

WILSON BOROUGH
NORTHAMPTON COUNTY
PENNSYLVANIA
February 8, 2021

The first meeting of February of the Council of The Borough of Wilson was held virtually via Zoom. President Verenna called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Roll call followed.

PRESENT:

Justin Woodring	Russell Lipari	John Burke
Scott Palinkas	James McGowan	
Tony Verenna	Jeffrey Bracken	

ABSENT: Pamela Taylor

Also present were: Solicitor Stanley Margle, Borough Manager Jill Garcia, Police Chief Christian Meehan, Fire Chief Joseph Sipel, Supervisor of Public Works Eric Flowers, and Code Officer Emanuel Machado.

READING OF THE MINUTES:

Motion by Mr. Woodring to approve Council Meeting minutes from January 28, 2021. Second by Mr. Burke. Roll call vote followed. Yes votes were cast by Mr. Burke, Mr. Bracken, Mr. Lipari, Mr. McGowan, Mr. Palinkas, Mr. Verenna, and Mr. Woodring. Motion passed with a 7-0 vote.

GUEST:

NONE

PRESENTATION OF MATTERS BY RESIDENTS AND TAXPAYERS:

NONE

COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS:

Mr. Verenna advised he received a letter of resignation from Councilman Dave Jones.

Solicitor Margle advised the following when Council selects a new councilperson for the 3rd ward:

1. Seat must be filled within thirty days.
2. Person appointed must live in the 3rd ward, must be a registered voter and must have one year residency in the Borough.
3. There is no requirement to advertise.
4. Post opening on the Borough Website requesting letters of interest.
5. Council must make a motion to appoint. Solicitor Margle suggested the motion be made in alphabetical order of interested parties.
6. March 8, 2021 is the deadline for Council to nominate someone and must be by resolution.
7. Individual appointed must run in the November general election.

A motion to accept Dave Jones's resignation was made by Mr. Verenna. Second by Mr. Burke. Yes votes were cast by Mr. Burke, Mr. Bracken, Mr. Lipari, Mr. McGowan, Mr. Palinkas, Mr. Verenna, and Mr. Woodring. Motion passed with a 7-0 vote.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT:

Mr. Verenna voiced his concern regarding the lack of support between departments during the most recent snowstorms.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR:

Mayor Barrett thanked Public Works for the great job they did with snow removal.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE BOROUGH MANAGER:

Ms. Garcia asked for a motion to allow her to sign the Disaster Declaration which will allow her to claim monies for over-time and contractors hired for snow removal. A motion made by Mr. Woodring to approve. Second by Mr. Burke. Yes votes were cast by Mr. Burke, Mr. Bracken, Mr. Lipari, Mr. McGowan, Mr. Palinkas, Mr. Verenna, and Mr. Woodring. Motion passed with a 7-0 vote.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES:

GENERAL GOVERNMENT:

NONE

POLICE:

Chief Meehan advised all departments are working well with Public Works by moving cars and helping with snow removal.

FIRE:

NONE

PUBLIC WORKS:

Mr. Flowers thanked the Police and Fire Departments for helping during the snowstorms.

PARKS:

Mr. Lipari advised this most recent snowstorm proves that Public Works needs additional help however, they did a tremendous job with the five employees that are currently staffed. Mr. Lipari made a motion to hire Mr. Michael Leh full-time.

Solicitor Margle advised Council should follow standard protocol to hire someone from part-time to full-time.

Mr. Lipari advised he was not concerned with the standard protocol at this time.

Solicitor Margle advised unless there is a defined emergency Council should follow the protocol for hiring. Solicitor Margle asked the Borough Manager, Ms. Garcia what the procedure is for moving a part-time to full-time employment. Ms. Garcia advised in Public Works the normal procedure is to interview. Solicitor Margle suggested hiring Mr. Leh full-time for a 90-day period subject to review and interview at the end of the 90-days.

Mr. Verenna advised to get a part-time list with CDL licenses to come in and help during snow storms.

A second was made by Mr. Woodring with the caveat that Mr. Leh would be subject to review after the 90-day period. Mr. Lipari accepted the modification.

Ms. Garcia advised that she must place Mr. Leh on all insurances and enroll him in pension plan for that 90-day period starting on day one, there is no waiting period.

A motion made by Mr. Lipari to move Mike Leh from part-time to full-time status for a 90-day period due to the emergency circumstances in the Borough of Wilson and at the end of 90-days his continued status as a full-time employee is subject to review and further action by Borough Council. He must also obtain a CDL permit within that 90-day timeframe. Second made by Mr. Palinkas. Roll call vote followed. Yes votes were cast by Mr. Burke, Mr. Lipari, Mr. Palinkas, and Mr. Woodring. No votes cast by Mr. Bracken, Mr. Mc Gowan and Mr. Verenna. Motion passed with a 4-3 vote.

CODE COMMITTEE:

NONE

2020 COMMITTEE:

The Centennial celebration has been moved to October 14-16, 2021.

ATHLETIC COMMISSION

Ms. Melissa Rosati of the Wilson Borough Football Association asked if the Resolution to separate the Cheer Association from the Football Association was going to be addressed during the meeting? Mr. Verenna advised he needs to speak with the Solicitor. Mr. Lipari made a motion to allow Solicitor Margle to draft the Resolution. Motion died for a lack of second.

CODE DEPARTMENT

NONE

ATTORNEY:

Solicitor Margle discussed the financing for the new fire truck. Solicitor Margle received the draft copy of the contract. PNC bank could not explain to Solicitor Margle the way the fire truck was going to be financed. They could not provide an explanation as to why they did not offer a lower interest rate that would save the Borough over \$100,000 and why they refer to the financing as a lease.

A motion made by Mr. Palinkas to authorize Borough Manager and Solicitor to explore the best interest rate possible, to negotiate the most favorable interest rate and terms available to the Borough and lastly to bring to Borough Council when all has been completed and have the best package and resolution. A second was made by Mr. Woodring. Yes votes were cast by Mr. Burke, Mr. Bracken, Mr. McGowan, Mr. Palinkas, Mr. Verenna, and Mr. Woodring. Motion passed with a 6-0 vote.

Solicitor Margle advised the Northpoint project sketch plan has been submitted. Solicitor Margle advised Borough Council to review carefully the proposed LERTA (Local Economic

Revitalization Tax Assistance) Resolution that Northpoint will be asking Council to conduct a public hearing on.

Solicitor Margle advised his office is working on the response to the challenge from The Hillis Group and hopes to have the information for next meeting for Council to review.

Solicitor Margle advised a meeting is in the process of being scheduled potentially for March regarding the Dixie Building.

COG:

NONE

MECAB:

NONE

OLD BUSINESS:

NONE

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Verenna made a motion to create a new Wilson Borough Cheer Association. Second by Mr. Burke. Yes votes were cast by Mr. Burke, Mr. Bracken, Mr. Lipari, Mr. Palinkas, Mr. Verenna, and Mr. Woodring. No votes cast by Mr. McGowan Motion passed with a 6-1 vote.

ORDINANCES:

NONE

RESOLUTIONS:

NONE

CAUCUS:

NONE

BILLS AND ACCOUNTS:

Bills were in the amount of \$137,185.60. A motion to approve the bills made by Mr. Burke. Second by Mr. Woodring. Roll call vote followed. Yes votes were cast by Mr. Burke, Mr. Bracken, Mr. Lipari, Mr. McGowan, Mr. Palinkas, Mr. Verenna, and Mr. Woodring. Motion passed with a 7-0 vote.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Lipari made a Motion to adjourn at 8:59 pm. Second by Mr. Woodring and Council concurred.

STEPHANIE N. JONES
BOROUGH CLERK/TREASUER