

**Towanda Borough
Regular Council Meeting Minutes
February 6, 2017**

The FEBRUARY 2017 regular meeting of the Towanda Borough Council was held on Monday, February 6, 2017, at the Municipal Building. Council President Paul Sweitzer called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM, with a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Mr. Klinger, Mr. Kovalcin, Mrs. Lacek, Mr. Long, Mrs. Miller, Mr. Sweitzer and Mr. Taylor

ABSENT: Mr. Christini, Mr. Roof

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MONTH'S AND YEAR-END MINUTES:

Motion to approve the January 3, 2017, regular meeting minutes was made by Mr. Long and seconded by Mr. Klinger. **Motion passed.** (Note: A small correction on pg. 2 "they" corrected to read "the" does not affect meaning.)

FIRE CHIEF REPORT:

Chief Roof was absent and Mr. Klinger reported that the fire company had their first dinner last month and it went well. He stated that they are planning on continuing with the dinners this month (third Thursday of the month).

There were 8 total incidences in January with one being in Towanda township.

FIRE BOARD REPORT:

Mr. Klinger attended the meeting but stated there is nothing new to report this month.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Miller stated that Joe DuPont, Towanda business owner contacted him concerning placing a historical sign outside 15 York Avenue honoring Pat Ballard. Mr. Ballard is said to have stayed at this address while taking care of his mother, and he wrote the 1954 popular song, "Mr. Sandman". Mayor Miller was told that this was confirmed by the historical society. **Council was asked to investigate whether this is authentic or not, and a motion was made by Mr. Klinger and seconded by Mr. Kovalcin to do so. Motion passed.**

Mr. DuPont also asked Mayor Miller about adding Towanda, Kansas, and the number of miles to there on a roadside sign that is near Wyalusing. The sign currently lists the number of miles to Towanda, Pennsylvania. No further action on this subject was taken, although it was noted that PennDot is the responsible party for the sign.

POLICE CHIEF REPORT:

Chief Epler stated that after meeting with the officers in the police department and getting the addendum to the police contract, they switched over to working 10 hour days beginning on Jan 14th. This change drops coverage hours by the least amount as possible. Prior coverage was 32 hours a day and the new coverage is 30 hours a day, and neither includes the SRO (School Resource Officer). So far, this is working well.

The janitor coverage was terminated on Jan. 25th to save \$4,500 dollars in the budget so the Department can use that money for part-time hours. As a result, the officers have picked up the cleaning duties.

Both speed timing devices were inoperable during the month, accounting for no speed citations. They have since been repaired.

Also, the Chief shared the area was attacked by a telephone scammer claiming to be the electric company. We heard of reports from New Albany to Sayre, and Towanda was not exempt. He stated that the department handled about 20 complaints in one day of mostly businesses being told that they had an overdue bill, and their power was going to be shutoff in 45 minutes if not paid. The police department warned citizens via Facebook to be aware, and had a very good response on that resource.

January – 2017

304	COMPLAINTS RECEIVED	0	JUVENILE PETITIONS
21	TRAFFIC CITATIONS	0	K-9 SERVICE (BORO)
10	NON-TRAFFIC CITATIONS	9	THEFT REPORTS
1	DUI ARRESTS	5	ANIMAL COMPLAINTS
51	DISTURBANCE CALLS	7	VEHICLE DOORS OPENED
4	VEHICLE ACCIDENTS	7	WARNINGS ISSUED
2	OUT OF TOWN ASSISTS	0	K-9 SERVICES
3	CRIMINAL ARRESTS		

POLICE COMMITTEE REPORT:

Mrs. Miller stated there is nothing to report.

CODE ENFORCEMENT / PUBLIC WORKS REPORT:

Mr. Haight reviewed the report for January 2017.

Included in his report: There were 17 permits issued in January 2017, with a work value of \$33,777. The value of the work for permits issued in the borough year-to-date is the same. Permit fees paid in January 2017 is \$1,344. There were \$602 for Towanda Borough in Code Inspections charges in January, and the UCC reportable permits amount year-to-date is \$16.

Mr. Haight also mentioned the zoning board hearing fees for “conditional use” / “special exception” be updated. The current deposit is \$500 special exception & additional costs. Mr. Haight feels we need to raise the deposit to cover the additional costs that might be incurred. If these costs do not exceed the amount of deposit, the balance of the deposit shall be refunded to the applicant. He stated that he will put something in writing for next month’s meeting.

PARKING REPORT: January 2017

- # Green Tickets Issued: 69
- # Yellow Tickets Issued: 10

- # Green Tickets Forgiven 1
- # Yellow Tickets Forgiven 0

- # Green Tickets Excused 5
- # Yellow Tickets Forgiven 1

# Paid W/N 48 Hrs @ ½ Cost	31
\$ Amount Paid w/n 48 Hrs	\$310
# Paid After 48 Hrs	5
\$ Amount Paid After 48 Hrs	\$100
# Tickets to Magistrate as Citations	0
Amount Received from Magistrate	\$0
Delinquent Tickets before Citations	100
	\$0
Revenue from Reserved Parking Spaces	\$2,600
Hours on Parking per Month	60
Police # of Tickets Written	0
\$ Amount Paid W/N 48 Hours	\$0
\$ Amount Paid After 48 Hours	\$0
TOTAL MONTHLY REVENUE	\$3,010

BOROUGH MANAGER’S REPORT -

Manager Lane reviewed his monthly report for Council.

1. Downtown Revitalization Project

Manager Lane stated the architect is finalizing the design of the garage, and should be finished by the end of this month. He is still planning on advertising for bids in March. Also, he stated the Flying Cow is very close to completion, and the next step with the Flying Cow is to complete an agreement with Chris Carr and finalize the land swap. Once the land swap is complete, the old Flying cow building will be torn down.

2. Fraud Policy

Manager Lane recently emailed council a draft Fraud Policy, which our auditor recommends Council adopt. This policy will be incorporated into the “Towanda Administrative Policy’s” (TAP). He stated, as long as there are no further comments, he would like council make a motion to have the Fraud Policy be included into the Towanda Administrative Policy as TAP # 38. Prior to this meeting, the Finance and Administration Committee reviewed the Policy.

Resolution 2017-3 - Towanda Borough & TMA Fraud Policy:

Motion to approve this resolution was made by Mrs. Lacek and seconded by Mr. Klinger.

The vote was as follows:

Aye/Yes: Mr. Klinger, Mr. Kovalcin, Mrs. Lacek, Mr. Long, Mrs. Miller, Mr. Sweitzer and Mr. Taylor

Nay/No: None.

Absent: Mr. Christini, Mr. Roof

Resolution No. 2017-3 carried.

3. 2017 Paving

If council agrees, Manager Lane would like to advertise for bids next month to pave State Street from Fourth Street to Convent Street and Pine Street from Western Ave. to Third. If bids come in close to the estimate, paving will continue on Pine Street to Main Street.

4. Abandoned Vehicles

Manager Lane updated Chapter 298 of the Towanda Borough code pertaining to abandoned vehicles. He noted, 1974 was the last time the chapter was updated. The updates he made were as follows: Identifying the towing garage (Jack Williams Garage), setting the storage fees per the garage owner Bobby Williams, and changing the bond requirement to carrying insurance. **He respectfully asked council to instruct the Borough Solicitor to begin the process of amending the Abandoned Vehicle ordinance. A motion was made by Mrs. Lacek and seconded by Mr. Klinger to have Solicitor Smith update Chapter 298 of the Borough Code. Motion passed.**

In continuing discussion about abandoned vehicles, Manager Lane stated that he was told the current ordinance is 2 years out of date. It needs to be amended and updated. It was suggested to have a committee work on this to redefine it so it can be enforced. This should be discussed by the code enforcement committee, the police, the solicitor, and the Planning Commission per Mr. Haight.

5. Street Light LED Conversation

Conversion of the first 42 lights have started. They are beginning mainly in the First Ward. Penelec also installed a decorative style LED light on South Main Street in front of the old State Farm building. This light was installed as a sample in order show what they look like before the rest of the Victorian lights are converted on Main Street.

MISCELLANEOUS – Concerning the lights on the flags at Veterans Memorial Park, the solar lights are not powerful enough to illuminate the flags, therefore, they took the American flag down for now, and are investigating a better way to illuminate the flags.

Also, Manager Lane stated that he has a call into the company that checks and fixes the red lights in the borough. The borough owns the red light but it is permitted by PennDot. Therefore, any changes to be made to the lights has to be permitted/applied for through PennDot (they make the decision on timing changes). The timing that is currently on the lights would need a traffic study to be performed at our expense in order to apply for the permit to change them.

Manager Lane also stated that the electric generation supplier contracts are up this year. He would like to give it to a broker and have the broker find a supplier for the borough. The broker only gets paid if they sell us the product.

President Sweitzer opened discussion about the Ben Franklin store that is rumored to be closing. He stated that the owner should be contacted as to the status of this store. In the past, the borough has tried to work with the store manager by changing Park Street to one-way which created more parking. However, that resulted in more parking for courthouse visitors. When the Ben Franklin store opens, there are no convenient places for customers to park. Also, there has not been a press release stating the store is closing. Manager Lane or President Sweitzer will contact the owner tomorrow to get some answers.

RE: BURNING IN BOROUGH ISSUE – President Sweitzer brought about discussion of the outdoor burning issue. After much discussion, it was decided to have the borough Solicitor along with Councilman Mr. Long draft changes to the current ordinance to ban burning in the borough. The only excep-

tions may be setting a fire approved by DEP for the purpose of: instructing personnel in firefighting; and (DEP approved) to prevent and control disease or pests. In addition, other exceptions may be: for cooking food (grilling, broiling and barbecuing) and fires set solely for recreational or ceremonial purposes within a certain diameter and height. As far as violations and penalties, council was in agreement to raise the first violation conviction to \$100, and the costs of prosecution; and for each subsequent violation, upon conviction, the fine can go up to \$1,000, and the costs of prosecution. **A motion was made by Mr. Taylor and seconded by Mrs. Lacek to have Solicitor Smith change and advertise Chapter 298 of the Borough Code. Motion passed.**

BOROUGH SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

Solicitor Smith stated that he drafted the changes to the Abandoned Vehicle section of Code Chapter 298. He will bring that to council in March.

BOROUGH SECRETARY REPORT:

Secretary Kulick presented **Resolution 2017- 4** to council. This resolution is to appoint the Borough Secretary as liaison between Towanda Borough and Berkheimer of Bangor, PA, for the purpose of sharing confidential tax information with the district for official purposes.

Motion to approve the resolution was made by Mrs. Lacek and seconded by Mr. Kovalcin. The vote was as follows:

Aye/Yes: Mr. Klinger, Mr. Kovalcin, Mrs. Lacek, Mr. Long, Mrs. Miller, Mr. Sweitzer and Mr. Taylor

Nay/No: None.

Absent: Mr. Christini & Mr. Roof

Resolution No. 2017-4 carried.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT – Manager Lane stated the police pension fund is performing well.

UNION SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT – Nothing to report this month.

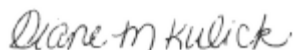
FINANCIAL REPORT – Motion was made by Mr. Klinger and seconded by Mr. Kovalcin to pay the bills. Motion passed.

PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT – Nothing to report.

RECREATION REPORT – Nothing to report.

TMA/WMA/CBPA REPORTS – Included in packets.

ADJOURNMENT - Motion to adjourn was made by Mrs. Lacek and seconded by Mr. Kovalcin. Meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.



Borough Secretary
Towanda Borough Secretary