

**NEW BERLIN BOROUGH COUNCIL
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**

A regular meeting of the New Berlin Borough Council was held on February 7, 2018, at 7:00 pm at the New Berlin Borough Community Center located at 318 Vine Street, New Berlin, PA. Present were President Julianne Finkbiner, Vice-President Jared Busby, Councilwoman Elaine Hopkins, President Pro-Tem Betty Kratzer, Councilwoman Lisa Decker, Councilwoman Lynda Frederick, and Councilwoman Barbara Stamm. Rebecca Witmer, Secretary/Treasurer; Bonnie Hamilton, Mayor; Wendy Cole, Solicitor; and L. Eric Hassenplug, Chief of Police were also present. Robert Sauer, Jr. was present as a visitor.

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

New Solicitor – Wendy Cole, Esquire, the new Solicitor for New Berlin Borough was introduced to Council.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 10, 2018 Council Meeting – Councilwoman Elaine Hopkins made a motion to approve the January 10, 2018 Council Meeting minutes. Councilwoman Lisa Decker made a 2nd to the motion. As a correction to the minutes, Barbara Stamm stated she thought the borough was going to put application in for the Memorial Day Parade just in case the Legion wants to bring back the event. Jared Busby thought the same. President Finkbiner thought Ms. Witmer was going to ask about the Parade before submitting for the application. Ms. Witmer stated she must have misunderstood or missed the exact language of the motion. Ms. Witmer explained the process of submitting the applications to PennDOT. Another correction on page 6, sentence 3 was noted; “send” should be changed to “second” in the motion. A few typos were corrected. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

Motion – Jared Busby made an amendment to the motion from last month referring to the submission of the applications to PennDOT. The amendment to the motion is to check with The American Legion to inquire if they intend to have the Memorial Day Parade before submitting the

special event permit to close the road for that event. Barbara Stamm made a 2nd to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

VISITOR BUSINESS - Robert Sauers, Chicken Farm Owner – Robert Sauers, owner of the chicken farm east of town, was present to discuss the letter sent to Bell & Evans from New Berlin Borough regarding the bad smell coming from his farm. Mr. Sauers stated the borough should not expect Bell & Evans to respond to the borough because it is not their problem. Mr. Sauers read aloud the letter council sent to Bell & Evans. Mr. Sauers communicated to council that he has a manure management program he must, and does, follow. Mr. Sauers stated he hauled March 10th, June 7th, and September 23rd in 2017.

Mr. Sauers stated there is one lady in particular who is complaining a lot and causing a lot of problems. She wrote a letter to Bell & Evans when he hauled manure in June and again on Thanksgiving. The letters accused Mr. Sauers of doing something illegal. It was also stated by Mr. Sauers that he never hauls in the field next to town and he does not use chemicals or pesticides. Mr. Sauers stated the farm owned by Mr. Mapes and also the one owned by Mr. Dennis Spangler is to blame for most of the smell.

Mr. Sauers stated if council wants to complain any further, they can call the conservation district. His farm is checked on periodically and is not doing anything illegal. As far as the odor goes, there is nothing anyone can do about the odor since there is no law against odor. Further, there is a pig farm going in next to town. So, if council thinks the smell is bad now, wait until the pig farm is up and running.

If council has any further complaints, they are not to call or contact Bell & Evans. Bell & Evans comes to check on his farm quite a bit and there is nothing wrong. Further, he does not own any property in The Borough so he is not under the borough laws.

A member of council asked why Mr. Sauers hauled over Thanksgiving; the smell was particularly bad and people could not enjoy their Thanksgiving Dinner. Mr. Sauers stated he did it over Thanksgiving so he did not interfere with the Tech School since they had the courtesy to call him

and ask not to interfere with some of its events.

Council inquired if Mr. Sauers could give notice when he is going to haul manure so notice can be given to borough residents. Mr. Sauers stated he would be hauling sometime in the middle of March. After more discussion, Mr. Sauers stated he could give the borough notice about a week before he hauls. He will call the borough office to let Ms. Witmer know. Council directed Ms. Witmer to place the information online in an attempt to give notice to residents.

COMMITTEE REPORTS – Police Committee - Rules and Regulations - Cell Phone – The Police Department Rules and Regulations were discussed. There were several parts that still need to be officially modified. The police committee will meet to look at the specific language and make the modifications. The Secretary/Treasurer will be given the modifications so employees can be given an updated copy of the document.

Motion - Rules and Regulations – Councilwoman Elaine Hopkins made a motion to adopt the PD Rules and Regulations once the official language is incorporated into the document. Vice-President Jared Busby made a 2nd to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

New Hire – Chief L. Eric Hassenplug would like to set up an interview with a candidate for police patrol officer. The candidate was briefly discussed.

Motion - New Hire – Councilwoman Barbara Stamm made a motion to hire Jackson Stroup as police patrol officer, probationary status, pending successful interview with the Chief of Police and New Berlin Police Committee. Councilwoman Lynda Frederick made a 2nd to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

POLICE REPORT – January Police Report – The January Police Report was reviewed. No questions were raised.

Bullet Proof Vests – Chief Hassenplug reported that the new bullet proof vests arrived.

STREET SUPERVISOR REPORT – Mr. Hummel was absent from the meeting due to working during the snow storm. No report was given in his absence.

Mountain Brush Area – President Julianne Finkbiner gave council a summary of past council discussions and directives regarding the brush area located on Mountain Road. The gate is not currently being opened consistently on Saturday mornings from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm as directed. Sometimes the gate is left open and sometimes it isn't open at all. Someone recently dumped a pile of concrete at the site which is only designated for organic material. Illegal dumping is one of the reasons council directed the gate should be opened and closed only on Saturday mornings. Another reason was that landscapers and others who are not residents of New Berlin are placing abnormally large amounts of organic material at that location.

Several solutions to the problem were discussed. After discussion, several members of council volunteered to open and close the gate on Saturday mornings. The Secretary/Treasurer was directed to give keys to those council members. A rotation schedule will be made.

Spring Maintenance in Town – President Finkbiner stated the town needs a little more maintenance to keep it looking fresh. Maybe council should walk the town sometime this spring to see what maintenance needs done and what can be done to make our town look better. For instance, the crosswalks could be repainted and that would make a difference. Mayor Hamilton stated placing some flower baskets on the main streets would make a difference as well.

MAYOR'S REPORT – Mayor Hamilton stated the new auditor has taken the Oath of Office.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT – Solicitor Cole stated she had nothing to report but looks forward to working with council.

NEW BERLIN MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY – Minutes – There was no questions or discussion regarding the New Berlin Municipal Authority Minutes.

SECRETARY/TREASURER REPORT - Balance – General Fund - Rebecca Witmer reported the balance in the General Fund as \$46,052.66.

PLGIT Transfers and Balances – Rebecca Witmer referred to the PLGIT Transfer and Balance report distributed to council. The reported balances for allocations within the PLGIT Account at the start of 2017 are as follows:

Borough Vehicle	\$1,200.00
Police Car	\$4,000.00
Police Computer Grant	\$0.00
Elementary School Repairs	\$8,300.00
Street Department Vehicle or Equipment	\$2,500.00
Secretary/Treasurer Equipment	\$250.00
Engineer	\$237.36
Total Transfers	\$16,487.36

End of Year Reporting – Rebecca Witmer, Secretary/Treasurer reported that the W-2’s have been distributed; the EIT and LST Tax reports and reconciliations have been completed. The State and Social Security Tax for each employee has been reported as well. The Liquid Fuels and other various required reports have been completed.

Committee List – Rebecca Witmer, Secretary/Treasurer made a correction to the 2018-2019 Committee List. Wendy Cole should be listed as the Solicitor.

SIGNING OF BILLS/PAYROLL – The Secretary/Treasurer noted that there will be additional bills listed on the minutes besides those listed since more bills are due to come soon.

Motion to Pay Bills – Councilwoman Betty Kratzer made a motion to pay the bills with any additions. Councilwoman Elaine Hopkins made a 2nd to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

BILLS TO BE PAID FROM M&T GENERAL FUNDS ACCOUNT

M&T Bank – January Checking Service Charge	60.76
M&T Bank - February School Payment	1,994.36

Atlantic Tactical	1,836.00
H.A. Thomson Company	322.00
PA State Assoc. of Boroughs	10.00
PIRMA	9,276.00
PP&L	296.88
YIS Cowden Group, Inc.	399.00
PP&L	514.25
Union County Commissioners	63.00
Curt Keister	80.36
Jacob Shipman	371.92
Leif E. Hassenplug	721.99
Lester O. Hummel	931.05
Michael H. Mattocks	93.50
Rebecca A. Witmer	1,736.46
Rodney E. Styers	98.07
William Stamm	312.39
AT&T Mobility	130.76
Hometown Disposal, lp	64.50
Kathy A Hummel Diehl	52.50
Kim Barton	35.00
Lester Hummel	11.47
M&T Bank	1,994.26
Postmaster	188.00
PP&L Electric	1,031.69
Union County Commissioners	3.00
Hackenburg's Garage	3,655.34
Quill	219.11
Cardmember Service	341.92
PA Department of Revenue	126.68
US Treasury	1,020.38
American Paper	83.92
Atlantic Tactical	117.93
PP&L	219.28
Windstream Buffalo Valley	251.37
PP&L	283.81

TOTAL \$28,948.91

OLD BUSINESS – PennDOT Bridge (Route 204) Project – The Secretary/Treasurer spoke with PennDOT regarding the bridge project letter discussed at the last meeting.

The project scope is to place an epoxy seal overlay with skid resistance on the existing bridge roadway. It is anticipated to start in spring or summer of 2022, lasting approximately 3 weeks with

no weekends or long down times. The plan is to make the bridge one lane during the project.

PennDOT is aware of the dates for New Berlin's Events. If any new events get scheduled between now and then, New Berlin should make PennDOT aware.

Non-Compliant Properties – The Secretary/Treasurer gave a council a history of two properties in the borough which have code violations. One of the properties is on Spangler Street and one is on Front Street. The borough has been working with CKCOG to get the owners of the properties to come into compliance with the International Property Maintenance Code.

An update on the properties was discussed. At this time, the property on Front Street is not recorded as being in foreclosure but the owner communicated with CKCOG that it is in foreclosure. The owner of the property on Spangler Street has not responded to any communication from CKCOG. Further action will be taken as time allows. The Solicitor will get mortgage and other lien information on record for the properties.

Statement of Financial Interest Forms – Statement of Financial Interest Forms are due to the office by May 1st.

Auditor – Matthew Hamilton – The Secretary/Treasurer reported that the newly appointed auditor term for Matthew Hamilton will expire in 2019. Mr. Hamilton will run for a 6 year auditor term in the next municipal election if he so desires.

DCNR Grant Project – Council received via email a series of documents regarding the bidding and construction of the DCNR Grant Project. The project will need to be advertised for bid. Several of the documents need be signed by the Solicitor and the Project Coordinator as indicated in the email.

Motion - DCNR Grant Advertisement – Councilwoman Lisa Decker made a motion to advertise the DCNR Project out for bid once approved by DCNR. Councilwoman Betty Kratzer made a 2nd to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS – Transportation Seminar Attendance – Council discussed who will be attending the UC Transportation Grant Seminar. At least one councilperson has registered to attend. One or two others may attend as well. The Secretary/Treasurer may be attending.

UC Housing Program – Councilwoman Elaine Hopkins expressed an interest in making sure information was distributed about the UC Housing Program. Participants of this program must meet income guidelines. The Union County Housing Authority is particularly interested in seeing elderly people apply for the program. The Secretary/Treasurer will place the flyer on New Berlin’s Facebook page but it is doubtful that many elderly residents will be reached by this method. Councilwoman Elaine Hopkins stated she would distribute flyers at the upcoming New Berlin Fire Company Dinner. Several other distribution ideas were discussed.

Bulletin Board – Council discussed placing a new bulletin board at the recycling area. The Secretary/Treasurer will contact the Sun Technical School to see if they are interested in the project. If not, Marvin Wagner will be asked to do the project.

PA One Call Proclamation – PA One Call is asking municipalities to proclaim April as “safe digging month”. Council discussed the topic.

Motion – Councilwoman Elaine Hopkins made a motion to proclaim April 2018 “safe digging month”. Vice-President Jared Busby made a 2nd to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

The Mayor proclaimed April 2018 as such and signed an official proclamation for the official books of New Berlin and to be sent to New Berlin’s PA One Call Representative.

PennDOT Connects Workshop – Council discussed attendance and registration for an upcoming PennDOT Connects workshop.

Borough Fences – Councilwoman Stamm stated she would like to discuss several fences in the borough and whether or not they meet borough regulations. There are quite a few fences in the borough that are leaning over. Regulations/Ordinances for fences and abandoned vehicles were discussed.

Several outdated borough ordinances were discussed which included the animal and sidewalk ordinances. Vice-President Finkbiner asked Chief Hassenplug to make a list of ordinances which need updating.

ADJOURNMENT – Motion – Councilwoman Lynda Frederick made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilwoman Elaine Hopkins 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

MAYOR