

MINUTES
NORTH EAST BOROUGH COUNCIL

Monthly Meeting
November 20, 2023

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
Rebecca Bliss, Administrative Assistant
Sean Lam, Police Chief
Mark Hamman, Assistant Streets Supervisor
Jacob Jones
Jack DiOrazio III
Joseph Schneider
Tom Huber
Bobbi Jo Morey
Nancy Anderson
Tony Montefiori
Robert Behrens
Sue Wilson
Kara Haas
Ray Schaff
Ann Schaff
Dan Adamus
Dave Herman
Steve Gregory
Aaron Jelly
Dave Jelly
Amy Burniston
Ryan Burniston
Jake Sander
Others present, not signed in

The second monthly meeting of North East Borough Council will be held Monday, November 20, 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.

INVOCATION:

B. Beardsley offered the invocation.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:

There were no citizens to be heard.

REPORTS FROM ELECTED OFFICERS:

Denise McCumber – North East Community Marina Authority

Denise McCumber stated that she was invited to a meeting by Russ Lafuria from the North East Township to discuss the proposed North East Community Marina Authority. She stated that the Township would like more information before moving forward and that they were not ready to hold a public hearing. She posed questions regarding DEP permits, funding, liability of the municipalities, and proposed operating costs of the marina. D. Adamus stated his concern for the spread of misinformation and cited the municipal code regarding liability for the municipalities. A. Burniston also stated that she has been in communication with the PA Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) regarding the property. D. Adamus stated that the authority must be established before they can move forward with the transfer of the property and funding.

Heather Jones – Erie County EMS Proposal

Heather Jones delegated the Erie County EMS Proposal report to Jack DiOrazio. J. DiOrazio stated that he attended the meeting but stated that the County had no real answers regarding fees, consequences for nonpayment, or guarantees of ECGRA funding for their proposed plan. He stated that there was minimal question/answer time and a deliberate lack of information. He stated that it is his personal opinion that the issue should be handled locally, not by the county. H. Jones stated her agreement that any fees collected should stay in North East.

REPORTS FROM APPOINTED OFFICERS:

There were no reports from Appointed Officers.

REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES:

There were no reports from Standing Committees.

REPORTS FROM SPECIAL COMMITTEES:

There were no reports from Special Committees.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS:

2024 Public Meeting Schedule

T. Luke motioned to approve and advertise the 2024 Public Meeting Schedule 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>	Bill Beardsley	<u>Yes</u>
Amber Belson	<u>Yes</u>	Denise McCumber	<u>Yes</u>

Resignation of Jon Triana – Mayor

P. Gehrlein stated that, once the mayor’s resignation is accepted, Borough Council will have thirty (30) days to appoint someone to fill the vacancy. If Borough Council fails to appoint a new mayor within thirty (30) days, the Vacancy Board will have fifteen (15) days to fill the vacancy. If the Vacancy Board fails to appoint a new mayor within fifteen (15) days, the Court of Common Pleas will appoint a new mayor.

H. Jones motioned to approve the Resignation of Jon Triana – Mayor, 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>	Bill Beardsley	<u>Yes</u>
Amber Belson	<u>Yes</u>	Denise McCumber	<u>Yes</u>

Borough Vacancy Advertisement – Mayor/Vacancy Board Chairman

P. Gehrlein reviewed the public advertisement, detailing how letters of intent will be submitted and accepted for the Mayor and Vacancy Board Chairman positions. T. Luke motioned to approve the Borough Vacancy Advertisement – Mayor/Vacancy Board Chairman as presented. A. Belson 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>	Bill Beardsley	<u>Yes</u>
Amber Belson	<u>Yes</u>	Denise McCumber	<u>Yes</u>

Borough Vacancy Advertisement – Planning Commission/Water Authority

P. Gehrlein stated that the vacancies for Planning Commission/Water Authority will be advertised separately from the Mayor/Vacancy Board Chairman, as the timeline isn't as stringent. B. Beardsley motioned to approve the Borough Vacancy Advertisement – Planning Commission/Water Authority as presented. A. Belson 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>	Bill Beardsley	<u>Yes</u>
Amber Belson	<u>Yes</u>	Denise McCumber	<u>Yes</u>

CORRESPONDENCE:

There was no correspondence.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

A. Belson thanked the Streets Department for the beautiful Christmas decorations that have been going up around town.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

T. Huber, 196 Eastwood Dr, stated that the City of Erie has a "Payment in Lieu of Taxes" that the Borough should consider. He asked that letters be sent to tax exempt properties asking them to pay in lieu of taxes. P. Gehrlein stated that the Borough currently receives approximately \$12,000 in payments in lieu of taxes but will look into contacting other properties.

D. Adamus spoke regarding the efforts focused on saving the North East Marina. He stated that Fuller Hose is highly reputable and is designated as the water rescue service between Presque Isle and Barcelona, NY, acting as a liaison to the US Coast Guard. He stated that the authority must be created in order to move forward with the transfer of property and funding. A. Jelly asked why D. McCumber met with R. Lafuria. She stated that R. Lafuria invited her to attend a meeting.

A. Burniston stated that she has been in contact with the Army Corps of Engineers, PFBC, and the DEP. She stated that they can't move forward with undertones of small town ideals and passive aggression toward one another. She also suggested a joint meeting. D. McCumber stated that the Borough voted unanimously to move forward with the public hearing, but that the Township did not.

D. Herman stated that there is no liability for the municipalities. He stated that the property is valuable, even without receiving money from the State, and that they will be able to make more money than the PFBC has previously made due to built-in safeguards.

N. Anderson, 95 Tannery Street, asked if the municipalities would be affected if the authority was sued. P. Gehrlein stated that only named parties would be affected.

D. Herman stated that only one municipality is required to create the authority. D. Adamus stated that it is being proposed as a community authority, and therefore both the Borough and Township should move forward. He stated that the PFBC will begin its feasibility study of the marina on January 4, 2024, which requires urgency on their part.

R. Behrens, 97 Wall Street, thanked M. Hamman and the Borough for planting new trees.

S. Gregory, 7 Eagle Street, stated his excitement for the plans announced regarding the new future owners of Granite Ridge.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 6:41 p.m. H. Jones motioned to adjourn. A. Belson seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Rebecca Bliss (November 21, 2023)

Patrick Gehrlein, Borough Manager