

Towanda Borough Regular Council Meeting Minutes March 5, 2018

The **MARCH 2018**, regular meeting of the Towanda Borough Council was held on Monday, March 5, 2018, at the Municipal Building. Council President Paul Sweitzer called the meeting to order at 7 PM, with a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

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

ABSENT: Mr. Christini, Mrs. Lacek, Mr. Roof

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:

Mr. Charlie Kitchen, who recently bought 3 North Fourth Street, introduced himself and stated he was there to talk about the stray cats and neighborhood cats around his home. He said they spray on his property and ruined his wicker porch furniture and the smell of cat urine is in his home. He said there are cats on each side of his house and the tom cats are spraying and fighting all the time.

A lot of discussion took place concerning this common problem. Code Enforcement Officer Jim Haight said that TNR (trap-neuter-return) is the best way to curb the problem. We were approached by the "You Too Animal Rescue," at last month's Council meeting, and they would like to work on this problem in Towanda. Several reps spoke about how the program works and requested some financial support to be able to run it.

President Sweitzer stated that the cat issue has been talked about before and it is difficult to police cats like you can dogs, and there is no clear answer. He stated that council will check with the State Association of Boroughs and Solicitor Smith may be able to find a sample ordinance in the PA Borough Solicitors Association website.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MONTH'S MINUTES:

Motion to approve the February 5, 2018, Regular meeting minutes was made by Mr. Taylor and seconded by Mr. Kovalcin. Motion passed.

FIRE CHIEF REPORT:

Chief Roof was unable to attend the meeting, but Mr. Klinger stated that he read the chief's report, and it looked like they had a busy month.

FIRE BOARD REPORT:

Mr. Klinger attended the meeting but had nothing to report.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Miller stated that there is a fundraiser for youth soccer on April 14th at the Riverfront Park.

POLICE CHIEF REPORT:

Chief Epler informed Council that Governor Tom Wolf's cabinet is coming to town on Wednesday, March 7th, to talk about issues. It's called "Cabinet in Your Community" talk and will be held at the Keystone Theater.

Chief Epler reviewed the monthly report:

Officer Werner was cleared by his doctor and has returned to work as of 2/11/2018. Therefore, the Chief has resumed using our part-time officers to get vacation time used.

Officer Hennessy gave a refresher classes at the Towanda Area Schools for A.L.I.C.E training and a table top exercise. (Alert Lockdown Inform Counter Evacuate).

Officer Lake did self-defense training for the Survival Class at the High School.

The Chief said they are currently looking at cameras and video surveillance equipment for the police cars.

JANUARY 2018 – Monthly Report

323	COMPLAINTS RECEIVED	1	JUVENILE PETITIONS
23	TRAFFIC CITATIONS	0	K-9 SERVICE (BORO)
6	NON-TRAFFIC CITATIONS	8	THEFT REPORTS
1	DUI ARRESTS	8	ANIMAL COMPLAINTS
50	DISTURBANCE CALLS	12	VEHICLE DOORS OPENED
4	VEHICLE ACCIDENTS	5	WARNINGS ISSUED
1	OUT OF TOWN ASSISTS	0	K-9 SERVICES
8	CRIMINAL ARRESTS		

Chief Epler reviewed year-end report for 2017.

2017 – YEAR END

3988	COMPLAINTS RECEIVED	8	JUVENILE PETITIONS
411	TRAFFIC CITATIONS		K-9 SERVICE (BORO)
133	NON-TRAFFIC CITATIONS	82	THEFT REPORTS
28	DUI ARRESTS	63	ANIMAL COMPLAINTS
616	DISTURBANCE CALLS	77	VEHICLE DOORS OPENED
54	VEHICLE ACCIDENTS	132	WARNINGS ISSUED
	OUT OF TOWN ASSISTS		K-9 SERVICES
113	CRIMINAL ARRESTS		

POLICE COMMITTEE REPORT:

Mr. Taylor stated they want to change the meeting day and time to the same night as the monthly council meeting. This would take place at 6 PM, but he needs to talk to Mr. Roof first to see if this is ok for his schedule.

CODE ENFORCEMENT / PUBLIC WORKS REPORT:

Mr. Haight said there will be a Zoning Hearing Board meeting tomorrow night (3/6/2018 at 7 PM) for a zoning appeal on an amended application for a variance (submitted for use of a

building in a C2 district), by Charles & Karen Kovacs. They are asking for a variance to use the first floor of their building as an apartment which is in the C-2 central business district, which by ordinance §325-17c (3) allows apartments on the second and higher floors as a Special Exception. The variance was denied by the Planning Commission as it is in a C2 District, and first floor living space is not permitted.

There were 11 permits issued in February 2018
Permit fees paid in February were \$1,146.00, YTD - \$1,393.00
Code Inspections charges in February were \$700.00 and YTD - \$700.00
The value of permits issued work in the borough YTD - \$56,108.00

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

PARKING REPORT – FEBRUARY 2018

# Green Tickets Issued:	-	12
# Yellow Tickets Issued:	-	6
# Green Tickets Forgiven	-	0
# Yellow Tickets Forgiven	-	0
# Green Tickets Excused	-	0
# Yellow Tickets Forgiven	-	0
# Paid W/N 48 Hrs @ ½ Cost	-	4
\$ Amount Paid w/n 48 Hrs	-	\$40
# Paid After 48 Hrs	-	4
\$ Amount Paid After 48 Hrs	-	\$80
# Tickets to Magistrate as Citations	-	
Amount Received from Magistrate	-	0
Delinquent Tickets before Citation	-	5
\$		\$100
Revenue from Reserved Parking Spaces	-	\$3,030
Hours on Parking per Month	-	50
Police - # of Tickets Written	-	58
\$ Amount Paid W/N 48 Hours	-	\$150
\$ Amount Paid After 48 Hours	-	\$140
<u>TOTAL MONTHLY REVENUE</u>	-	<u>\$3,540</u>

BOROUGH MANAGER’S REPORT:

1. **Downtown Revitalization Project-**

Manager Lane said that progress continues slowly but surely on this \$4.2 million-dollar project. Contractor is working around the weather as best as they can. A ma-

majority of the footers and piers are in place. The wet soils are slowing down the backfill process. They plan to begin steel work by the end of March. Contractor still feels confident in August/September completion.

Getting very close to seeing Phase II reimbursements. Manager Lane has been working with the Office of the Budget on a few final compliance items.

2. College Run –

Manager Lane received a notification from PEMA that they agree with all the expenses we turned in for the College Run Project. Now waiting for FEMA to finalize/settle and close the project. He stated that we were \$772,000 under budget on this project, so the state de-obligates those funds and they will go to some other disaster elsewhere. Our final reimbursement is around \$64,000 for our administrative time and a few engineering invoices that we paid last year and in 2016.

3. USDA GRANT/LOAN – BACKHOE –

Manager Lane said we should be hearing from them by the end of this week.

4. PennDOT Projects -

- a. Towanda Bridge work is scheduled begin by the end of March - (weather permitting) all work will be underneath until May 7th, when PennDOT is allowing deck work to begin. According to PennDOT, there will always be 2-way traffic on the bridge during this project (the It will be divided in 3rds).
- b. York Avenue resurfacing will begin in June. I was advised they would be starting on the base repair and ADA sidewalk ramps first, and then the mill and overlay will follow. The project will start at Mix Ave. and end at the bridge just past Leroy's in North Towanda.

The Towanda Municipal Authority in preparation for the Rt. 6 work is replacing man-hole frame and covers within the project area. They started last summer and have a few left to finish this spring.

- c. Manager Lane said that SR 2027 (South Main Street) paving has been pushed to 2019. He added that the water line by the Elks needs to be replaced before they pave.
- d. PennDOT is presenting the turn back project (Poplar Street) to their Union. Union notification is a requirement of their internal process. Once it goes through the union, it will go to Harrisburg to draft an agreement. Then it will come back to us, and then it will go back to Harrisburg for approval.

5. Ordinance Cleanup -

Manager Lane is looking into cleaning up a few ordinances. Some we have discussed in the past. He stated that we need to remove the Oil and Gas language from our zoning ordinance, clean up the Water & Sewer ordinance that conflicts with TMA's Rules and Regulations which is handled by Towanda Water & Sewer. He said we also need to look into the Occupational tax ordinance, as it looks like council

started to update it in 2012, but it was not completed. Therefore, we still need to address it.

6. 2018 Paving –

On the fence about Paving in 2018. Considering waiting until 2019 in order to have more liquid funds money for a larger paving project. I am meeting with Greg Dibble on the 13th.

7. Superintendent Position -

The search has begun. I advertised the position in the Daily Review as well as the Morning Times. I have received several resumes and plan to interview at the end of the month.

BOROUGH SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

At 7:48 PM, Solicitor Smith called for an Executive Session to discuss potential litigation. At 7:56 PM, the Executive Session ended.

BOROUGH SECRETARY REPORT:

Secretary Kulick had nothing to report.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT:

Included in packet.

UNION SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT:

This year the Public Works union employees new contract negotiations will be starting sometime in May. President Sweitzer also invited any members of TMA to sit in the union negotiations if they desire. President Sweitzer, Mrs. Miller and Mr. Rick Lewis are on the committee. Manager Lane will be involved, and a board member of TMA expressed an interest in sitting in also.

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

PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT:

Mr. Haight said they had a public hearing to review a variance application request for Chuck & Karen Kovacs to use the first floor of their building at 5 Poplar Street, for an apartment. This is in the C-2 Central Business District which by ordinance § 325-17C(3) allow apartments on the second and higher floors as a Special Exception. The Planning Commission members voted to deny because the building is in a C2 District, and first floor living space is not permitted. Mr. Haight stated the Zoning Hearing Board will meet on March 6 at 7 PM to review the Amended Application for the Variance and hear testimony.

He also said that District Magistrate Todd Carr will be a guest for the next Planning Commission meeting on March 20th at 7 PM. The members would like to talk to him about code fines.

RECREATION REPORT:

Mr. Kovalcin stated the committee is raising money for 3rd Ward Playground new modern equipment, the equipment there now is very old.

TMA/WMA/CBPA REPORTS:

Included in packet.

MISC: Mr. Long said that he gets questions about the parking garage, if there will be a charge to park there. Manager Lane stated there will be a charge for monthly rental of the 2nd and 3rd floor, and we might offer hourly parking on the bottom floor. We do not have a set up for 1-day parking yet. There were originally 80 spaces in the old parking lot, therefore will net 120 spaces in the new parking garage. Also, he said the County will get 20 spaces on one of the floors for 5 years (in lieu of interest on the Borough's interim loan). The charge for parking on the 1st floor and what the fines will be is to be determined by the Administration Committee.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn was made by Mrs. Miller and seconded by Mr. Klinger. Meeting adjourned at 8:13 PM.



Towanda Borough Secretary