

**NEWVILLE BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**SPECIAL MEETING**  
**MARCH 22, 2022 AT 6:00**  
**PM**

A Special Meeting of the Newville Borough Council was held on Tuesday, March 22, 2022 at 6:00 PM in the Newville Borough Office, 4 West Street Newville Pennsylvania. The meeting was called to order by Council President Scott Penner, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

On roll call, the following members were present: Nathan Burrow, Robert Darius, Jack Ericksen via Zoom. Edward Sinkovitz and Scott Penner. Also prese Fred Potzer, Mayor Michael Croutch, Borough Solicitor Marcus McKnight III, Officer Matthew Keller, Officer Shawn Gutshall, Borough Assistant Secretary/Treasurer Deborah Piper, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Gobin, Sentinel Reporter Maddie Seiler, and Borough Planning Commission members Sharpe Over, James Franklin, and Bobbi Olson. Community residents present were Jody Roberts, Bob Over, George Schuyler and Don Bowers

Council President Pro Tempore Joey Diehl arrived at 6:40 PM.

New Business: Mr. Penner discussed issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for

The Borough/Authority insurance coverage will lapse on June 1, 2022. Brown and Brown of the Lehigh Valley had previously been appointed to serve as the broker of record for the past two years.

Mr. Potzer explained that the broker of record shops for the best insurance for the Borough and presents the best possible prices. Mr. Potzer is asking Council to authorize the Requests for Proposals to take bids for insurance coverage. The bids would be for June 1, 2022 to June 2, 2023. A motion was made by Mr. Sinkovitz, seconded by Mr. Burrow to grant Mr. Potzer's request for the RFP. All were in favor. The motion passed with five (5) affirmative and zero (0) negative votes.

Purpose: Mr. Penner stated the purpose of this meeting is to discuss and to possibly finalize the plans for the construction of a new police station and/or a municipal building. Mr. Allan Galbraith, of Galbraith Pre-Design was to present the design of the project for the meeting. Mr. Galbraith was not in attendance for the meeting to give his presentation.

Mr. Potzer gave an overview of the project to date. He explained that the

Borough Council has been working with Mr. and Mrs. Gobin for the past year with developing plans of a new police station and municipal building. The original plans were for a two story, 8,360 square foot building to be located on South High Street. The land has been conveyed by the Gobins to the Borough in December of 2021. Bids for the building were also conducted in December. The building proposal came in at more than double the projected budget of 1.5 million at a cost of \$3,169,680. Increase in the cost was attributed to uncertainty in the construction market, supply chain problems, delivery of materials, and prices of building materials.

The building committee met with Mr. Galbraith to discuss options were that were in terms of the project. Mr. Potzer explained at that time, it was stated that the building would be either a police station or a municipal building, but could not be both. The borough debt for this would be \$4,000 per month. The Borough cannot afford any more than that or a building budget of 1.5 million dollars.

Mr. Potzer stated that there is no significant cost difference between building a police station verses a municipal office. Most likely the building will be one story and made of pre engineered steel. The site would share the main entrance with Big Spring Physical Therapy. The Gobins have also donated to the Borough a 20-foot-wide easement across the property and Big Spring Pharmacy for the purpose of a walking trail. The trail will eventually connect the property on High Street with the Laughlin Mill. Also, included in the project, the Borough Council would like to develop a fishing area for the children by the dry hydrant located on the property. He stated that this is the over view of the project.

Mr. Potzer conveyed the three choices: police station, municipal building or nothing. He stated that the war in Ukraine has had a significant impact on oil prices which affects the building and construction market. For example, an estimate for the paving of North Corporation Street was \$125,000. When the bids were opened, the bids came in at \$195,000. Additional money had to be found for the paving of the street. Five years ago, that amount of money paved six streets in the Borough of Newville. Supply is also affecting with inventory of water meters as well.

Mr. Potzer reported that for the past twenty-eight years, the Borough has had no long term debt. When he first started with the Borough, all major purchases were made by cash from the Borough savings. Everything done now is financed, although short term. However, in order to finance the building, Council had to increase taxes by half a millage. \$50,000 is needed to maintain the debt service on the project every year.

Mr. McKnight explained the unique financing of the building project is an agreed upon amount of \$4,000 per month and is basically an interest only loan by the Gobins. The principal will be forgiven at the discretion of the Gobins and when both have passed away, the debt will be forgiven. All funds for the construction are being provided by the

Gobins.

Mr. Potzer restated the events that led up to the police department's relocation to 55 Manor Lane. The department had a problem with mold at the station on 27 West Big Spring Avenue. The officers were relocated from that building to the operations office at the Waste Water Treatment Plant. After remediation of the mold and favorable air quality testing, the officers moved back to the station on Big Spring Avenue. Within two weeks of the move, there was once again a water leak into the station. Until the Borough was made aware of the recurring leak, the Borough was contemplating renewing the lease in February. Other locations within the Borough were toured and considered for the relocation. However, those buildings were old and required extensive renovations in order to be converted into a safe environment to house the police department. Green Ridge was the safest option for the officers to be moved.

Mr. Schuyler voiced his disagreement in building a new police station on the acquired ground. He asked if any other arrangements could be made with the landlord to correct the mold concerns.

Mr. Potzer responded that those arrangements had been made but the landlord was only willing to go so far with the remediation. The Borough had contracted with Richard Roush of Cumberland Analytical Laboratories to perform the air quality testing. The best form of remediation is tearing out and putting in new and that's where the negotiations with the landlord stopped. The officers had a concern and brought it to Council's attention where they in turn authorized the move to Green Ridge as a temporary solution.

Mr. Potzer has been in discussion with Mr. Kenn Tuckey about his building on Big Spring Avenue. The building will need renovation before the police could move into it. Another option for consideration is renovation of the current Municipal building at 4 West Street.

Mr. Penner restated that Green Ridge is a temporary fix to this dilemma and that everyone wants to see the police department back within the Borough.

Mayor Crouch reminded everyone present that the half mill tax increase is tied to the mortgage. Once the mortgage is forgiven, the tax increase goes back.

Mr. (Sharpe) Over asked if other contractors have been contacted besides Mr. Gobin's builder, Allan Galbraith. He stated from the Planning Commission perspective, they were in favor of a Municipal Building housing both the police and borough offices. Mr. Over would like to see other builders brought in and other options presented for the police station.

Mr. Potzer replied that pre-engineered steel buildings will reduce the cost. Besides Galbraith, he named Conestoga and Morton as examples. This project was first discussed in 2018 with a different Council but never materialized. Mr. Potzer stated that the Borough will be tenants and that Mr. Gobin ultimately has the final say in the

construction of the building.

Mr. (Sharpe) Over stated his opposition to the project. He feels it is not attainable in today's market.

Mr. (Bob) Over asked what the land requirements are for the police building. Mr. Potzer answered that the building itself would be 3,500 square feet and parking for the police cars. The problem with an existing building, is that there is not sufficient space for a secure evidence room.

Mr. Penner stated that the rent for both locations of the police stations are the same. Big Spring Avenue was \$1,000 per month plus utilities and Green Ridge is \$1,550 per month with utilities included. Mayor Crutch commented that in running the numbers, Green Ridge came in cheaper.

Officer Gutshall would like to see more contracts in place. He asked if a committee could be made to solicit the surrounding townships for contracted police coverage.

Mr. Potzer replied that this been done in the past but at this time, the townships are receiving State Police coverage for free. Until that changes, the townships will not be receptive to contracts.

Mr. Penner commented that a Municipal Building is more feasible for the site than a police station because if the contracts do become a reality in the future, a larger force will be needed to accommodate the neighboring areas, the building will be come obsolete in five years.

Mr. Gobin stated that since building the pharmacy and purchasing the surrounding property, he has been contacted by other developers, but he is adamant that the Borough gets this property. He wants it to remain to have public access and enjoyed. He feels an attractive entrance to the Borough is essential. His dream was to have a two-story building there and had if it been built two years ago, it could have been done for \$1.5 million. He stated once he and his wife have passed, the building is the Borough's free and clear.

Mr. Potzer asked Mr. Gobin if he would be receptive to a pre-engineered steel building from Conestoga or CoStars instead of the initial building previously designed. The Borough's goal is to bring the project in less than 1.5 million. Mr. Gobin said that he would not be opposed but had two conditions: First, it would not look like a barn and second, he would like it to have geothermal for heating and cooling.

Mr. Potzer stated that the building he was looking at had 4,180 square feet with sixteen parking spaces for the Borough Office. Mr. Gallbraith had previously quoted a price for a one story building as coming in between 1.4 and 1.6 million dollars. Mr. Potzer's thoughts of a pre engineered steel building would come in at a lower price. With redesigning the building into a one story, it will have to be presented to the Planning Commission once again for a revised land development plan.

Mr. Potzer restated the three options available: a police station, a borough office or nothing. Mr. Penner did not think the price would decrease if the building was put on hold for two years. Mr. Potzer stated that while waiting on the revised land development plan, it would be a good opportunity to receive other bids on the new design. Using a pre-engineered steel building, it most likely could be constructed in eight to nine months. There would be no significant difference in pricing, whether it be a police station or municipal building.

Mr. Ericksen reported from the EDA perspective, that the location of the building will become the gateway into Newville. It opens up the creek front and create a green way to the mill. He would also like to see it connected to the Rail Trail someday. He feels it would be an important addition in bringing new business to Newville,

It was unanimously agreed upon by all council members, that a Municipal building would be the best choice for the Borough. A motion was made by Mrs. Diehl, seconded by Mr. Ericksen to authorize Mr. Carl Bert to prepare and submit to the Planning Commission, a revised land development plan. All were in favor. The motion passed with six (6) affirmative and zero (0) negative votes.

A motion was made by Mr. Sinkovitz, seconded by Mr. Burrow to form a committee consisting of the police officers, the chief, the mayor, and Mr. Darius as chairman to research and plan for the move of the police department back into the Borough. All were in favor. The motion passed with six (6) affirmative and zero (0) negative votes.

A motion was made by Mrs. Diehl, seconded by Mr. Sinkovitz to authorize Mr. McKnight to prepare a resolution which would confirm the lease of the property by June to advise the public the terms of the agreement. All were in favor. The motion passed with six (6) affirmative and zero (0) negative votes.

A motion was made by Mr. Sinkovitz, seconded by Mrs. Diehl to accept the donation of blue and yellow LED lights by a borough resident for the tree at F & M Trust to be displayed in the month of April in support of the Ukraine people. All were in favor. The motion passed with six (6) affirmative and zero (0) negative votes.

Executive Session: A motion was made by Council President, Scott Penner to adjourn to Executive Session at 7:28 PM to discuss a personnel issue.

The member of the Newville Borough Council returned to regular session at 8:02 PM on a motion by Mrs. Diehl, seconded by Mr. Sinkovitz. All were in favor. The motion passed with six (6) affirmative and zero (0) negative votes. During the Executive Session no decisions were made and no votes were taken.

A motion was made by Mrs. Diehl, seconded by Mr. Sinkovitz to authorize Mr. McKnight to draft a resolution for the March 29th meeting appointing Mr. P. Richard Wagner, Esquire as special labor council. All were in favor. The motion passed with six (6) affirmative and zero (0) negative votes.

Mrs. Diehl stated at the conclusion of the meeting that she was disappointed in the lack of communication between the police department and among the council members regarding important current events. All present agreed.

**Adjournment:** With no further business to discuss for the Newville Borough Special Meeting of March 22nd, the meeting was adjourned at 8:14 PM on a motion of Mr. Sinkovitz, seconded by Mrs. Diehl. All were in favor. The motion passed with six (6) affirmative and zero (0) negative votes.

**Upcoming**

**Meetings:**

- Newville Borough Council Work Session 6:00 PM, followed by Regular Meeting 7:00 PM, March 29, 2022

Minutes recorded  
by:

Jody Hofman  
Jody Hoffman, Borough  
Secretary/Treasurer