

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

The **NOVEMBER 2017**, regular meeting of the Towanda Borough Council was held on Monday, November 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. Roof, Mr. Sweitzer, and Mr. Taylor

ABSENT: Mr. Christini

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD: Mr. Robert Archer, 4 North Street joined in the meeting after the Fire Board report. He voiced his displeasure of "Trick or Treat" night, and stated that he suspects that he had kids at his door that were from other local towns around us. Several council members stated that most of the children that came to their doors were very polite, and a few of the members stated that they normally have upwards of 200 children who visit their homes for Trick or Treat night. Mr. Long moved that the Recreation Committee work on making this night more manageable in 2018. Councilman Kovalcin, who is also on the Recreation Committee stated they will look into this issue for next year and give a report.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MONTH'S MINUTES:

The minutes of the October meeting were approved with a motion made by Mr. Taylor and seconded by Mrs. Lacek. Motion passed. Note: On page 4, under Poplar Street Turnback" heading – changed the sentence to say "26 foot deep pipe running underneath the street."

FIRE CHIEF REPORT:

Chief Roof stated that the fire company had a dozen or so incident calls in October. Equipment is in working order and they had some inspections. Also, he stated that the department had some more training this past month, and the Halloween Parade this year went well.

FIRE BOARD REPORT:

Mr. Klinger attended the meeting and had nothing to bring forward to council. He thanked the fire company and fire police members for helping out at the parade and during Trick or Treat.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Miller stated that he was a judge at the Halloween Parade and at the YMCA costume party. He also thanked borough council for allowing the (Towanda High School) THS Homecoming bonfire, and the THS student council, who's idea it was the bring back the bonfire celebration festivity during the week of Homecoming (there were no negative issues during the bonfire).

POLICE CHIEF REPORT:

Chief Epler stated on his report the following:

Sergeant Lantz lectured at the " Red Ribbon Rally" to students at the Towanda High School about the affects of certain drugs on the body.

Towanda Police participated in the Halloween Parade.

Trick or Treat night was patrolled with the duty Officer and 1 part time Officer. No major incidences were reported.

The parking garage construction has taken more of our parking than initially anticipated. We have changed our parking situation around the station several times, more changes may be needed. Two to three patrol vehicles are now parked out in front of the station, in that parking is so tight out back. With that, the 2006 Crown Victoria was hit while parked on the 25th.

There have been 30 to 40 reported thefts of items inside cars (all of them were left unlocked).

Chief Epler also addressed council about extending or rolling over the balance of the officer's (including himself) vacation time this year because they don't have the extra help to be able to use the required amount for the year.

At 7:20 PM, President Sweitzer called for an executive session to discuss vacation hours for rollover. At 7:35 PM, the executive session ended, and regular meeting continued.

A motion was made by Mr. Taylor to approve rollover of the police officer's hours (including Chief Epler's). This was seconded by Mr. Kovalcin. Motion passed.

OCTOBER 2017 – Monthly Report

363	COMPLAINTS RECEIVED	1	JUVENILE PETITIONS
25	TRAFFIC CITATIONS	1	K-9 SERVICE (BORO)
19	NON-TRAFFIC CITATIONS	15	THEFT REPORTS
1	DUI ARRESTS	6	ANIMAL COMPLAINTS
66	DISTURBANCE CALLS	6	VEHICLE DOORS OPENED
5	VEHICLE ACCIDENTS	9	WARNINGS ISSUED
2	OUT OF TOWN ASSISTS	0	K-9 SERVICES
10	CRIMINAL ARRESTS		

POLICE COMMITTEE REPORT:

This is covered in this meeting.

CODE ENFORCEMENT / PUBLIC WORKS REPORT:

Mr. Haight reviewed the report for October 2017.

There were 21 permits issued in October – 165 year-to-date.

Permit fees paid in October were \$1,589.

Code Inspections charges were \$450 for October -- \$3,033.58 year-to-date.

The value of permit issued work in the borough year-to-date is \$1,426,055.

Mr. Haight reviewed the compliance actions, permits issued and rental inspections.

Council discussed the need to address the payment schedule of fines for code violations in the borough. This will be discussed further at a later date with Solicitor Smith.

PARKING REPORT: October 2017

# Green Tickets Issued:	14
# Yellow Tickets Issued:	2
# Green Tickets Forgiven	3
# Yellow Tickets Forgiven	0

# Green Tickets Excused	0
# Yellow Tickets Forgiven	0
# Paid W/N 48 Hrs @ ½ Cost	6
\$ Amount Paid w/n 48 Hrs	\$60
# Paid After 48 Hrs	0
\$ Amount Paid After 48 Hrs	\$0
# Tickets to Magistrate as Citations	0
Amount Received from Magistrate	\$0
Delinquent Tickets before	12
Citations - \$	\$160
Revenue from Reserved Parking Spaces	\$2,890
Hours on Parking per Month	65
Police # of Tickets Written	1
\$ Amount Paid W/N 48 Hours	\$0
\$ Amount Paid After 48 Hours	\$0
TOTAL MONTHLY REVENUE	\$3,110

BOROUGH MANAGER’S REPORT:

Manager Lane also reported on the following:

1. Downtown Revitalization Project-

Construction continues on the parking garage. The “GeoPiers” have been installed and excavation of the footers is commencing.

Navarro and Wright have been retained to conduct soil compaction and concrete testing as well as general site inspection.

Ben Denault conducted an audit of the DCED Keystone Communities Grant we used to help pay for “soft cost” of the Towanda Downtown Revitalization Project. There were no findings in the audit report and he submitted the report to DCED.

Kaye Goodman with HRG, (Herbert, Rowland & Grubic, Inc - Contractor for Office of the Budget) will be here on Tuesday November 7th to represent the Office of the Budget for a site visit.

2. College Run –

Manager Lane submitted all the required paperwork to PEMA for closeout. We will receive our last reimbursement once FEMA has audited the closeout documents.

Lochen and Chase are conducting a single audit for 2016, and will plan to do 2017 as well. FEMA has agreed to pay for both audits.

3. Police Union Negotiations –

Manager Lane stated he has reviewed the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Towanda Police Department and Teamsters Local Union No. 529, and recommended council approve the contract along with the Health and Hospital Agreement which will begin January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2020. A motion was made by Mr. Klinger and seconded by Mrs. Miller to approve the new contract. Motion passed.

One change to the contract is any new officer hired after January 1 2018, will pay 20% of the Health Insurance premium.

The GWI is 2.25% each year

The Health insurance plan was converted to a “HRA” plan, which reduces the cost by 10%.

4. Poplar Street Turnback –

Municipal Services continues to work out the financial details within the PennDOT organization. They still don't know what they are going to do about the 26 foot deep pipe on Third Street. Manager Lane is still patiently waiting for more information.

5. Trail Study-

The first meeting for the committee was held on October 26th. Manager Lane was not able to attend. The committee discussed the goals of the trail and general layout. There were a wide variety of ideas passed around the table. Towanda borough resident representative, Mike Guerin was present at the meeting.

6. 2018 Budget –

Manager Lane has a rough draft of the budget complete. He scheduled a Budget Work session for the 16th of November at 7 PM. This will be advertised.

7. CDBG -

Jim Haight presented our applications to the County Commissioners in Manager Lane's stead. We are asking for funds to tear down the buildings on Mason Alley and install sidewalk ramps on Park Street & Bill Sick Lane. He stated we will wait to hear from the county.

8. Tourism Room Tax Grant –

Manager Lane submitted the application for “Riverfest” to the Bradford County Tourism Agency for \$5,000, to help with advertising and entertainment. He expects to hear of awards in December.

9. Police Pension Funding Strategy-

On October 25th the Police Pension committee met with John Vargo from Conrad Siegel to discuss a funding strategy for the police pension. The committee, with the actuary's recommendation, made the preliminary decision to make changes to the actuarial assumptions from 6% to 7% for the January 1, 2017, actuarial valuation report (done each odd-numbered year). The strategy is to contribute the MMO plus an additional \$45,000 annually to the plan for the years 2019 and 2020. The additional contribution will be reevaluated again upon completion of the 2019 actuarial report. Manager Lane asked for council's approval to the change. A motion was made by Mr. Kovalcin and seconded by Mr. Klinger to approve the change to the actuarial assumption from 6% to 7% in the Police Pension Plan. Motion passed.

10. Route 6 Towanda River Bridge –

PennDOT plans to do work on the river bridge starting approximately April 2018, and will conceivably last until October 2018. They will be working on the sub structure and piers (concrete jacketing) underneath the bridge. They will be replacing the light poles, installing LED lights, also repairing deck concrete, expansion joints and will finish with an epoxy overlay.

11. Street Lights –

Manager Lane stated there are 38 more street lights to be changed over to LED. After that, they will work on the decorative lights.

12. Traffic Lights –

Mr. Klinger inquired about the traffic light at Main Street (at the bridge crossing and intersecting Merrill Parkway). He has heard comments and questions about "who" is the owner of the traffic lights. Manager Lane stated that the borough is the owner of the light and the borough has a permit with PennDOT to operate it with timing that was set by PennDOT who did traffic study at the time the borough applied for the Arle Grant. In essence, PennDOT controls the light.

13. Yearly Insurance Policy –

Manager Lane stated that we are now seeking bids for the yearly insurance policies and/or renewals. When these numbers come in, the admin/finance committee will make a decision on the servicer and coverage.

BOROUGH SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

Solicitor Smith stated that he would be writing a letter that Manager Lane needs to apply for the backhoe grant application with the USDA. He also stated that the garage project may be backing up against some other properties that were impinging on them. Manager Lane stated that we are ok now, as they tightened up the measurements.

Solicitor Smith stated that last month he was asked to amend the zoning code provisions on Oil and Gas Operations (Chapter 325, Article XIII), and the Planning Commission is currently considering another amendment. He stated he would like to do the updating of these ordinances all at once to make it more cost efficient.

Solicitor Smith also asked for an executive session to discuss potential litigation.

Therefore, at 8:08 PM, President Sweitzer called for an executive session.

At 8:24 PM, the executive session ended, and regular meeting continued.

BOROUGH SECRETARY REPORT:

Secretary Kulick informed Council about the K9 run Officer Hennessy is planning to have on November 18th.

Also, the Central Bradford Chamber of Commerce is having a 5K Run/Walk from 11 AM to 1 PM (on the Merrill Parkway), and sponsoring the Towanda Christmas Parade (on Main Street) at 4 PM on December 2nd.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT – Police Pension statement in packet.

UNION SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT – Covered earlier in the meeting.

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

PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT –

Mr. Long stated the commission met but had **no quorum** again.

The information on what was discussed at the meeting is in the form of minutes included in this package, although not official.

ZONING – Nothing new.

RECREATION REPORT – Mr. Kovalcin stated the committee was very pleased with the turnout at Riverfront Park after the parade. The committee had a bonfire and served hot chocolate and made smores for the children who attended.

TMA – The minutes included in packet.

WTMA – The minutes included in packet.

CBPA REPORTS – The minutes included in packet.

MISCELLANEOUS – Nothing new.

ADJOURNMENT - Motion to adjourn was made by Mrs. Lacek and seconded by Mrs. Miller. Meeting adjourned at 8:32 PM.


Towanda Borough Secretary