

**NEW BERLIN BOROUGH COUNCIL
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**

A regular meeting of the New Berlin Borough Council was held on Wednesday 8, 2019, 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 Elaine Hopkins, President Pro-Tem Betty Kratzer, Councilwoman Barbara Stamm, Councilwoman Lisa Decker, Councilwoman Lynda Frederick, and Councilwoman Meghan Shambach. Wendy Cole, Solicitor and Rebecca Witmer, Secretary/Treasurer; were also present. Bonnie Hamilton, Mayor and L. Eric Hassenplug, Chief of Police were absent from the meeting. Cynthia Wray, David Farmer, and Sally Farmer, all Borough Residents were present as visitors. James Emery, Central Keystone COG was also present as a visitor.

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – April 10, 2019 - Discussion was brought regarding the April 10, 2019 meeting minutes. Vice-President Elaine Hopkins made a motion to approve the minutes. Councilwoman Lynda Frederick made a 2nd to the motion. Vote was taken to approve the minutes. All in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

VISITOR BUSINESS – Cynthia Wray, Borough Resident- Feral Cats - Cynthia Wray was present to voice a complaint about feral cats on and around her rental property. Ms. Wray stated she knows who is feeding the feral cats. Ms. Wray was encouraged to review the Borough’s animal ordinance and fill out a complaint at the borough office.

Cynthia Wray also inquired if the borough passed a snow emergency ordinance since she was last at a council meeting a few years ago. It was stated that a new snow emergency ordinance was not passed. Ms. Wray asked if the snow plowing during the next winter season could include both sides of the street since there is no plowing on the side where the cars are parked.

David and Sally Farmer, Borough Residents – Landlord Ordinance – David and Sally Farmer were present to voice concerns about the recently passed landlord ordinance. The concerns expressed were regarding the borough asking for information about renters in town when that same information is not asked from those in town who own their homes. The concern extended to the Borough creating two classes of people rather than one community as a whole. Solicitor Cole and Council addressed the concerns, stated the Borough has access to the same information from homeowners, and explained the public safety reasons for passing the ordinance.

James Emery – Central Keystone COG – James Emery was present to discuss the 407, 409, & 411 Front Street duplex property and the 608 Spangler Street Property which are in violation of the Building Code and have been condemned by the Borough.

COMMITTEE REPORTS – Activities Committee – Dumpster Day – Everything is in order for New Berlin's first Dumpster Day.

Personnel Committee & Finance Committee – Street Department Supervisor – The recommendation of the Personnel Committee is to hire Curt Keister as Street Department Supervisor.

Motion – Councilwoman Lynda Frederick made a motion to hire Curt Keister as Street Department Supervisor, probationary status until December 31, 2019, at a rate of \$16.00 per hour. Councilwoman Lisa Frederick made a 2nd to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

The Personnel Committee met to discuss the roles of the street department laborers and their hourly pay rate. The Finance Committee met to discuss the same. It is the recommendation of both committees to adjust the rate of pay for three of the street department laborers. Benjamin Pilko's rate should wait to be changed until the beginning of the year due to him recently starting the position.

Street Department Wages – Motion - Vice-President Elaine Hopkins made a motion to raise the rate of pay for Michael Mattocks and William Stamm to \$12.00 per hour. Councilwoman Meghan Shambach made a 2nd to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

The Finance Committee will adjust the rate of street department laborer Benjamin Pilko to \$10.00 per hour at the beginning of the year when planning the budget.

Local Emergency Management - Councilwoman Meghan Shambach stated she attended a local emergency management meeting during which they discussed a plan for using the fire department sirens to warn residents about tornadoes. The tone and duration of the siren will be different than the one used for fires. During certain times, New Berlin Residents may be able to hear the Mifflinburg Fire Sirens. Once the plan is in place, the secretary/treasurer will be given a copy for reference.

POLICE REPORT- April Police Report - Council reviewed the April police report.

Andrew Bustin started his position as police patrol officer and it is going well.

MAYORS REPORT – No Mayor’s report.

SOLICITORS REPORT – Executive Session – Legal Matter – An executive session was held from 8:10 pm to 8:45 pm to discuss a legal matter involving property. All members of council, the secretary/treasurer, James Emery from Central Keystone COG, and the solicitor were in attendance.

Three proposals were received for the demolition of the Spangler Street Property. The lowest proposal received was from Schlegel Excavating in the amount of \$11,356.00. The estimates will be placed on file at the Borough Office as legally required.

Motion – Councilwoman Barbara Stamm made a motion to accept a quote in the amount of \$11,356.00 from Schlegel Excavating for the demolition of 608 Spangler Street pending the final order of court. Vice-President Elaine Hopkins made a 2nd to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

Brandon Ball from the Northumberland County Soil Conservation District will be contacted regarding treating the property at 608 Spangler Street for mosquitoes.

Estimates received for the demolition of 407,409, & 411 Front Street were above the bid threshold and therefore needs to be advertised for bid. The Secretary/Treasurer will start on a bid packet for the demolition. The solicitor stated not to spend an abundant amount of time on it until it is known if the condemnation will be challenged.

Motion – Councilwoman Linda Frederick made a motion to proceed with demolition of the property at 407, 409, & 411 Front Street. Councilwoman Meghan Shambach made a 2nd to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

Motion – Councilwoman Lisa Decker made a motion for the solicitor to send a letter responding to Attorney Showalter stating that council is proceeding with the demolition of the property. Councilwoman Lynda Frederick made a 2nd to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

NEW BERLIN MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY - Minutes – No comments were made regarding the municipal authority minutes.

SECRETARY/TREASURER REPORT - Balance – General Fund - Rebecca Witmer reported the balance in the General Fund as \$137,208.92.

Fire Escrow Account – A new Fire Escrow Account has been opened at M&T Bank. M&T Bank gave the Borough the option of depositing fire escrow checks via scanner online, saving travel time to and from the bank. The Fire Escrow Account at First National Bank has not yet been closed due to

one of the houses involved in a fire not yet having a final inspection. There is approximately \$50.00 remaining in the First National Bank account which will be distributed to the property owner once final inspection happens.

DCNR Grant Park and Maintenance Operations Plan - The currently open DCNR grant for Plum Street Park and pavilion required New Berlin to adopt a Park Operations and Maintenance Plan before final closing of the grant. The proposed plan was worked on by the consultant, DCNR, and the secretary/treasurer and includes all DCNR required criteria. Some street department laborers, including the newly hired Street Department Supervisor, were also consulted when developing the plan. While the plan includes some maintenance that does not pertain to New Berlin recreation areas at the present time, the goal was to plan for future maintenance as well as current maintenance.

Motion - Vice-President Elaine Hopkins made a motion to adopt the Park Operations and Maintenance Plan for Plum Street Park as proposed. Councilwoman Betty Kratzer made a 2nd to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

Motion to Pay Bills – Councilwoman Betty Kratzer made a motion to pay the bills with any additions. Councilwoman 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 M&T GENERAL FUNDS ACCOUNT

M&T Bank – April Checking Service Charge	25.00
M&T Bank – May School Payment	1,994.26
A+ Office Outlet	10.99
Atlantic Tactical	256.84
PP&L	474.45
SJ Eaton Plumbing & Heating	1,036.35
UC Commissioners	9.00
YIS Cowden Group, Inc.	100.00
A+ Office Outlet	399.80
AT&T	144.91
Atlantic Tactical	185.97
Kim Barton	35.00

Marco Technologies, LLC	49.74
Richard’s Portable Toilets	80.00
Union County Commissioners	80.00
Atlantic Tactical	85.99
Union County Commissioners	66.00
Andrew Bustin	205.11
Benjamin Pilko	29.68
Curt Keister	460.10
Jacob Shipman	264.60
Leif E Hassenplug	387.01
Michael Mattocks	570.97
Rebecca A. Witmer	1,958.96
Rodney E. Styers	111.91
William Stamm	710.69
Cardmember Service	1,248.99
Coles Hardware	67.86
New Berlin Fire Company	795.51
PP&L	905.57
Union County Commissioners	32.00
YIS Cowden Group, Inc.	316.50
PA Department of Revenue	171.14
US Treasury	1,314.96
TOTAL	\$14,585.86

OLD BUSINESS – No old business was discussed.

NEW BUSINESS - Plum Street Park Electric – Ms. Witmer reported that proposals are being sought and a site meeting was held with a PP&L representative regarding the electrical hookup at the Plum Street Park Pavilion. All proposals have not yet been received. Information was given regarding the PP&L hookup. There is no cost for a service drop for municipal recreation areas.

Motion - Councilwoman Lisa Decker made a motion to place an electrical pole with overhead electric line at the location determined by PP&L at the site meeting and then have electric lines run underground to the pavilion. Vice-President Elaine Hopkins made a 2nd to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

Right-to-Know Resolution – An email request asking council for support, via passage of a resolution, for relief from serial right-to-know requesters was sent to council from another municipality. Discussion was tabled until the next meeting of council.

New Berlin Elementary School Building – Councilwoman Meghan Shambach and the Secretary/Treasurer recently put on the appropriate personal protective equipment to check the mold condition inside the building known as the New Berlin Elementary School. Councilwoman Meghan Shambach read and explained certain parts of the mold report from 2014/2015 and also reported on the current environmental conditions. The mold is in all of the porous surfaces in the building. If the desire is to keep the building structure, everything inside would need to be removed and the building would need to be completely gutted. It would be very costly to salvage anything in the building. If a purpose for the building is established, grant money may be obtained to remediate the issues but it would still likely be more costly to completely gut and rehabilitate the building rather than demolish and rebuild an entire new structure. Therefore, it would likely be best to demolish the building.

Council briefly discussed the possibility of doing a feasibility study to determine a practical, self-sustaining purpose for the building. Councilwoman Shambach proposed the idea of an environmental education center and preliminarily started exploring to see if any agencies or educational institutions were interested in helping with a venture such as that one. A meeting will be held with the UC Conservation District to determine what possibilities there are, if any, of the agency helping New Berlin with an environmental education center. Councilwoman Meghan Shambach, Councilwoman Lisa Decker, and Councilwoman Betty Kratzer will attend the meeting.

NB Elementary School Property Committee – President Finkbiner appointed Meghan Shambach to the New Berlin Elementary School Property Committee.

PP&L – Native trees are being provided free of charge to those municipalities interested. Council will email the Borough Office with ideas as to the number of trees and proposed placement.

May 8, 2019

ADJOURNMENT – Motion – Vice-President Elaine Hopkins 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

MAYOR