

# **MINUTES FOR SPECIAL MEETING OF NESQUEHONING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Wednesday, February 12, 2020 at 6:00p.m., Borough Office  
114 W. Catawissa Street, Nesquehoning, PA 18240

**ROLL CALL:** COUNCILMEN JACOBS, PAUL, RADOCHA, SABOL III; COUNCILWOMEN FOX, POREMBO; PRESIDENT HAWK; & MAYOR KITCHKO

President Hawk called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Councilman Paul arrived at 6:20 p.m. & Councilman Sabol arrived at 6:30 p.m.

**PURPOSE:** Committee/Workshop

**1. STREETS** MICHAEL RADOCHA, CHAIRMAN; LOUIS PAUL, CO-CHAIRMAN;  
GEORGE SABOL

Councilman Radocha stated how he had asked the Borough crew to patch some potholes on Marconi Avenue, which they did. He stated how there was an issue with the Borough crew pushing back on Industrial Road. Councilwoman Fox stated how they were working on Yard Street and Tippetts Road also. Councilman Radocha stated that if they get any heavy rain, it was going to turn to mud, which it did. He stated how Mark Mandart had brought it to his attention. Councilman Radocha stated how they have a borough crew member off of work. He also stated about overtime.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

The Borough Council Members entered into an Executive Session at 6:07 p.m. for personnel reasons. The Council Members exited their Executive Session at 6:21 p.m.

Councilman Paul stated how the Borough crew was pushing back on the shoulders because of the water runoff, ending up on the roadway.

Councilman Radocha stated about safety vest and raincoats. Councilman Jacobs stated how they should have them. Councilwoman Porembo stated how some of their clothing allowance should be used towards reflective clothing. Councilman Radocha stated how the Borough was supposed to supply the safety vest. President Hawk stated how they should have them, because they were purchased.

Councilman Paul stated about the sewer line in New Columbus. He stated how he tried to do some figures, cost of the job by a contractor versus the cost if the Borough crew would have dug it. He stated that according to his figures, the Borough crew could have saved money by digging it themselves. Councilman Paul stated that when he worked for the Borough, they install the inlets on the New Columbus hill, saving the Borough approximately \$16,000.00. He asked who calls/approved the contractor. Councilman Paul stated how they were always claiming that the Borough workers did not do anything, but they could have dug the sewer line and saved \$3,000.00. He stated how there were times when they need a contractor, but he wanted to know if they needed a contractor, because he wanted to know the prices for equipment. Councilman Paul stated that if he could save taxpayers \$3,000.00 on a project, he was going to do it. Councilman Radocha stated how did not start as a Borough job. He stated how the County property had a block sewer line, which was blocked under the sidewalks. He stated that they had discovered how the sewer line was broke when the water line was installed back in the 1980s, which was the reason for the blockage.

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Councilman Radocha stated how the sewer line was a 4" terra-cotta line, which Mr. Pilla decided to change to a 6" line. Councilman Paul asked if it was a County job, why the Borough got billed for \$4,800.00. Councilman Radocha stated how it ended up being two separate main lines and the property owner was not responsible for the main. He stated how Susko's properties were going into the County's line and they changed it to go into a main line. Councilman Sabol asked if Susko was getting a bill. Councilman Radocha stated how it was the Borough's main line.

Councilman Radocha stated that the second day, when they were laying the main line, Mr. Pilla had a surprise inspection at the sewer plant and was not able to be there all day; so they laid all the pipe themselves. Councilman Sabol asked Councilman Radocha, how come he received a call to dig and not the Borough workers. Councilman Paul asked Councilman Radocha who authorized him to do the work for the Borough. He asked Councilman Radocha if he was automatically called when they had to dig something. Councilman Radocha stated how he was there, working for the County. He stated how Mr. Pilla would not get in the hole with the Borough workers digging. Councilman Paul stated how he did. He stated how Mr. Staehle was a very good backhoe operator. Councilman Radocha stated how Mr. Staehle did not have the qualifications to run it back. Councilman Paul stated how they had to start to get along. Councilwoman Porembo stated that to move forward, they should review/discuss if the project could be done in-house. She stated that even if they would have to put the project on hold for a day to get everything in order. Councilman Radocha stated that when they were figuring a price to do a job in-house to add in the Blue Cross/Blue Shield and the workers compensation insurance plus the wear and tear on the equipment. Councilman Sabol stated how they have been through how they do not get along; make them work together.

Councilman Radocha asked if Mike Tirpak had talked to anyone about Willow Lane. Councilman Paul stated how he had talked to Mr. Stempa and he was going to cut the street down. Councilman Radocha stated how Mr. Tirpak was not confident on the grades and was supposed to come out to check them. Councilwoman Fox stated how nobody contacted Mr. Tirpak after the December meeting to have him contact Mr. Malaska. She stated that it was not until after the January meeting that Secretary/Treasurer Ahner had asked Mr. Tirpak to Contact Mr. Malaska, which he did meet with him. Councilman Paul stated how he sees a total nightmare on Willow Lane; between the engineering and the curbing. Councilwoman Fox asked if anything was going to be done to fill in the holes on Willow Lane. Councilman Radocha stated how the Borough crew had done it that day. Councilman Sabol stated how some of the people were complaining about their property behind the curbing.

Councilman Sabol asked what happened with the street; street too high, curbing too low. Councilman Jacobs stated how the street was going to be cut down over 12" Councilman Paul stated how he did not know that they were going to cut down the street that much. He stated how that was going to make a big difference. Councilman Jacobs stated how he did not know if they were going to have enough room to store all of the material that was being taken off of that street. Councilman Sabol asked if Mr. Stempa followed the right grades. Councilman Radocha stated how Mr. Tirpak was going to check them. Councilman Paul stated about getting a meeting with Mr. Tirpak.

Councilwoman Fox stated about the trucks and getting them listed on Municibid. She stated how they were talking about only getting rid of two of the trucks. Councilman Radocha stated how they could sell all three of them as far as he was concerned. Councilman Sabol stated how the Borough crew would like to keep the old green Chevy.

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Councilwoman Fox asked about the white Dodge. Councilman Jacobs stated how that truck was going. Councilman Paul stated how they should keep the green Chevy and when it dies, they would get rid of it. Councilwoman Fox stated how they would get rid of the white Dodge and the white Sewer trucks. She stated about getting them listed on Municibid. Councilman Jacobs stated how they have to put limits on the trucks; \$1,000.00 on the Dodge and \$5,000.00 on the Sewer Ford.

Councilwoman Fox asked how they were with the Railroad and the drainage pipes. Councilman Sabol stated how Matt Johnson had informed him that the Borough did exactly what they had told them to do. He stated how Andy Muller was not 100% happy with them. Councilman Sabol stated how it was a good effort on the Borough's part. Councilwoman Porembo asked how many they had to do. Councilman Sabol stated how he did not know, because he did not know if the Borough was responsible for all of them. President Hawk asked if they were going to do any more. Councilman Sabol stated how they were going to wait to hear back from the Railroad. Councilwoman Fox stated that as long as the Borough keeps the ditch dug out at Industrial Road and Park Avenue, the water should keep flowing. Councilman Jacobs stated about getting a new pipe installed on Industrial Road.

Councilwoman Porembo asked if they were getting a report concerning the train derailment, because of the condition of the crossing. Councilman Paul stated "yes". Councilman Jacobs asked if the black top was torn up at the crossing. Councilman Paul stated "no". Councilwoman Porembo stated how the concrete was a little chewed up. Councilman Paul stated how they were down to look at it. He stated how he sent the Borough crew down to look at it also.

Councilman Paul stated how he did not know what they wanted to do with the apartment. He stated how he would have the Borough crew spackle and paint on rainy days.

Secretary/Treasurer Ahner asked if they were keeping an eye on the inlet behind Kovatch Ford. Councilman Paul stated how he was watching it himself. He stated how they have to do something with that inlet over the summer. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner asked what happened within the last two years that they now have an issue. Councilman Radocha stated that they paved Route 309 and all the water was directed to that side of the road. He stated that they had a lot of rain over the past year.

Councilwoman Fox asked about Rhume Run Tunnel. Councilman Radocha stated how they had purchased the material. He stated that they have blocked it off, but the caution tape keeps getting ripped down. Councilwoman Fox asked when they were going to fix it. Councilman Jacobs stated that they should get to it, once the weather breaks. He stated how the property has sold. Councilman Radocha stated how they will need to get an easement from the new property owner.

### **2. SEWER**

**MARY FOX, CHAIRWOMAN; FRANK JACOBS, CO- CHAIRMAN;  
MICHAEL RADOCHA**

Councilwoman Fox stated how they had a Committee meeting with Mr. Pilla on January 31<sup>st</sup>. She stated how there was a company, who installed a rebuilt flow pace in the Chlorine Building, which did not work. She stated so they had to install a new one at a cost of \$2,200.00. Councilwoman Fox stated that they replace the two heads on the Chlorine Tank, which were replaced back in 2010. She stated how the cost to replace them was \$1,000.00 each.

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Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how they had received the bill and it was for \$5,300.00. Councilwoman Fox stated how they were not supposed to be billed for the time to install the rebuilt unit since it did not work. She stated that she would have Mr. Pilla have the invoice broken down.

Councilwoman Fox stated how Unit #3 was done in 2010, but the bigger piping was not done in stainless steel. She stated how they had two companies, who were supposed to give them prices, to replace the piping. Councilwoman Fox stated how Martins was replacing the drive from Unit #3, which should be done soon. She stated how Mr. Pilla was going to start emptying Unit #2 in the beginning of July. She stated that they will be able to have their one-year test on the paint job. Councilwoman Fox stated how they had to replace the hot water heater at the Sewer Plant.

Councilwoman Fox stated how they had an issue at the Lake; the pump station by Ken Snyder's property. She stated how there was a power outage in October/November during a storm. Councilwoman Fox stated how they were getting a lot of infiltration from Rush Township. She stated that with the power down, the pump station could not keep up with the water and they had sewage that backed up into Mr. Snyder's property. Councilwoman Fox stated how Mr. Pilla had purchased three check valves to install on the properties' sewer lines. She stated how she had instructed Solicitor Yurchak to send letters to the three property owners concerning the check valves, because they needed permission to go onto the properties. Councilwoman Fox stated how the check valves were supposed to be installed a pipes-length from the house. She stated how young Ken Snyder wanted it installed out at the road. She stated how the property owners would have to sign a waiver and maintain the check valve once they were installed. Councilwoman Fox stated that if they wanted the check valve installed by the road instead of where it was supposed to be installed, it would be noted, because any damage that would occur if the check valve would fail was the property owners' problem.

Councilwoman Fox stated how Mr. Snyder was becoming irritated because the insurance company was not getting back to them. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how the insurance company was waiting on the adjusters. She stated how either the insurance company or the adjusters had been in touch with them because now there was an issue with mold and they were waiting on documentation. Councilwoman Fox stated how she and Mr. Pilla have talked to Mr. Snyder in regards to the issue. President Hawk asked when they were sending out the letters. Councilwoman Fox stated how they should have been mailed that day.

Councilwoman Fox stated how she did not know what they could do about the infiltration from Rush Township. Councilman Radocha stated how they were going to have to address it to some extent. He stated how the flow was increased for days after a rainstorm, because it was not just downspouts; it was sub-pumps and french drains as well.

Councilwoman Fox stated that after April 15<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Pilla wants to get letters mailed out to the residents of Willow Lane, Rhume Street, Coal Street and Mill Street to notify them of testing for infiltration. Councilman Jacobs asked why they wanted to start with those streets when they knew that most of the infiltration was coming from New Columbus. Councilwoman Fox stated how they could start wherever they wanted. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner asked if they had to send letters to each and every homeowner. Councilman Jacobs stated "yes". Councilwoman Fox stated that when they smoke test, they may end up with smoke in their house. President Hawk stated how people might close up their illegal hookups until the testing has been completed. Councilwoman Porembo stated how it was good to keep them informed. President Hawk stated that the surprise test might be the way to go.

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Councilman Sabol asked about the white crane on the back of the new sewer truck. Councilman Radocha stated how it was for pulling pump motors out from the pumping stations.

### **3. BUILDINGS      GEORGE SABOL, III, CHAIRMAN; MICHAEL RADOCHA, CO-CHAIRMAN; FRANK JACOBS**

No report.

### **4. PUBLIC SAFETY      ROSEMARY POREMBO, CHAIRWOMAN; LOUIS PAUL CO-CHAIRMAN; DAVID HAWK**

Councilwoman Porembo stated how the Committee had a meeting with Chief Smith and there were three grants that he was working on 1) JAG, 2) LSA & 3) COPS. She stated how he was also writing a policy for the cameras. Councilwoman Porembo stated how they were reviewing the Evidence Procedure Policy. She stated how they had asked about the SOP, which Solicitor Yurchak was working on that revision.

Councilwoman Porembo stated that on May 17<sup>th</sup>, they would be holding a fundraiser basket raffle at the Nesquehoning Hose Company for three activities; trunk or treat, Christmas tree lighting in the New Columbus that Park and National Night Out (first responders and borough employees).

Councilwoman Porembo stated about Chief Smith's memo concerning the part-time police officers. She stated how the memo references the uniforms and hours for court time. Councilwoman Porembo stated how they were also requesting an inventory list of items that has been turned back into the Police Department. She stated how it was also discussed about increasing the part-time officers pay rate, but they did not make any decisions. Councilwoman Porembo stated how they had also discussed advertising for part-time officers, which could be placed in the Times News and the Morning Call. Councilwoman Fox asked if there was any way that they could advertise at the academy. Mayor Kitchko stated how Officer Neikam usually does that. Councilwoman Fox asked if it was better to advertise through an internet site.

Councilwoman Porembo stated how they were working on a report to meet with the Carbon County Prison Board. She stated how they were getting their statistics and itemizing their cost for the calls to the prison. Mayor Kitchko stated how they wanted to have all their ducks in line. So when they attended the meeting, they can tell them what they want from the County, because that was what it was costing them. He stated how they were going to try March meeting. Councilwoman Porembo stated how they might not get there until April. She stated how they were working on it.

Councilwoman Porembo stated how they discussed with the fire companies about photographing and videotaping and then posting on social media. She stated how nothing was put into writing. Councilwoman Porembo stated how the Mayor and the chief were working together. She stated how the police department would be in charge at any scene. She stated how they were working on procedures when volunteers for photographing/videotaping at a scene.

Councilwoman Porembo stated how they asked the fire companies to provide the Borough with their Act 172 certified 2019 list and their Act 172 2020 volunteer list by February 21<sup>st</sup>.

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Councilwoman Poremba stated how they also had a letter out to Carl Faust to respond by February 21<sup>st</sup> in regards to 90 E. Catawissa Street and 121 W. High Street. She stated that if they did not hear anything from him, they would have to move forward with hiring another firm to do inspections.

Mayor Kitchko stated about the company, who administers their CDL testing in town. He stated how the truck driver, who took out the pole on Locust Street, was testing and did not have a permit. Mayor Kitchko stated how they were going to write a letter to Kuhn Transportation informing them that the Borough did not want them administering CDL tests on the Borough streets. He stated how they could not stop them from coming through town, state route. Councilman Paul gave an explanation.

Mayor Kitchko stated how they have an employee (crossing guard), who was going to be handing in his resignation. He stated how he also had someone to hire to fill the position, Bertha Shreffler. Mayor Kitchko stated how they also had a new part-time police officer, Isaac Jimenez.

Councilman Sabol stated how he had received a complaint about the crossing guard in New Columbus, because he was not visible. Councilman Paul stated how the bus should not be backing up into the intersection. He stated how there was no reason why they could not go around the block.

Mayor Kitchko stated about the request to detail the white police car. He stated how he received a quote for \$1,450.00.

Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how she was informed that the program was ending (contract expired) with the parolees at 127 W. Catawissa Street and the property owner was not renewing the contract.

### **5. SANITATION      LOUIS PAUL, CHAIRMAN; ROSEMARY POREMBO, CO-CHAIRWOMAN, MARY FOX**

No report.

### **6. RECREATION      GEORGE SABOL III, CHAIRMAN; LOUIS PAUL, CO-CHAIRMAN; MARY FOX**

Councilman Sabol stated how the Committee met to discuss the future plans for the Borough parks. He stated how he had presented a drawing to the Committee in regards to his plans for the Railroad Station Park. Councilman Sabol stated how Secretary/Treasurer Ahner had given them, the engineering paperwork for the project (grant awarded) in Johnson Park. He stated how they would like to get electric installed at the New Columbus Park for events (tree lighting, movies, music) in the park. Councilman Sabol stated about looking into grants (EPA, DCNR) to have walking/exercise paths at the Sports Complex Field.

Councilman Sabol stated how they attended the Recreation Commission meeting on February 3<sup>rd</sup>. he stated how they had discussed the Commission using the Borough credit card to purchase items rather than using personal credit cards and then looking for reimbursement. Councilwoman Fox stated how they were not allowed to use a debit card, because bank transactions require two signatures. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how they might be able to get a bank issued credit card for them to use, besides the Bank of America credit card, they already have. Councilman Sabol stated about looking into other alternatives rather than them using their personal cards.

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Councilman Sabol stated how they also discussed rental fees for nonprofit organizations, because they should be getting a break on the fees.

Councilman Sabol stated about the bathrooms and heating in the bathrooms at the Recreation Center. Councilwoman Fox stated how the heating pipes under the seating area needed to be cleaned. Mayor Kitchko stated how they have to take the benches apart to get at them. Councilman Sabol stated how they were claiming that the heat was not getting to the bathrooms. Mayor Kitchko stated how they might have something turned off for the bathrooms heat. Councilman Jacobs stated how it might be air bound and that there was a bleeder valve.

Councilman Sabol stated how they were asking for a new kitchen. He stated how they do not want to hire a contractor, because Pam Zlock's son could do it. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated that if they were going to remodel the kitchen, it would have to be done under the UCC. Councilman Radocha stated how it would have to be brought up to code. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how they were also going to have to make it handicap accessible, because it was a commercial, public building.

Councilwoman Fox stated how they had purchased their bingo license and their small games of chance license.

Councilwoman Fox stated how they had asked for the Borough crew not to plow snow into the handicap parking spots. President Hawk stated how they had asked the same thing for the dumpsters not to be placed in the handicap parking spots.

Councilwoman Fox asked who was supposed to shovel the sidewalks. Councilman Jacobs stated how he has seen the Borough crew shoveling already. Councilwoman Fox stated how it was a borough building. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how they should be shoveling sidewalks/parking lots for all of the Borough building/properties. President Hawk stated how he agreed that they should be maintaining all of the Borough properties. Councilman Paul stated how the streets were more important than the sidewalks.

Councilman Sabol stated about the issue they were having at the Railroad Station Park with Mr. Stempa. He stated how Mr. Stempa continues to pull onto the property, creating ruts. Councilman Sabol stated how he had the Borough crew place a barricade across the curb cut opening and it was removed. He stated how he had placed it there again, two days later and it was removed again. Councilman Sabol stated how he had talked to Councilman Paul and they had the Borough crew place a rock at the curb cut opening. He stated how it was not placed right up to the curb line, so Mr. Stempa, was still pulling onto the property. Councilman Sabol stated how he had called Councilman Paul to have the big rock placed at the curb opening. He stated how they placed the rock, the barricade and also posted a no trespassing sign. Councilman Sabol stated how Mr. Stempa called President Hawk, who allowed, temporarily, to push back the rock until they decide what was going on. He stated how Solicitor Yurchak had told President Hawk that Mr. Stempa might have some kind of claim to it, which he did not agree. Councilman Jacobs stated how Mr. Stempa installed the curbing for the County. He stated how the property was now owned by the Borough. Councilman Paul stated how they had tried to talk to Mr. Stempa after that and he blew up at Councilman Sabol, so they got in their cars and left. He stated how they were willing to work with him. Councilman Sabol stated that after President Hawk had granted permission, he wanted to see what they could do to still allow Mr. Stempa access. He stated how Mr. Stempa did not want to negotiate.

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Councilwoman Fox stated that if she had granted permission for someone to user property; once she sells her property, that agreement was gone. Councilman Sabol stated how they should send him a letter not to use the property. Councilman Paul stated how they should also send him a letter about all the tires. Councilman Sabol stated how the tires would be a safety issue over the summer. President Hawk stated how he should get a letter for the tires. There was discussion about tires and how they could get rid of them, because of the amount of tires, they had up at the Borough garage.

Councilman Paul stated how they should send a letter for the tires and the property. Councilman Sabol stated how he will then move the rock back.

Councilman Jacobs stated about a visit from Mike Skrimcovsky, who lives on Coal Street in regards to a curb cut and the damage to the road on School Street. Councilman Radocha stated how the damage was done prior to the poll building. He stated how he had asked Secretary/Treasurer Ahner to send him a letter three months ago. After a discussion, Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how she had talked to Mr. Stempa and there was a small spot, which broke out when they did the curbing. She stated how the full crack/damage on School Street came from the independent contractors who were contracted through Pioneer Building. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how Mr. Skrimcovsky had mentioned it to them while we were doing the work. She stated how Mr. Skrimcovsky had given her the name and phone number to his contact from Pioneer Buildings, which she had given to Councilman Radocha. Councilman Sable stated how it was the property owner's responsibility. Councilman Radocha stated how they should send him a letter that he has to get his contractor to fix it, because if the Borough would fix it they would bill the property owner. President Hawk stated how the property owner should be the one who contacts the contractor. Councilman Sabol stated about Secretary/Treasurer Ahner drafting up the three letters.

### **7. BUDGET/ FINANCE**

**FRANK JACOBS, CHAIRMAN; ROSEMARY POREMBO, CO-  
CHAIRWOMAN; DAVID HAWK**

No report.

### **8. PERSONNEL/ SAFETY**

**ROSEMARY POREMBO, CHAIRWOMAN; MARY FOX, CO-  
CHAIRWOMAN; FRANK JACOBS**

Councilwoman Porembo stated about the employee handbook. She stated how the purchasing procedure needed to be added to the handbook. Councilwoman Porembo stated about section 10 in regards to personal files and their procedures. She asked if they had a procedure for the employees to sign their files out. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how an employee is not allowed to take the file out of the office. She stated that if an employee wanted to look at their file either herself or Susan Bamford would have to sit with them while they reviewed it. Councilwoman Porembo stated how they should have some kind of sign-out sheet.

Councilwoman Porembo stated about the classifications and 32 hours for part-time workers. She stated that since Obama care, they may have to revise the hours because of medical insurance.

Councilwoman Porembo stated how they also have to get the light duty policy included in the handbook. She stated how they also need to have a sign off sheet at the back of the book to hand in that the employee had received the handbook.

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**ADJOURNMENT**

**Councilman Jacobs moved and Councilman Sabol seconded to adjourn the meeting. All voted yes. Meeting adjourned at 8:39 p.m.**

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RoniSue Ahner  
Secretary/Treasurer