

NEW BERLIN BOROUGH COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

A regular meeting of the New Berlin Borough Council was held on February 10, 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, Councilman Barry Kuhns, President Julianne Finkbiner, Councilwoman Barbara Stamm, Vice-President Lisa Decker, and Councilwoman Lynda Frederick. Wendy Cole, Solicitor; Rebecca Witmer, Secretary/Treasurer and Bonnie Hamilton, Mayor were also present. Councilwoman Betty Kratzer was absent from the meeting. Visitors present were Brian Dugan and New Berlin Borough residents David Farmer, Sally Farmer, Nancy Showers, and John Showers.

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

APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – January 13, 2021 – Councilwoman Lynda Frederick made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the January 13, 2021, council meeting with any corrections. Councilwoman Barbara Stamm made a 2nd to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

VISITOR BUSINESS – Sally Farmer – Borough resident Sally Farmer inquired if she would be able to ask a few questions regarding the number of landlords and tenants in town during the rental property discussion later in the meeting. The secretary/treasurer stated she should be able to answer some of the questions but may not be able to answer all of them since she doesn't have the rental spreadsheet with her at the meeting.

David Farmer – Borough resident David Farmer made suggestions about how council should handle written comments from the public and how visitor business should be dictated into the council meeting minutes.

COMMITTEE REPORTS – Fire Company Liaison – Grant - The New Berlin Fire Company Liaison reported that the fire company has continued to follow through with the processes for the grants they have been awarded.

Workers Compensation – The liaison reported she asked the fire company to contact the secretary/treasurer regarding workers compensation while utilizing Penns Creek’s ambulance.

Fire Company’s 2021 Calendar of Events and 2021 Fireman’s Parade – The fire company will not be completing a 2021 calendar of events but will instead be deciding events on a month to month basis. There will not be a firemen’s parade in 2021.

Animal Ordinance Committee – A proposed animal ordinance was distributed to council along with notes from the solicitor regarding the ordinance. Council will review the revised ordinance and solicitor notes in preparation for discussion at the next meeting. Mayor Hamilton explained the reasons for some of the language in the ordinance regarding feral cats and also explained how she and others have been trapping feral cats, getting them spayed or neutered, and finding them homes.

Activities Committee – The activities committee is continuing as an entity but will have a sub-committee to organize New Berlin Day. The fireworks display will be held on July 4th but there may not be as many activities held during the day. There was discussion regarding the fireworks contract. The activities committee will sign the contract and make sure it is sent back by the May deadline.

POLICE REPORT – Officer Andrew Bustin - President Finkbiner read aloud a resignation letter from Police Patrol Officer Andrew Bustin.

Motion to Accept Resignation – Councilwoman Meghan Shambach made a motion to accept the resignation of Police Patrol Officer Andrew Bustin. Councilman Barry Kuhns made a 2nd to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

Officer Dreisbach – The police committee recently interviewed Joshua Dreisbach for a police patrol officer position. The committee recommends him for hire as a police patrol officer, probationary status.

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 2nd to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

STREET SUPERVISORS REPORT – The street department supervisor was absent from the meeting. There was no report in his absence.

MAYOR'S REPORT – Mayor Hamilton had nothing to report aside from that which was already reported.

SOLICITORS REPORT – 407-411 Front Street – Solicitor Cole reported that the buyer of the 407-411 Front Street property is creating a Limited Liability Corporation under which name the property will be transferred. Once the LLC is formed, the closing can be completed and the deed can be filed.

Legal Question - Limiting Rental Properties in Borough – President Finkbiner inquired if it is legal for a municipality to limit the number or percentage of rental properties within its boundaries. Solicitor Cole stated she would look into the issue and report back to council.

The Secretary/Treasurer answered Sally Famer's questions regarding rental properties in the borough.

NEW BERLIN MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY - NBMA Waterline Project Bid Award – The New Berlin Municipal Authority conducted a bid opening for the waterline project on Water Street. Gutelius Excavating was awarded the bid at \$61,520.00.

Water Meter Replacement – The NBMA will be replacing some of the old water meters inside some of houses in town.

Minutes - Appointment to NBMA Board – Councilwoman Stamm stated that the way the NBMA minutes are written regarding the NBMA’s recommendation to council to reappoint R. Kurt Zimmerman to the NBMA Board is as if the NBMA appoints their own board. A change of language should be requested. Councilwoman Meghan Shambach, NBMA Liaison, will suggest to the NBMA that the paragraph be reworded.

SECRETARY/TREASURER REPORT - Balance – General Fund – The secretary/treasurer reported the balance in the general fund as \$30,121.75.

DCNR Walking Trail – Closeout – The financial paperwork for the walking trail grant was submitted to DCNR last month for audit. The audit is complete with no findings. The final reimbursement to the borough has been approved but not yet received.

DCNR Grant Feasibility Study and Grant Application – As reported last month, the borough was approved for a grant to hire a consultant to conduct a feasibility study on the former New Berlin Elementary School. DCNR’s newest grant round is open; the secretary/treasurer inquired if there was a project for which the borough would like to apply. After discussion, the consensus of council was to forgo this DCNR grant round to save funds to follow through with any project recommended by the consultant once the feasibility study is complete.

PLGIT Transfers – PLGIT transfers are as reported last month with a few more dollars incurred under unallocated funds which accounts for the interest earned in December 2021.

Liquid Fuels Report – The 2020 liquid fuels report was submitted to PennDOT and approved pending audit. The report was distributed to council. As reflected on the report, the 2020 ending balance in the Liquid Fuels Fund is \$112,465.47 with \$37,392.48 of that balance being permitted to be allocated for street department equipment.

2020 Profit/Loss – A 2020 General Fund Profit Loss Report was distributed to council showing total income for the year 2020 as \$313,391.47, total expenses for the year 2020 as \$303,287.20. The total borough 2020 net income is \$10,104.27

Election Petitions – Anyone running for reelection should soon contact the Election’s Office for the paperwork.

Statement of Financial Interests – Statement of Financial Interest Forms are available and due to be turned into the office in May.

Pay Differential – Officer in Charge - The secretary/treasurer is performing Administrative Officer-in-Charge (OIC) duties for the police department until an OIC is appointed. All special training and needed approval has been received. A pay differential while performing those duties was discussed.

Motion - Vice-President Lisa Decker made a motion to pay the secretary/treasurer the current OIC rate for the hours worked performing OIC duties for the police department. Councilwoman Lynda Frederick made a 2nd to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

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
Martin’s Steel LLC	33.64
PP&L	684.18
Phil Miller’s Electric	190.00
DE LANGE LANDEN FINANCIAL	75.57
Hometown Disposal	72.42
R.W. Maust Jr. Garage, Inc.	495.77
PA Dept of Revenue	251.22
Hoover Tractor, Inc.	1,378.01

Hornings Attachments, LLC	575.27
YCG, Inc.	1,197.50
US Treasury	1,810.02
AT&T Mobility	53.50
Bradley Bilger	20.04
Christopher Snyder	18.07
Curt Keister	206.62
Joshua Dreisbach	96.15
Michael Mattocks	975.95
Rawlin Swanger	2.24
Rebecca A. Witmer	2,027.73
Rodney E. Styers	32.43
William Stamm	983.97
Cardmember Service	177.03
Coles Hardware	11.38
Kim Barton	35.00
Postmaster	198.00
PP&L	1,099.97
SEDA-COG	110.00
Union County Commissioners	12.00
Windstream Buffalo Valley, Inc.	269.96
Hometown Disposal	72.42
Kim Barton	60.00
Cole & Varano	1,500.00
Rogers Uniforms	328.00
Amtrust North America	915.00
DE Lange Landen Financial Services, Inc.	75.57
New Enterprise Stone & Lime Co, Inc.	412.12
PP&L	603.08
PA Department of Revenue	172.77
US Treasury	1,302.96

TOTAL	\$18,560.56
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OLD BUSINESS – WIFI – Community Center – The WIFI at the community center has been installed.

NEW BUSINESS – PennDOT PDD – Council discussed recent information from PennDOT regarding ground-based delivery devices called personal delivery devices (PDD's) that are manufactured for transporting cargo or goods. The devices are operated by a driving system that allows for autonomous and/or remote operations. After discussion regarding impact PDD's may have on the

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town, council did not take any action. If there are negative effects on the town from the use of PPD's, council will consider passing an ordinance regulating their use within the borough.

Tax Collector Commission – The borough received a letter from Union County about its recent decision to stop collecting taxes for municipalities. Various commission rates were discussed which will be applicable to anyone running for New Berlin Tax Collector. Council set a commission for an elected tax collector at \$3.50 per tax bill.

ADJOURNMENT – Motion – Councilwoman Meghan Shambach made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilwoman Lynda Frederick 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