

MINUTES FOR SPECIAL MEETING OF NESQUEHONING BOROUGH COUNCIL

Wednesday, February 14, 2018 at 6:00p.m., Borough Office
114 W. Catawissa Street, Nesquehoning, PA 18240

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

President Hawk called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Councilman DeMelfi was absent.

President Hawk stated how they would be holding a brief executive session at the end of the meeting.

PURPOSE: Committees/Workshop

1. STREETS MICHAEL RADOCHA, CHAIRMAN; GEORGE SABOL III, CO-CHAIRMAN; FRANK JACOBS

Councilman Radocha stated how they were getting a quote for repairs to the F550 dump truck's plow or a quote to purchase a new plow. He stated how the V plow was pretty beat up and that it was a pain. He stated how they were looking into a regular plow for next year. Councilman Radocha stated how he was going to get them started on patching some pot holes. Councilman Jacobs stated how they would find the money for a new plow rather than paying to repair the V plow.

Councilman Radocha stated how the Vac Truck needed to be serviced and some hoses need to be changed. He stated how he did not know where the police vehicles were being serviced, but the Borough crew could be changing the oil.

Councilman Sabol asked if they had plans to do paving/construction on any streets other than Rhume Street that year. Councilman Radocha stated about possibly getting some of the roads oil and chipped that year. Councilwoman Fox stated how they had oil and chipped the road out of the lake last year and it was so dusty with stones flying up hitting the vehicles. Councilman Radocha stated how they had done it too late in the year, because it was already cold out.

Councilman Sabol stated how he was at the Sewer plant for a social visit and he was reading some newspaper articles about how Ron Tirpak had done a priority list of streets, which he never saw. He stated that what he did see was a cost estimate, but it did not prioritize which roads they should do first. Councilman Sabol stated how it gave a list of the streets and what it would cost for each street. He stated how it was done several years ago and how the cost estimates were probably obsolete. Councilman Radocha asked if they had included black topping in the budget. Councilman Sabol stated how they did not have to do it in 2018, but the \$73,000.00 that they bank . . . Councilwoman Porembo stated how there should be more than that. Councilman Jacobs stated how there was around \$80,000.00 in the account. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how there was approximately \$65,000.00 in the account. Councilman Jacobs stated how they had taken \$20,000.00 out for Hazard Street. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how they had taken funds out of the account for Hazard Street, Tippetts Road, 1st Avenue and 3rd Avenue.

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Councilman Sabol stated to Secretary/Treasurer Ahner about letting them know how much was actually in the account, because she had informed him how they had taken \$3,000.00 out to balance the budget for 2018. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how it was \$3,000.00 out of the budget line item, so they were only looking to bank \$70,000.00 in 2018. She stated how it would be more like \$80,000.00 because they usually deposit the Solar Park payments into that account.

Councilman Sabol stated how he was told how that money was strictly for road repairs when he had asked about matching the funds for the Christmas lights. He stated how they take \$3,000.00 out of that to balance the budget, so it was not strictly for street repair. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how he was talking about two different budget years. Councilman Sabol stated how he was talking about the money that they were realizing from lowering the Sewer and Sanitation bills. He stated how it was a \$73,000.00 windfall. Councilwoman Porembo stated about \$73,000.00 and how they had to take into consideration that they did not raise taxes for 2018. Councilman Sabol stated how it had nothing to do with taxes. Councilwoman Porembo stated how it does have to do with the taxes. Councilwoman Fox stated how they cannot take funds from one account and deposit it into another account. Councilman Sabol stated how he knew that. Councilwoman Porembo stated how they had originally discussed placing a \$5.00 street tax on every household, but they were not able to do something like that. She stated that they increased the millage, but dropped the Sewer and Sanitation, so there would be a wash for the Borough residents. Councilman Sabol stated how they reduced to the Sewer and Sanitation, but raise taxes. Councilwoman Porembo stated “yes”.

Councilman Sabol stated how they were supposed to have \$73,000.00 a year from that increase. Councilwoman Porembo stated how it was for the budget and that the millage increase was not completely for the highway. She stated how they could have increased taxes for 2018 in order to secure the funds for the highway repairs. Councilman Sabol stated how that was not what he was told a year or two ago when they were talking about it. He asked Councilman Radocha if he understood what was going on there. Councilman Radocha stated, “not really”. He stated that he did understand on how they had to balance the budget. Councilman Sabol stated how President Hawk had told him that they could not guarantee that the entire \$73,000.00 would be able to go for street repairs. He stated how he was okay with that, but then the Christmas lighting came around and he thought that they should match what was raised dollar for dollar. Councilman Sabol stated how President Hawk had told him that they could not do it because they did not have any money. He stated how he wanted to use some of the \$73,000.00 they received for streets, but President Hawk stated how that was strictly earmarked for street repairs. Councilman Sabol stated how Secretary/Treasurer Ahner now used \$3,000.00 to balance the 2018 budget. He stated how it was not for street repairs, but it was to balance the budget. President Hawk stated how they have to take a little from everywhere to balance the budget.

Councilman Jacobs stated how it was like a budget they would have for a home, having to rob from Peter to pay Paul. Councilman Sabol stated that when he asked to rob Peter to pay Paul for Christmas lights, they could not do it. Councilman Jacobs stated how they did not have that kind of money in there to do it. Councilman Radocha stated that they use the \$3,000.00 to balance the budget and not to give away.

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Councilman Sabol stated that if they were going to say something, then they should stick to it and not change the rules. He stated how it was earmarked for one thing and they could not use it for that, but they could use it for something else. Councilman Jacobs stated how they have budgeted for A, B and C, but A ended up costing more than they had anticipated, so they have to take funds from B or C. Councilman Sabol stated how he understood it, because he has done it his whole life with his family budget. He stated how he was told that they could not guarantee that it was strictly for streets, but when he asked to take some of that money for street lighting, which the borough should be responsible for in the first place . . . He stated how he was not trying to promote the street lighting, but they said how it was strictly for streets. Councilman Sabol stated that at first it was not strictly for streets, but then it was strictly for streets and now, it was not strictly for streets. Councilwoman Porembo stated how that was where the dilemma was when they sit on a board.

Councilman Sabol stated how he understood about robbing Peter to pay Paul. Councilwoman Porembo stated that if the Borough would have taken money from the street repairs for the lights. She stated how the next thing would be that they could not patch a hole on the street or they were not able to get the dump truck. She stated how one decision causes them to make decisions on other things; it was a ripple effect. Councilwoman Porembo stated how it was what they were going to hold the line to, which they have to do it with \$1.7 million budget. She stated how it may come down to that they will not be able to keep forging ahead, because they were held to \$1.7 million.

Councilman Sabol stated how the \$73,000.00 that they had realized from lowering the Sewer and Sanitation, it was not strictly for street repairs. Councilman Jacobs stated “yes and no”. Councilman Sabol stated how it could not be for lights, but they could use it to balance the budget. President Hawk stated how that was basically it. Councilman Sabol stated how they should have told them that the first place. President Hawk stated that when they have to balance the budget, everything gets jostled around. Councilwoman Fox stated how that \$3,000.00 may still be used for streets, but it might be to purchase the new plow.

Councilman Sable stated how they said at first it could not be guaranteed to be used strictly for street repairs and he lived with that, but then when he said about matching dollar for dollar, not that he was after more money for the lights; they were doing a great job. He stated how they were doing more than what they had to do because it was the Borough’s responsibility, but he was told that when it was time to match dollar for dollar for lights, that was strictly for street repair. Councilwoman Fox stated that if it came down to comparing road repairs to Christmas lights, which one would they want to do. Councilman Sabol stated how they should not tell him how it was for anything, then just street repair and now just for anything. He stated how they should not jerk him around. Councilwoman Porembo stated how she was trying to explain it the best that she could. Councilman Sabol stated how he knew all about robbing Peter to pay Paul. He stated how he did it his whole life with his family and raised 4 kids. Councilwoman Porembo stated that maybe when they wanted to do the lights, they should have been tough and told them how they were only supposed to buy 10 lights and that would have been the end of it. Councilman Sabol stated how he wanted to know right there that night if the \$73,000.00 was strictly for streets or could it be used for anything that they deemed necessary. He stated that if it was for anything that they deemed necessary, he could live with it, but they needed to tell him up front.

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President Hawk stated how it was for streets, but they might have to use it to balance the budget. Councilman Sabol stated how that was all he wanted to know. He stated how they should not tell him one thing that then do another thing behind his back.

Councilwoman Fox stated how Ron Tirpak had drawn up a grant a few years ago for Willow Lane for drainage and infiltration. Councilman Jacobs stated how that was submitted two years ago. Councilwoman Fox asked if they could still address it. She stated how they were going to submit it in phases. Councilman Jacobs stated how Mr. Tirpak tried. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner asked if it was CDBG Funding. Councilman Jacobs stated how it was CDBG Funding from Harrisburg not the County. Councilman Radocha asked if they have to pursue grants or if they get a notified of the grant. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how she might receive an email concerning a new grant that opens along with information about the grant. She stated that the LSA Grant was put out every year, which it usually closes on September 30th.

Councilman Sabol asked Secretary/Treasurer Ahner about the grant information that she had sent them for sewer. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how it was a PA Small Water and Sewer Grant. Councilman Sabol asked if anybody thought about applying for that grant. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how she had talked to Mike Tirpak about the Rehabilitation of Unit #2 because he would have had everything ready to go for submission. She stated how they would have had to hold off on that project until they heard back on the grant application. Councilman Sabol stated how that was another reason he was down at the Sewer Plant to speak to Mr. Pilla about Willow Lane. He asked if it was a sewer issue on Willow Lane. Councilwoman Fox stated how it was sewer, drainage and infiltration. Councilman Sabol asked why they did not go after the grant for sewer for Willow Lane. He stated how they could use the grant, Sewer fund's money and some from the General fund to get Willow Lane completed.

Councilman Sabol stated that according to Mr. Pilla, Mr. Tirpak had all the information and had done a study on Willow Lane. Councilwoman Poremba stated about Secretary/Treasurer Ahner contacting Carbon Engineering concerning the grant and letting them know what they wanted to apply for. Councilwoman Fox stated about having them pull out the information to apply for the grant for Willow Lane. She asked Secretary/Treasurer Ahner about the grant and how it works. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated that they have to use the funds for what they applied for. Councilwoman Fox stated how they have to justify to DCED what they used the grant money for. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated "yes". Councilman Sabol stated that if they were tearing up the street for sewer, then sewer should be paving the street. Councilwoman Fox stated how streets would have to pay to install the inlets.

Councilwoman Poremba stated about the questions from the contractors concerning the deadline for the paving of Rhume Street. She stated how they were concerned with the Elementary School and having the projected completed by May 25th. Councilman Radocha stated how it should be quick because they were just putting down an overlay. Councilman Jacobs stated how it should only take them one week. He stated how they should not have any problem with the School.

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2. SEWER

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

Councilwoman Fox stated about the 300 block of W. Catawissa Street and how they were having issues with sewer at one of the homes. She stated that since there was still an issue, Mr. Pilla had the camera the mainline. She stated how he was only able to go into the line approximately 20 feet. Councilwoman Fox stated how they were going to take to the VAC truck up there tomorrow to hopefully be able to clean out the line. She stated how they would then try to re-camera the line to see what the problem was.

3. BUILDINGS

**GEORGE SABOL, III, CHAIRMAN; DAVID DeMELFI,
CO-CHAIRMAN; MICHAEL RADOCHA**

Councilman Sabol stated that he had not been notified of any major problems. He stated that they want to eventually get new lighting in the meeting room. Councilman Sabol stated about removing the wall and finishing off on the office side with displays. He stated how they could post historical items on that wall. He stated how it might help motivate people to get involved in the Borough. President Hawk asked why he would want to take the wall out. Councilman Sabol stated that he did not want to take it out, but cover over it with something that was rustic.

Councilman Sabol stated how he talked about applying for the Road to Zero grant and had talked to Matt Johnson. He stated how they had missed the deadline for the grant application. Councilman Sabol stated how he would like to get a better cost estimate than just some figures written on a piece of paper. He stated how they will be better prepared next year for the grant. Councilman Sabol stated that when he had talked to the people from the Road to Zero, he had asked if land acquisition would fall under the grant. He stated how they were not too fond of the idea. Councilman Sabol stated about acquiring the triangular piece of property on W. Mill Street. He stated how they would be able to maintain the weeds a little better. Councilman Sabol stated how he talked to the owner of the property last year and has approached her again recently. He stated how he had told her about maintaining the weeds. He stated that she would consider selling it, but she had made mention that she did not want to incur any expenses with the sale of the property. Councilman Sabol stated about giving her \$500.00 and paying for all the fees involved. He stated how he was actually interested in the property up to the first curb cut. Councilman Sabol stated how in time, they might be able to utilize the triangular piece of property for a makeshift train station, because there had been talk of rebuilding the old train station. He stated how they could use it for storage. President Hawk stated how he thought it might be worthwhile going after that piece of property. Councilman Jacobs stated how they needed to know how much property she was willing to sell. Councilman Radocha stated about the railroad. Councilman Jacobs stated that he thinks the railroad right away goes to the top of the embankment. He stated about checking with Mr. Tirpak to see what was on the survey when the Lions Club/County sold the property.

Councilman Radocha asked if they had heard anything back about the trees. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how she had not heard anything back, but was going to take a walk up and actually talk to them in person. Councilman Radocha stated how they could also look at installing stop signs.

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4. PUBLIC SAFETY

**ROSEMARY POREMBO, CHAIRWOMAN; DAVID DeMELFI
CO-CHAIRMAN; DAVID HAWK**

Councilwoman Porembo stated about the revised version of the Burn Ordinance. She stated how there have been several changes, which mostly had to do with charcoal, cooking grills compared to heating and the change in Article 4. She stated how they had eliminated the wording, giving the right to the Borough to provide or plan placement of any kind of cooking facilities on any Borough property. Councilwoman Porembo asked if the Nesquehoning Conservation Club during their Fishing Derby were they located on any public property. Mayor Kitchko stated “no”.

Councilwoman Porembo stated that if they were using any kind of grill, under that Article, they would not be allowed to do it. President Hawk stated how he thought it might have been included in one of the other ordinances that they had reviewed, whereas, they have a public park with freestanding charcoal grilling facilities. He stated that as long as the Borough would have installed it, the public was able to use it. He stated how the Borough does not have any of them.

Councilwoman Porembo stated how it was taking the right to install them, if they wanted to, away. Councilwoman Fox stated that if they would want to install some kind of freestanding grilling facility, they would have to amend the ordinance. She stated how they could have just left that part of Article 4 in the ordinance. President Hawk stated how they could always put it back in if they wanted to. He stated how he had never heard anyone mention or say about installing anything like that at any of their parks. Councilwoman Porembo stated that they should put Article 4 back the way it was.

5. SANITATION

**GEORGE SABOL, CHAIRMAN; ROSEMARY POREMBO,
CO-CHAIR, MARY FOX**

No report.

6. RECREATION

**MARY FOX, CHAIRWOMAN; GEORGE SABOL III, CO-
CHAIRMAN; DAVID HAWK**

Councilwoman Fox stated that the February meeting was canceled. She stated how their next meeting would be held on April 2, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.

Councilman Jacobs stated how he had received a call about the Borough crew cleaning the sidewalks off at the Recreation Center. He stated how they do not receive any funds for the Recreation Center and they should have somebody to clean off of the sidewalks themselves. He stated how the Recreation Commission had purchased a snow blower. Councilwoman Fox stated how the Borough was not cleaning the sidewalks because the Recreation Commission had somebody doing it before. Councilman Jacobs stated how the Borough was now being asked to do it. He stated how it was their responsibility.

Councilman Jacobs stated how they have been ignoring them with the rental agreement forms. Councilwoman Fox stated that if it would knock it done, it was Borough property and the Borough would be held liable if something would happen. Councilman Jacobs stated that the inside of the Recreation Center was also Borough property. He stated how they should sit down with Solicitor Yurchak and draw up a lease agreement.

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Councilman Sabol stated about the Borough paying the utilities for the Recreation Center and about the rental fees they were charging. He stated how he had heard that they wanted a new kitchen. Councilwoman Fox stated that as the Recreation Commission, they were able to file for grants. She stated how they might be able to file for a grant for a new kitchen. Councilman Sabol stated that since the Borough was paying the bills, the Recreation Commission Members should not have free reign to do what they wanted.

7. BUDGET/ PURCHASING FRANK JACOBS, CHAIRMAN; ROSEMARY POREMBO, CO-CHAIRWOMAN; DAVID HAWK

Councilman Jacobs stated how they had decided to borrow the \$109,000.00 from the Sanitation Fund for the new chassis and they will make that motion at the regular meeting.

8. PERSONNEL/ SAFETY ROSEMARY POREMBO, CHAIRWOMAN; MARY FOX, CO-CHAIRWOMAN; FRANK JACOBS

No report.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Borough Council Members entered into an Executive Session at 7:05 p.m. for personnel reasons. The Council Members exited their Executive Session at 7:27 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilman Jacobs moved and Councilman Sabol seconded to adjourn the meeting. All voted yes. Meeting adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

RoniSue Ahner
Secretary/Treasurer