Northern Lehigh Community Center, concerning request for property tax relief. Informational only
2. The Council reviewed the letter from the Chamber of Commerce stating they would like to set up a local government committee. They would meet every quarter. Would like borough manager to take part. Cindy Miller has been asked by the chamber president to chair the committee. Councilor Ruff made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Schnaars, to allow our borough manager to take part in the Chamber of Commerce on the local government committee that meets quarterly. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Voice Vote, All in Favor
3. Thank you letter for donation from the Northern Lehigh Historical Society and the Venture Group for the Borough's \$440.00 donation. Informational only
4. Thank you letter from Northern Lehigh Pool for the Borough's \$2,000.00 donation. Informational only. Councilor Steckel informed the Council that when they redid the plaster shell in 2010 it was not done correctly, and they have been patching it every year since. The patches are no longer going to work. Due to this, the pool will not be opening this year. However, they are going to try to raise the money to make the repairs. They need \$150,000.00 to \$175,000.00 for the project.
5. Thank you letter from NOVA for the Borough's \$9,520.04 donation. Informational only
6. Letter from Lehigh County concerning Tourism Grant application for 2021. The grant for the disc golf course was not approved.

Councilor Ruff reminded the Council of the RRS Electronics Recycling Day, Saturday, April 3rd, 2021

D. Finance/Planning/Zoning

Councilor Thomas Bartholomew

1. Manager Stevens and President Reed provided an update on the electricity contract. Councilor Bartholomew made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Schnaars, to authorize President Reed and Manager Stevens to award an electricity contract for the longest possible term, provided the price is \$.06, or less, per KWH. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Roll call, voting as follows:

ROLL CALL

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

NAYS

ABSTAIN

E. Sewer/Solid Waste

Councilor Joseph Wechsler

1. Councilor Wechsler made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Ruff, to authorize holding a joint shredding event September 25th, 2021, together with Representative Mako’s office at a cost of \$275.00 to the Borough. Borough will provide 1 worker (not including any volunteers) for event. Borough will recycle any discarded cardboard. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Voice Vote, All in Favor
2. Manager Stevens provided an update on the bidding for the sludge hauling contract. Manger Stevens stated that the advertisement will run on 2/9/21 and 2/12/21. Bid opening will be on February 25th, 2021. Hopefully, the Borough can award the contract at the next regular council meeting in March.
3. Councilor Wechsler made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Schnaars, to authorize transfer of \$1,250.00 to Slatington Borough Authority for the NPDES Permit. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Roll call, voting as follows:

ROLL CALL

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

NAYS

ABSTAIN

F. Water/Special Sewer Committee

Councilor Ronald Kratz

1. Water Test Statement - Water was tested and found safe for human consumption
2. Councilor Kratz made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Schnaars, to approve having BEI Electrical install new lighting fixtures at the Slatington filtration plant for a cost of \$4,900.00. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Roll call, voting as follows:

ROLL CALL

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

NAYS

ABSTAIN

- Councilor Kratz made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Schnaars, to authorize repairs to 2004 pickup truck for the water department not to exceed \$1,700.00. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Roll call, voting as follows:

ROLL CALL	<u>AYES</u> Bryon Reed Jason Ruff Joseph Wechsler Dave Schnaars Thomas Bartholomew Ronald Kratz Kevin Steckel	<u>NAYS</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
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- Bill Weissman, from Essex Service Corp, is progressing with the stated phased approach. Information only
- Manager Stevens provided an update on the media replacement project. Manager Stevens has sent out a request for quotes. The Borough has received a few quotes. At the next committee meeting the information will be reviewed. Hopefully, the contract can be awarded at the regular council meeting in March.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

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.) **None**

EXECUTIVE SESSION: President recessed to executive session at 7:56 PM. At 8:51 PM President Reed reconvened the meeting. Matters of personnel involving the police department were discussed in executive session.

Councilor Kratz made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Schnaars, to create a position for Officer Brandon Gianopulos as a full-time patrolman. Position in accordance with the collective bargaining agreement; subject to the officer, the Police Union, and the Borough executing a memorandum of understanding recognizing that Officer Gianopulos may be terminated, without recourse to him, or the Union for budget purposes. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Roll call, voting as follows:

ROLL CALL	<u>AYES</u> Bryon Reed Jason Ruff Joseph Wechsler Dave Schnaars Thomas Bartholomew Kevin Steckel	<u>NAYS</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
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Councilor Kratz made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Schnaars, to request that the Civil Service Commission extend the Civil Service list for police officers up to 1 year from the date

that the last list was approved. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Roll call, voting as follows:

ROLL CALL

AYES

NAYS

ABSTAIN

Bryon Reed
Jason Ruff
Joseph Wechsler
Dave Schnaars
Thomas Bartholomew
Kevin Steckel

ADJOURNMENT

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

President Reed declared the meeting adjourned at 8:55PM.

Daniel L. Stevens
Borough Secretary