Hawley Borough Council Meeting

January 11, 2023 7 pm

94 Main Avenue

Present from Council were President Rojas, and Councilpersons Bartleson, Dougherty, Herzog, Mead, and Monaghan. Vice President Faubel was absent due to illness. Also present were Mayor Nichols, Chief Drake, Solicitor Bernathy and Secretary Racht. Present from the public were Peter Becker of the TriCounty Independent and from Lake Region EMS Ken Morrison and Mike Sankowisz.

President Rojas began the meeting with a salute to the flag. Motion: made by Councilperson Dougherty, seconded by Councilperson Herzog, and passed unanimously to approve the agenda with flexibility.

Motion: made by Councilperson Herzog, seconded by Councilperson Mead, and passed, with Councilperson Monaghan abstaining because she was away for work and missed the December meeting, to approve the minutes from December 14.

Correspondence: on file.

Motion: made by Councilperson Monaghan, seconded by Councilperson Herzog, and passed unanimously to approve the following reappointments: Solicitor: Attorney R. Bernathy, Engineer: Reilly Associates, Alternate Engineer: Kiley Associates, Grant Consultant: Jim Martin, Zoning/Building: SFM Consulting, Code Enforcement: Ralph Bolinger, Newspaper of Record: Tri-County Independent.

Motion: made by Councilperson Mead, seconded by Councilperson Herzog, and passed unanimously to pass Resolution 2023-1, a resolution to implement property tax penalty waiver provisions.

Motion: made by Councilperson Bartleson, seconded by Councilperson Monaghan, and passed unanimously to pass Resolution 2023-2, a resolution to define the maintenance requirements for all traffic signals within the municipality.

Motion: made by Councilperson Monaghan, seconded by Councilperson Bartleson, and passed unanimously to pass Resolution 2023-3 setting the tax rates for the year.

Public comments: there was none.

Treasurer’s Report and Bills List: Motion: made by Councilperson Monaghan, seconded by Councilperson Dougherty, and passed unanimously to accept the Treasurer’s Report and to pay the bills as on the bills list.

Planning: Councilperson Monaghan gave the report, on file. Motion: Made by Councilperson Monaghan, seconded by Councilperson Dougherty, and passed unanimously to appoint Councilperson Mead to Planning. She will be the liaison.

Rental Inspections: Councilperson Mead reported that subletting might be happening at 836 Hudson Street. Ten apartments were inspected in December. Three of these were not approved.

Ambulance: Councilperson Herzog said that the PHP Committee would meet the last Wednesday of January. Ken Morrison of Lake Region EMS gave the report for December and 2022. He also gave an update on their progress including more personnel, another vehicle, and construction of a new building.

Health and Welfare: Councilperson Herzog spoke of the ice rink being used by hockey players. Solicitor Bernathy will prepare a more official rules sign than the one currently posted.

Fire: Chief Mead gave the report, on file.

Hawley Area Authority: Councilperson Monaghan reported that the budget was approved and there will be no rate increase this year.

Park and Rec: Councilperson Dougherty reported that there was no December meeting. Councilperson Herzog announced that the Lake Region Homeschoolers won the people’s choice award for the decorated Christmas trees contest put on by Downtown Hawley Partnership. A check was presented to be used on Bingham Park, the charity selected by the Lake Region Homeschoolers.

Grants: President Rojas said there was nothing to report. Councilperson Herzog asked what the county’s $30,000 grant was earmarked for. President Rojas said it was for the bandstand or the new Police car.

Solicitor: Solicitor Bernathy asked what language Council wanted added to the Aqua Easement. He will be in contact with Ron Bates who is involved with the project. Solicitor Bernathy reviewed the steps for bonding Paupack and Falls.

Finance: An auditor will be appointed next month.

Police: Councilperson Herzog announced these dates: Easter Egg Hunt-4/1/23 10 am Bingham Park, weather permitting, Memorial Day Parade-5/28/23 Riverside to Bingham Park lineup noon, step off 1pm, Independence Day Parade-Spring Street to Bingham Park lineup 11 am, step off noon, Halloween Parade-10/31/23 Church and Main to Bingham Park lineup 4:30, step off 5pm, National Night Out-8/1/23 Bingham Park 5-8pm. Street Closures for DHP events: 8/26/23 1-8pm Church Street Main to Penn for car cruise. 9/30/23-10/1/23 7am Saturday to 6pm Sunday Keystone from Main to Penn for Hawley Harvest Hoedown. 9/30/23 7am Saturday-6pm Sunday Church Street from Main to Penn for Hawley Harvest hoedown. Other events for 2023 that haven’t been scheduled yet: Trunk or Treat, Christmas Bonfires, and the Winterfest parade. Motion: made by Councilperson Herzog, seconded by Councilperson Monaghan, and passed unanimously to approve the event dates as written.

Police Report: Bullet proof vests were discussed.

Chief’s Report: Chief Drake thanked everyone who helped with the giving tree because several families were helped.

Streets: Public Director Mead’s report is on file.

Building: Councilperson Bartleson requested an executive session regarding personnel.

Personnel: the new part time secretary has started.

Unfinished business: Councilperson Herzog reported that the Chamber of Northern Poconos has requested using fields for parking. After a discussion about the damage this could cause to the fields the request was turned down.

New Business: Motion: made by Councilperson Dougherty, seconded by Councilperson Herzog, and passed unanimously to accept, subject to Solicitor Bernathy’s review, Bunnell as the new trash company for pick up at the borough building.

Councilperson Monaghan announced that the Future Business Leaders of America is hosting a Polar Promenade at the school on January 28. Councilperson Herzog brought up the problem of the public street trashcans being used for household waste disposal. This has been an ongoing problem. Motion: made by Councilperson Herzog, seconded by President Rojas, and passed unanimously to direct Solicitor Bernathy to create an ordinance about signage and a fine for putting household trash in street trashcans.

There were no public comments at this point. President Rojas requested an executive session regarding litigation. Council went into executive session at 7:52pm. Council came back into regular session at 8:09pm. Motion: made by Councilperson Monaghan to adjourn. The time was 8:11pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Racht, Hawley Borough Secretary