



Official and Approved Minutes

BERLIN BOROUGH COUNCIL

January 3, 2019 - 7:00 p.m.

1. The President calls the meeting to order.
2. Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

ROLL CALL

Barb Zerfoss	Present
Thomas L. Fisher	Present
Michael A. Lottig	Present
John Harding, Jr.	Present
Thomas W. Jones	Present
Mayor Joseph Krause	Present
Clifford E. Horner	Present
Charles E. Rhodes	Present

Also in attendance are: Thomas D. Jones, Executive Borough Secretary, and Jr. Council Member Cannon Hay.

Members of the public: *please see the attached list.*

Citizen's Comments:

The following asked to address the Council:

Kerri and Brian Bechtel – they asked why an inspection was needed of the mobile home at 180 Vine Street. They plan to do some remodeling and then have someone live there. Council discussed with them the initiative of cleaning up properties around town and that several others have received a similar letter requesting permission to allow for the Borough code inspector to inspect to determine if the property is inhabitable or not. Mr. & Mrs. Bechtel were told that an inspection would be set up soon with them.

Approval of Minutes:

Minutes of the December 6, 2018 Regular Borough Council Meeting were forwarded for review with the Council meeting packets. (*Exhibit 1*)

Motion by John Harding and seconded by Michael Lottig to approve and accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Berlin Borough Council held at 7:00 P.M. and dated December 6, 2018.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Passed

Minutes of the December 20, 2018 Committee of the Whole meeting of the Berlin Borough Council were forwarded for review with the Council meeting packets. (*Exhibit 2*)

Motion by Clifford Horner and seconded by Thomas W. Jones to approve and accept the minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting of the Berlin Borough Council dated December 20, 2018.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Passed

President's Report

CCIS Activity Report – The CCIS report for December. (*Exhibit 3*) there were no questions or comments.

Property Maintenance & Building Code Complaints – the Borough received 1 property maintenance complaint during December: 1) a complaint was received cats roaming on 9th Avenue. Residents have complained before about cats roaming in other areas of town. It appears that there may be some feral colonies in town; 2) letters were sent to 13 property owners raising concerns about blighted property conditions. There were two landlords that received letters about their tenant's mobile homes. Inspections are expected to be scheduled with CCIS before the end of January.

Mayor's Report: Mayor Joseph G. Krause

From December 1 through December 31, 2018:

Officers were dispatched for 55 calls.

Officers investigated 5 incidents. 5 of these are now closed.

8 Traffic Stops were conducted. 4 Warnings were issued. 8 Citations were issued.

1 Parking ticket was issued.

2 Non-Traffic citations were issued.

0 Borough Ordinance Violation citation were issued.

2 People were arrested.

For the Year from January 1 through December 31, 2018:

Officers were dispatched for 882 calls.

Officers investigated 117 incidents. 117 of these are now closed.

114 Traffic Stops were conducted. 60 Warnings were issued. 61 Citations were issued.

10 Parking tickets were issued.

16 Non-Traffic citations were issued.

7 Borough Ordinance Violation citations were issued.

19 People were arrested.

There was some discussion about parking on sidewalks.

Motion by John Harding and seconded by Thomas Fisher to approve and accept the Police Report as presented.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Passed

Administrative Business:

- 1) Property Maintenance Complaints & Right to Know Law Requests Cost Summary:
The Borough has incurred \$0 in attorney expenses and \$185.00 in Borough employee expenses for a total of \$185.00 in addressing Right-to-Know requests and Property Maintenance Complaints for the month of December 2018. The total year to date is \$3,445.00. (Exhibit 4)
- 2) Treasurer's Report and Bills: – the reports for December were included in the Council Meeting Packets (Exhibit 5). Council Member Thomas W. Jones asked about the following expenses – 1) Chief's Supply - *this was for police uniform shirts*; 2) Mystik Products – *this was for grease/lubricants*; and 3) Matthews Communication – *this was for 2-way radio repairs*.

Motion by Michael Lottig and seconded by Thomas Fisher to approve the bills and Treasurer's Report as specified on Exhibits 5.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Passed

Old Business:

- 1) The Municipal Authority of the Borough of Berlin has finished replacing the main waterline on Cumberland Street from South Street extending south to approximately the vicinity of the Donald Ziegler property. They still must do the customer tap ins and install new curb stops. Kevin Yoder and AEG, LLC is working on the final engineering for the curb and sidewalk replacement and will be submitting the information to PennDOT by the end of January for both the Borough permit and the Municipal Authority permit.
- 2) Letters were sent to four property owners about opening an alley off the south end of Division Street and laid out on Borough streets maps and plans but that was never opened. Responses have not been received back yet.
- 3) Welcome Sign Update – the stone and sign were installed. Wiedenhoft Electric will be installing the dusk to dawn lighting as soon as the ground around the stone is either dry or frozen.

New Business:

- 1) Council Member Thomas Jones and Secretary Jones have discussed replacing the computers for Ms. Werner and Ms. Flamm. Ms. Werner's computer is having problems with the operating system. Dell XPS Tower Special Edition computers are recommended. The monitors will not need to be replaced at this time. (*Exhibit 6*).

Motion by Michael Lottig and seconded by Thomas Fisher approving the purchase of a 2 Dell XPS Special Edition computers as quoted, for \$1,399.99 each.

Ayes: 7

Nay: 0

Motion Passed

- 2) An Official Certification of Offices for the 2019 Municipal Primary Sheet was received from the Office of Voter Registration and Elections. Berlin needs to appoint two auditors to fill the vacant positions. Also, John F. Harding, Jr., Charles E. Rhodes, and Barbara E. Zerfoss council member terms will expire on

December 31, 2019. All three Borough Auditors terms will expire on December 31, 2019. Nomination petitions will be available for pickup in the Election Office beginning on February 4, 2019. The last day to register before the primary is April 22nd, and the Municipal Primary will be held on May 21st. Thomas Fisher will check to see if Jim Eutsey and Shawn Hart will serve another year as the Berlin Borough Auditors.

- 3) A thank you note was received from Kerry Claycomb which read as: *“Just a note to thank you for the invitation to Berlin Borough’s recognition dinner held on December 15. I enjoyed an evening of good food and fellowship.” Kerry Claycomb.*
- 4) The generators were not used for any peak shaving events during December 2018. Secretary Jones will present an analysis of the 2018 generators operations at the Committee of the Whole meeting scheduled for January 17th.
- 5) Secretary Jones passed out a summary of the FOP contract which lays out the lunch periods that officers can take. Officers can take 30 minutes lunch during an 8-hour shift but remain on call during their lunch. This was at the request of Barb Zerfoss at the last Council meeting. *There were no questions or comments.*
- 6) Secretary Jones asked Council Member Thomas W. Jones to review the Borough Comcast internet service and make recommendation for keeping the same plan or to upgrade. Council Member Jones will report back at the January 17 Committee of the Whole meeting.
- 7) Charles E. Rhodes term on the Municipal Authority of the Borough of Berlin expired December 31, 2018.

Motion by Thomas Fisher and seconded by Barb Zerfoss to appoint Charles E. Rhodes to serve on the Municipal Authority of the Borough of Berlin for a five term, effective starting on January 1, 2019.

Ayes: 5

Nay: 0

Abstained: 2 (John Harding and Charles Rhodes abstained due to a potential conflict of interest – both serve on the board of the Municipal Authority).

Motion Passed

- 8) Council Member Thomas W. Jones reported that he has been doing some research on establishing historical points or districts in Berlin. Bill Callahan, the Western PA Community Preservation Coordinator for the Pennsylvania State History Preservation Office, will be invited to the February 7th Council meeting. Roger Clarke and members of the Berlin Historical Society will also be invited to attend

Motion by Michael Lottig and seconded by Thomas W. Jones to recess to executive session.

Ayes: 7

Nay: 0

Motion Passed

At 8:10 P.M. the council adjourned to executive session to review and discuss agency business which, if conducted in public, would violate a lawful privilege or lead to the disclosure of information or confidentiality protected by law, including matters related to the initiation and conduct of investigations of possible or certain violations of the law and quasi-judicial deliberations.

Executive Session (if needed)

Motion by John Harding and seconded by Thomas W. Jones to reconvene the regular meeting.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Passed

At 8:36 P.M., the council reconvened the regular meeting.

President Charles E. Rhodes read the following resignation letter from Thomas D. Jones, Executive Borough Secretary:

“January 3, 2019

Honorable Council Members and Mayor Krause:

It has been my distinct honor and pleasure to serve as the Borough of Berlin Executive Borough Secretary since May 31, 2016. However, an excellent opportunity in the private business sector has recently become available to me. Therefore, I am respectfully submitting my resignation as the Executive Borough Secretary effective at the close of business February 8, 2019.

Over the next five weeks, I will do my utmost to assist in the search for my replacement and to try and arrange for a smooth transition. I realize this time will move swiftly but I am willing to discuss an arrangement with the Council should my services be needed after February 8th.

The community and residents that I have served and the many new friendships that I have made during my tenure in Berlin will always hold a special place in my heart.

Sincerely,

Thomas D. Jones”

Motion by Thomas W. Jones and seconded by Michael Lottig to accept the resignation of Thomas D. Jones as the Berlin Executive Borough Secretary, effective at the close of business on Friday, February 8, 2019.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Passed

Motion by John Harding and seconded by Thomas W. Jones to advertise for a new Executive Borough Secretary in the Somerset Daily American.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Passed

Secretary Jones asked permission to read the following statement:

To the Borough Council and Berlin Residents:

As I deliberated and contemplated my departure decision, I kept thinking about all the many wonderful projects in progress in Berlin that I was leaving unfinished. Then I reflected on the many remarkable accomplishments that I was able to make a significant contribution toward in such a very short time – with both this Council, and the prior Council that hired me: 1) leading the installation of the Berlin Interactive Distributed Generation Project with a savings of \$200,000 off the original estimated purchase and construction costs; 2) overseeing the successful first year of operations of the generators with savings in excess of \$275,000 per year in electricity transmission and capacity costs; 3) the new purchase replacement of most of the Borough public works fleet of vehicles; 4) purchase power contract negotiations for the Berlin Municipal Electric System resulting in Berlin having one of the top ten lowest purchased power costs out of the 135 AMP municipal electric system partners across 9 states; 5) price protection and stability in electric rates charged to Berlin residents for the next four years; 5) the beginning of the Berlin Revitalization project and completion of Phase I of the Project; 6) a \$1.2 million grant award from PennDOT for Phase II of the Revitalization Project; 7) a \$34,000 grant award in CDBG funds for Diamond Street of the Revitalization Project. I take great pride in all of these and especially the many accolades, awards, and recognition that has been bestowed on Berlin - locally, regionally, statewide, and nationally for the positive impact we have made in the Borough.

I challenge you to be a progressive thinking, unified Council, with initiative, a vision and decision making that is best for all the Borough. Do not ever let a vocal minority, or those with selfish special interests, or misguided motivations deter you. The future is bright for Berlin!

Thank you. Thomas D. Jones

Motion by Michael Lottig and seconded by Barb Zerfoss to adjourn this Meeting of the Berlin Borough Council at 8:45 P.M.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Passed

Note: The next regular meeting of the Berlin Borough Council is scheduled for Thursday, February 7, 2019, beginning at 7:00 p.m., and the next scheduled meeting of the Berlin Borough Council Committee of the Whole is scheduled for 4:00 p.m., Thursday, January 17, 2019 at the Berlin Borough Council Conference/Meeting Room, 700 North Street, Berlin, Pennsylvania.



Executive Borough Secretary

January 3, 2019

