

Council Meeting  
February 11, 2014  
Chancellor Center

President Robert Walker called the regular semi-monthly meeting of Newtown Borough Council to order at 7:00 P.M. on Tuesday, February 11, 2014. Mr. Walker asked those in attendance to join him in a moment of silence, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Councillors Auerweck, Grunde-McLaughlin, Gusty, King, Walker and Warren; Mayor Swartz and Solicitor Bolla.

### **Mayor's Report**

Mayor Swartz read the list of snow emergency routes, the snow removal ordinance regarding snow emergencies and snow removal from sidewalks, and reported the additional request to remove cars from Liberty Street. He then announced that he was declaring a Snow Emergency for February 12, 2014, through the night until approximately noon or whenever the snow stops. Mr. Walker said that rather than straight plowing the Borough will be removing snow from some streets and Allan Smith agreed to permit the snow to be deposited on the parking lot behind the carpet store on State Street. This process will probably add approximately \$15,000-20,000 to the Borough snow removal costs.

#### Special Events Reminders

The Book Lover's Party sponsored by the Newtown Library Company on February 22, 2014, at the Stocking Works

A dedication and renaming of the Newtown By-pass to the Officer Brian S. Gregg Memorial Highway on March 4, 2014, at 11 A.M. at Borough Hall

### **Amendments to the Agenda**

There were no amendments to the agenda.

### **Comcast Donation**

Brian Jeter of Comcast presented a check for \$1000 to former Councillor Charles Machion. The donation will be applied to the purchase of a speed-monitoring machine. Mr. Jeter said that safety is a concern of Comcast and they are happy to provide support to a program that will help implement a safety component for the Borough.

## **Sewer Authority Update**

Mr. Walker announced postponement of the Sewer Authority update until March.

## **Public to be Heard**

Resident Harry Hughes recognized Scott's All Seasons for doing a good job with snow removal, but he voiced concern about fire hydrants buried in the snow. There are two hydrants in his cul-de-sac that have been plowed in and although residents are responsible for keeping hydrants clear, he felt the snow plows should be aware of them when plowing. An additional concern is the storm sewer grates that should be kept clear to eliminate flooding.

## **President's Report**

There was no report from the president.

## **Engineer's Report – Mario Canales**

Mr. Canales reported on the recent bid opening for the Greene Street Improvement Projects, which include the handicapped ramp upgrades at Liberty and Greene Streets and the replacement of the West Greene Street storm sewer from Greene Street to the Newtown Creek.

- ❖ A motion was duly made by Councillor Gusty, seconded by Councillor King, and carried unanimously, to accept the bid of Bray Brothers, Inc. in the amount of \$62,402.65 for the Greene Street Improvements Projects.

In response to Mr. King's question about potholes, Mr. Walker said that with the weather conditions the way they are currently, it would not be wise to patch them now. The Borough will keep a list of potholes and the work will be completed weather permitting.

## **Presentation of Minutes**

- ❖ A motion was duly made by Councillor Warren, seconded by Councillor Auerweck, and carried unanimously, to approve the January 6, 2014, Reorganization Council Minutes.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Budget & Finance – Robert Walker, Chris Gusty & Perry Warren**

#### **Consolidated Report**

- ❖ A motion was duly made by Councillor Warren, seconded by Councillor King, and carried unanimously, to accept, subject to audit, the consolidated expenditure report for the month of January 2014 totaling \$110,508.77.

Mr. Walker provided Council with an unaudited year-end report of income and expenses, showing that the Borough ended the year under budget. Projections for earned income tax were higher than anticipated, which helped with snow removal expenditures in December, which were \$62,000 over budget. Real estate transfer taxes were almost double from last year and the Police Department was \$21,000 under budget. The good news was that the Borough did not use any of its Operating Reserve Funds in 2013. Mr. Walker has asked the Treasurer to examine how the Borough can allocate/re-allocate funds for the 2014 snow budget, which totaled \$138,000 in January alone. The \$40,000 savings in our streets budget for the Greene Street projects, which came in under budget, might be an area to consider.

### **Open Space Plan Update – Perry Warren & Robert King**

Mr. Warren reported that he and Mr. King would work with Ms. Woldorf on an application for a DCNR grant and noted that \$234,000 in funds were available to the Borough, with only \$10,000 used to date. A public meeting was held in November to identify properties that might be considered for Open Space consideration. Some discussions have taken place with a property owner along the creek about possible acquisition of easements.

### **Streets, Lights & Properties – Robert Walker & Chris Gusty**

In response to a question asked at the Work Session about bidding thresholds, Mr. Walker explained that purchases/contracts below \$10,300 require no formal bidding or written or telephonic quotes; purchases/contracts between \$10,300 and \$19,100 require three written or telephonic quotes; and purchases/contracts over \$19,100 require a formal bid. Those are the guidelines followed for the salt purchase, the State Street repair project and that Mr. Canales followed for the Greene Street project bids.

Mr. Walker reported that the Borough sold all the available parking permits for 2014. Mr. Witchell opened/or is in the process of opening three additional businesses with 150 employees. Approximately 40-50 are working at any one time. The Borough hopes Mr. Witchell will encourage or require his employees to take advantage of permit parking, but the Borough would need more parking spaces. Allan Smith has agreed to permit use of the South State Street lot next to the carpet store for that expansion. In addition, the Stockburger organization is offering \$10/month parking at their Court Street lot. Further discussions with Mr. Witchell will be scheduled to discuss the matter.

### **Solicitor's Report – William J. Bolla**

There was no report.

## **Old Business**

There was no old business.

## **New Business**

Mr. Warren announced that the Shade Tree Commission plans to meet on February 27, 2014, at 7 P.M. at Borough Hall.

## **Public to be Heard**

There was no one who wished to be heard at this time.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcia M. Scull  
Borough Secretary

## **ATTENDEES**

Julia & Warren Woldorf  
Ted Schmidt  
Brian Jeter  
Charles Machion