

January 02, 2019

**Emmaus Borough Council
Agenda
January 02, 2019 7:00 pm**



1. Call to Order

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Council Member Appointment
 - 3.a. Candidate Interviews

 - 3.b. Resolution 2019 - 1: Appointment of Council Member

4. Swearing In

5. Adjournment

EMMAUS BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Emmaus Borough Council met in Special Session on January 2, 2019 in Borough Council Chambers, 28 S. 4th Street, Emmaus, PA 18049.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Labenberg called the Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Brent Labenberg, President	Present
Chris DeFrain, Vice President	Present
Roy Anders	Present
Shana Baumgartner	Present
Jeffrey Shubzda	Present
Teri Sorg-McManamon	Present
Lee Ann Gilbert, Mayor	Present
Shane Pepe, Borough Manager	Present

PERSONAL APPEALS, PART I (On this Agenda only) – None.

A Special Session of Borough Council was held to appoint a new Council member. The following candidates were interviewed:

1. David Bocchino, Esq.
2. Alice Fortunato
3. John Hart
4. Jim Kercher
5. Trevor Schneck

Each candidate was asked a series of pre-formatted questions, listed below:

1. **Tell us a little about yourself and why you want to be on Council.**
2. **What do you believe are the top 3 challenges facing our community today and what do you believe would be your role in helping us face those challenges?**
3. **The bulk of our work gets done at the committee level. For the most part, our committees meet in the afternoons between 3pm and 5pm. Some committees even meet in the mornings. With your schedule, are you going to be able to do this? Additionally, Council members traditionally commit between 25 and 30 hours per month to this position, between meetings, preparation, events, and engaging with members of the public. Do you feel that you have the time to dedicate to this?**
4. **What skill set do you bring to Council that you feel Council needs most?**
5. **Council Members and Mayor, what questions do you have for this candidate?**

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David Bocchino, Esq.Question 1

Mr. Bocchino stated that he served in the United States Army, attended and graduated from college, law school and practiced law in Maryland for 17 years. He stated that he loves Emmaus and wants to be involved in the process of solving the town's problems and advancing the community.

Question 2

1. Maintaining the budget without a sky-high tax increase.
2. Economic future of community – businesses closing.
3. Public Works is very important and over-taxed.
4. Education. Recreational issues and quality of life. Mr. Bocchino stated that he can provide input.

Question 3

Mr. Bocchino stated that he does have the necessary time to dedicate to Council.

Question 4

Mr. Bocchino stated that he reads the minutes and the current Council has the community's best interest at heart. He stated that his skills are his ability to recognize issues, read the budget and prioritize. He stated that he is open-minded. He also stated that he is a registered Republican, leaning toward Libertarian and can be swayed by logic and reason. He stated that he hates fanatics and agendas.

Council Questions

Mr. Anders asked Mr. Bocchino if he reviewed the budget. Mr. Bocchino responded affirmatively. Mr. Anders asked what Mr. Bocchino considers the most pressing need for the community. Mr. Bocchino responded Public Safety and Public Works are the biggest priorities and responsibilities. Mrs. Sorg-McManamon asked Mr. Bocchino if he could make one improvement to the downtown area, what would that be? Mr. Bocchino responded that he would like to see tenants in the vacant buildings in the downtown and would like to work with the LVEDC. Ms. Baumgartner asked Mr. Bocchino what he believes characterizes a strong quality leader. Mr. Bocchino responded "fairness". She asked what Mr. Bocchino would hope to learn in his first year. Mr. Bocchino responded that he would want to learn how Council works, who to call, and how to respond to situations. Mr. Shubzda asked Mr. Bocchino if he was interested in any other involvement in the community. Mr. Bocchino stated that he sent a letter in for the Zoning Hearing Board when he first moved here and was sent a decline letter. Mr. Anders asked Mr. Bocchino if he is able to adjust his schedule to fit the needs of Council. Mr. Bocchino responded that he is.

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Alice Fortunato

Question 1

Ms. Fortunato stated that she is currently studying for her Masters in Public Administration. She stated that she would like to be involved with the community and keep the community moving in a positive direction.

Question 2

1. Fiscal – manage to provide services without raising taxes.
2. More of a social media presence, especially with younger people.

Question 3

Ms. Fortunato stated that she does have the necessary time to dedicate to Council.

Question 4

Ms. Fortunato stated that she is objective and able to do research. She stated that she is able to look at the research to make decisions and not make emotional decisions.

Council Questions

Mrs. Sorg-McManamon asked Ms. Fortunato what her community involvement currently is. Ms. Fortunato responded that she is not currently involved due to being in school full-time and working. Mr. Anders asked Ms. Fortunato if she is able to adjust her schedule to fit the needs of Council. Ms. Fortunato responded that she is putting her real estate license in escrow and will be able to commit the necessary time to fit the needs of Council. She stated that she will now have only one job and school. She said that she can take vacation by the hour.

John Hart

Question 1

Mr. Hart stated that he loves Emmaus and has had a very unique opportunity to live here. He stated that he wanted to live here and has lived here since college. He also stated that his wife is an educator and Emmaus provides one of the best educational systems in the Lehigh Valley. He stated that he is a Democrat and only voted straight ticket three times in his life. He stated that he does not like the political party label, that council seats should not be political, and Council should do what is best for the community. He stated that he is fiscally strategic. He stated that he uses new technology, has no agenda and no self-serving platforms. He stated that he simply wants to give back to the community that has been very good to him. Mr. Hart stated that last January, he began coming to Council meetings and learned more about the position. He stated that he attended Council meetings and Committee meetings. He stated that he became more knowledgeable and intrigued about Council and saw positive collaboration between the current Council members. He witnessed appropriate debate and positive interchange. He stated that he believes he possesses similar skills as Mr. Barrett.

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Question 2

1. Potential Public Relations/Education opportunities. He believes that the Borough may receive some backlash from the residents about the increase in the refuse/recycling rates and believes that it will require more education and communication as to the reasons behind Council's decision. He stated that communication to a diverse population is very difficult, but very important.
2. Building, Recreational Facilities, and Grounds – 33 E. Minor Street was a great opportunity. However, he believes that it is an unfunded liability. He stated that in the meantime there are other buildings that are deteriorating. He stated that he would love to help investigate innovative ways to fast tract occupying the building.
3. Upkeep/improvement of current parks. He stated that he would like the opportunity to help investigate innovative funding.

Question 3

Mr. Hart stated that he is retired and will make the necessary time to dedicate to Council.

Question 4

Mr. Hart stated that he has strong financial and budgetary knowledge. He stated that he has an appreciation for human capital and appreciation for small businesses. He stated that he was a partner of a small business in Allentown. He stated that he has facilities, construction, and maintenance experience. He also stated that he has an appreciation for Information Systems and automation.

Council Questions

Ms. Baumgartner asked Mr. Hart for three words that an employee might use to describe him and his leadership style. Mr. Hart responded tough, fair, and protective. He stated that he has many loyal employees as a result. Ms. Baumgartner asked Mr. Hart what he believes is an important quality of a community leader. Mr. Hart responded that it is important to appreciate and make certain that the views of everyone are heard and to move the agenda along. Mrs. Sorg-McManamon asked what Mr. Hart believes Council should prioritize in the next five years. Mr. Hart responded that there should be a timeline of investments of top priorities. He stated that things come up and they must be dealt with. He would love to spend time looking at what businesses we are in or should we turn it over to the outside to farm out. Is it a full-time service or should we be doing it at all?

Jim Kercher

Question 1

Mr. Kercher stated that he grew up in Macungie and went to Emmaus High School. He stated that he had his first apartment in the Borough. He stated that he has been married for eighteen years and his wife owns a business. He stated that he is currently a logistics supply manager and works from home. He stated that he wants to give back and contribute to the community. He stated that what Council does is selfless. He stated that he has no children and wants to help the community.

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Question 2

1. Mr. Kercher stated that he likes the small-town community but it is growing and it is a tough balancing act.
2. Infrastructure changing in communities.

Question 3

Mr. Kercher stated that he has the necessary time to commit to Council because his occupation is home-based and he can manage his schedule. He stated that he does travel on occasion but he can schedule his travel accordingly.

Question 4

Mr. Kercher stated that he has spent most of his career in management and has the ability to discuss ideas and remain composed.

Council Questions

Mr. Anders asked Mr. Kercher if he has followed Council meetings or read any of the Council minutes. Mr. Kercher responded that he has watched the recent meetings on You Tube and read the Council minutes from 2012 so that he had a present and past view of Council. Ms. Baumgartner asked Mr. Kercher what he hoped to contribute as a Council member. Mr. Kercher responded that he is hoping to contribute some perspective as to what is best for Emmaus. He stated that he likes the small town feel and would like to keep it that way. Ms. Baumgartner asked Mr. Kercher what he believes is a good quality of a manager. Mr. Kercher responded that he does not believe that everyone should agree, but it is important to come to a compromise that works for everybody. Mr. Shubzda asked Mr. Kercher if he has done any volunteering in Emmaus. Mr. Kercher responded that he hasn't but would like to start becoming more involved.

Trevor Schneck

Question 1

Mr. Schneck stated that he was born in the Borough in 1979. He stated that he has 4 children and lives in the house that he grew up in. He states that he cares about the town.

Question 2

1. Spending problem.
2. Crime up maybe a little bit. He is happy with it and wants it to stay where it is.

Question 3

Mr. Schneck stated that he has no problem with the time needed to serve on Borough Council.

Question 4

Mr. Schneck stated that Borough Council is doing a good job. He stated that he is a business owner (photographer, videographer, & DJ) and he is very good at organizing his time and that he has great people skills.

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Council Questions

Mrs. Sorg-McManamon asked Mr. Schneck if he could improve one thing in the downtown area, what would it be. Mr. Schneck responded that parking sucks, but he loves the Triangle. He stated that he believes that the downtown area needs more traffic and there should be more advertising.

Nominations

Mr. DeFrain nominated John Hart as a member of the Emmaus Borough Council.
Ms. Baumgartner nominated Jim Kercher as a member of the Emmaus Borough Council.
Mr. Anders nominated David Bocchino as a member of the Emmaus Borough Council.

Motion by Mr. Anders, seconded by Mr. DeFrain to close the nominations. There were 6 ayes. Motion carried.

John Hart received 4 ayes, 2 opposed (Baumgartner, Anders).

Resolution 2019-1 – A Resolution of the Council of the Borough of Emmaus, Lehigh County, Pennsylvania Appointing a Council Member to a term ending December 31, 2019.

Motion by Mr. Anders, seconded by Mr. DeFrain to adopt Resolution 2019-1: Appointment of John Hart to Emmaus Borough Council. There were 6 ayes. Motion carried.

Mayor Gilbert issued the Oath of Office to new Council Member John Hart.

Committee Assignments

Health Sanitation & Codes	Shubzda (Chair), Sorg-McManamon, Anders
Parks & Recreation	Baumgartner (Chair), Anders, Shubzda
Public Works	Roy Anders (Chair), Sorg-McManamon, Labenberg
General Administration	Labenberg (Chair), DeFrain, Baumgartner
Budget & Finance	Hart (Chair), DeFrain, Labenberg
Public Safety	DeFrain (Chair), Baumgartner, Hart
Community Relations/ Planning & Development	Sorg-McManamon (Chair), Shubzda, Hart

Mr. DeFrain reminded everyone that there is an election next year and encouraged everyone that interviewed to become involved in the community. Mayor Gilbert stated that there is an opening on the Civil Service Commission, Zoning Hearing Board and Recreation and Entertainment Commission.

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ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. DeFrain, seconded by Ms. Baumgartner to adjourn. There were 7 ayes. Motion carried.

The Special Meeting of the Emmaus Borough Council was adjourned at 8:20 p.m. on January 2, 2019.

Shane Pepe
Borough Manager

Transcribed By: Paula Weiant
Administrative Assistant
January 3, 2019