

AGENDA FOR SPECIAL MEETING OF NESQUEHONING BOROUGH COUNCIL

Wednesday, January 11, 2023 at 6:00 p.m., Borough Office
114 W. Catawissa Street, Nesquehoning, PA 18240

ROLL CALL: COUNCILMEN/COUNCILWOMEN FOX, GUARDIANI, HEANEY, KUBA, PAUL,
PRESIDENT HAWK & MAYOR KATTNER

President Hawk called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.
Councilman Nalesnik was absent.

PURPOSE: Committee/Workshop Meeting

1. STREETS BRUCE NALESNIK, CHAIRMAN; FRAN HEANEY

Councilwoman Heaney stated how they were going to keep with the same schedule that they had discussed last year with Mussmano Avenue and Columbus Avenue.

Councilwoman Guardiani asked President Hawk if the Cogeneration Plant does anything to help keep the dust down. President Hawk stated how they have a rotary sweeper. He stated how it will get large quantities off of the roadway, but it will still cause dust. President Hawk stated that they will at times rent a vacuum sweeper. Councilwoman Guardiani stated how the right side of the road was really dirty. She asked if they take any responsibility for the dirt on the road. President Hawk stated how they have a truck wash, but they were not going to get everything off of those trucks. He stated how the truck drivers have to go through the truck wash; whereas, some of the driver were meticulous when going through and other drivers will just zip right through. President Hawk stated how there was a hose down by the scale and some drivers will even take the hose to rinse the truck off.

2. SEWER MARY FOX, CHAIRWOMAN; BRUCE NALESNICK, CO-CHAIRMAN;
FRAN HEANEY

Councilwoman Fox stated how they want to look into getting the infiltration testing started in the Spring.

Councilwoman Fox stated how Windstream was out of service, because they had a major wire spilt. President Hawk stated how he saw them working on the lines on Route 54 on his way home from work.

Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated about the Borough cell phones, which was something that they wanted to discuss at the December meeting but forgot. Councilwoman Heaney stated how they had previously mentioned about giving a stipend to the employees for using their own cell phones. Mayor Kattner stated how Chief Weaver has told him that he has been using his personal phone to take pictures of evidence and they could confiscate his phone to be used for evidence. Councilwoman Fox stated how Mr. Pilla uses his phone to take pictures of the sewer lines as well. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner asked if the police could use the iPads to take pictures. Councilwoman Fox asked what their options were. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated that the Borough issued cell phones were just flip phones, so they were not able to use them to take pictures. She stated how they do have the Borough issued iPads to use for pictures or they could look at some kind of digital camera if they needed to take pictures. Mayor Kattner stated how the workers need Borough cell phones. Councilwoman Fox stated how none of the workers were using them. Councilwoman Heaney stated how that was part of their concern. Mayor Kattner stated how he did not think that the police should use their personal cell phones, but the street department was a different story. Councilwoman Fox asked what about a digital camera. President Hawk stated that if they were taking evidence pictures, they could possibly use a digital camera or the iPad.

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Mayor Kattner stated how Chief Weaver was very concerned with using his own phone to take pictures. Councilwoman Heaney stated that if they could use the iPads or if a digital camera would work, she would go with the recommendation of Chief Weaver. President Hawk stated that even with Mr. Pilla, he should probably have a camera if he was taking pictures of the sewer lines. He stated how the Borough could get memory cards for the camera and they would have those pictures for the next 20 years. Councilwoman Guardiani asked Secretary/Treasurer Ahner what she used when she was going out for code issues. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated that she used either her phone or her iPod and then emailed them to the office. She stated how Ms. Arieta was doing the same thing. Councilwoman Guardiani stated that if they were going to get another code enforcement officer, they should also have a camera. She asked if they should get 3 cameras; police, sewer and code. Councilwoman Fox stated how they might need more than one camera for the police. It was mentioned if they would need one for streets. President Hawk stated that if the Borough workers would need to take a picture of an inlet, they could borrow the sewer camera. Mayor Kattner stated that he would talk to Chief Weaver to see what he would recommend.

Councilwoman Fox asked what they wanted to do as far as the Borough cell phones. Mayor Kattner stated how he was not able to get in touch with the Water Authority workers or Mr. Staehle. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated to Mayor Kattner that he would have to talk to the workers to get their personal cell phone numbers. She stated how the Water Authority had not been using the Borough cell phones either; they have been using their own phones. Councilwoman Fox asked if the Water Authority was doing a stipend for their workers. President Hawk stated how they have not done anything yet, but if the Borough ends up doing something, he was sure that the Water Authority would do something also. Councilwoman Guardiani asked if someone has everybody's cell phone number. President Hawk stated how he has most of them. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how she has almost everybody's number. Councilwoman Fox asked what they wanted to do. President Hawk stated that they should do at the least the Public Works department (Street and Sewer). He stated how he felt that the stipend was the best way to go. Councilwoman Fox asked what they were thinking of giving per month. Mayor Kattner stated about \$20.00 a month.

Councilwoman Heaney asked what it was costing the Borough when they did have the cell phones. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how it was approximately \$300.00 for all of the cell phones. Councilwoman Guardiani stated how she thought \$20.00 a month was fine. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner asked who all were they looking to give the stipend. President Hawk stated about Mr. Pilla, Mr. Staehle and Mr. Degiglio. He stated about whoever they might hire for code. Councilman Paul stated how Mr. Staehle did not have a cell phone at that time. President Hawk stated how he would like more clarity on the police with them using their personal phone, pictures aside, for making calls or sending text messages. Councilwoman Heaney stated how she would prefer that they did nothing with their personal phones. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how she gets a hold of Chief Weaver through a text message.

Councilman Paul stated that was how he would get in touch with everybody; the chief, office staff, etc., through text messages. President Hawk asked who all had Borough phones. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated that the front office had a phone, she had a phone, there were three at the police department, two at the sewer plant, four at the Borough garage and the Water Authority had three. Councilwoman Fox stated that at one time the Chairman of Streets had a Borough cell phone. Councilwoman Fox stated how they were looking at the three public works employees, code officer and Secretary/Treasurer for a stipend. She stated that it would be \$20.00 a month per person, so it would be \$100.00 a month.

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President Hawk asked if they need a Borough phone in the office other than their regular phones. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated that when they get a call at the office in regards to the streets, they will come back and tell her and she will have them send Councilman Paul a message or give him a call. She stated how they usually use their own cell phones to do that. Councilman Paul stated how the girls in the front office send him text messages all of the time. He stated that if they were using their own phones for everything, other than the police, he did not have a problem with it. Councilwoman Fox asked if they wanted to get a cell phone for in the front off, for any reason if the office phones would go out, they would have a cell phone for a back up.

Councilwoman Guardiani stated how she had come to the office to call people back, because she was not putting her personal cell phone number out there. She stated how it might be a good idea to have that extra phone. Councilwoman Guardiani stated how she had tied up one of the phones for an hour one day. President Hawk stated how they could look into getting a call phone in the office for all of those reasons. He stated how the police should have something. Mayor Kattner stated how he would talk to Chief Weaver. He stated how they should be getting their body cameras soon as well.

Secretary/Treasurer Ahner asked that if they were going to pay for a cell phone plan for the office, would it not be cheaper to just give a stipend to the girls in the front office as well. President Hawk stated about using the cell phone to make phone calls. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated that if they were going to make any phone calls, they were going to do it from the office phone. Councilman Paul stated how he has talked to them on their cell phones. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated that they will call/text to the Council Members, police and Borough workers on their personal cell phones, but they will not do that for someone from the public. Councilwoman Guardiani stated that she did not want to tie up a desk phone for an hour.

Councilman Paul asked how many phone lines they had. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated “two”. Councilwoman Fox stated how it was only one number. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how they had two different phone numbers. She stated that if they would call the main number and it was busy, it was pushed through to the second line, but they could call the second line directly. Councilman Paul stated how they were not tying up the phone line, if it comes through on another number. Secretary/ Treasurer Ahner stated how there was also a corded phone on the code desk as well. She stated how a code enforcement officer can make calls from the office and do not have to use their personal phone either. Councilwoman Heaney stated that they should give a stipend to the five they had talked about and get a cell phone for the Borough office. Councilwoman Fox stated that if the landline was down, they could use the Borough cell phone for business. President Hawk stated how they could send text messages to the girls in the front office as well. Mayor Kattner stated how he would talk to the chief to see what he wanted to do about cell phones.

3. BUILDINGS & GROUNDS

**BRUCE NALESNIK, CHAIRMAN; LOUIE PAUL, CO- CHAIRMAN;
ABBIE GUARDIANI**

Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how she was informed that the Nesquehoning Borough Water Authority was willing to go half for a snow blower. President Hawk stated how their preference was to purchase it through JC Small Engines or M & S Hardware in the event it would need any kind of maintenance. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how she would like a model number from JC Small Engine, because it was not listed on the quote that was given. She stated how they would be able to compare the two models with all of the specifications.

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Councilman Paul asked what the deal was with Station Park. President Hawk stated how he had not said anything and he did not ask him again. Councilman Paul asked if they were not willing to do anything with it, were they willing to get rid of it.

Councilwoman Guardiani stated about the appearance of the lobby of the Borough office. President Hawk stated how Councilman Nalesnik had mentioned it several times. Councilwoman Heaney asked if they were talking about painting, getting rid of the carpeting and the table. Councilwoman Guardiani asked if anybody ever cleaned. Councilwoman Fox stated how they did not have a cleaning person. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how she had Mr. Degiglio pressure wash the front of the building last week. Councilman Paul stated how they had three girls working in the front office and none of them could run a vacuum cleaner. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how they do run the vacuum every so often, but it was not getting done on a regular basis.

4. POLICE & PUBLIC SAFETY: LOUIE PAUL, CHAIRMAN; LOIS KUBA, CO-CHAIRWOMAN; DAVID HAWK

President Hawk stated how they had an informational conference with Lansford on January 10th regarding the police regionalization. He stated how both the Lansford Borough Council and the Nesquehoning Borough Council have to decide if they were serious about looking into it and moving forward with the DCED Study. President Hawk stated that according to District Attorney Greek, the study was free, but they (Chief Weaver & Secretary/Treasurer Ahner) would have to provide information for the study. Councilwoman Fox stated how D.A. Greek told them that once they receive the report, it might look scary, but they were all recommendations. President Hawk stated that once they got the report back, they did not have to move forward with regionalization. He stated that if they would move forward, they did not have to follow the report to the letter; it was not binding in any way. Mayor Kattner stated how he wanted to see how the study turns out. He stated how he did not want to put the officers in danger, since Lansford has more calls than Nesquehoning. Councilwoman Fox asked if PSAB would be able to give them any information on regionalization. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated that she did not know if they would or not.

Councilwoman Fox stated how the Borough would be able to appoint individuals to a Police Commission like they do for the Water Authority. Councilwoman Heaney stated how the study was a guide to how it works. She stated how they could pick and choose with what they would need and what they would not need. Councilwoman Heaney stated how they would have officers trained (specialize) to handle certain situations and take over investigations so the patrol officers could continue to do their jobs. Councilwoman Kuba asked about Summit Hill. Councilman Paul stated how they were not interested. President Hawk stated how Coaldale was not interested either, but that could change in the future. Councilwoman Heaney stated how anyone was able to join; they would just have to do some restructuring. President Hawk stated how they will have to vote at the Regular meeting if they want to proceed with the study.

Councilwoman Heaney stated about having the study done to give them the information of what they have the ability to do. She stated that once they have the study, it was the Borough's to do with what they wanted. Councilwoman Heaney stated that if they wanted to continue, they would reach out to the proper authority and continue; if they decided not to continue, they were done. She stated how the study could open their eyes to what was required in their own town. President Hawk stated how D. A. Greek told them that there was nothing against the police departments the way they were, but they did lack the expertise in certain areas. He stated how they were not able to prosecute a case if they did not have good evidence or a good investigation, which was a County wide issue.

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Mayor Kattner asked if the Borough had received the required paperwork from Ms. Schiano and Mr. Duda for Fire Police. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how she has not received anything from them. She stated how Officer Lahovski had called her asking her what they needed, so she emailed him a copy of the policy and the minutes where the policy was approved.

Councilwoman Fox stated about the Weatherly Police department purchasing a bunch of equipment through the Pennsylvania Surplus program. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated about the sewer upgrade for the Police department at a cost of \$1,000.00. She stated how she had also purchased 10 of the Ansi 2 Safety Vest for the police department and the Public Works at a cost of approximately \$63.00.

5. SANITATION & QUALITY OF LIFE ABBIE GUARDIANI, CHAIRWOMAN; LOIS KUBA, CO- CHAIR- WOMAN; MARY FOX

Councilwoman Guardiani stated how the Blight Plan has been completed and will be ready for adoption at the Regular meeting. She stated how it was a plan, a road map and it would probably change as the Borough changes. Councilwoman Guardiani stated how they did not have to agree with everything that was in there. She stated that there were templates that they were able to use. Councilwoman Guardiani stated how they followed the five step process, which was on page 3. She stated how on page 5 were the recommendations from the analysis and on page 7 were the nine strategies that the committee considered. Councilwoman Guardiani stated how the one thing that the committee had learned was that there was a beginning, a middle and an end to blight in their town. She stated that they have been fighting blight at the end. Councilwoman Guardiani stated about the IMPC – International Property Maintenance Code and the lite version of the IPMC. She stated how she would like everyone to take a look at it, because it will be on the agenda for adoption.

Councilwoman Guardiani stated how they had reviewed the Quality of Life Ordinance with Solicitor Yurchak and it should be ready to advertise at the next meeting. She stated how it ties into the Blight Plan, because it has what they call a “Quick Ticket”. Councilwoman Guardiani stated how they have discussed people getting NOV’s and going to the magistrate. She stated how the QOL Ordinance was the preventative step to writing the NOV’s. Councilwoman Guardiani stated how the Code Enforcement and the Police were able to write Quick Tickets. She stated how the Quick Tickets were easier to track. Councilwoman Guardiani stated how they were able to give a warning ticket. She stated how the fines for the Quick Tickets match the fines for the NOV’s. Councilwoman Guardiani stated how they talked about adopting ordinances and they do not enforce them, but the QOL Quick Ticket was easily enforceable. Councilwoman Guardiani stated how Code Enforcement officers were told not to look for trouble, just wait for a complaint. She stated that with the ticketing ordinance, they could just issue a ticket when some issues were seen.

Councilwoman Guardiani stated about the trackable database for the Borough. She stated how Mr. Stalega works with a database that cost Barry Isett \$500,000.00. Councilwoman Guardiani stated how the Borough was going to use the database and they were going to input information into that database. She stated that Secretary/Treasurer Ahner had supplied them with every address in town. Councilwoman Guardiani stated about adopting the Blight Plan at their regular meeting. She stated how they would then set up a meeting with the surrounding municipalities to discuss their strategy plan for attending the Commissioners Meeting. Councilwoman Guardiani stated how her target date to attend the Commissioners Meeting was February 23rd. President Hawk stated how she would be able to take their QOL Ordinance along to the meeting as well, because that would get adopted at their Regular meeting on February 22nd. Councilwoman Guardiani stated that anyone on Council was welcome to attend the meeting.

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Councilwoman Guardiani stated how she had met with Chief Weaver, the three fire chiefs and Mr. Stalega to identify and label the dangerous dwellings in town. She stated how they had made a lot of progress and it was a very good meeting.

Councilwoman Guardiani stated how they will have to advertise for a new code enforcement officer. She stated how she was going to ask that all of the Council members follow the directive that President Hawk had emailed out to everyone, because they should have to put their complaints on paper like everyone else.

6. RECREATION LOIS KUBA, CHAIRWOMAN; MARY FOX, CO-CHAIRWOMAN; DAVID HAWK

Councilwoman Kuba stated how the Recreation Commission was holding bi-monthly bingos. She stated how their next meeting was scheduled for Monday, February 6th at 7:00 p.m. at the Recreation Center. Councilwoman Kuba stated about the gun bingo and how it was scheduled for March 4th. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated about the Engineers from Barry Isett attending the Regular Meeting at 5:00 p.m. to give the Council Members a presentation for the Johnson & Jacobs Memorial Park project. She stated how they will need to vote to advertise for bids for the project during their Regular meeting. Councilwoman Kuba stated how they were still working on the plans for the National Night Out in August 2023.

7. BUDGET/FINANCE FRAN HEANEY, CHAIRWOMAN; BRUCE NALESNIK, CO- CHAIRMAN; DAVID HAWK

President Hawk stated about the Nesquehoning Borough Authority's audit and how there was a copy in the office for the Council Members to review, if interested. He stated how the auditor reviewed the audit at the Authority's meeting, which was a very favorable audit. President Hawk stated how the Borough Authority was looking into opening a CD, because of the higher interest rates. He stated how they were talking about paying off a loan, but the auditor suggested getting the CD, because the interest rates on CDs were higher than the interest rate on the loan. President Hawk stated how Secretary/Treasurer Ahner had requested changing some of the Borough's CDs in order to get the higher rates. He stated how they would have to pay a penalty for early withdraw, but the higher rates would off-set those cost in no time.

Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how her, Solicitor Yurchak and Councilwoman Kuba sat down to review the Borough's fee schedule. She stated how they were going to purpose some changes and additions. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated that as they looked over some of the other municipalities, they decided to add in charges that the Borough did not have and they were also going to add in charges that the Borough had but were not listed.

8. PERSONNEL/ SAFETY MARY FOX, CHAIRWOMAN; BRUCE NALESNIK, CO-CHAIRMAN; FRAN HEANEY

Councilwoman Fox stated about getting copies of the Borough Handbook to everyone, including the Council Members. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated that a few years ago they had made changes to the adopted Handbook. She stated how they did not adopt the new Handbook with the changes. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how they had to review the changes and also to make sure that it coincides with the Borough contracts. Councilwoman Fox stated how the standards for dealing with people were the same for the Council Members as they were for the Borough employees.

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Councilwoman Fox stated about getting together with the Teamsters representative to start the contract negotiations. She stated that she did not know if they were going to present them with a proposal first, but that she would contact Mr. Bachman to get something scheduled.

Councilwoman Guardiani stated how the Fire Chiefs had a safety issue concerning 90 E. Catawissa Street, because of the residents who resided on the 3rd floor. She stated that during the last fire call to the building, there were residents who would not get out. Councilwoman Guardiani stated how she did not know if there was anything that the Borough could do. President Hawk stated how he thought that the building was on rent control, but did not know if they were getting state funding.

Councilwoman Guardiani stated how she had sat with Solicitor Yurchak and went line by line over the Quality of Life Ordinance. She stated that she has read all of the drafts of the Noise Ordinances, but she did not think that they would be enforceable. Councilwoman Guardiani stated how they had looked at an Ordinance, which addresses what people wanted addressed – ATVs, recreational vehicles and dirt bikes. She stated how she reviewed with Solicitor Yurchak and does believe that it would be enforceable, but was nowhere near completed. Secretary/Treasurer Ahner asked where they were at with the Short Term Rental Ordinance. Councilwoman Guardiani stated how Solicitor Yurchak had just sent them a copy of the Ordinance for them to review. She stated how they need to read review it before the meeting.

Secretary/Treasurer Ahner asked that if they could review their Workers Compensation Medical panel when the Personnel/Safety Committee meets. She stated how there were some physicians that were no longer around on their list.

Secretary/Treasurer Ahner stated how they also had a Real Estate Tax reduction payment request, which will have to be approved or denied at the Regular meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Borough Council Members entered into an Executive Session at 8:21 p.m. for personnel. The Council Members exited their Executive Session at 8:45 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilman Paul moved and Councilwoman Kuba seconded to adjourn the meeting. All voted yes. Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

RoniSue Ahner
Secretary/Treasurer