

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

Wednesday, February 08, 2017 at 6:00p.m., Borough Office  
114 W. Catawissa Street, Nesquehoning, PA 18240

**ROLL CALL:** COUNCILMAN JACOBS; COUNCILWOMEN FOX, POREMBO;  
PRESIDENT HAWK & MAYOR KITCHKO

President Hawk called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.  
Councilmen DeMelfi and Sabol were absent.

President Hawk stated how they would be going into an Executive Session prior to starting the Committee Reports.

**PURPOSE:** General Purposes & Committees/Workshop

- **Councilman DeMarco resignation letter**

**Councilman Jacobs moved and Councilwoman Porembo seconded to accept Councilman DeMarco's resignation letter with regrets. All voted yes. Motion passed.**

President Hawk stated about accepting letters of intent until Wednesday, February 22, 2017 at 4:00 p.m. to fill the Council Member position, which would be for the remainder of the year. He stated that since Councilman DeMarco's term would have expired in 2019, there would be a two year term on the ballot in May/November in order to fill the remainder of his term.

President Hawk stated how the Committees were short-handed due to Councilman DeMarco resignation and DM request to be removed from all Committees.

**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 6:28 p.m.

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

Councilman Jacobs stated how they (Councilman Sabol, Daniel Staehle, Robert Pilla) met with the Engineer on Hazard Street. He stated how Mr. Staehle knows what kind of inlets they needed and was going to get them ordered. He stated how Mr. Pilla was going to order the necessary items and the inlets for Rhume Street.

Councilman Jacobs stated how the Borough crew was ready to go out to plow as soon as they would get the call.

Councilwoman Porembo asked that since they were earmarking funds for street, were they making any assessments as to what work would need to be done. Councilman Jacobs stated how they do have some issues written down. He stated how they have two projects planned so far. He stated how they have the inlet work to do on Hazard Street and they were going to help the Sewer workers with the sewer line and the storm drains on Rhume Street.

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Councilwoman Fox stated how there were some storm drains running into the sewer system. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner asked about paving Rhume Street. Councilman Jacobs stated that since the patch work, which was done in the first block of Rhume Street, was holding up, they were going to wait until 2018 to pave all of Rhume Street. Councilwoman Fox stated that the paving on Rhume Street from School Street to Mermon Avenue was the responsibility of the sewer.

Councilman Jacobs stated how they did not hear anything concerning the grant for Willow Lane. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how she had talked to Mike Tirpak about that briefly because he had asked her about the grant for Tippetts Road. She stated how Tippetts Road was a LSA Grant and she probably would not hear anything until July on that one. She stated that the Grant Mr. Tirpak had submitted for Willow Lane was through the County but it was more than just the CDBG and he was not sure when he would hear anything on it. Councilman Jacobs stated how the inlets on Hazard Street was supposed to be part of the project that was going to be bid out from the County, but with the Borough doing the work, they were going to see what reimbursements they could get from the County from the CDBG.

Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how the meeting at Route 209 & 54 had been postponed. She stated how she was told that they would probably reschedule it for sometime in March.

Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how she received a phone call from Bill Richards concerning the truck traffic on Route 93. She stated how he wanted to know the Borough's position on it. She stated how she thought that the Chief was in favor of rerouting the traffic, but was not sure. She stated how she was not sure where the Council Members stood either, because it was never really discussed in detail at a meeting and the Borough never sent any letter to PennDOT. President Hawk stated how they had met a while back at the Communications Center. Councilman Jacobs stated how they were rerouting them to Route 309 and route 54. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how they would be getting the large truck traffic coming through town. President Hawk stated how it would be through town and through Hauto. He stated how they were directing the trucks to use Route 309, Route 54 and Route 424. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how it was strange for them to have three truck accidents in as many days. President Hawk stated how the police have cited truck drivers since the accidents for not stopping at the top of the hill. He stated that if that would continue, there would eventually be another accident. Mayor Kitchko stated how they do not know how many go through the stop sign and do not wreck because they were able to make the turn.

Councilwoman Poremba asked how much additional effort was there for the police to man that area. Mayor Kitchko stated how it was tough. Councilwoman Poremba asked if they go up Route 93 to make their presence known. Mayor Kitchko stated how they do when they have extra time. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how she had concerns with the truck traffic both ways, traveling down Route 93 and/or through town on Route 54 and 209. Councilwoman Poremba stated about having a conversation/discussion with them to see if Route 443 would be a better route for them to use as long as they were not coming to Nesquehoning. Councilman Jacobs stated how Jim Thorpe has an officer on duty who was going to be their truck enforcement officer.

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President Hawk stated how there would be more traffic through town, which would be an inconvenience, but in terms of safety, the potential of anything catastrophic happening would be less with the going through town than coming down the broad mountain. He stated how it was up to the police to enforce the Jake Brake law and speeding. He stated how they were more likely to monitor the trucks to see infractions with them in town as opposed to having to sit at the top of Route 93. Councilwoman Fox asked if they could request the State Police to set up their scales. President Hawk stated how they could have them come in to do spot checks.

President Hawk stated how they had talked last meeting about looking into getting a street sweeper. He stated that it seemed like there was a lot of anti skid on the streets for the amount of weather they had. Councilman Jacobs stated that the anti skid they were getting was bigger than it was last year.

### **2. SEWER                      MARY FOX, CHAIRWOMAN; FRANK JACOBS, CO- CHAIRMAN; GEORGE SABOL, III**

Councilwoman Fox stated how Rose Chapello was working on a PA One Call mapping. She stated how there was an indemnity agreement, which they had asked Solicitor Yurchak to review. Councilwoman Fox stated how Ms. Chapello was utilizing Carbon Engineering's scanner for the mapping for the PA One Call. She stated how Solicitor Yurchak recommended approving the agreement by a vote of Council. Councilwoman Fox stated how it was releasing PA One Call of any liability if someone would get hurt or if there was damage to somebody's property. She stated how that would be in the event the Borough would not be notified of a dig because the Borough's maps were incorrect. She stated how they have to make sure that their maps were current and up to date.

Councilwoman Fox stated how Solicitor Yurchak and Mr. Tirpak were working on the agreement with Rev Group (KME) concerning the discharging of their testing pit water into the sewer systems at Plant 6.

Councilwoman Fox stated how the compressor motor was fixed and the lights were installed at the sewer plant.

Councilman Jacobs stated about the agreement with Ms. Chapello, which she signed, giving her a raise retroactive back to December 24, 2016. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner asked how much was the raise. Councilman Jacobs stated how it was for \$1.35 per hour. Councilwoman Fox stated how there were wording changes that had to be made in the next contract. Councilwoman Poremba stated how the Memorandum of Understanding would become part of the contract. Councilwoman Fox stated how it would have to go before the Teamsters. She stated that either Mr. Staehle or someone from the union would have to sign it. Councilman Jacobs stated how he thought that she was doing it all in house. Councilwoman Fox stated that when it was time for contracts, it had to be included that an operator #2 had to have a C license and a CDL.

**Councilman Jacobs moved and Councilwoman Fox seconded to award Rose Chapello a \$1.35 per hour increase in salary retroactive to December 24, 2016 as per the Memorandum of Understanding. All voted yes. Motion passed.**

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President Hawk stated how it also stated in the Memorandum of Understanding that in October 2017, Ms. Chapello would have the necessary experience to acquire her Class C. License. He stated that as long as she would have her CDL by that time, she would move up to the Operator #2 position.

Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how they had received a complaint from the gentleman, who resides at 366 Lake Drive. She stated how he was complaining that the Borough trespassed on his property while posting a shut off notice on his door. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how they wanted to know how they handle that type of complaint, plus asked if they should have an officer accompany them while they were posting. President Hawk stated how he knew that the Water Authority has asked the police to go with them when shutting water off to a property. Councilman Jacobs stated how he thought that it was a good idea to have an officer with them while posting.

Councilwoman Fox stated how she had received a complaint concerning the online bill pay because there was a \$3.00 fee to pay with a credit card. She stated how she had informed them how that money was not coming to the Borough. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how everything was up and running except the A/R box, which was where they could pay by check. Councilwoman Fox asked when it would be available. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how she did not know, but she was after the company to get it implemented.

Councilman Jacobs stated how he had complaints that they took the discount away from sanitation. He stated how he had told them that they could not do both.

Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated that they were having an issue, since the online bill payment system was up and running, accepting mail that was post dated before the end of the month. She stated how Ms. Coniglio used to hold off on running the penalty report because of them mail. She stated that with having to upload everything to the system, the systems would not be current with penalties at the beginning of them month. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how she did have noted on the Website, that there was a 2 day delay and that late payments made on or after the first of the moth would still be assessed a penalty, but that did not mean people were reading it. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated that they wanted to know if it would be possible, since there were other means of paying the bill, to do away with the post dated mail payments. She stated how the payments should have to be in the office by the last day of the month. She stated how it was for Sewer and Sanitation.

President Hawk stated how most of the bills they receive, state that they should be mailed in time to be received by the due date. He stated that if it was due by January 31<sup>st</sup>, that did not mean the check was written on the 31<sup>st</sup>, it was mailed on the 31<sup>st</sup> or it was given to the person at the window at the post office on the 31<sup>st</sup>. He stated that it meant the Borough should have it by the close of business day on the 31<sup>st</sup>. Councilwoman Poremba stated how that was the same way it was when they would have to pay a credit card. Councilwoman Fox stated that the person who complained about the \$3.00 charge also questioned as to why the drop box was taken out. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how they had closed the drop boxes because people were putting cash in them. Councilwoman Fox stated how it was because of people who work. She stated how they had even mentioned about opening the office on a Saturday for a few hours.

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Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how the A/R Box might work for those people or even the ACH. President Hawk stated how they could install a drop box but let the people know that the Borough would not accept cash payments, but that did not mean that they were going to listen. Councilwoman Porembo stated that with all of the complaints they were getting would just take time until they get used to it. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how they were not asking for it immediately, but to transition into it throughout the year. President Hawk and Councilwoman Porembo stated about getting it on the bills and on the website on how it was due in the office by the end of the month. Councilwoman Fox stated how it should say “payments must be received by . . .”. Mayor Kitchko asked about the end of the month and if it would fall on a weekend. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how they were still willing to give a grace period of the end of the month falling on the weekend. Councilwoman Fox and Councilwoman Porembo stated how it should be the last business day of the month.

Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated that with the auditors in the office that week, they had discussed getting rid of the General Sewer account. She stated how he had informed her that it had to be done by an act of Council. Councilman Jacobs asked “why”. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how they do not use the account; it had a \$0.00 balance in the checking account for the last two years. She stated how it was another account that they had to audit, because there were still balances in the Chart of Accounts. She stated how it could be combined with the SOM Fund.

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

Councilman Jacobs stated how they had started to install the split units at the Recreation Center.

Councilman Jacobs stated how they were going to look into why the electric bill was so high at the Borough garage. He stated how they thought that it was from the lights.

### **4. PUBLIC                ROSEMARY POREMBO CHAIRMAN; DAVID HAWK SAFETY**

Councilwoman Porembo stated how they had a brief discussion at the last meeting regarding the polygraph testing, because the State Police had discontinued their testing. She stated how the Borough used it as one of their requirements for hiring a part-time police officer. Councilwoman Porembo stated how they (Herself, President Hawk, Mayor Kitchko, Chief Smith, Officer Wuttke) had a meeting on Monday. Mayor Kitchko stated how both the Chief and Officer Wuttke had offered up their opinions and he agreed that they should keep the polygraph testing. Mayor Kitchko stated how it seemed to weed out some undesirables in certain ways that they would have no idea otherwise. Mayor Kitchko asked Secretary/Treasurer Ahner how many Polygraphs they had last year. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how they had two polygraphs in 2016 at \$425.00 each, which neither applicant was hired. She stated how they had three polygraphs in 2015 at \$400.00 each, which one was for a full-time officer and the other two were for part-time officers that they hired one. Councilwoman Porembo stated that if they wanted to keep their standards high and possibly weed out problems before they occur, which could also cut down on legal fees. Councilwoman Fox stated about the cost incurred with hiring someone part-time.

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President Hawk stated that some of the questions and answers from the candidates for the Borough were pretty shocking, which disqualified them. He stated how Officer Wuttke had informed them that since they have the polygraphs early, the Borough would not have to invest money in their training. He stated how most of the information would probably come to light during their training through conversations or actions/interactions with the other officers. President Hawk stated how he had asked if they were going to weed out a good candidate for something that they did 10 years ago, which he was told how that was not going to keep someone out. Councilman Jacobs stated how some towns/Boroughs were not giving polygraphs. Mayor Kitchko stated how the State Police might be doing away with the polygraphs because of budget cuts.

Councilwoman Porembo stated about the Knox Box Ordinance/Key Lock System. She stated how Councilman DeMarco had given a presentation at January's Meeting. Councilwoman Porembo stated about contacting either her or President Hawk with any questions or concerns. She stated how they would try to get answers before the next meeting. Councilwoman Porembo asked if anyone knew how many companies were committed for the Knox Boxes. Councilman Jacobs and Mayor Kitchko stated how they thought it was approximately 20 companies. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner asked if they were committed or interested. Councilman Jacobs stated how he thought that they were interested. Councilwoman Porembo stated how that as a question she would have for John McArdle. She stated how she would like to see how many companies were committed before they would invest in having them installed in the trucks.

Councilwoman Fox asked if it would be an option for a residential property. President Hawk stated how it would be optional for residents to have them installed. Councilman Jacobs stated how his concern was with the budget, because they were \$10,000.00 over budget in 2016. He stated how he wanted to know where they were getting the money from to install the boxes. Councilman Jacobs stated how it was mentioned about the police having keys, which would be another expense. Councilwoman Porembo stated how they might have to keep a better check and balance on what was being purchased. Councilman Jacobs stated how they had gotten blind sided with the last truck with the Nesquehoning Hose Company because they did not have a monetary figure when they agreed to help. Councilwoman Porembo stated how they might have to keep a better watch on it. She stated that when they were asking for something, they might have to just say no, which could be hard.

Councilman Jacobs stated how they would be holding a budget meeting sometime in March. Councilwoman Fox stated how that was one of her pet peeves, when something was thrown out at a meeting and they were expected to vote on it right away. She stated that if it was not on the agenda, it should have to wait until the next meeting. Councilwoman Porembo asked if it was standard for them to apply for a grant every year. President Hawk stated that the reason they were paying off so many trucks at one time, was because they had gotten grants. He stated how it was hard to say no when half or more than half of a fire truck was being paid for through a grant. Councilwoman Porembo stated how she did agree that they would need to take the money when it was there because it might not be available in the next couple of years. President Hawk stated how they would get nickel and dined on repairs if they would keep the older vehicles. He stated that when it came to the fire trucks, or in the case of the ladder truck, it was not if they wanted to keep paying for repairs; they were not able to get it repaired.

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Mayor Kitchko stated that with the change of time schedule at the Panther Valley Schools, there were several weeks in the Spring and in the Fall in the morning that Grace Whildin and Louis Hirochek were in the dark on the main street. He stated how he had looked into blinking/flashing stop signs, which were approximately \$300.00 each. He stated how they might look into lighted vest. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner asked about the orange flashing wands. President Hawk stated about seeing what they could find out in terms of the vests.

### **5. SANITATION MARY FOX, CO-CHAIRWOMAN**

Councilwoman Fox stated how she did not receive any complaints. She stated how there had not been any garbage at the recycling bins either.

Councilwoman Fox stated about the Electronics Recycling Event on May 23<sup>rd</sup> from 2 – 5 p.m.

### **6. RECREATION MARY FOX, CHAIRWOMAN; GEORGE SABOL, III, CO-CHAIRMAN; DAVID HAWK**

Councilman Jacobs stated about going over the rules and regulation to get signs purchased for the parks before Spring time.

Councilwoman Fox stated how she was informed that several of the Commission Members needed to submit letters to be reappointed to the Recreation Commission. She stated how she was going to let them know. Councilwoman Fox stated that she had brought it to their attention about getting a copy of the Rental Agreements to the Borough office, because they were responsible for the liability for the Recreation Center.

Councilwoman Fox stated how the Kiddie Bingo was scheduled for Sunday, February 19<sup>th</sup>.

Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how she was meeting the gentleman from PPL at the bridge on Tuesday, February 14<sup>th</sup> at noon concerning the guide wires.

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

Councilman Jacobs stated about setting up a meeting with Mr. Zinc from MCT concerning the Police Pension Fund. He stated about possibly meeting on March 8<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. prior to their Workshop/Committee meeting. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how the gentleman concerning the bridge inspections would be attending the Workshop/Committee Meeting on March 8<sup>th</sup>.

Councilman Jacobs stated about going through the Fire Truck Fund budget from last year to see where the additional funds were spent. Councilman Jacobs stated how they cannot go over on the budget by \$10,000.00 again that year. He stated how some of the money was taken out of the Fire Truck Fund for the legal fees for the truck accidents.

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

Councilwoman Porembo stated that the transfer to the new insurance was working out very well.

Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how BCUI had not received any data from the County yet.

Councilman Jacobs asked if the letter had approved releasing the information to them.

Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how the letter asked them to send the data to BCIU even if it was not the current information, but to get something in their system for the Borough.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Councilwoman Fox moved and Councilman Jacobs seconded to adjourn the meeting. All voted yes. Meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.**

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RoniSue Ahner  
Secretary/Treasurer