

**NEW BERLIN BOROUGH COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING**

A regular meeting of the New Berlin Borough Council was held on May 12, 2021, at 7:00 pm at the New Berlin Borough Community Center located at 318 Vine Street, New Berlin, PA. Those in attendance were Councilman Barry Kuhns, President Julianne Finkbiner, Councilwoman Barbara Stamm, Vice-President Lisa Decker, Councilwoman Betty Kratzer, Councilwoman Meghan Shambach and Councilwoman Lynda Frederick. Wendy Cole, Solicitor; Rebecca Witmer, Secretary/Treasurer; and Joshua Dreisbach, Officer in Charge of the Police Department were also present. Bonnie Hamilton, Mayor, was absent from the meeting. Visitors present were residents Christine Benfer, Nancy Showers, Scott Benfer, David Farmer, and Michael Palermo, Sally Farmer, and Edward Pilko were present as visitors.

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

**APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – April 14, 2021** – Councilwoman Lynda Frederick made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the April 14, 2021, council meeting. Councilman Barry Kuhns made a 2<sup>nd</sup> to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

**VISITOR BUSINESS** – There was no visitor business brought before council.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS – Fire Company Liaison – Fire Truck** – The fire company liaison reported that the fire company will not be purchasing the fire truck mentioned at the last council meeting.

**Fire Company Festival** - The New Berlin Fire Company will have a festival Thursday, June 24<sup>th</sup> through June 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Activities Committee – 4<sup>th</sup> of July** – The fireworks are scheduled for July 4<sup>th</sup> with a rain date of July 5<sup>th</sup>. There will be some activities on the commons the day of the fireworks but, overall, the activities will be scaled back this year.

**Maintenance Gazebo at Vine and Water Streets** – The activities committee is searching for someone to power wash the gazebo located at Vine and Water Street.

**Town Yard Sales** – The May Town Yard Sales were a success.

**Community Center Landscaping** – Plants have not yet been purchased. Councilwoman Meghan Shambach will send a list of the flowers decided upon to the Borough Office. The secretary/treasurer will give the list to the street department so they can purchase and plant the flowers accordingly.

**Study Committee – Request for Proposals** – Council was asked to approve and/or give corrections to the Request for Proposals as submitted. The Request for Proposals will be sent to DCNR for approval and/or corrections once council gives its approval. Once it is approved by DCNR, it will be advertised accordingly to solicit proposals for a consultant to complete a feasibility study on the former New Berlin Elementary School building.

**Union County Local Emergency Planning Committee** – Councilwoman Shambach reported that the UC Local Emergency Planning Committee has not met since the first quarter of 2020 due to COVID-19 but meetings are expected to resume soon.

**POLICE REPORT – April 2021 Police Report** – The April 2021 Police Report was reviewed. No questions were asked.

**New Officers Updates and Trainings** – All of the uniforms for the newly hired officers have recently been received. Both officers have been qualified. Officer Geise has been in for one day of patrol training with OIC Dreisbach. During that training the police had a good traffic stop and the person stopped was found to have warrants, so it was a good training day. Officer Faulkner will be out with OIC Dreisbach for his first day of patrol training tomorrow.

**STREET SUPERVISORS REPORT – Street Sweeper** – Street Department Supervisor Curt Keister reported that the street sweeper contractor who was hired did not show up on the three different scheduled days. He has since not returned any telephone calls. Since then there have been heavy rains which washed most of the cinders and other debris down the storm drains. Due to all of the circumstances, council decided to forgo street sweeping this year.

**Paint & Drywall - Borough Offices** – The Street Department Supervisor presented quotes for the drywall and painting of the inside of the Borough Offices. The drywall work is more extensive than minor repair. For example, some of the ceiling lights need to be removed before the drywall can be repaired in certain areas. Due to that reason, it may not be ideal to utilize volunteers for the work. Quotes received were: Keith Kline in an amount of \$2,400.00; Painting Well Done in an amount of \$4,286.58; and Norman Moyer in an amount of \$4,013.67.

**Motion – Paint and Drywall** - Councilwoman Frederick made a motion to hire Keith Kline to drywall and paint the inside of the Borough Offices if the quote is all inclusive of materials as well as labor. If not, then the next lowest quote will be accepted and that person hired. The materials will be taken from repairs and maintenance line item of the budget since the Borough budgets for these circumstances. However, the street department wages are where labor for repairs and maintenance of borough buildings is planned. Therefore, the labor portion of the awarded quote will come out of the street department wages since they did not want to do the work. A 2<sup>nd</sup> to the motion was made by Meghan Shambach. Vote was taken on the motion with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

**MAYOR’S REPORT** – Mayor Hamilton was absent from the meeting. No report was given in her absence.

**SOLICITORS REPORT – 411 Front Street** - Solicitor Cole reported that the 90 days specified in the sales contract which was given as a deadline to demolish the buildings on the 407-411 Front Street lot is approaching. Thus far, all of the duplex except for the original log part of the home and the garage have been demolished. The current owner of the property is hoping council will release him from part of the contract which will allow him to keep the log home portion of the structures

standing in order that he may sell the property with the log home portion of the duplex still standing and receive more money. The log home is not a complete structure and is not habitable as is. Solicitor Cole would like for council to discuss it in executive session due to some legal implications and legal strategies.

**NEW BERLIN MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY – Minutes** – There was no question regarding the minutes.

**Water Meter Replacement** – At a past meeting it was reported that the NBMA would be replacing water meters in some homes within its service area. Councilwoman Shambach has since found out that if the meter is replaced without issues with the main water shut off valve or other issue, the NBMA will be paying for the meter. If there are issues with the homeowner’s pipes or shutoff around the meter, then the homeowner will be responsible for the cost of those repairs.

**Logging Company – Brush Site** – A logging company will be using the NBMA’s property at the brush site for parking during some logging they are doing. Coordination for gate access will be made through the Borough Office. There will be no interference with resident use.

**NBMA Waterline Project** – The contractor recently hired by the NBMA to perform work on the waterline, placed dirt piles and aggregate at the site. Those items need to be removed or pushed back; that will be done before the contractor receives final payment from the NBMA.

**SECRETARY/TREASURER REPORT - Balance – General Fund** – The secretary/treasurer reported the balance in the general fund as \$130,891.59.

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

**BILLS TO BE PAID – GENERAL FUND**

M&T Bank – Service Charge	25.00
AT&T Mobility	53.50

DE LANGE Landen Financial Services, Inc.	75.57
Law Office of Peter R. Kay	900.00
Martin's Small Engine Repair	19.95
PP&L Electric	402.42
The Daily Item	85.35
PA UC	12.56
Quill Corporation	136.13
Rogers Uniforms	700.00
Aurand's Auto Service, LLC	175.50
Martin's Small Engine Repair, LLC	379.04
Merroth Enterprises, LLC	8,000.00
Curt Keister	645.55
George Geise	138.95
Joshua Dreisbach	492.62
Michael Mattocks	999.99
Rawlin Swanger	62.27
Rebecca Witmer	2,335.51
Rodney Styers	100.68
William Stamm	834.98
A1 Lock & Key	334.00
Cardmember Service	2,434.54
CH Waltz Sons, Inc.	63.78
Coles Hardware	20.41
Ervin Blank Associates, Inc.	175.00
Kim Barton	140.00
PP&L Electric	910.41
Windstream Buffalo Valley, Inc.	412.95
PA Department of Revenue	243.12
US Treasury	1,785.56
Law Office of Cole & Varano	1,236.25
TOTAL	24,331.59

**OLD BUSINESS – Pollination Gardens – New Berlin Signs** – Councilwoman Shambach stated she contacted PennDOT to gain clarification on the status of New Berlin's grant application for the pollination gardens to be placed at three of the four New Berlin Welcome Signs. She has not yet received a reply.

**NEW BUSINESS – CKCOG – Funds Request** – The CKCOG sent a letter to each of its member entities requesting 2% of each member entity's American Rescue Plan funds. The Borough has not yet

received the funds and only received the guidelines for use of the funds today. The discussion was tabled until next month.

**EMS Council Proclamation** – In the absence of Mayor Hamilton, a Proclamation was made by President Julianne Finkbinder designating May 16-22, 2021 as Emergency Medical Services Week.

**Motion – Proclamation** – Councilwoman Meghan Shambach made a motion to designate May 16-22, 2021 as Emergency Medical Services Week. Councilman Barry Kuhns made a 2<sup>nd</sup> to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed.

Officer in Charge Dreisbach thanked council for supporting the emergency medical services. In addition, he stated that this week is National Police Week and May 15<sup>th</sup> is National Police Officer's Memorial Day. Each year on National Police Officer's Memorial Day, the name of every police officer killed on duty the year before is etched in stone in Washington DC.

**PA Beautiful – Giant Grant** – Giant is extending grants for recreational projects. Applications will be accepted for \$2,500, \$5,000, \$10,000, \$15,000, and \$25,000. Council was given a handout showing the list of criteria for eligible projects. Applications are due June 30, 2021 at 5pm. Councilwoman Stamm shared several ideas via email for council to think about before the meeting. Councilwoman Stamm is mostly interested in creating handicapped access to the commons, possibly via an electric elevator. Discussed was that an engineer previously drafted a plan which included handicapped access to the commons; the cost of an electric elevator versus the grant amount; and the possibility of other grants to help with the cost.

**Executive Session – Front Street Property** - An executive session was called at 8:05pm to discuss legal strategy in a real estate matter. All council members, Solicitor Cole, and the secretary/treasurer were in attendance. Executive session ended at 8:21pm and the regular session resumed.

**Motion – Extension of 90 Day Contract Terms** – Councilwoman Meghan Shambach made the motion to extend the time of demolition of the structures as outlined in the contract by an

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additional 30 days should the property owner make a request for extension. All other contract terms are to remain the same. Councilwoman Lynda Frederick made a 2<sup>nd</sup> to the motion. Vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

**ADJOURNMENT – Motion** – Councilwoman Meghan Shambach made a motion to adjourn the meeting. 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. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rebecca A. Witmer,  
Secretary/Treasurer

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MAYOR