

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

**Wednesday, June 14, 2023 at 5:00 p.m., Borough Office**

**114 W. Catawissa Street, Nesquehoning, PA 18240**

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

The workshop meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by President Hawk. The committee workshop meeting was advertised for general purposes, so we can't take action if required, and we also advertised that there would be an executive session preceding the meeting, going into executive session at 5:33 p.m.

It is 6:22 p.m. out of executive session.

**PURPOSE: Committee/Workshop Meeting**

**STREETS:**

Councilmen Nalesnik reported Columbus Avenue was completed yesterday, wants to thank Lou for being there throughout the day. Done quickly and satisfactorily.

The bucket truck's LED lights, a PO was issued to get fixed. The flashers for truck, hopefully get put on soon. Flags on the streets by the banners are going to stay up until July 4<sup>th</sup>. Councilwomen Kuba said that we lost about 25 flags and that maybe should keep a few up on the corners. Up on New Columbus and going down the hill, we lost 25 flags and poles. Councilmen Nalesnik reported that he looked over all of the maintenance, what we are doing and what the cost and juggle around, the car needs a motor and what we spent the last couple of weeks, I know we have been passing around either garage or this garage, Kovatch, were every we could get a deal and best price, and I have no objections to that and I think that is best way to go. A lot of maintenance on these vehicles is brakes, tires, exhaust, small problems. We are paying \$100.00 to \$150.00 per hour on labor, now the one person that worked at this place no longer works there, he worked on all of our equipment. I don't want to hire anybody, but we did this once before, that we had a person that we got in to do part time work on the vehicles and it saved us a great deal. The person that worked on all vehicles and the radiator is no longer at that place, I was thinking, if we hire him for part time work at \$25.00 way under the rate of \$150.00. The only thing we would have to do is put a lift at the garage. If we brought him in at \$25.00 as needed to work on our vehicles and split the general fund, and sewer fund, he would be working on sewer equipment also. Council to look at this, that we would be saving on the cost of repairs on the vehicles. Council, think about it, we maybe need to look into this.

**SEWER:**

Councilwomen Fox reported that still working on the easements on the Lake and the generators. Councilmen Nalesnik reported about the HVAC system got the specifications from the engineering group. I forwarded to three installers waiting to hear back requesting quotes. Do not have to be put out for bids. The mack truck, got a PO number issued and told to proceed.

## **BUILDINGS & GROUNDS:**

Councilmen Nalesnik reported that he is waiting to hear back from our engineering firm on putting together to grant request on the Recreation Center. I know they wanted to do asbestos testing on the inside and also do a termite evaluation, so that is going to require us to go further, before we go and do a sizable grant we need to insure that this taken care of. Received another electrical proposal for the park, I want to have a little more discussion with the vendors, there are two now, and one is quoting one way and the other is quoting another.

## **POLICE & PUBLIC SAFETY:**

Councilmen Paul reported that there was a meeting with New Columbus Fire Company and public safety committee, they are presenting to us that their truck is almost 30 years old and probably on its last leg. They have been fixing everything mostly on their own, so they brought before the public safety meeting that they are looking at a pumper, which is a used truck that is \$225,000.00, so Lois and I and David were here and looked at the fire truck fund to see if there are funds there. There is about \$180,000.00 in the fund. I look at the fire truck fund and kind of made a recommendation to the public safety committee, if we gave New Columbus Fire Company \$150,000.00 out of that fund, they can borrow \$75,000.00, which they would take the loan on and that would leave the borough free and clear. I know that we pay on the ladder truck all the repairs. I am not sure when that loan came out and there is another loan that recently came out, so I think it is a good idea to bring out that we would free and clear. The members are here and I asked them to come to the meeting, so if council has any questions on this truck, they could answer any questions. Tyler, myself and another went down to Limerick Fire company, got word they had a truck for sale, which is not actually up for sale yet, we went down and checked it out. Everything that is on the truck is in beautiful shape, we asked why they were selling the truck and they said that every 10 years Limerick buys a brand new engine, and I believe after 5 years, they move their primary truck to a reserve truck, so that last four or five years this truck has been a reserve. Every two years, they change the batteries in it, every five years, they change the tires, they gave a list of things that were done to the truck, there have been no major issues with it. Councilwomen Guardiani asked how old is the truck? Tyler responded and said it is a 2010, he also stated that their truck now is 32 years old. Councilwomen Guardiani asked if there were any issues with the current truck now and Tyler said that there is water on the floor of the truck. He said that the shaft that goes from the engine to run through the pump, starting to leak, everything is wet. Councilwomen Guardiani asked what is usual life expectancy on the truck? Tyler said a lot of them are 15 or 20 years. Councilwomen Kuba, said that the fire company has done all of their work on their own. Tyler said in the last 32 years they have not come to council for anything. The tank size is 1000 and on the new truck is 750. Jim from the fire company was asked if they have lost any water from the difference in tank and he responded and said no. He said that the department has 5 apparatus'. He said that he feels the new truck is good shape. He said that it may be up for sale in a year or so, he said it could be next spring or later, that they have not spoken with them yet. President Hawk that over the years we kind of rotated helping the fire companies, as then ascend, they haven't been here at council since 1992. We have assisted Nesquehoning, assisted Hauto, we have did get the new ladder truck, it was never cut and dry rotation, but who we have helped it's been 32 years since we helped New Columbus. They were less needy. They never came to the borough for help. Councilmen Paul reported that they have self sufficient for the last 30 years, they pay all the bills, fixed their own trucks, now they are starting to open up the bar to raise money to help pay for these items. He said, they could afford to take their own loan for the \$75,000.00. The aerial truck we have, we pay a loan, we pay the upkeep, how much have we spent on the truck. He said that this is what he likes and thinking about the tax payers, everyone is capable of

working on their truck. President Hawk said that right now the fire truck fund balance is about \$188,000.00, not sure what mils are, but we are budgeted to bring in \$112,000.00 for taxes for fire truck fund. Our budgeted expenses for 2023 were \$111,000.00 which makes it about an \$8,000.00 surplus, so we were to take out \$150,000.00 out and continuing down with an \$8,000.00 surplus a year, we are looking at about 18 years to replenish that. Councilwomen Fox said that the expenditures are the insurance, worker's compensation. President Hawk said that the expenses right now include \$51,000.00 in payments on vehicles in the 2023 budget. I was trying to see how much we owe on the three that we pay. In 2023 we are paying the ladder, Hauto and pumper down there. Obviously, during the course of this, the ladder is almost paid for and that surplus will increase its not going to be the full 18 years. Councilmen Paul said that if the surplus increases we will not have a problem paying for everything else that we have to pay for, like the loans for the three trucks. President Hawk said that if we were to do something right now it is making a commitment, it is not that tomorrow we will be taking the money out of the fire truck fund. Councilmen Paul said doesn't council think about it and maybe act on it at the next meeting, and give them an answer. Councilmen Nalesnik asked if there was a legal issue if we made a motion tonight, and being locked into the monies, because the pumper is not going to be available right away. Tyler is going to call the station and find out what is needed, he said the truck is not up for sale as of now. Councilwomen Fox said that seeing the aerial truck is owned by the borough, It is housed at the Nesquehoning Fire Company, are all of the fire fighters at New Columbus trained on the use of the aerial truck. Tyler responded by saying that as long as you take the aerial training class, then you can go get the truck. There are only a couple of people certified down there. Councilwomen Heaney asked if there was any certified to use the aerial truck. Tyler responded by saying no, there is no one that is certified. Councilwomen Fox said that all fire companies should have access to the aerial truck though it is owned by the borough and be able to operate the truck. President Hawk said that in his talks with Kyle, he did not want to be certified. She said that everyone should have accessibility to the aerial truck. There is a motion put on the table by Councilmen Paul and seconded by Councilwomen Heaney to agree, being Nesquehoning Borough, will commit up to \$150,000.00 from the fire truck fund towards the purchase of the 2010 KME pumper from Limerick, if and when it will go on sale. I say that limited it to this truck, and for some reason they do not end up selling this truck and you need to go look for another one, it may change your financial picture as well as our financial picture, and the \$150 may or may not be applicable at that point. Again it would be a commitment tonight that when this truck if and when would go on sale, the borough will commit a \$150,000.00 from the fire truck fund for New Columbus Fire Company and you will be responsible for financing the balance. All in favor of motion, motion passed. Councilwomen Guardiai said that here are our fire companies coming to us, because they need help and she just received the envelope for the fire truck fund, so she remind the public to help them out. President Hawk said that under public safety he does have requests from Mr. McArdle for Nesquehoning Hose Company, for a Parade attendance in McAdoo on Friday, June 16<sup>th</sup>, parade attendance at Franklin Township in June 23<sup>rd</sup> and a live structural burn at the training center on June 24<sup>th</sup>. Councilwomen Guardiani made motion to approve any of the fire company to attend these events. Councilwomen Kuba seconded. All in favor of motion, motion passed. President Hawk also has two sets of quotes from John McArdle, an air brake value on the aerial is leaking, he got a quote from Campbell Supply and one from Bull Dog. Bull Dog quoted \$800.00, Campbell quoted \$709.33. Councilwomen Kuba made motion to approve the repair of the aerial brake value at the lowest quote from Campbell Supply at \$709.33. Councilwomen Fox seconded. All in favor of motion, motion passed. Mr. McArdle has asked for two replacement radio batteries, that are no longer functioning. He received two quotes, one from Greens Communications \$273.42 and one from Shoreway battery for \$214.14. He spoke to me a couple of days ago and told me that the batteries are getting very scarce to get, they had advised him to get them ordered as soon as possible and President Hawk did give him authorization to get the said batteries. Councilwomen Fox made motion to ratify the purchase of batteries from Shoreway in the

amount of \$214.14. Councilwomen seconded. All in favor of motion, motion passed. President Hawk said that they received a letter from Reading Blue Mountain and Northern Railroad has applied to the public utility commission, they want to install crossing gates at the west industrial road crossing. I believe they are going to try and get a grant for this. They said that increased truck traffic utilizing the crossing, they railroad is looking to make it safer.

#### **SANITATION & QUALITY OF LIFE:**

Councilwomen Guardiani reported that they received the response from DEP confirming the electronic recycling date, so it is now confirmed and it is being advertised for September 6<sup>th</sup> from 2-5 down on Locust street down near CVS or when the truck is full. She also said the fireworks season on May 30<sup>th</sup>, but is off to a bang. I am going to look into Ordinances and sat with the Chief and spoke with Solicitor Yurchak and PA does have its own laws regarding fireworks, but municipalities can enact their own regulations, now most of the big display fireworks are controlled by PA laws, but a lot of municipalities write their own laws on consumer fireworks the small grade, so before I did anything I approached the Chief, he was very much in favor of something being done. The Chief of Police said it would be helpful to them to have things in writing that they can enforce, but keep it simple. I did write something very simple and take a look at it and see what you think. She said that Solicitor Yurchak had done an Ordinance for Lansford and that the display and consumer were all in one. It needs to be simple. She then reported, that there is a concern for council, we are having the police do quick tickets, they are enforcing quick tickets, the person is giving quick ticket, money in envelope, there is no billing that has to happen, but Chip continues to do his work which is a NOV. Chip ends up writing up the NOV and sending it out, then Chip emails the secretary/treasurer to bill, we have nobody billing them. The sixth police officer should be doing code enforcement. Solicitor Yurchak needs to do an MOU, stating that the police are now doing the code enforcement up to 20 hours per week.

#### **RECREATION:**

Councilwomen Kuba reported that the event very well, there were 30 children in attendance. They gave away 4 bikes, the recreation center gave away 2. Great help from the Recreation Commission, the members of the VFW and police. National Night Out date is for August 1<sup>st</sup>, the meeting for the community is June 26<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm. Recreation Center. Johnson Jacobs Park, we got the first plans from engineer, and it will out on bid again. The price came in where is should have. Community bench project going very well, we had stipulated that is would be 25 benches, we are up to 40 benches already. We have some cemeteries that will hopefully take some benches, all of our parks. The benches will start next Saturday and be done by Labor Day. Community yard sale will be in July and maps will be available at rec center. July 22<sup>nd</sup> and July 23<sup>rd</sup> yard sale. They are getting ready for the basket raffle on September 15<sup>th</sup> and with the community bench project the recreation committee is handling paying all bills and doing everything and if it goes over a little bit they will make up the difference. Councilmen Nalesnik mentioned about putting solar lights at the park.

#### **BUDGET & FINANCE:**

Councilwomen Heaney reported that there are things that need to be looked at for the change in management, in terms of the amounts that we have in certain accounts to afford the make the decisions that we talked about. We are in a good spot with our budget, we have some questions about how to move some things around, paying things. We need to have a budget meeting, hopefully to do it before the end of the month. Need to set up a meeting to go over the police pension.

## **PERSONNEL & SAFETY:**

Councilwomen Fox reported that there was a latest proposal from the Teamsters with regards to the office staff and that she would like to make a motion. Councilwomen Guardiani said that she had questions. She wanted to make sure that they were going to cross train and that she felt that if they brought in a Borough Manager, she did not want to set that person up to fail. Councilwomen Fox said that the only thing that changed was the salary, that was the hold out, all other duties are the same. She also said that it does state in the job description, other duties. Councilwomen Kuba said the Teamsters are telling them what to do and what to say no to. Councilwomen Fox said that the only thing they are holding out on is the salary, everything else remains the same, the salary is the ticket and I think they are willing to work with us. Councilmen Nalesnik said he thinks that offering 3% increase was good, but a 5% increase, it is 5.2% for the first year and 1.7% each year after that. President Hawk roll called the motion, Fox- yes; Guardiani-No; Heaney-No; Kuba-No; Paul- No; Nalesnik- No. President Hawk did say yes for the fact that it states in the job description about other duties. Councilwomen Fox said that as far as negotiations the only thing that council has moved on from the beginning the salary. We haven't done anything as far as labor practices or neither have them. From their original proposal that they put in they have taken stuff away. Councilwomen said when you have something it is very hard to take away. President Hawk said the vote was 5-2 and we need to figure out the next move, going to investigate about going to arbitration or negotiations.

Mayor Kattner asked to speak with Council after meeting. He said Councilmen Paul needs to be given a lot of credit for what he did. He stood there and took abuse from people, he needs to be thanked. Councilmen Paul said he had to take his hat off to H & K Contractors, they were excellent to work with.

## **ADJORNMENT:**

President hawk said that Council will be going into Executive Session at 7:40 p.m. and no action will be taken.

DEBORAH DELFRANCO  
SECRETARU/TREASURER