

MINUTES NORTH EAST BOROUGH COUNCIL

Monthly Meeting May 1, 2023

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

OTHERS PRESENT:

Jon Triana, Mayor
Patrick Gehrlein, Borough Manager
Dan Miller, Solicitor
Rebecca Bliss, Administrative Assistant
Sean Lam, Police Chief
Wayne Yokom, Streets Supervisor
Mark Hamman, Streets Asst. Supervisor
Julio Pazmino, Waste Water Supervisor
Leah Griffin, Water Assistant Supervisor
Amanda Steeneck
Robert Behrens
Robert Belson
Jeff Stritzinger
Peter Pkelnicky
Denise Pkelnicky
Allen Dalrymple
Tom Huber
Steve Gregory

Betty Truby
Robert Hoyt
Mason Bennett
Jarett Scotch
Bobbi Jo Morey
Angela Sanfilippo
Joseph Schneider
Nancy Schneider
Ken Snyder
Dave Hirtzel
Deb Wurst
Ray Schaaf
Michael Dayton
Jeff Orzechowski
Jacob Jones
Matthew Coccarulli
Others present, not signed in

The regular monthly meeting of North East Borough Council was held Monday, May 1, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers.

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.

REVISED AGENDA:

H. Jones motioned to approve the revised agenda to include a time-sensitive park request. B. Beardsley seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

MINUTES:

T. Luke motioned to approve the April 3, 2023, minutes as presented. R. McGregor seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE:

B. Beardsley motioned to approve the Expense Approval Report as presented. R. McGregor seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

R. Behrens, 97 Wall Street, asked if grant funding would be used on Wall Street this year. P. Gehrlein stated that the funding application made to H2O PA for work on the water line replacement has not yet been answered. P. Gehrlein stated that the water line should be replaced before repaving. P. Gehrlein stated that grant funding has been used for façade grants in the area and throughout the town. R. Behrens also asked about cameras and repaving in the underpass. P. Gehrlein stated that the Borough has been working on cameras, lighting improvements, and graffiti clean-up. He also stated that PennDOT is expected to repave Route 89 from Smith Road to Route 20.

T. Huber, 196 Eastwood Drive, asked about the 2021 grant the Borough applied for on behalf of Granite Ridge for field house renovations and other projects. P. Gehrlein stated that the grant was not selected for funding.

M. Dayton, 30 Wellington Street, voiced his concern regarding vehicles speeding on Wellington Street, creating an unsafe environment. He asked Council to consider adding flashing lights to the speed limit signs, radar speed signs, and increased police presence. Chief Lam asked for details regarding the time of day he sees most speeding occurring and said the police presence will increase.

M. Coccarulli, from the North East Athletic Club, asked about increasing green space near his business. He asked if the Borough would replace any concrete that may be damaged during the Borough’s planned resurfacing of the area. W. Yokom stated that they will coordinate with the Athletic Club and will address any replacement needs if/when they occur.

D. Pkelnicky, 36 West Main Street, asked if the crosswalk on West Main Street will be repainted. P. Gehrlein stated that painting and signage will be added to make the crosswalk more visible.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS:

Planning Commission: Small Subdivision/Replot in Whistle Run Subdivision

P. Gehrlein detailed a request on behalf of David Thornton, as recommended by the Planning Commission, to approve the subdivision/replot of a property line within Whistle Run Subdivision to accommodate a drainage line. R. McGregor motioned to approve the Planning Commission: Subdivision/Replot in Whistle Run Subdivision 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>

Resolution 05012023-1: Erie County Hazard Mitigation Plan

P. Gehrlein stated that the proposed resolution would co-accept the consolidated hazard mitigation plan created by the Erie County Department of Planning and Community Development with all other municipalities within the county. B. Beardsley motioned to approve Resolution 05012023-1: Erie County Hazard Mitigation Plan as presented. A. Belson stated that she would not be comfortable approving something that the first responders within the community have not seen. A. Steeneck, 240 Dewey Road, asked if the plan addressed natural disasters. R. McGregor stated that the proposed plan would clarify roles through the office of public safety. B. Beardsley rescinded his motion to approve Resolution 05012023-1. R. McGregor motioned to table Resolution 05012023-1: Erie County Hazard Mitigation Plan until emergency responders within the community had the opportunity to review the plan. A. Belson seconded the motion. After a roll call vote, the motion to table 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>

Request for Ptlm. Orzechowski’s promotion to Patrolman Fourth Class

J. Triana read a letter from Chief Lam recommending Ptlm. Orzechowski for promotion to Patrolman Fourth Class, citing exemplary service and performance evaluations. A. Belson motioned to approve the Request for Ptlm. Orzechowski’s promotion to Patrolman Fourth Class 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>

Civil Service: Eligibility List

Chief Lam stated that the current eligibility list has one candidate. The current procedure states that, when less than three candidates remain, the current eligibility list should be abolished, and a new eligibility list established. T. Luke motioned to activate the Civil Service: Eligibility List as presented. B. Beardsley seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Liquid Fuels Tax Fund Audit – FY 2020 and 2021

P. Gehrlein stated that funds received from Liquid Fuels are used for resurfacing and maintenance of roads. In 2020, there was an error in the amount received by \$2.07, which was then deducted from the 2021 allocation to correct the error. The Borough is in full compliance. No action was needed.

Gibson Park: Community Nursing Services of NE – 8th Annual Butterfly Release (August 26, 2023)

B. Beardsley read the letter from the Community Nursing Services of North East, detailing the Annual Butterfly Release event. B. Beardsley motioned to approve the request for Gibson Park: Community Nursing Services of NE – 8th Annual Butterfly Release as presented. A. Belson seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Gibson Park: STEM & Vine – STEM, Service, and Stocking Days (May 11-12, 2023)

P. Gehrlein stated that STEM & Vine is a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math program held at the North East School District in collaboration with Mercyhurst University. He stated that the presented

parks request will allow for community service and demonstrations of agricultural equipment. R. McGregor motioned to approve the request for Gibson Park: STEM & Vine – STEM, Service, and Stocking Days as presented. H. Jones seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Heard Park: Roger’s Ride (June 3-4, 2023)

P. Gehrlein stated that the Roger’s Ride is an annual event, but that their late inclusion on the meeting agenda was due to a delay in completed paperwork. T. Luke motioned to approve the request for Heard Park: Roger’s Ride as presented. R. McGregor seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Junior Councilperson – Councilman McGregor

R. McGregor detailed the proposal to create a Junior Councilperson program in which a high school age student from the Borough will serve as a non-voting member of Borough Council for a one-year term. D. Pekelnicky suggested that specific criteria be created and advertised before the selection process begins. R. McGregor stated that this would be the first program of its kind within Erie County. B. Beardsley motioned to approve the proposal for Junior Councilperson as presented. T. Luke seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Ordinance No. 925 – International Property Maintenance Code

P. Gehrlein explained that the drafts of Ordinance Nos. 925 and 926 were created as a result of a previous meeting with two council representatives (H. Jones and A. Belson), a representative from the landlord group (R. Hoyt), and the North East Area Code Administration (Fritzer Shunk). P. Gehrlein stated that once the codes have been adopted, the rental inspection ordinance could be revised to reference the established standards.

D. Pekelnicky asked if the Borough would be hiring employees to conduct inspections. P. Gehrlein stated that some Borough employees would be certified as inspectors through the International Code Council. R. Hoyt stated that the International Property Maintenance Code should have been edited, not presented in its entirety. D. Pekelnicky stated that a representative of commercial landlords should be included, asking that a new committee be formed to review the codes for inclusion in a revised ordinance. H. Jones stated that a revised Ordinance No. 924 should have been presented along with Ordinance Nos. 925 and 926. R. Hoyt stated that the process should start over and move forward.

H. Jones motioned to advertise to repeal Ordinance No. 916. A. Belson seconded. After a roll call vote, the motion carried. The votes were as follows:

Heather Jones	<u>Yes</u>	Ryan McGregor	<u>No</u>
Todd Luke	<u>Yes</u>	Denise McCumber	<u>No</u>
Bill Beardsley	<u>No</u>	Amber Belson	<u>Yes</u>
Jon Triana, Mayor	<u>Yes</u>		

H. Jones motioned to table Ordinance No. 925—International Property Maintenance Code as presented. A. Belson seconded. After a roll call vote, the motion carried. The votes were as follows:

Heather Jones	<u>Yes</u>	Ryan McGregor	<u>No</u>
Todd Luke	<u>Yes</u>	Denise McCumber	<u>No</u>
Bill Beardsley	<u>No</u>	Amber Belson	<u>Yes</u>
Jon Triana, Mayor	<u>Yes</u>		

Ordinance No. 926 – International Fire Code

H. Jones motioned to table Ordinance No. 926—International Fire Code as presented. T. Luke seconded. After a roll call vote, the motion carried. The votes were as follows:

Heather Jones	<u>Yes</u>	Ryan McGregor	<u>No</u>
Todd Luke	<u>Yes</u>	Denise McCumber	<u>No</u>
Bill Beardsley	<u>No</u>	Amber Belson	<u>Yes</u>
Jon Triana, Mayor	<u>Yes</u>		

D. McCumber asked for confirmation regarding the new committee that will review the codes in order to update the proposed ordinances. The committee members include Robert Hoyt, Denise Pekelnicky, and Todd Luke.

Ordinance No. 927 – Comprehensive Parking Ordinance

P. Gehrlein stated that the proposed ordinance was drafted in coordination with the Police Department and Streets Department in order to create a comprehensive parking ordinance, which would repeal the current sixty-eight (68) existing ordinances. B. Beardsley motioned to advertise Ordinance No. 927 – Comprehensive Parking Ordinance 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>

Second Monthly Meeting – May 15, 2023, if needed

A second monthly meeting was announced, dependent upon the discussion of agenda items. At the end of the meeting, it was determined that the mid-monthly meeting was not necessary. H. Jones motioned to cancel the Second Monthly Meeting—May 15, 2023. T. Luke seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE:

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

A. Belson reminded community members of the upcoming Memorial Day Ceremony, parade, and community events.

Baker Creek Cleanup – Councilman McGregor

R. McGregor announced and encouraged participation in the Baker Creek Cleanup, which is scheduled for May 13, 2023.

Granite Ridge Public Meeting: May 11, 2023, at 6:00 p.m., Ridge Library Building

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

D. Hirtzel, 186 South Washington Street, asked what was happening at the water department regarding staffing. D. McCumber stated that personnel concerns are not discussed during public meetings.

R. Behrens, 97 Wall Street, asked if there was going to be a summer walk scheduled. D. McCumber said the walk will be scheduled at a later date.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 7:46 p.m., H. Jones motioned to adjourn. B. Beardsley seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Rebecca Bliss (May 2, 2023)

Patrick Gehrlein, Borough Manager