

## **Towanda Borough Regular Council Meeting Minutes August 6, 2018**

The **AUGUST 2018**, regular meeting of the Towanda Borough Council was held on Monday, August 6, 2018, 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. Christini, Mr. Klinger, Mr. Kovalcin, Mr. Long, Mrs. Miller, President Sweitzer and Mr. Taylor

**ABSENT:** Mrs. Lacek and Mr. Roof

**OTHERS:** Mr. & Mrs. Nate Jennings, Officer John Hennessy, and 2 unknown persons

**CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:** Mr. Nate Jennings of 18 Packer Avenue stated that he is concerned with the complaints he's heard of about his property and his pets. Mr. Haight stated Mr. Jennings' address is not zoned for farm animals to which Mr. Jennings stated, "they are pets". Also, Mr. Jennings stated that there is not an ordinance that says he is doing anything wrong, and they are his pets. Mr. Haight stated that they create a noise nuisance according to complaints the borough has received from some neighbors, and there is concern about odors, rodents, waste and overall appearance of the surroundings. Mr. Sluyter has talked to Mr. Jennings about this matter, and one of the complaints was about a rooster on the property that was crowing at different times. Mr. Jennings currently has the following: 15 chickens, 4 dogs, 3 cats, 1 peacock, 2 ducks and 1 turtle. Mr. Haight stated that Mr. Sluyter will meet with Mr. Jennings at his (Mr. Jennings') convenience.

Mr. Richard K. Cook II, who resides at 308 Bridge Street, Towanda, sent a letter to the borough asking for 1 handicap parking spot in front of his home. Mr. Cook has a physically challenging, degenerative, walking disability, and his wife also has walking limitations. They both have permits for handicap vehicle placards, and they have 2 vehicles. A motion was made by Mr. Klinger and seconded by Mr. Kovalcin to approve the request to place 1 handicap parking sign on Bridge Street in front of Mr. Cook's home. Motion passed.

**APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MONTH'S MINUTES:**

***Motion to approve the July 2, 2018, regular meeting minutes was made by Mr. Long and seconded by Mrs. Miller. Motion passed.***

**FIRE CHIEF REPORT:**

Chief Roof's report was provided.

**FIRE BOARD REPORT:**

Mr. Klinger had nothing new to report.

**MAYOR'S REPORT:**

Mayor Miller stated that Officer John Hennessy is present tonight and the Mayor stated that K9 Edo is 8 & 1/2 years old now, approaching retirement age. Another K9 named Hades is 14 months and is in Arkansas training. He will arrive here on August 14 to start to get to know Officer Hennessy.

When Officer Hennessy was attending a week-long training seminar at Southern Tier Police K9 Association, he talked to the members about finding a replacement for K9 Edo at some point. The association had Officer Hennessy in mind when a woman offered to donate \$5,000 toward the purchase of a new K9 dog. Even though there is a budget for the K9 program, a new dog generally costs around \$8,000. K9 Hades was originally set to go to another police department, but that deal fell through. K9 Hades will be trained in patrol work, tracking and narcotics.

The cost of \$8,000 for the K9 dog will be covered by the \$5,000 donation and \$3,000 from the police department K9 Fund. Officer Hennessy stated that the K9 fund is strong and receives individual, some industry, and school districts donations which help keep it strong.

Council thanked Officer Hennessy for his dedication to the K9 program along with the volunteering of his own time to this program, as it is very appreciated by the community.

A motion was made by Mr. Klinger and seconded by Mr. Kovalcin to purchase K9 Hades. Motion passed.

**POLICE CHIEF REPORT:**

Chief Epler reported that the 2014 SUV was damaged in a crash while stopping a DUI driver. The suspect was stopped at 10:30 am for suspicion of driving under the influence and after coming to a stop on State St. at the corner on Merrill Parkway, put it into reverse and backed into the driver's side door. This was all caught on video by a in car camera on the assisting PSP patrol car following our car.

Chief Epler attended a meeting at the Guthrie Memorial Hospital Facility about that site's security and how to better improve it.

To date Chief Epler stated that the department has received \$3,470 in donations for the 4 body cameras, 2 in car cameras (that are needed), software and video storage.

**JULY 2018 – Monthly Report**

303	COMPLAINTS RECEIVED	0	JUVENILE PETITIONS
16	TRAFFIC CITATIONS	2	K-9 SERVICE (BORO)
10	NON-TRAFFIC CITATIONS	11	THEFT REPORTS
2	DUI ARRESTS	10	ANIMAL COMPLAINTS
62	DISTURBANCE CALLS	7	VEHICLE DOORS OPENED
2	VEHICLE ACCIDENTS	6	WARNINGS ISSUED
1	OUT OF TOWN ASSISTS	2	K-9 SERVICES
7	CRIMINAL ARRESTS		

**POLICE COMMITTEE REPORT:**

Mr. Taylor stated

**CODE ENFORCEMENT / PUBLIC WORKS REPORT:**

There were 21 permits issued in July for a total YTD at 125  
Permit fees paid amount in July was \$1,327 YTD - \$8,268  
Code Inspections charges in July were \$95 YTD - \$2,600  
The value of permit issued work in the borough YTD - \$3,059,242.19

Contractor's Registrations in July amounted to \$900 YTD - \$9,600

Mr. Haight reviewed the reports and asked if anyone had any questions. Mr. Christini inquired about the condition of the sidewalks on Main Street. He took some pictures unofficially and found 11 sidewalks that were somewhere between 3/4 and 1&1/2 inches out of alignment. Mr. Christini does not believe there is anything in the code about alignment and allowable mis-alignment. He feels this should be addressed in the building season and before winter. Mr. Christini is open to what council may want to do.

Mr. Haight stated that they did a survey in the 1980's and Main Street was one of them in 1982. He canvased the town sidewalks and a lot of the downtown (Main Street) sidewalks were raised due to the "street trees" that were planted ~~with the idea that~~ some years ago. Mr. Christini stated that if possible we could look at the sidewalks, and whatever resolution can be done. He thinks as Council people we have to provide a safe environment in town and promote the business district as best we can. He also stated that when you get sidewalks that are looking pretty bad and are unsafe, that is not promoting the downtown. Mr. Christini then stated he would like to have the Main Street sidewalks looked at before winter this year.

**PARKING REPORT – Nothing for July 2018**

# Green Tickets Issued:	-	0
# Yellow Tickets Issued:	-	0
# Green Tickets Forgiven	-	0
# Yellow Tickets Forgiven	-	0
# Green Tickets Excused	-	0
# Yellow Tickets Forgiven	-	0
# Paid W/N 48 Hrs @ ½ Cost	-	0
\$ Amount Paid w/n 48 Hrs	-	\$0
# 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 Citation	-	0
\$		\$0
Revenue from Reserved Parking Spaces	-	\$0
Hours on Parking per Month	-	0
Police - # of Tickets Written	-	0
\$ Amount Paid W/N 48 Hours	-	\$0
\$ Amount Paid After 48 Hours	-	\$0
<b><u>TOTAL MONTHLY REVENUE</u></b>	-	<b><u>\$ Nothing for July 2018</u></b>

**BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT:**

1. **Downtown Revitalization Project-**  
Manager Lane stated that the RACP reimbursements are flowing regularly. 10 out of 12 requests have been reimbursed.  
Current focus is pouring the deck floors. They will begin on the third floor and work their way down. The tentative schedule of completion is the end of September. The recent weather is not helping to reach that goal.
2. **USDA GRANT/LOAN – BACKHOE –**  
Still waiting for USDA to approve closing documents provided by Solicitor Smith. Once approval arrives we will purchase backhoe
3. **PennDOT Turnback -**  
Project is still in the hopper. Waiting for PennDOT in Harrisburg to generate the paperwork on for the agreement. Manager Lane anticipates having all the documentation ready for council at the September meeting.
4. **Parkway LED conversion –**  
The bulbs were purchased and have arrived. We will begin installing them as soon as we can, but it will take some time to replace all 87. The plan is to have the job completed by the end of the year.  
Manager Lane submitted the paper work to receive a rebate for the purchase of the bulbs.
5. **Health and Pension Fund Audit -**  
The Teamsters Health and Pension Fund made a onetime offer that they would waive all the Health Fund findings and only ask for the pension funds. Manager Lane agreed and mailed a check for \$1,681, approximately half of what he originally thought.
6. **Union Negotiations – Public Works Employees**  
The first meeting is scheduled for September 10th, and the second is tentatively scheduled for September 19th. Manager Lane will notify the committee of the dates. This negotiation will include a TMA board member – A.J.Brandt.
7. **Trail Feasibility Study**  
Manager Lane met with Hunt Engineers and representatives from the involved municipalities last week. The study group which he is a part of has a general layout for the trail and has identified major obstacles both physical and environmental. Also, they are planning to hold a public meeting to acquire public input within the next few weeks.
8. **Riverfest 2018 –**  
Jim and the Riverfest Committee are working tirelessly to prepare for Riverfest. They have a great show lined up!!
9. **BCVMPA –**  
The BCVMPA has secured the funds to complete the rotunda. They secured a grant from Senator Gene Yaw's Office. The Borough will be the sponsor of the grant. Manager Lane stated he will receive a contract/agreement any day now.

**BOROUGH SOLICITOR'S REPORT:**

Solicitor Smith briefed Council on the Zoning Hearing Board meeting that was held on July 31, 2018. He stated that the owner of the property at 104 York Avenue was cited for improper use and the owner appealed. That was the purpose of the meeting. The owner entered into an agreement with Bradford County to provide transitional housing for individuals that are free on pre-trial bail or former inmates of the Bradford County Correctional Facility who were able to be released on probation, but were homeless. After three hours of testimony and statements from subpoenaed witnesses and resident neighbors, the borough's position was upheld, therefore the appeal was denied. The homeowner has 30 days to appeal with the Bradford County Court of Common Pleas, and he could go to court for a decision, and this could take a couple months. Solicitor Smith stated if there is no appeal, Mr. Haight will enforce the decision.

**BOROUGH SECRETARY REPORT:**

Secretary Kulick presented the following:

**RESOLUTION 2018-2**

Towanda Borough Impaired Driving Program Grant for Years 2019/20.

Mr. Klinger made a motion seconded by Mr. Kovalcin to adopt, by resolution.

The roll was called and recorded as follows:

AYE/YES: Mr. Christini, Mr. Klinger, Mr. Kovalcin, Mr. Long, Mrs. Miller, Mr. Sweitzer, and Mr. Taylor

NAY/NO:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT: Mrs. Lacek, Mr. Roof

Resolution 2018-2 carried unanimously by those present.

**ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT:**

Included in packet.

**UNION SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT:**

President Sweitzer

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

**PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT:**

Mr. Long stated that a motion was made to change/modify the definition of abandoned vehicles and trailers to be more inclusive for Towanda Borough Code Chapter 298-1 Vehicles Abandoned.

**Correction - Draft Minutes stated:** After discussion it was decided to have the Planning Commission address "commercial" trailers that **are not** classified as "abandoned" in residential zones.

**Minutes should have stated:** After discussion it was decided to have the Planning Commission address "commercial" trailers as "abandoned motor vehicle trailers" in residential zones.

Mr. Long agreed, and the Planning Commission will go back and address trailers and tighten up the definition of vehicles "abandoned".

**RECREATION REPORT:**

Regarding **Concerts in the Park**, Mr. Kovalcin stated that the last band played last Thursday and almost 100 people attended. Out of seven scheduled concerts, they had to cancel 1 night because of rain. Mayor Miller wanted to recognize Mr. Paul DeWitt, who donated to the Recreation program on one of the nights he attended. Paul is in his nineties and enjoys the program a lot.

**TMA/WMA/CBPA REPORTS:**

Status and latest news is included in packet. Manager Lane stated that they are working on the permit process for the new wells.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Taylor and seconded by Mr. Klinger. Meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.

*Diane M. Kulick*

Towanda Borough Secretary