

**NEW BERLIN BOROUGH COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING**

A regular meeting of the New Berlin Borough Council was held on January 13, 2021, at 7:00 pm at the New Berlin Borough Community Center located at 318 Vine Street, New Berlin, PA. Those in attendance were Councilwoman Meghan Shambach, Councilwoman Betty Kratzer, Councilman Barry Kuhns, President Julianne Finkbiner, Councilwoman Barbara Stamm, Vice-President Lisa Decker and Councilwoman Lynda Frederick. Wendy Cole, Solicitor; Rebecca Witmer, Secretary/Treasurer; William Stamm, Street Department Laborer; Michael Mattocks, Street Department Laborer; and Bonnie Hamilton, Mayor were also present. Gregory Drollinger, Officer-in-Charge, under suspension, and Gregory Stuck, Attorney at Law were present. Visitors present were residents David Farmer, Sally Farmer, Sandra Mattocks, Penny Stamm, John Showers, and Nancy Showers.

The meeting was brought to order by President Julianne Finkbiner with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – December 9, 2020** – Councilwoman Lynda Frederick made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the December 9, 2020 with any corrections. Councilwoman Betty Kratzer made a 2<sup>nd</sup> to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

**VISITOR BUSINESS – David Farmer** – Borough resident David Farmer inquired about the Borough Council policy on communication from residents stating that an anonymous letter was read by the Borough Council President at the October meeting during public comment time but three anonymous letters received since then that were not read aloud.

President Finkbiner stated which letters read were at the discretion of council.

David Farmer stated that being consistent is important for a leader and it would be in everyone's best interest for council to adopt a policy on that matter and stick to it.

Mr. Farmer also had a suggestion about public comment as it relates to the meeting minutes. His suggestion was that the public comment should be included as completely as possible because summarizing it may open council up to criticism for leaving out important points and misrepresenting what the public said. In addition, Mr. Farmer stated it would be perfectly fine to summarize what Borough Council members say because they all are involved in approving the minutes and, therefore, can be sure their points are represented accurately.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS – Fire Company Liaison – 2020 Call Count** - The New Berlin Fire Company Liaison reported that the fire company had 115 calls during the year 2020 which was their highest call volume in the history of the fire company. The ambulance had a total of 313 calls during the year 2020.

**Vaccine Notification** – A COVID-19 vaccine notice was given to the fire company stating that the vaccine was available at Evangelical Community Hospital.

**POLICE REPORT – Officer Jackson Stroup Resignation** - President Finkbiner read aloud a resignation letter from Police Patrol Officer Jackson Stroup.

**Motion to Accept Resignation** – Councilwoman Barbara Stamm made a motion to accept the resignation of Police Patrol Officer Jackson Stoup. Councilwoman Meghan Shambach made a 2<sup>nd</sup> to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

**Police Interview – New Hire** – The police committee interviewed Joshua Dreisbach for a police patrol officer position and recommend him for hire.

**Motion** – Vice-President Lisa Decker made a motion to hire Joshua Dreisbach as police patrol officer, probationary status, pending his acceptance of the position. Councilman Barry Kuhns made a 2<sup>nd</sup> to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

**STREET SUPERVISORS REPORT – New Hire** – The street department supervisor was absent from the meeting. Michael Mattocks and William Stamm, street department laborers, were present in

his absence. It was recommended that Christopher Snyder be hired as a street department laborer at the standard starting rate for that position.

**Motion** – Councilman Barry Kuhns made a motion to hire Christopher Snyder as a street department laborer, on an as needed basis, at the standard starting rate for that position. Councilwoman Lynda Frederick made a 2<sup>nd</sup> to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

**MAYOR'S REPORT** – Mayor Hamilton reported that Officer-in-Charge Gregory Drollinger, who was hired in October, was placed on suspension in December.

**Executive Session** – President Finkbiner called an executive session at 7:16pm to discuss the aforementioned personnel matter involving Officer-in-Charge Drollinger. Officer-in-Charge Gregory Drollinger; Gregory Stuck, Attorney for Officer-in-Charge Drollinger; Bonnie Hamilton, Mayor; Wendy Cole, Borough Solicitor; Rebecca Witmer, Secretary/Treasurer; and all councilpersons were in attendance during the executive session. Executive session ended at 8:55pm and the regular session resumed.

**SOLICITORS REPORT – 407-411 Front Street** – Solicitor Cole reported that the 407-411 Front Street property transfer to Schlegel Excavating is almost complete.

**Officer Drollinger Employment - Motion** – Councilwoman Betty Kratzer made a motion to dismiss Gregory Drollinger from employment. Councilman Barry Kuhns made a 2<sup>nd</sup> to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

**NEW BERLIN MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY - Minutes** – No questions or comments were made regarding the NBMA minutes.

**NBMA Board Appointment** – Kurt Zimmerman’s Municipal Authority Board appointment ended 12-31-2020. There have not been any letters of interest received. Emails exchanged between the borough office and the municipal authority office indicated that appointing Mr. Zimmerman for another term, pending his acceptance of the position, would be a good course of action.

**Motion** – Councilwoman Meghan Shambach made a motion to appoint Kurt Zimmerman to the New Berlin Municipal Authority board for a 5 year term to end 12-31-2025. Councilwoman Betty Kratzer made a 2<sup>nd</sup> to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor except President Finkbiner who opposed. Motion carried.

**SECRETARY/TREASURER REPORT - Balance – General Fund** – The secretary/treasurer reported she forgot to add the balance on the agenda but would email council the balance when she goes back to the office after the meeting. \*The balance emailed to council after the meeting was \$29,842.49\*

**Limestone Township Winter Maintenance Check Received** – The secretary/treasurer reported that the check from Limestone Township for winter maintenance was received.

**Consideration for Next Year’s Winter Maintenance** – It was mentioned that William Stamm and Michael Mattocks spend a lot of time on the hills in Limestone Township and council may want to consider not contracting with them in the future.

**DCNR Grant** – The Borough received approval for a DCNR Grant in the amount of \$27,500.00 for a feasibility study to be done on the former New Berlin Elementary School.

**PLGIT Account** – PLGIT Account end of year savings totals and and transfers were reported as follows:

400.75	Borough Vehicle	\$10,092.80	\$1,200.00
410.75	Police Car	\$17,465.88	\$4,000.00
	Police Computer Grant	\$205.21	\$0.00
409.6	Elementary School Property	\$10,189.50	\$0.00
	Street Department Vehicle or		
430.75	Equipment	\$10,542.50	\$2,500.00
405.75	Secretary/Treasurer Equipment	\$2,487.40	\$585.21
408.31	Engineer	\$8,832.36	\$3,000.00
			\$11,285.21
		Total Transfers	

The secretary/treasurer explained that the total for each allotted savings item is in the column on the left and the amount transferred in 2020 is in the column on the right.

**READING AND SIGNING OF BILLS/PAYROLL** – Councilwoman Meghan Shambach made a motion to pay the bills with any additions. Vice-President Lisa Decker made a 2nd to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

**BILLS TO BE PAID FROM THE GENERAL FUND**

M&T Bank – Service Charge	25.00
K&S Music Center	1,652.00
Technology Enterprise Group, Inc.	840.00
Bilger Automotive	100.00
American Paper	88.92
Cardmember Service	716.58
Kim Barton	125.00
Phil Miller Electric	200.00
PIRMA	29,001.00
Curt Keister	375.98
Gregory Drollinger	1,335.88
Michael Mattocks	1,198.90
Rawlin Swanger	116.23
Rebecca A. Witmer	2,342.78
Rodney E. Styers	36.30
William Stamm	1,172.80

PA UC Fund	9.89
Coles Hardware	24.68
Fisher Auto Parts	51.48
H.A. Thomson Company	324.00
PP&L	910.51
Stein's Flowers & Gifts	60.00
The Daily Item	63.75
Windstream Buffalo Valley Inc	269.96

TOTAL \$41,041.64

**OLD BUSINESS – Animal Ordinance Committee** – The animal ordinance committee will meet and have an update for council next month.

**NEW BUSINESS – Maintenance Agreement HVAC – Motion** – After discussion, Councilwoman Barbara Stamm made a motion to enter into an agreement for HVAC maintenance with S.J. Eaton. Councilwoman Betty Kratzer made a 2<sup>nd</sup> to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

**Acoustic Panels at Community Center** – The acoustic panels were installed inside the community center as planned for in the budget. The big acoustic improvement inside the facility was noted.

**WIFI for New Berlin Community Center** – The benefits and cost of having WIFI at the community center were discussed. Also discussed was the location for the router.

**Motion** – Councilwoman Meghan Shambach made a motion to install WIFI at the community center. Vice-President Lisa Decker made a 2<sup>nd</sup> to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

**Community Center Rental Rate** – Discussed was increasing the rental rate for the community center due to the addition of WIFI.

**Motion** – Councilwoman Barbara Stamm made a motion to increase the community center rental fee from \$85.00 to \$100.00 beginning February 1, 2021. Councilwoman Betty Kratzer made a 2<sup>nd</sup> to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

**New Berlin Activities Committee** – Councilwoman Barbara Stamm stated that she cannot guarantee that the activities committee will be having fireworks in New Berlin this year. Councilwoman Meghan Shambach stated that the fire company is not having a carnival but is hoping to have some type of a summer festival. Councilwoman Shambach also stated that she is hoping to have a summer concert series. Mayor Hamilton stated she thought New Berlin Day was the only event in doubt. Councilwoman Stamm stated that it doesn't look like the fireworks will be happening either.

Councilwoman Stamm stated that the borough solicitor was helping the activities committee with fireworks contract language and an issue with a deposit for the fireworks. During that time, an email from the pyrotechnics company's owner was received which stated his insurance company was unwilling to accept the new language in the contract but was willing to wait until May for the committee to sign the contract for the fireworks for this year. The solicitor was not sure what would happen with the deposit if the committee does not do the fireworks this year but the committee could ask for it to be held for the following year and see if he agrees.

Councilwoman Stamm stated she is unsure the activities committee is going to continue, she thinks it may fold altogether, not just the New Berlin Day part, and inquired if the money could go to the borough to hold. Mayor Hamilton stated she thinks the discussion should wait until the activities committee has their meeting. Councilwoman Stamm stated she was hoping to give ideas to the committee as to what to do with the money if the activities committee does not continue.

January 13, 2021

**ADJOURNMENT – Motion** – Councilwoman Meghan Shambach made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilwoman Lisa Decker made a 2nd to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rebecca A. Witmer,  
Secretary/Treasurer

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MAYOR