

BLOSSBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
August 11, 2021

Council Meeting was called to Order at 6:30 p.m. by Vice President Jill Nickerson.

Attendance: President Jolene Hall (Absent), Vice-President Jill Nickerson, Pro-Temp Tonya McNamara, Council Members: Jerome Ogden (Absent), Henry Bartlett, Tim Martin, James Rakoski, Mayor, Shane Nickerson, Borough Solicitor, Patrick Barrett, Police Chief, Josh McCurdy, Borough Manager, George D. Lloyd, Borough Secretary, Cheryl Bubacz and School Representative (Absent).

Mayor Nickerson asked that a moment of silence be observed in memory of former Mayor John Backman who recently passed away. Mayor Backman was a mentor to him and asked him to run against him on a write-in campaign when Mayor Nickerson was first elected.

Guests: Joe Naimoli, Natalie Kennedy (*Wellsboro Gazette*)

Natalie Kennedy - Nothing

Joe Naimoli: Joe was there on behalf of his wife who had written a letter regarding speeding cars near their house on Water Street. Chief McCurdy addressed the subject and explained that the Department will sit near his property once the lines are painted. In the interim, he will make the Department's presence known in the area which should help deter the speeding. Chief asked Mr. Naimoli to let him know the times of the day when the speeding is most prevalent.

Minutes, Treasurer's Report, Bills, Police Report & Borough Manager's Report:

Minutes and Reports were all accepted as presented Motion of James Rakoski; Second Tonya McNamara. All in favor.

Mayor:

The Mayor explained that he and the Chief had attended a presentation at Mansfield University on July 14th. The presentation was from a Wilmington Delaware Police Lieutenant who was assigned to a section of Wilmington that was considered the worst in the city. The Lieutenant and his officers, would go to the area daily, park their cruisers and walk the area. By doing so, they developed a knowledge of the area and what was needed. By communicating with the residents, the Officers were able to get some of the area cleaned up, repairs to streets made, etc. It was a great program and if it is offered again, it is well worth the time.

National Night Out was held on August 3, 2021 on Island Park and hosted by the Tioga County Sheriff's Department. It was a huge success! The number of people on the Park for the event was unbelievable. This was a way for the Sheriff's Department and our Police Department to talk with residents and develop a rapport with them.

The Mayor has also been in contact with the owners of the Old Hospital. They are currently boarding up windows and doors. The owners are currently waiting for USDA to get back to them regarding the status of the grant they filed. They figure that once the building is up to code, etc., they will have a staff of 80 to 85 employees. Hopefully this will come to fruition soon.

Police:

Part-time Officer Geiser will be starting her full-time position at Mansfield University beginning later this week. With her taking this full-time position, she will be reducing her hours to 8 hours per week from the 32 she has been doing.

Officer Pratt will be in his own police car starting in a couple of weeks. The Department has been spending a considerable amount of time in Hamilton Township. There is a major drug issue up there. The Chief asked that people be more aware and they need to call 911 when they see something wrong, not put it on Facebook or call the office and leave a message. Leaving a message at the office or posting it on Facebook is not the way to let the Department know there is an issue. By the time a message is heard and/or the Facebook post is seen it could be the next day.

The Department is working with other Departments and the School Districts in the County on the STOP Grant. In the final stages of the application and should be submitting very soon.

Mr. Bartlett asked the Chief if the rumor was true that there was a homeless person living at Island Park. The Chief explained that there was a person living on the Park, however, as of this morning she was incarcerated for charges outside of the Borough.

Mayor Nickerson explained that he and the Chief had met with this person multiple times. They had gotten rooms at various centers, but the person refused to go. Being incarcerated, the person will now be able to get food, shelter and the help needed. The Mayor commended the Chief on his handling of the situation. He did so with a human touch.

Police Committee:

Nothing

Borough Manager:

The guys have been very busy working in Morris Run on the water line project along Blake Road. They should be done within the next 2 weeks.

Fall Clean-up will be held on October 5th and 6th, depending on your garbage day. If items are put out after your normal garbage day, they will not be picked up.

Mr. Bartlett noticed that there is some wash-out by the Union Cemetery. George said that he will have some gravel taken up.

The 2022 Minimum Municipal Obligation for the Uniformed and Non-Uniformed Pension plans were calculated. The Uniformed requirement is \$31,826 and the Non-Uniformed is \$40,788. These amounts will be put in the 2022 Budget.

Junior Council Person:

Not Present.

VIBE:

VIBE working on the Fall Festival and welcome baskets. Also the information regarding the dog park was sent in for grant review.

Planning Commission Report:

No Meeting

Zoning Hearing Board:

Nothing

Recreation:

The work on the pavilion will be started in a couple of weeks. Tom Dickinson will start putting a “Reserved” sign on the Pavilions when they are rented. There are some trees behind the visitors’ bleachers that have some blight. The guys will take care of them this fall.

Riverwalk: Nothing

Skate Park Addition: The addition has been marked out.

Fire and Ambulance:

Minutes were received from the Ambulance Department.

Library:

Everything seems to be going well. The hours maybe extended in the fall, pending any Covid restrictions. Borough Manager asked the Mayor and Tonya McNamara if they discussed with the Library Board the tree that was split during one of the storms and if it can be removed. The Mayor will check and let the Borough Manager know.

Street Committee:

Nothing.

Shade Tree Commission:

Nothing

Budget:

Once we have an estimate of the insurance costs for 2022, we will schedule a second meeting.

Blossburg Municipal Report:

Earlier today the Permit from DEP was received for the Taylor Run Water Tank. The Municipal Authority will reconvene their Meeting next week and the construction will begin for the footers, etc.

OLD BUSINESS:

Sesquicentennial Planning (February 2020):

Celebration planning is going very well!

Shared Services Agreement (June 2020):

Nothing

LED Streetlights (April 2021): Waiting on Penelec to hire a project manager.

American Rescue Plan (April 2021): Nothing

Sale of 245 Main Street: (April 2021) Nothing.

Old Hospital: Discussed earlier in the meeting.

Junk Cars on Taylor Street (June 2021). Solicitor will review the Ordinance to possibly modify it to include a per diem charge

NEW BUSINESS:

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting was adjourned by Vice President Jill Nickerson at 7:12 p.m.
Motion by Henry Bartlett, Second by Tim Martin. All in Favor

Cheryl L. Bubacz

Cheryl L. Bubacz, Borough Secretary