

MINUTES

NORTH EAST BOROUGH COUNCIL

Monthly Meeting December 5, 2022

The regular monthly meeting of North East Borough Council was held Monday, December 5, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Denise McCumber, President
Bill Beardsley, Vice President
Todd Luke, President Pro Tem
Heather Jones
Ryan McGregor
Amber Belson

OTHERS PRESENT: Patrick Gehrlein, Borough Manager
Dan Miller, Solicitor
Rebecca Bliss, Administrative Assistant
Sean Lam, Police Chief
Wayne Yokom, Streets Supervisor
Julio Pazmino, Waste Water Supervisor
Terry Daughenbaugh, Water Supervisor
Tom Huber
Allen Dalrymple
Robert Behrens, Jr
Ken Snyder
Jeff Stritzinger
Jarett Scotch
Don Wagner
Ray Schaff
Ann Schaff
Betty Truby
Robert Hoyt
Deb Wurst
Angela Sanfilippo
Dan Adamus
Dave Hirtzel
Mason Bennett
Jake Jones

CALL TO ORDER:

Borough Council President D. McCumber called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., at which time the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

MINUTES:

R. McGregor motioned to approve the November 7, 2022, minutes as presented. T. Luke seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

B. Beardsley motioned to approve the November 21, 2022, minutes as presented. H. Jones seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE:

A. Belson motioned to approve the Expense Approval Report as presented. H. Jones seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

T. Huber, 196 Eastwood Drive, asked who is responsible for removing graffiti in the Route 89 underpass. P. Gehrlein stated that the Borough would address the problem within the next few weeks.

R. Behrens, 97 Wall Street, asked if safety inspections applied only to rental units but not business. W. Yokom stated that building issues are addressed through Code Enforcement. R. Behrens also stated that CO2 sensors and alarms are required in rental units according to Pennsylvania law.

B. Truby, 37 South Pearl Street, thanked the Borough for expediting the order and installation of the star on the Heard Park Christmas Tree. She stated that donations from several local organizations paid for the star, including: the VFW, the VFW Auxiliary, the American Legion, the American Legion Auxiliary, St. Joe’s Club, the North East Athletic Club, Women of the Moose, and Men of the Moose.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

North East Area Comprehensive Plan

P. Gehrlein stated that the Planning Commission met on November 23, 2022, and motioned to forward the North East Area Comprehensive Plan to the Borough Council, recommending its adoption following the 45 day review period. A public meeting will be held on Monday, February 6, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS:

Resolution 12052022-1: Community Development Block Grant Program FY 2019 Modification

P. Gehrlein stated that this resolution will be tabled until the December 19, 2022, meeting due to the public hearing being rescheduled by Erie County.

Resolution 12052022-2: Community Development Block Grant Program FY 2021 Modification

P. Gehrlein stated that this resolution will be tabled until the December 19, 2022, meeting due to the public hearing being rescheduled by Erie County.

Resolution 12052022-3: Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO)

P. Gehrlein stated the proposed resolution is a result of a recommendation through the Comprehensive Plan to revise and update SALDO terminology. Erie County has offered to assist in the rewriting of the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance. H. Jones motioned to approve Resolution 12052022-3: Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO) as presented. T. Luke seconded. After a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. The vote was as follows:

Heather Jones	<u>Yes</u>	Ryan McGregor	<u>Yes</u>
Todd Luke	<u>Yes</u>	Denise McCumber	<u>Yes</u>
Bill Beardsley	<u>Yes</u>	Amber Belson	<u>Yes</u>

Resolution 12052022-4: Zoning Ordinance Amendments

P. Gehrlein stated that the proposed resolution is a result of a recommendation through the Comprehensive Plan to amend the Zoning Ordinance. The proposed amendments would modify the central business district and mixed-use development area, including updates to setbacks, occupancy, parking, etc. Erie County has offered to assist in the drafting of the ordinance. T. Luke motioned to approve Resolution 12052022-4: Zoning Ordinance Amendments as presented. R. McGregor seconded. After a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. The vote was as follows:

Heather Jones	<u>Yes</u>	Ryan McGregor	<u>Yes</u>
Todd Luke	<u>Yes</u>	Denise McCumber	<u>Yes</u>
Bill Beardsley	<u>Yes</u>	Amber Belson	<u>Yes</u>

2023 Proposed Budget

P. Gehrlein stated that the presented 2023 Proposed Budget is balanced at \$11,809,838 including general, water, and sewer funds. Rate increases are proposed due to the increase in expenses for plant operation, chemical costs, inflation, etc. P. Gehrlein stated that all departments are on a spending freeze to fulfill a balanced budget. H. Jones asked if the fire donation listed in the budget would be split between both fire houses. P. Gehrlein stated that the donation would be split between Fuller Hose and Crescent Hose Companies. R. McGregor asked for clarification regarding line items in the current budget and those proposed in the 2023 budget. P. Gehrlein stated that the budget is based on increased costs of operation. H. Jones motioned to advertise the 2023 Proposed Budget as presented. B. Beardsley seconded. After a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. The vote was as follows:

Heather Jones	<u>Yes</u>	Ryan McGregor	<u>Yes</u>
Todd Luke	<u>Yes</u>	Denise McCumber	<u>Yes</u>
Bill Beardsley	<u>Yes</u>	Amber Belson	<u>Yes</u>

Ordinance No. 921 - Water Rates

P. Gehrlein stated that the proposed water rate increases, necessary to balance the 2023 budget, would take effect in April 2023, increasing average usage costs by \$1.65 per quarter. B. Beardsley motioned to advertise Ordinance No. 921- Water Rates as presented. H. Jones seconded. After a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. The vote was as follows:

Heather Jones	<u>Yes</u>	Ryan McGregor	<u>Yes</u>
Todd Luke	<u>Yes</u>	Denise McCumber	<u>Yes</u>
Bill Beardsley	<u>Yes</u>	Amber Belson	<u>Yes</u>

Ordinance No. 922 - Sewer Rates

P. Gehrlein stated that the proposed sewer rate increases, necessary to balance the 2023 budget, would take effect in April 2023, increasing average usage costs by \$2.86 per quarter. A. Belson motioned to advertise Ordinance No. 922- Sewer Rates as presented. T. Luke seconded. After a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. The vote was as follows:

Heather Jones	<u>Yes</u>	Ryan McGregor	<u>Yes</u>
Todd Luke	<u>Yes</u>	Denise McCumber	<u>Yes</u>
Bill Beardsley	<u>Yes</u>	Amber Belson	<u>Yes</u>

Ordinance No. 923 - Garbage Rates

P. Gehrlein stated that the proposed garbage rate increases, necessary to balance the 2023 budget, would take effect in April 2023, increasing average usage costs by \$15 per quarter. Garbage collection services currently included unlimited garbage collection on scheduled days, recycling, grass/branch pick up, leaf collection, etc. B. Beardsley motioned to advertise Ordinance No. 923- Garbage Rates as presented. T. Luke seconded. After a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. The vote was as follows:

Heather Jones	<u>Yes</u>	Ryan McGregor	<u>Yes</u>
Todd Luke	<u>Yes</u>	Denise McCumber	<u>Yes</u>
Bill Beardsley	<u>Yes</u>	Amber Belson	<u>Yes</u>

Tax Ordinance 2023

P. Gehrlein stated that the proposed Tax Ordinance would not increase in 2023. H. Jones motioned to advertise Tax Ordinance 2023 as presented. R. McGregor seconded. After a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. The vote was as follows:

Heather Jones	<u>Yes</u>	Ryan McGregor	<u>Yes</u>
Todd Luke	<u>Yes</u>	Denise McCumber	<u>Yes</u>
Bill Beardsley	<u>Yes</u>	Amber Belson	<u>Yes</u>

3rd Quarter 2022 Shut Off List – To be Presented

R. McGregor motioned to approve the 3rd Quarter 2022 Shut Off List as presented. B. Beardsley seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Gibson/Heard Park Request: Skunk & Goat - Miller Mistletoe Mile, December 18, 2022

B. Beardsley motioned to approve the Gibson/Heard Park Request: Skunk & Goat – Miller Mistletoe Mile, December 18, 2022. A. Belson seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Second Monthly Meeting – December 19, 2022

CORRESPONDENCE

- Police Chief Report
- Code Enforcement Report
- Departmental Report
- Commissions and Authorities

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

There were no announcements.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

B. Truby, 37 South Pearl Street, suggested the Borough research different options for garbage collection to allow for individualized costs based on usage. W. Yokom stated that research and comparisons have been completed with other municipalities and the Borough’s consumer costs are much lower than surrounding areas, especially considering the unlimited collection, twice a week summer collection, leaves/debris collection, etc.

C. Trump, 29 South Mill Street, stated that her apartments are often vacant and questioned why she had to pay for garbage collection if no one is living there. P. Gehrlein stated that a minimum charge is written into the ordinance because the Borough is unable to monitor occupancy changes.

J. Stritzinger, 55 South Washington Street, stated that a minimum usage is up to 500 cubic feet of water/sewer, with additional charges for usage above that minimum.

R. Behrens, 97 Wall Street, suggested looking into dumpster options for landlords.

T. Huber, 196 Eastwood Drive, asked what Council had to say to those in the community who are on a fixed income and will be burdened by increased rates. D. McCumber said she apologizes for the hardships but stated that everyone is being forced to deal with cost increases in our current economy. She stated that the Borough is making cuts and implementing spending freezes to limit the need for increases, but that they are sometimes necessary despite best efforts. T. Huber also thanked the Borough employees for how the town looks, especially clean and decorated for the season.

R. Hoyt, 9310 West Main Road, asked for an update regarding Haynes House and permitting. P. Gehrlein stated that renovations would require zoning authorization to make sure the proposed activities are allowable within current zoning regulations before the owners could apply for building permits. The current construction that is being completed does not require zoning approval.

R. Behrens, 97 Wall Street, asked why the fire companies don't combine in order to save money in a tight budget.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 6:58 p.m. H. Jones motioned to adjourn. B. Beardsley seconded. The motion carried unanimously.