Hawley Borough Council Meeting

February 14, 2024 7 pm

94 Main Avenue

Prior to the meeting there was an executive session regarding personnel and litigation. Present from Council were President Monaghan, Vice President Herzog, and Councilpersons Dougherty, Faubel, Hawk, and Rojas. Mayor Nichols was absent due to personal reasons. Also present were Chief Drake, Director of Public Works Mead, Solicitor Bernathy, and Secretary Racht. Present from the public was Carolynn Hanel, Hank Keil, Bob Myers, Marie Riberio, and Peter Becker of TriCounty Independent. President Monaghan began the meeting with a salute to the flag.

Motion: made by Vice President Herzog and seconded by Councilperson Dougherty to approve the agenda with flexibility. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion: made by Vice President Herzog, and seconded by Councilperson Hawk to approve the minutes for January 10. Motion passed with five yes and one abstention from Vice President Faubel who was absent from the January 10 meeting due to personal reasons.

Correspondence: Vice President Herzog spoke about the Pocono Mountain Visitors Bureau. She will work with DHP on applying for a grant this year. Last year the Borough received ten thousand through this grant.

Motion: made by Vice President Herzog and seconded by Councilperson Rojas to pass Resolution 2024-2 and 2024-3 for the Chamber of Northern Poconos to erect banners for the June and September Craft fairs. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion: made by Vice President Herzog and seconded by Councilperson Dougherty to pass Resolution 2024-4 to extend the Blue Ridge franchise agreement with the amendment of “ordinance” to “agreement”. Motion amended by Vice President Herzog, seconded by Councilperson Dougherty to amend the motion to a 5yr term at 3%. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Presentation: Hank Keil spoke about St. Paul’s summer concert series and asked if they were able to hang a banner to advertise it. They were advised of the process.

Treasurer’s Report: Motion: made by Vice President Herzog, seconded by Councilperson Faubel, and passed unanimously to accept the Treasurer’s report.

Motion: made by Councilperson Faubel, seconded by Councilperson Rojas, and passed unanimously to approve paying the bills on the bills list with these additions out of General :$179.76 for Police cell phones with AT&T, $27.58 to PP&L for Spring and Main blinker, $60.40 from Elan Financials for Police operating supplies, and $105.39 from Elan for paper and envelopes.

Planning: Motion: made by Councilperson Mead and seconded by Vice President Herzog, to appoint as new members for the Planning Commission Carl Shultz and Mark Nordenhold with Marie Riberio as alternate. Motion passed unanimously.

Landlord/Tenant: Councilperson Mead asked Solicitor Bernathy about the list of delinquent landlords she had given him before the holidays. Solicitor Bernathy said he would need to go over that list with her. Councilperson Mead requested time to go over the current landlord/tenant ordinance. This will be done on March 13 at 6:15pm, before the Council meeting.

Ambulance Report: Vice President Herzog gave the report, on file. The anticipated shortfall with the multi municipal ambulance occurred. Remedies may include brining on other municipalities or bringing the county on board.

Fire Report: Given by Chief Mead, on file.

Hawley Area Authority: on file.

Zoning and Building: on file.

Code Enforcement: from Code Enforcer Bolinger, on file.

Park: Councilperson Dougherty gave the report mentioning restoring the trail between the tennis court and skate park andfinding a location fora potential butterfly garden. Dick Briden said the community gardens would need to be replaced this year.

Grants: Councilperson Rojas reviewed the Church Street paving project. In 2022, the borough was awarded an $80,000 grant. Council had already passed that the $32,846 shortfall would be covered by $15,000 from Pligit and theforty thousand and change from American Rescue Plan funds. Council had also passed a resolution to use $25,000 for Cedar from Pligit. Church Street could be done in phases. The engineer will have to determine how much can be done for $80,000. Council is not aware of work that UGI or Aqua has scheduled because the borough is no longer getting five-year plans from them. Motion: made by Councilperson Rojas, and seconded by Vice President Herzog to authorize Councilperson Rojas to contact the engineer about what $80,000 of square yard work would be. Motion amended by Councilperson Rojas and seconded by Vice President Herzog to amend the motion to focus from wherever legally allowed to do work form the railroad to the Presbyterian Church. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion: made by Councilperson Rojas and seconded by Councilperson Dougherty to authorize signing the spillway contract #76218 extension to June 2025. Motion passed with five yes and one abstention, which was from Vice President Herzog. DEP and the Army Corps of Engineers recommend waiting until August so that the spillway will be drier. Councilperson Rojas said that the engineer could reach out to DEP and Army Corps of Engineer about doing the work before then. Vice President Herzog asked if DEP and the Army Corps have seen the process D&M has proposed to do. She would like to see this in writing.

Councilperson Rojas opened a discussion on finding a significant project for a DCED flood mitigation grant. Motion: made by Councilperson Rojas and seconded by Vice President Herzog to authorize getting an estimate from the engineer for the cost to repair the balusters (this would require underwater camera work), the island, the wall and culvert issues and the estimate for the required DCED engineering portion. Motion passed unanimously. There is a 15% match for this grant. Councilperson Rojas pointed out that there is also a need to do a hydrological analysis for 50, 100, and 500 yr flood. Solicitor Bernathy will look into how long the pipes should have lasted from the levee project.

Councilperson Rojas discussed a Greenways and Trails grant for a Park project. The amount is to not exceed $250,000 and there is a fifteen percent match. There was a discussion regarding an ADA pavilion. Motion: made by Councilperson Rojas and seconded by Vice Herzog, and passed unanimously to authorize first pursuing the reallocation for the existing Welwood County Block Grant and then create an estimate and then go after the Greenway grant. Vice President Herzog suggested using a Pocono Mountain Visitors Bureau grant for the 15% match.

Emergency Management: Councilperson Hawk attended a quarterly training. President Monaghan will sign off on the Borough receiving the Brookfield Emergency manual.

Mayor: the Mayor was not present due to personal reasons.

Solicitor: Solicitor Bernathy noted that his items had been handled during the executive session.

Finance: Councilperson Faubel announced that the audit had begun.

Police: The Police will need computers for the office and the vehicles because eventually E-File will be mandatory. Councilperson Rojas said that the bulletproof grant would open in April. Motion: made by Vice President Herzog, seconded by Councilperson Rojas, and passed unanimously to hire pending all the prerequisites and standard testing, Forrest Erway as Police officer at the standard hiring rate. She reported that rate was $18 per hour.

Chief’s Report: on file. Chief Drake said the Easter Egg Hunt would be on March 23. Motion: made by Vice President Herzog, seconded by Councilperson Dougherty, and passed unanimously to authorize Councilperson Rojas to apply for four bulletproof vests. Motion: made by Vice President Herzog, seconded by Councilperson Dougherty, and passed unanimously to authorize Councilperson Rojas to go ahead and investigate the PCLB grant.

Streets and Roads: Motion: made by Vice President Herzog, seconded by Councilperson Dougherty, and passed unanimously to approve these street closures for Downtown Hawley Partnership: Saturday, August 24th Church Street from Main to Penn approximately 1pm to dusk for the Wally Lake Fest Car Cruise and Saturday/Sunday October 5th & 6th Church Street and Keystone Street Main to Penn from 6am to on 10/5 through 6pm and 10/6 overnight Saturday for Hawley Harvest Hoedown.

Building: Director of Public Works Mead reported that the generator seems to be fine.

Health and Welfare: nothing.

Personnel: selecting an alternate solicitor was tabled to look into other options.

Unfinished business: nothing.

New Business: Motion: made by Vice President Herzog, seconded by Councilperson Dougherty, and passed unanimously to authorize President Monaghan to sign the Kuharchik proposal for traffic light maintenance.

Public Comments: none.

Motion: made by Vice President Herzog, seconded by Councilperson Dougherty, and passed unanimously to adjourn. The time was 8:10pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Racht, Hawley Borough Secretary