

NEWPORT BOROUGH COUNCIL
MID-MONTH MEETING MINUTES & LIQUOR LICENSE TRANSFER HEARING
September 17, 2024

President Greg Shope called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm with the following Borough Council Members present: Christian Fickes, Mary Bucher, Barbara Leach, Tami Halstead, and Billie Dudley.

Absent: Penny Frownfelter

OTHERS PRESENT: Newport Borough Secretary Shelly Damiano, Mayor Stephen Tice, Solicitor William Dissinger, Luke Roman, Perry County Times, Evan Wise, Frank Campbell-Newport Revitalization Preservation Society (NRPS) Dave Rossi-Attorney; Ansh Shah-Newport Convenience, Nikul Shah (Father), Bola Shah (Mother)

President Shope asked Cl'm Fickes to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Shope announced that the meeting was being recorded.

AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA: None

NEW BUSINESS

Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) owed for Non-Uniform totaling \$9,415.55

MOTION: Cl'm Halstead moved, seconded by Cl'm Dudley to Approve the Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) owed to Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System (PMRS) for Non-Uniform in the amount of \$9,415.55.
Motion carried.

Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) owed for Uniform Police totaling \$0

MOTION: Cl'm Halstead moved, seconded by Cl'm Fickes to Approve the Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) owed to Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System (PMRS) for Uniform Police in the amount of \$0.
Motion carried.

2013 GMC Front Tire Replacement: Cl'm Fickes

Newport Auto Repair LLC, Newport, inspected the 2013 GMC on 9/6/24 and made a recommendation at that time to have the 2 front tires replaced at a cost of \$240.00 per tire, which included mounting and balancing. The truck did pass inspection.

A verbal quote of \$204.00 per tire was obtained from Deimler's Tire Service, 7297 Spring Road, Sherman's Dale, PA 17090 for a medium grade tire. Tabled. Will obtain a written quote and bring back to the October 1, 2024 Council Meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Evan Wise:

Mr. Wise made a disclaimer that he was not affiliated with any borough organization as he addressed the safety concerns of the children leaving the elementary school, crossing the roadway, and himself witnessing many near misses caused by vehicles not obeying the posted stop signs. The new gym on Fickes Lane is creating more foot traffic on Brick Avenue after school. The State Police have been asked to check the area between 3 pm – 4:30 pm. Mr. Wise continued his concern for safety of the children with, in his words, the park and streets being riddled with drugs. He suggested the borough add a stop sign on the left side of the road to increase safety.

Cl'm Fickes will speak to the streets crew about supplies that would help with the situation.

PUBLIC COMMENT (continued): Frank Campbell (NRPS):

The collaborative effort between the Perry County Chamber of Commerce and the Perry County Economic Development Authority (PCEDA) was instrumental in spearheading the first Discover Perry County Pennsylvania 2024 brochure that grew to 80 pages. Great job! Thank you to Newport Borough for participating in this endeavor with Newport Revitalization Preservation Society (NRPS).

2025 Budget Worksheet Introduction: Cl'm Halstead

The 2025 Budget Worksheets were included in the information packet for all council members. The updated worksheet included Cl'm Halstead's and Secretary Damiano's best estimates on Income for 2025.

HEARING 7:15 pm: Request for transfer of Liquor License from Newport Tavern LLC, 726 North 4th Street, Newport , PA, Oliver Twp., Perry County to Newport Convenience, 29 N. 2nd Street, Newport Borough, Perry County

Attorney Dave Rossi swore in Ansh Shah to give testimony on his background and aspirations for his new business endeavor, Newport Convenience, requesting the transfer of the liquor license from Newport Tavern, LLC, Oliver Twp., Perry County to 29 N. 2nd Street, Newport Borough, Perry County.

Ansh Shah: Background

- 21 years old, Senior at Penn State, active in Philanthropy Committee, lives in Cumberland County
- Parents, Nikul and Bola Shah, have had businesses in Shermans Dale, Loysville, and Tower City.
- Parents gave back to the communities where their businesses were, and the son would like to do the same.
- Father has been in business for 30 years: Never had a citation, trained employees for no underage access.
- Son would like to start his own business: Newport Convenience

Ansh Shah: Newport Convenience, 29 N. 2nd Street, Newport Borough

- Convenience store, small deli, seating for 32
- Community gathering place
- Convenience items in front; Deli and alcohol in back
- Convenience section will carry cigarettes and tobacco products, but no smoking is permitted on premises
- Deli would prepare food on-site; Patrons sit where they would like; No table service
- 8 – 10 tables, some high-top tables to give allusion of roominess; Floor plan of seating not available at this time
- Not a bar: no tap beer; no hard liquor; Note that an R-license designates Restaurant, which these alcohol items would be allowed; R-license requires seating for 30
- Standard and craft beers would be available for eat-in or package goods to go
- Hiring 15-20 employees
- Hours: 9 am – 8 pm, 7 days a week
- Possible outdoor seating in the future
- \$38,000 has been invested in the property for a building he does not own

Council Comments

- Some did not want to see just another bar in Newport
- Some liked the idea of an eatery offering craft brews
- Some remember when there were 3 bars in Newport and not having a problem in the past
- Once a liquor transfer is within Newport Borough, the liquor license can transfer within the borough without borough council having any say, but all the Liquor Control Board (LCB) rules must be followed
- A vacant store front will now be occupied
- More thriving businesses might give a reason for buying a home in Newport

HEARING Closed at 7:35 pm.

Application for Approval: Solicitor Dissinger

Solicitor Dissinger asked if a Decision would be made tonight on hearing the testimony that the transfer of a Restaurant Liquor License into the Newport Borough by Newport Convenience, Ansh Shah, would not adversely affect the welfare, health, peace, and morals of the municipality or its residents.

ROLL CALL VOTE to Accept or Reject the Liquor License Transfer

Yeas: Christian Fickes, Mary Bucher, Billie Dudley, Barbara Leach

Nays: Greg Shope, Tami Halstead

Yeas = 4; Nays = 2; Motion Carried

RESOLUTION NO. 15-24 Transfer of Liquor License from Newport Tavern, LLC, 726 North 4th Street, Newport, PA, Oliver Twp., Perry County to Newport Convenience, 29 North Second Street, Newport, PA, Perry County

MOTION: Cl'm Dudley moved, seconded by Cl'm Fickes to Approve Resolution No. 15-24 Transfer of Liquor License from Newport Tavern, LLC, Oliver Twp., Perry County to Newport Convenience, Ansh Shah, 29 North Second Street, Newport, PA, Perry County.

Yeas: Cl'm Dudley, Cl'm Fickes, Cl'm Shope, Cl'm Bucher, Barbara Leach

Neas: Cl'm Halstead

Yeas = 5; Neas = 1; Motion carried.

2025 Budget Worksheet

Council discussed the 2025 Budget, and decided to take home the worksheet to review and will review together at the next Budget Meeting on Tuesday, October 15, 2024 at 7 pm.

FT CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER POSITION

President Shope and Vice President Fickes will review the 6 candidates resumes. The position will be kept open for more possible candidates until the next council meeting on October 1, 2024. Council does not want to rush the process.

Next Meeting Date: Tuesday, October 1, 2024, at 7 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT: Cl'm Halstead moved, seconded by Cl'm Fickes to adjourn at 7:58 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shelly Damiano,
Secretary/Treasurer