

**BOROUGH OF SLATINGTON
COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES
9/14/20**

The Regular Meeting of Council was held on **Monday, September 14, 2020**, at 7:05 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 7:05 PM with the following in attendance:

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT

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

ABSENT

OTHERS PRESENT

Dave Rachman
Ed Healy
Mayor Niedermeyer
Daniel Stevens
Larry Turoscy

VISITORS

Jeffrey Hausman, Crystal Hausman
Bekki Baumann, Michael J. Eckman
Peter Wayda, Drew Snowberger
Dennis Long, Kris Porter
Karl E. Drumon, Marc Grammes
Lindsay Taylor, Jason Nicholas
Felicia Moore, Nathan Brown
Phil Armstrong, Zach Mako,
Shawn Millan, David Alercia and
Family, majority of the Slatington
Police Department

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 as corrected: Councilor Schnaars noted a on page 3, under the Mayor/Chief Police Remarks and Section C Item 3 it should be “UnWind” Ceremony, not “Un-wine” for the **Council Meeting** of August 10th, 2020; **Committee Meetings** – August 17th, 2020 and August 24th, 2020. President Reed declared the motion passed with following a Voice Vote, All in Favor.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION:

President Reed introduced PA State Representative Zach Mako, who awarded a special presentation to Sgt. David Alercia. President Reed welcomed back and thanked State Representative Zach Mako for his military service in the Middle East. State Representative Zach Mako stated that he respects law and order. Rep. Mako awarded Sgt. Alercia two certificates; one from the Slatington district and one from PA State Representatives Joe Emrick and Marcia Hahn. Representative Mako stated that the training received by the Slatington Police Force, allowed Sgt. Alercia to do his job to protect the community. Rep Mako also stressed the importance of respecting police officers. Representative Mako thanked Sgt. Alercia for his service and good work.

President Reed introduced Shawn Millan from State Senator Pat Browne’s office. He is also appearing for PA State Senator Mario Scavello, and State Senator Lisa Boscola.. Shawn stated that although Sgt. Alercia lives in Senator’s Scavello district, all the senators united to recognize his bravery and dedication

to the people he serves. Shawn presented an award on behalf of Senators Browne, Boscola, and Scavello.

Mayor Niedermeyer read a letter from US Senator Pat Toomey awarding a certificate of special recognition thanking Sgt. Alercia for his valor and bravery.

President Reed introduced County Executive Phil Armstrong. Mr. Armstrong stressed how much they appreciate Sgt. Alercia's valor and his heroic act defending the citizens of Lehigh County. Mr. Armstrong stated that they respect the men in blue and understand what is occurring at this time. Mr. Armstrong awarded a proclamation to Sgt. Alercia.

President Reed introduced County Commissioner Mark Grammes. Commissioner Grammes awarded Sgt. Alercia with a certificate. Commissioner Grammes admires Sgt. Alercia's dedication, the training he does for the Borough of Slatington and also, with the Lehigh County Municipal Emergency Response Team, (MERT). Mark quoted: "When a burning sense of duty flows through the veins of a police officer, like blood it turns the very word police into an emblem of hope, an emblem of righteousness, an emblem of integrity, dignity, and virality." Commissioner Nathan Brown from Emmaus spoke stating that Monday morning quarter back has a new meaning to him. On behalf of the Emmaus PD and Chief Palmer they wish to say good job and congratulations. Commissioner Brown cited from the Good Book: John 15:13 "Greater love hath no man than this, to lay down his life for his friends." Commissioner Brown added that all the men in blue, and other colors, have laid down their lives for us with out even knowing the person. He thanked everyone.

President Reed cited an article from a newspaper stating that local police officers do a lot more than many people realize. They get noticed when they respond to a car accident, a shooting or other news worthy incident, but they also make sure the communities are nice place to live in. They are who you call when your neighbor is blasting their music at 3:00 AM, or when some knucklehead is shooting fireworks over your roof, when a car is blocking your driveway, and when a daredevil dirt biker disrupts traffic. Those quality of life complaints won't make the headlines, but they must be dealt with. President Reed stated they do, and need to, appreciate their police officers. President Reed read a letter from Borough Council. It stated, that like any small-town, occasionally big cities problem arise, which is why we are so grateful to have courageous officers like Sgt. David Alercia who confronted an extremely dangerous situation and put an end to it with good judgment, that he was able to exercise while managing a harrowing scenario. Sgt Alercia has had to deal with a lot during his 18 years with our towns police department. He has responded to everything from devastating fires, messy domestic clashes, drug overdoses, and getting kicked where it counts while apprehending a culprit from stealing Christmas cards for cash. He needed all of his training, professionalism, experience, and courage on the morning of August 1st. Receiving gun fire from a dangerous suspect of an attempted homicide without any innocent bystander being hurt. President Reed gave the background which lead up to the dangerous situation occurring in Slatington. Sgt. Alercia sustained a bullet wound to his right arm from incoming fire. Sgt. David Alercia is a true hero and validates the police adage "Slatington's Finest". We are grateful and honored to have him as part of our community. President Reed awarded Sgt. David Alercia a proclamation commending him on valor and acts of courage, without regards for his own safety, while engaging with someone who was armed and dangerous.

Chief Dave Rachman thanked everyone for attending on behalf of the police department. Your accolades are not only appreciated by Sgt. Alercia, but by all of the police. Chief Rachman stated that it is a difficult time to be a police officer. He stated there are times that an officer would not like to remember, but there are those moments that remind them of why they became officers to begin with. Chief Rachman said that one such moment occurred for 2 of their officers early Saturday morning. Officer William Borst and Christopher D'Andrea. These 2 officers responded to an EMS call for a maternity case in the borough. The baby was delivered in the apartment with the assistance of the officers and EMS. These 2 officers should be commended for helping to bring a new life in this world. Chief Rachman wished to acknowledge the sacrifice of Sgt. Alercia's wife. His wife is not only a wife and mother, but a fellow

police officer, one of New York's finest. Chief Rachman thanked Daniele for her services in New York and her unwavering support for her husband Dave. Chief Rachman stated that Sgt. Alercia's father, Thomas, was also a true hero. In 1983 Thomas was instrumental in rescuing 4 children from a raging apartment fire while serving as a fire fighter for Wilson Borough. Thomas, like his son Dave, responded and reacted immediately, and without hesitation, in spite of the peril he was facing, to save the lives of 4 children from burning apartment. Without such courageous and heroic efforts, they would have surely perished. Chief Rachman awarded Sgt Alercia with a Commendation for Valor for extraordinary acts of courage without regard for his own safety while engaging with someone who is armed and extremely dangerous.

President Reed recessed the meeting at 7:32 PM.

President Reed reconvened the meeting at 7:55 PM

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.

Bekki Baumann – 314 Kern Street - Signed in and was recognized to speak. Bekki provided the council with photos of a drainage issue in front of her house. She stated the erosion and property damage is getting bad. She doesn't know why a storm drain can not be put in the ally? Bekki had been informed that it is Washington Township's problem. Bekki has suggested that Slatington and Washington Township work together to get this problem resolved. President Reed will place this on the next committee agenda.

Felicia Moore – 1202 Main Street - Signed in and was recognized to speak. Felicia also provided the council with photos of drainage and curbing issues. Her concern is the erosion to the property during storms. Her property is right on the same corner of Kern and Long Alley. Parts of the curbing in front of her house and 1210 Main Street are gone, there are holes, and rebar is sticking out. Due to this, when it rains water is now leaking into her basement. She asked who is responsible for this? President Reed will place this on the next committee meeting.

Jason Nicholas – Slatington Fire Chief -Signed in and was recognized to speak. Chief Nicholas wished to make it public information that the Slatington Fire Department and the Diamond Fire Company together have obtained a recruitment and retention grant through FEMA in the amount of \$281,500.00. This will be split equally between the 2 departments, and is for recruitment and retention of volunteers. This is a 4-year grant and there is no match required. This grant will be managed by a 3rd party. If the money is not used in 4 years, it must be sent back. Chief Nicholas informed the Council the fire department call volume for August was 43 for a total of 221 calls for the year. They have 49 people on their roster at this time. Chief Nicholas stated they will be doing a media announcement with the Walnutport Fire Department concerning the FEMA grant. Chief Nicholas received a letter from Lindsay Taylor from the NLRA. NRLA is planning to have an evening of scary stories at the covered bridge. There will be a camp fire, camping overnight, and clean up. Lindsay is requesting assistance from the fire department. The 1991 fire truck was not sold, and has been inspected. President Reed stated that it is back on Municibid.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMUNICATIONS AND SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Lindsay Taylor – NRLA – Signed in and was recognized to speak. Lindsay updated the Council on the NLRA events and programs. Their goals are retaining existing families and attracting new families and businesses. A survey was conducted by the National Recreation Parks Society that 77% of adults consider parks and recreation programs and well-maintained parks could be an important factor in deciding on a place to live. This is a goal for the NLRA to improve the quality of life of the residents and the most economical way possible. Slatington is only one of the municipalities in the NLRA. The NRLA did conduct a Bulldog Blast within the green phase regulations at no cost. The also provided free lunches,

courtesy of the Northern Lehigh School District. Many families benefited from structured supervised programs for their kids at no cost for a 5-week period. They gave over 250 activity kits to kids at no charge. For the adults they had their first series of Unwind Wednesday's concerts at the Trailhead. They are offering some programs that were prior to COVID such as tennis lessons. In the fall they plan to have scary ghost stories with Charles Adam at the Covered Bridge and a Hoot Hike that will precede the stories. Plans for a simplified Trunk or Treat will be held for the kids; there will be mini-bulldog vacation camps during school breaks. A candy cane hunt will also be held within the restrictions of the COVID. The NRLA has secured over \$250,000.00 in grants over the past year and half. These grants have helped compensate for the programs. The NRLA is moving forward with the amphitheater, the bathrooms, and the disc golf course at Victory Park for next year. The NRLA is asking residents what they would like at the West End Park. They are not giving up on the community center, but they are moving to plan B to secure a certificate of occupancy for the building and get a tenant in it to raise funds. This would eventually become the property of the NLRA. Lindsay thanked the Council for the opportunity to speak. Lindsay informed the Council that the Mannered Mutts Four-Legged Friends Fest at the Slatington Trailhead scheduled for Saturday, September 19th, 2020, has been postponed until the Spring. However, they will conduct a pack walk along the trail on October 24th at 3:00 PM. Mannered Mutts will be there to talk about obedience, training, and trail etiquette.

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 Kratz 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>	<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 attended the Wednesday Unwind Ceremony at the Slatington Trailhead on August 12th and August 26th. He also attended a Roundtable discussion at the NOVA Station on August 13th. Mayor Niedermeyer spoke with Denise Martinez. On the first Saturday in December they will have the Warm and Cozy event and Santa Claus will distribute coats and hats at the Trailhead.

Chief Rachman

Chief Rachman thanked the Council, Manager Stevens, and Mayor Niedermeyer for making this successful awards presentation. Councilor Schnaars and the Council thanked Chief Rachman for the Slatington Police Department training.

STANDING COMMITTEES

A. Highway

Councilor David Schnaars

1. Councilor Schnaars made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Ruff, to put the electrical conduit in on the project at Memorial Park project so that the lights might be added on at a later date. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Voice Vote, All in Favor.

Mayor Niedermeyer commented that when they have the lighting ceremony there are complaints that it is too dark. He stated that they need some type of lights.

2. Councilor Schnaars made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Wechsler, to accept bids for Memorial Park CDBG Project. Bids range from \$94,239.78 to \$126,922.00. President Reed declared the motion passed with following a Voice Vote, All in Favor.
3. Councilor Schnaars made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Kratz to award Memorial Park CDBG projects to G&B Construction for \$94,239.78. Contingent on meeting all the requirements of Lehigh County, Lehigh Engineering and the Borough Solicitor. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Roll call, voting as follows:

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

B. Public Safety

Councilor Kevin Steckel

1. Councilor Steckel informed the Council that the 1991 fire truck did not sell and is back on Municibid.

C. Human/Community Services

Councilor Jason Ruff

1. Councilor Ruff contacted Meals on Wheels to find out how many people they serve in Slatington. He was informed that Slatington Borough proper has 9 people currently being serviced and they deliver 20 days per 4-week month, they receive 2 meals per day. Councilor Ruff made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Weschler, to approve a donation to Meals on Wheels for \$250.00. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Roll call, voting as follows:

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

2. The Homecoming Parade has been canceled. Informational only
3. Thank you to team organized by Slatington Rotary Club for work on Memorial Park. Informational only. Manager Stevens informed the Council that the new 10 ft. x 6 ft. American flag had arrived today. He also stated that the Vigilant has agreed to pay for that flag. Representative Mako donated the Pennsylvania flag. Both flags were erected today by the road crew. Manager Stevens will write a thank you letter.

4. The Council discussed if they would have Trick or Treat in Slatington. Councilor Ruff made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Schnaars, to approve Trick or Treat night on Wednesday, 10/28/20 from 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Voice Vote, All in Favor.
5. This was discussed earlier in the meeting. Readdress the letter, dated July 30, 2020, from Lindsay Taylor, Northern Lehigh Recreation, to hold the 1st Mannered Mutts Four-Legged Friends Fest at the Slatington Trailhead on Saturday, September 19th.
6. The Borough was notified 9/14/2020 that the well at Victory Park test sample failed. Restroom and water access must remain closed. Informational only. This will be placed on the next committee meeting.

D. Finance

Councilor Thomas Bartholomew

1. Councilor Bartholomew made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Kratz, to adopt Resolution R-14-20, *a resolution of the Borough Council of the Borough of Slatington, Lehigh County, PA adopting a records retention and destruction policy*. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Voice Vote, All in Favor.
2. Councilor Bartholomew made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Kratz, to adopt Ordinance 701, *an ordinance of the Borough of Slatington, Lehigh County, PA, amending Section 141-7 of Chapter 141, Article II (relating to residential rental, rooming and commercial units) of the Borough Codified Ordinances*. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Roll call, voting as follows:

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

3. Councilor Bartholomew made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Wechsler, to approve contract extension agreement between SEIU 668 and the Borough of Slatington, extending current contract until December 31, 2021. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Roll call, voting as follows:

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

4. 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: Sally Connole – Deceased - \$16.50 (3 x \$5.50); Dawn Herman –

Deceased - \$16.50 (3 x \$5.50); Karen Machrer – Deceased - \$5.50; Tina Martranft – Deceased - \$11.00 (2 x \$5.50). President Reed declared the motion passed following a Roll call, voting as follows:

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

5. The Council reviewed letter dated Aug. 18, 2020, from ACER Associates, LLC, concerning NEPA Survey- cellular Antenna Facility. Informational only
6. Councilor Bartholomew made a motion, duly seconded by Councilor Kratz, to renew lease with Turning Point for a term of 1 year beginning on October 1, 2020 for \$575.00/month. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Roll call, voting as follows:

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

7. The Council reviewed the letter from County of Lehigh dated 9/8/2020 concerning the CBDG-CV Application.

E. Sewer/Solid Waste

Councilor Joseph Wechsler

1. E-mail dated 8/31/20, from Duane Szczesny regarding the Lehigh Street meter. Informational only. Manager Stevens called LCA; they just installed the meter, but there is difficulty in obtaining readings.
- 2a. Motion to authorize September 14, 2020. Meeting transfer for Sewer Authority bills: Edmund Healy 6/9/20 to 9/14/20 \$1108.80; Tad Miller 6/9/20 to 9/14/20 \$125.00; Brown & Brown Treasurer’s Bond \$250.00 Total **\$1483.80**. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Roll call, voting as follows:

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

2b. Motion to approve transfer for Assistant Treasurer's Time and Travel Report for the period of 6/9/20 to 9/14/20 Time \$250.00; Travel \$63.83 **Total \$313.83**. 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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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 Wechsler, to approve LCA installing a sample port on Welshtown Road. President Reed declared the motion passed following a Voice Vote, All in Favor.

President Reed informed the Council that the Wizard will coming on Wednesday. Manager Dan Stevens and Councilor Ron Kratz will join President Bryon Reed in talking with him.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS: Manager Stevens informed the Council that the airport will have a hot air balloon glow event in October.

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.)

EXECUTIVE SESSION – President Reed recessed to executive session at 9:00 PM. At 9:05 PM, President Reed reconvened the meeting. Legal matters were discussed in executive session.

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, Councilor Ruff 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 9:07 PM.

Daniel L. Stevens
Borough Secretary