Easton, Pennsylvania  January 4, 2016

A regular meeting of the Northampton County Council was held on the above date with the following present: Margaret L. Ferraro, President; Glenn A. Geissinger, Vice-President Mathew M. Benol; John Cusick; Matthew H. Dietz; Kenneth M. Kraft; Hayden Phillips; Seth Vaughn; Robert F. Werner; Linda M. Zembo, Clerk to Council, and Philip D. Lauer, Solicitor to Council.

Prayer

Mrs. Ferraro led County Council in a moment of silence.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mrs. Ferraro led County Council in the pledge of allegiance.

Courtesy of the Floor

As no one signed in, there was no Courtesy of the Floor.

Selection of County Council Officers:

Mrs. Ferraro stated in accordance with Northampton County Home Rule Charter Section 206. Organization, (a) Organization Meeting. The County Council shall hold a meeting on the first Monday of January of each year, at which it shall elect one of its members as President and another member as Vice President.

Mrs. Ferraro advised the first item of business was to select the President of County Council.

A.  President of County Council

Mrs. Ferraro asked if there were any nominations for the office of President of County Council.

Mr. Geissinger nominated Mrs. Ferraro.

Mr. Benol nominated Mr. Cusick.
As there were no further nominations, Mrs. Ferraro closed the nominations and called for the vote.

The voting began with Mr. Cusick, who voted for himself, but Mrs. Ferraro pointed out he could not vote for himself because he would receive a monetary gain of $500.

Mr. Lauer stated it was previously concluded that with respect to voting for office, individuals could vote for themselves, but the difference here was that there would be a financial benefit. He further stated the Home Rule Charter indicated that no elected officials shall participate in the consideration or approval of any County business in which he had a direct or indirect financial interest. Therefore, since there would be a financial gain he would conclude that both Mrs. Ferraro and Mr. Cusick would be unable to vote.

Mrs. Ferraro advised they could if they rescinded the $500 additional benefit.

Mr. Werner advised if a member of County Council decided to vote on a matter of which they had a direct financial interest, which in this case would be County Council President, they could be in violation of the State Ethic Act. He further advised if Mr. Cusick would sign a waiver stating he refused to take the $500 then it would make it clear.

Mr. Cusick stated he would gladly do so and Mrs. Ferraro also agreed.


Mr. Cusick was elected President by a vote of 5-3 with 1 abstention.

Mrs. Ferraro advised she appreciated the years of service in the leadership role as President and Vice President. She further advised she had lost a few elections in her time, but some of the best things in her life had come after her losses.
Mr. Cusick thanked Mrs. Ferraro for her last few years of leadership and stated he looked forward to working with her and the other members of the County Council. He further stated he had the opportunity to meet with the members of the Administration and had good conversations about the direction of the County.

Mr. Cusick advised the County Council President set the committees so he would like the members to send him an e-mail indicating what committees they would like to participate in as soon as possible. He further advised he had no intention of changing the committee meeting schedule that had previously been established.

B. **Vice-President of County Council**

Mr. Cusick asked if there were any nominations for the office of Vice President.

Mr. Kraft nominated Mr. Werner.

Mr. Phillips nominated Mr. Vaughn.

Mr. Vaughn nominated Mr. Geissinger.

As there were no further nominations, Mr. Cusick closed the nomination and called for the vote.

Mr. Geissinger stated he appreciated the nomination and the opportunity to serve at the side of Mrs. Ferraro as Vice President for the past few years, but wanted to allow someone else to serve at Mr. Cusick's side so he was withdrawing his nomination.

Mr. Cusick accepted Mr. Geissinger's withdrawal, asked for any other nominations and then called for the vote.

The vote: Dietz, "Vaughn"; Ferraro, "Werner"; Geissinger, "Vaughn"; Phillips, "Vaughn"; Vaughn, "Vaughn"; Werner, "abstain"; Benol, "Vaughn"; Cusick, "Vaughn"; and Kraft, "Werner".

Mr. Vaughn was elected Vice President by a vote of 6-2 with 1 abstention.
Adjournment

Mr. Vaughn made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Mr. Benol seconded the motion.

The motion to adjourn passed unanimously by acclamation.

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Linda M. Zembo
Clerk to Council