

WILSON BOROUGH
NORTHAMPTON COUNTY
PENNSYLVANIA
November 25, 2024

The Second meeting of November of the Council of The Borough of Wilson was held in the Guy B. Tomaino Public Safety Building at 2040 Hay Terrace, Easton, PA. Council President John Burke called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Roll call followed.

PRESENT:

Susan Allen	John Burke	Jeffrey Bracken	Russell Lipari
Shaun Gable	Charles Wacik	Kimberlee Muzac	Michael Figueroa

ABSENT:

Scott Palinkas

Also present were Solicitor Stanley Margle, Borough Manager Jill Garcia, Fire Chief Joseph Sipel, Public Works Supervisor Eric Flowers and Police Chief Christian Meehan.

READING OF THE MINUTES:

A motion by Mr. Wacik to approve the minutes from the October 28, 2024, meeting. Second by Mr. Lipari. A roll call vote followed. Yes votes cast by Ms. Allen, Mr. Bracken, Mr. Burke, Ms. Gable, Mr. Figueroa, Mr. Lipari, Ms. Muzac and Mr. Wacik. Motion passed with an 8-0 vote.

GUEST:

NONE

COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS:

NONE

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT:

Tree lighting will be held in Meuser Park at 6 pm Friday, November 29, 2024.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR:

Mayor Barrett and Mr. Burke visited St. Luke's Easton Hospital and advised the entire hospital is being updated beginning with the first floor.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE BOROUGH MANAGER:

Mr. Lipari made a motion to approve the duly advertised proposed 2025 budget. Second by Mr. Bracken. A roll call vote followed. Yes votes cast by Ms. Allen, Mr. Bracken, Mr. Burke, Ms. Gable, Mr. Figueroa, Mr. Lipari, Ms. Muzac and Mr. Wacik. Motion passed with an 8-0 vote.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES:

GENERAL GOVERNMENT:

NONE

PROTECTION TO PERSONS & PROPERTY

POLICE:

NONE

FIRE:

Ms. Gable advised changes in relation to part-time fire fighters were discussed during the Protection to Persons and Property meeting prior to the Council meeting. Ms. Garcia and Chief Sipel agreed that the changes discussed should wait until other issues have been resolved.

Chief Sipel advised three Wilson Borough Police Officers were first on scene at a fire on 17th Street where an elderly couple were trapped. Chief Sipel thanked the Officers who rescued the trapped couple.

PUBLIC WORKS:

NONE

PARKS:

NONE

CODE COMMITTEE:

Next meeting will be held in January 2025.

CELEBRATION COMMITTEE:

Mr. Burke advised the next meeting will be on December 12, 2024, at 6:30 pm

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

NONE

CODE DEPARTMENT/ZONING/LAND DEVELOPMENT:

NONE.

ATTORNEY:

Solicitor Margle advised that a Board of Review has been appointed for the Lehigh Dr. property, however the review has been delayed. Solicitor Margle will advise when the hearing is scheduled.

Mr. Brian Bartee of Skyline Investment Group and Attorney Brett Flower of Eckert Seamans requested preliminary/final approval for a minor subdivision and preliminary/final approval for lot consolidation. In regard to the lot consolidation plan, the waiver request for showing right-of-way and cartway width information for existing streets adjacent to any part of the subdivision was being withdrawn. The plans will be revised to comply. For the lot consolidation plan, waivers are being requested for preliminary/final plan approval, showing contours on the plan and to allowing a double frontage lot.

In regard to both the subdivision and lot consolidation plans, all existing and proposed easements shall be shown on the plan prior to recording. All necessary easement agreements shall be executed prior to Skyline taking ownership of Parcel B-2.

In regard to the subdivision plan, the waiver request for showing the entire tract being subdivided and surveyed meets and bounds for Parcel B-2 on the plan shall become a deferral and a plan showing these items along with a legal description for Parcel B-2 shall be provided within ninety (90) days of Borough Council approval. Also, the waiver request relative to installation of iron pins along Parcel B-2 where existing survey markers do not exist shall become a deferral. The iron pins along Parcel B-2 shall be installed within a period of ninety (90) days of Borough Council approval. The waiver requests for preliminary/final plan approval and showing contours on the plan shall remain as waivers.

A motion made by Mr. Lipari to approve the applicant's minor subdivision plan conditioned upon:

1. Modification of the waiver requested relative to meets and bounds description be modified to constitute a deferral for a period of ninety (90) days.
2. The waiver request previously submitted asking for a waiver of the requirement to show iron pins and other monuments and matters that are set forth on the land after a revised legal description be deferred.
3. Waivers requested by the applicant other than set forth in #1 and #2 above be, as per the Planning Commission recommendation, be granted.
4. Any other conditions or requirements as set forth in the Engineer's review letter of November 22, 2024, be complied with by the applicant.
5. The applicant complies with any and all other representations set forth during the presentation before the Planning Commission and Borough Council

Second by Mr. Bracken. A roll call vote followed. Yes votes cast by Ms. Allen, Mr. Bracken, Mr. Burke, Ms. Gable, Mr. Figueroa, Mr. Lipari, Ms. Muzac and Mr. Wacik. Motion passed with an 8-0 vote.

A motion made by Mr. Bracken to approve the Waivers and Deferrals conditioned upon the applicant's Attorney modifying the previously submitted waiver requests into deferrals and the other waiver requests other than the ones being deferred be acted upon by Borough Council. Second by Mr. Figueroa. A roll call vote followed. Yes votes cast by Ms. Allen, Mr. Bracken, Mr. Burke, Ms. Gable, Mr. Figueroa, Mr. Lipari, Ms. Muzac and Mr. Wacik. Motion passed with an 8-0 vote.

A motion by Mr. Bracken to grant approval of applicant's request of lot consolidation conditioned upon:

1. Applicant's Attorney must submit a letter requesting withdrawal of the request for a waiver on 153-49.B(14) to not show existing easements and rights-of-way on the plan.
2. The applicant complies with all other comments, suggestions and requirements as set forth in the Engineers letter dated November 22, 2024.
3. The applicant complies with any and all representation before the Planning Commission and Borough Council as part of the review process.

Second by Mr. Figueroa. A roll call vote followed. Yes votes cast by Ms. Allen, Mr. Bracken, Mr. Burke, Ms. Gable, Mr. Figueroa, Mr. Lipari, Ms. Muzac and Mr. Wacik. Motion passed with an 8-0 vote.

A motion to approve the Waiver requests made by Mr. Bracken. Second by Mr. Wacik. A roll call vote followed. Yes votes cast by Ms. Allen, Mr. Bracken, Mr. Burke, Ms. Gable, Mr. Figueroa, Mr. Lipari, Ms. Muzac and Mr. Wacik. Motion passed with an 8-0 vote.

Attorneys Catherine Cursio and Naomi Centrella representing 1991 Northampton St. LLC requested Council's review of three pending petitions for comments:

1. Vacate N. 20th Street and an unopened portion of Liberty Street.
2. A zoning map amendment to rezone certain parcels along N. 20th Street withing the R-1 Low Density Residential District to the I-1 General Industrial District.
3. A zoning Ordinance text amendment application to increase the allowed building height in the I-1 General Industrial District from forty feet to forty-four feet and exclude parapets, mechanical equipment and solar panels from height limitations in all districts for presentation and discussion.

All of these will go before Wilson Borough Planning Commission.

Council's comments and suggestions were:

1. Vacating N. 20th Street would mean that any large vehicles such as garbage trucks, fire trucks and snowplows would have no turn around and would have back out blindly on to Northampton St. A cul-de-sac or exit would be required.
2. All the streets on the North side of the Borough will be impacted if N. 20th Street is eliminated; N. 16th & N. 18th Streets are too narrow for more than one car; N. 17th Street is one way.
3. The applicant should investigate the feasibility of moving the proposed building west, leaving N. 20th Street open to traffic and putting parking on the open space on the east side of N. 20th Street (in the applicant's parcels between N. 20th and N. 19th).
4. Will the applicant be willing to provide a plan to avoid an increase in traffic?
5. Storm sewer lines would have to be diverted if N. 20th Street is closed and developed.

A motion to table the discussion until a recommendation from the Planning Commission is received made by Ms. Gable. Second by Mr. Wacik. A roll call vote followed. Yes votes cast by Ms. Allen, Mr. Bracken, Mr. Burke, Ms. Gable, Mr. Figueroa, Mr. Lipari, Ms. Muzac and Mr. Wacik. Motion passed with an 8-0 vote.

MECAB:

NONE

OLD BUSINESS:

Mr. Bracken asked Solicitor Margle if there are any further actions which can be taken against Councilman Palinkas. A discussion ensued. It was stated he has not attended a Council meeting since July 8, 2024, totaling nine council meetings as per Council meeting attendance sheet. Council member Palinkas continues to collect a payment for being a Council member from the taxpayers of Wilson Borough. This is a blatant dereliction of his sworn duties as a Councilman. He has also received multiple votes of no-confidence from current and past Council.

A motion for Council to authorize the Solicitor or Manager to create a dignified press release to the appropriate media for the purposes of requesting Councilman Palinkas absences be brought to the public's attention made by Ms. Gable. Seconded by Ms. Allen. A roll call vote followed. Yes votes cast by Ms. Allen, Mr. Burke, Ms. Gable. No votes cast by Mr. Bracken, Mr. Figueroa, Mr. Lipari, Ms. Muzac and Mr. Wacik. Motion failed with a 3-5 vote.

A motion for Borough Council to authorize the Solicitor and Manager to create correspondence to the applicable ethics board having authority over Borough Councilman and bring to their attention the Borough's dissatisfaction with the state of the law and the state of the Ethics Commission and request an audience or at least a response as to their position in writing. Draft a letter to both legislatures and Senators indicating Borough Council's dissatisfaction and frustration with the state of the law and ask they consider enactment of a law that would give the Borough some authority to remove councilman such as Mr. Palinkas made by Ms. Muzac. Seconded by Mr. Bracken. A roll call vote followed. Yes votes cast by Ms. Allen, Mr. Bracken, Mr. Burke, Ms. Gable, Mr. Figueroa, Mr. Lipari, Ms. Muzac and Mr. Wacik. Motion passed with an 8-0 vote.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Bracken advised the Wilson Youth Football team needs new helmets. They received three quotes, \$11,000, \$9,000 and \$7,600. Twenty-eight helmets would be replaced. Mr. Keith Tone of 849 W. Milton St. representing the Youth Football Board requested \$3800 to replace the twenty-eight helmets that are nearing expiration. Mr. Bracken advised he will also submit 6 months of bank statements, minutes and the quotes so the check can be made to the vendor directly. A motion to approve made by Mr. Lipari. Second by Ms. Muzac. A roll call vote followed. Yes votes cast by Ms. Allen, Mr. Burke, Ms. Gable, Mr. Figueroa, Mr. Lipari, Ms. Muzac and Mr. Wacik. Mr. Bracken abstained. Motion passed with a 7-0-1 vote.

A motion to require youth sports requiring financial aid from the Borough to submit a request in writing, 6 months of bank statements, 6 months of minutes, budget and three purchase estimates for Council to consider the request being made by Ms. Gable. Second by Ms. Allen. A roll call vote followed. Yes votes cast by Ms. Allen, Mr. Bracken, Mr. Burke, Ms. Gable, Mr. Figueroa, Mr. Lipari, Ms. Muzac and Mr. Wacik. Motion passed with an 8-0 vote.

ORDINANCES:

NONE

RESOLUTIONS:

A motion to approve Resolution #1296 LSA Grant for a sanitary sewer truck made by Ms. Allen. Second by Mr. Wacik. A roll call vote followed. Yes votes cast by Ms. Allen, Mr. Bracken, Mr. Burke, Ms. Gable, Mr. Figueroa, Mr. Lipari, Ms. Muzac and Mr. Wacik. Motion passed with an 8-0 vote.

BILLS AND ACCOUNTS:

Bills were in the amount of \$306,168.70 A motion to pay the bills was made by Mr. Wacik. Second by Mr. Lipari. A roll call vote followed. Yes votes cast by Ms. Allen, Mr. Bracken, Mr. Burke, Ms. Gable, Mr. Figueroa, Mr. Lipari, Ms. Muzac and Mr. Wacik. Motion passed with an 8-0 vote.

PRESENTATION OF MATTERS BY RESIDENTS AND TAXPAYERS:

NONE

CAUCUS:

Entered caucus at 9:12 pm.
Exited caucus at 9:39 pm.

The purpose of the Caucus was to discuss personnel matters and real estate .

A motion made by Ms. Allen to authorize the Solicitor to advise the prospective seller of a certain property that he has until December 15, 2024, to execute the sales agreement exactly as the Borough has submitted. Failure of which will result in the Borough's termination of negotiations relative to the agreement. Second by Mr. Bracken. A roll call vote followed. Yes votes cast by Ms. Allen, Mr. Bracken, Mr. Burke, Ms. Gable, Mr. Figueroa, Mr. Lipari, Ms. Muzac and Mr. Wacik. Motion passed with an 8-0 vote.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Bracken made a Motion to adjourn at 9:46 Seconded by Mr. Lipari and Council concurred.

STEPHANIE N. JONES
CLERK/TREASURER