

Towanda Borough Regular Council Meeting Minutes September 4, 2018

The **SEPTEMBER 2018**, regular meeting of the Towanda Borough Council was held on Tuesday, September 4, 2018, at the Municipal Building. Council Vice-President Christini called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM, with a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Mr. Christini, Mr. Klinger, Mr. Kovalcin, Mrs. Miller, Mr. Roof and Mr. Taylor

ABSENT: Mrs. Lacek, Mr. Long and President Sweitzer

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD: Mrs. Christine Griffiths, 200 Thomas Street and Mrs. Ashley Lent, 106 Thomas Street were present and told Council that they had recently started a "Crime Watch" in their neighborhood. They and their concerned neighbors have followed a procedure of being organized together, in communication with Borough Police, and connected with each other when they see suspicious activity in the neighborhood. They are both very concerned about safety, especially for the children in the neighborhood. Mrs. Griffiths stated she would be willing to help train citizens in the other borough wards in starting their own "Crime Watch" program.

Mrs. Griffiths also stated she has concerns about rentals in the borough being up to code and if the code needed to be tightened up. Finally, Mrs. Griffiths would like to see Memorial Park playground renovated and offered her help in obtaining grants and funding that may be available.

Mayor Miller stated that he appreciates Mrs. Griffiths concerns and efforts, and Mr. Klinger said he thinks it's a great idea to have the crime watch. Chief Epler also stated that there has been trouble with thefts for a while, and having security systems are not expensive. He suggests that a homeowner have one installed and point it toward the road.

Mr. Christini told Mrs. Griffiths to talk with the Recreation Committee about the Park updates and she could also attend the committee's next meeting on September 10th (normally on 2nd Monday of each month) at 7:00 PM. On rental inspections, Mr. Christini said that the borough code states that an apartment has to be inspected every 2 years or whenever a change in tenants occurs, unless a satisfactory inspection has been completed within the previous six months, in which case the inspection may be waived at the discretion of the Code Enforcement Official.

Mr. Christini thanked Mrs. Griffith's and Mrs. Lent for their comments.

Joyce Detharidge, 109 Spruce Street introduced herself and stated that she was present at the last meeting when Mr. & Mrs. Jennings (Packer Avenue) were present too. Mr. Jennings attended the last meeting because he received a letter from Mr. Sluyter telling him that his neighbors were complaining about his roosters crowing at different times of the day. It was at that meeting Mr. Jennings said his roosters were pets as well as other pets on his property. Tonight, Ms. Detharidge told Council that the roosters "crow" 24/7. They wake her up 5 AM every day of the week. She said she can't go outside on her deck because of hearing the crowing and barking dogs. Mr. Christini told her that he has been on Council for years and this issue has just festered up, and in the last 6 months it has turned into a strong issue with complaints from people. We can only follow the ordinance as it is written today. It appears that the borough should tighten things up as we have done with other ordinances in the past. He stated that Code Enforce-

ment could discuss it and Council could potentially send it to the Planning Commission to investigate, research and draft an ordinance that would tighten all this up. He stated that to do this is a process. Ms. Detharidge asked is this process takes a long time. Mr. Christini stated that if Council supports it, it could take up to 6 months. She said she has lived in the Borough many years and has never encountered anything like this. Mr. Christini said that Council will discuss her concern tonight and someone will get back her about it.

Mr. Christini read an email from Mr. Ben Hoffman who is suggesting that several recycle bins be put along the Merrill Parkway trail. Mr. Hoffman included a picture of a dual bin with one side garbage and the other side recyclable items. There is a concern of people contaminating the recycle side with garbage, and Chief Epler stated that Council could place a test bin across from the police station that would have the bin in view. Also, it was mentioned that you can have special tops on the recycling containers that only allow small containers to pass through. Council may act on this suggestion in the future.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MONTH'S MINUTES:

Motion to approve the August 6, 2018 regular meeting minutes with a correction was made by Mr. Taylor and seconded by Mr. Klinger. Motion passed.

FIRE CHIEF REPORT:

Chief Roof stated the department was very busy this past month assisting other counties with flooding issues. Also, he said there is a lot of training going on for the newer fire company members this past month, and the Tower has not yet been certified, but will be before the end of the year.

Also, Chief Roof stated the "hydrants" around the borough that were newly painted look good but the chains are sticking to the paint on the hydrants, therefore when they try open it, the cap (when you spin it) catches on the chain(s), and you need a wrench to get it off.

Manager Lane said that maybe the high pressure can hinder getting it open easily. Chief Roof and Manager Lane agreed that the hydrants may need lubricating, and to keep him posted in identifying the hydrants. Mr. Christini also told the Chief to let Council know if we need to do something. Chief Roof mentioned that the grease fittings in the older hydrants probably need to be replaced. Mr. Christini told the Chief to keep them posted.

FIRE BOARD REPORT:

Mr. Klinger had nothing new to report, as they did not have a meeting due to the weather extremes. He said the guys deserve a big thank you for all the time and effort they volunteered in the communities affected by the flooding.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Miller thanked Mr. Haight and the Riverfest Committee for a great event this year. He stated the fireworks were great as usual.

POLICE CHIEF REPORT:

Chief Epler stated that 2016 Ford Explorer SUV Interceptor that was damaged while apprehending a suspect is repaired and back in service. The 2014 Ford Explorer SUV Interceptor that was damaged in a DUI traffic stop is at the body shop and repairs to it are nearly completed.

To date Chief Epler stated that the department has received \$5,870 in donations for the body and in car cameras, software and video storage equipment. The department has received an additional \$2,000 from the Wysox Lodge IOOF #1152 (the Odd Fellows Lodge) and \$500 from the Towanda Gun Club.

Chief said K9 Hades arrived on August 15, 2018, and Officer Hennessy trained with him on August 16th, 20th, 21st, and 28th. Hades is doing well at training and all this training is free to us from Southern Tier K9 Association.

Officer Hennessy also did a presentation at Guthrie Memorial Hospital for “Camp Sensation” for disabled children. Officer Hennessy gave two (2) tours of the police station and also gave a K9 demonstration to YMCA Day Camp children.

Sargent Lantz did refresher training on ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter and Evacuate) at Towanda High School.

AUGUST 2018 – Monthly Report

395	COMPLAINTS RECEIVED	0	JUVENILE PETITIONS
24	TRAFFIC CITATIONS	2	K-9 SERVICE (BORO)
4	NON-TRAFFIC CITATIONS	12	THEFT REPORTS
4	DUI ARRESTS	14	ANIMAL COMPLAINTS
90	DISTURBANCE CALLS	6	VEHICLE DOORS OPENED
7	VEHICLE ACCIDENTS	4	WARNINGS ISSUED
3	OUT OF TOWN ASSISTS	3	K-9 SERVICES
9	CRIMINAL ARRESTS		

POLICE COMMITTEE REPORT:

Mr. Taylor stated they did not have a meeting this month as there was nothing to discuss.

CODE ENFORCEMENT / PUBLIC WORKS REPORT:

There were 27 permits issued in August for a total YTD at 152
 Permit fees paid amount in August were \$2,486 YTD - \$10,754
 Code Inspections charges in August were \$1,590 YTD - \$4,190
 The value of permit issued work in the borough YTD - \$3,241,407.19
 Contractor’s Registrations in August amounted to \$900 YTD - \$10,500

Mr. Haight reviewed the reports and asked if anyone had any questions.

PARKING REPORT – August 2018

YEAR-TO-DATE

# Green Tickets Issued:	-	4	41
# Yellow Tickets Issued:	-	0	9
# Green Tickets Forgiven	-	1	2
# Yellow Tickets Forgiven	-	0	1
# Green Tickets Excused	-	0	0
# Yellow Tickets Forgiven	-	0	0
# Paid W/N 48 Hrs @ ½ Cost	-	20	10
\$ Amount Paid w/n 48 Hrs	-	\$20	\$100
# Paid After 48 Hrs	-	1	14
\$ Amount Paid After 48 Hrs	-	\$20	\$280

PARKING REPORT – AUGUST 2018		YEAR-TO-DATE
# Tickets to Magistrate as Citations	- 0	0
Amount Received from Magistrate	- 0	\$0
Delinquent Tickets before Citation	- 5	28
\$	\$100	\$560
Revenue from Reserved Parking Spaces	- \$3,000	\$24,080
Hours on Parking per Month	- 40	330
Police - # of Tickets Written	- 10	147
\$ Amount Paid W/N 48 Hours	- \$30	\$390
\$ Amount Paid After 48 Hours	- \$120	\$410
TOTAL MONTHLY REVENUE	- \$3,290	YTD \$25,820

BOROUGH MANAGER’S REPORT:

1. **Downtown Revitalization Project-**
Manager Lane stated that RACP reimbursements are flowing regularly. 13 out of 14 requests have been either reimbursed or approved for reimbursement. E.R. Stuebner is making progress. The third and most of the second decks are poured. Contractor still shooting for the end of September. Manager Lane thinks the end of October is more reasonable.
2. **USDA GRANT/LOAN – BACKHOE –**
Manager Lane stated that we are closing on the grant/Loan on September 13th here in the council room with USDA. Solicitor Smith and Mr. Sweitzer (& Diane Kulick) will be attending.
3. **PennDOT Turnback -**
He stated this project is still in the hopper. Waiting for PennDOT in Harrisburg to generate agreement. Manager Lane currently does not have any new information.
4. **Parkway LED conversion –**
Manager Lane stated that they started installing led fixtures, however the flood set us back a few weeks. Manager Lane submitted all the rebate paper work but has not heard anything yet.
5. **2019 Police Pension MMO - Resolution 2018-3**
Manager Lane stated that the 2019 MMO is \$128,949. The State Aid amount expected is \$63,000. That will leave the Borough responsible for \$65,949. Manager Lane said that this was discussed last year, and we planned on putting an additional \$40,000 on top of the MMO into the plan. That would make the total 2019 Police Pension Contribution \$105,949.

RESOLUTION 2018-3

Minimum Municipal Obligation for 2019 – Police Pension Plan

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

The roll was called and recorded as follows:

AYE/YES: Mr. Christini, Mr. Klinger, Mr. Kovalcin, Mrs. Miller, Mr. Roof, and Mr. Taylor
NAY/NO:
ABSTAIN:
ABSENT: Mrs. Lacek, Mr. Long & Mr. Sweitzer

Resolution 2018-3 carried.

6. **Union Negotiations**
Manager Lane stated that the first meeting is scheduled for September 10th, and the second meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 19th. He will notify the committee of the dates.
7. **Trail Feasibility Study**
Manager Lane stated that after discussion with Kayla, the consultant we decided to hold off on the next public meeting for a couple weeks due to the flood. He stated that there still needs to be a public input meeting held. It should be scheduled in a week or two.
8. **Riverfest 2018 –**
Manager Lane stated that despite flooding and a month of bad weather, the show must go on!! Riverfest had another successful year. Jim, Stacy, Dalton, Laurie and everyone on the committee did a great job planning the event.
9. **BCVMPA –**
Manager Lane executed the grant for BCVMPA, (that was secured with the Commonwealth) on behalf of the Borough. He also made the request for funds. The park will be complete once rotunda is installed!
10. **2019 Budget –**
It's that time of year again for Manager Lane to start the preliminary work on the 2019 budget.
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BOROUGH SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

Solicitor Smith stated that the backhoe purchase is ready to be transacted. Also, he stated the Ludlow zoning board hearing was decided in our favor, however, Mr. Ludlow's attorney filed an appeal with the Bradford County Court of Common Pleas. This may take some months to be decided. Solicitor Smith filed a "notice of intervention" on behalf of the borough so he can protect the borough's position. The judge will be a Bradford county judge for this appeal.

BOROUGH SECRETARY REPORT:

Secretary Kulick established a date for TRICK-OR-TREAT with Council. It will be Wednesday, October 31, 2018, from 6 PM to 8 PM. The annual Firemen's Halloween Parade will be held on Saturday, October 27, 2018, starting at 7 PM.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT:

Included in packet.

UNION SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT:

A meeting is scheduled.

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

PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT:

Mr. Christini reviewed the Planning Report and the 3 motions for amending the below code sections that were discussed over the last several months and approved in the August Planning Commission meeting. *He asked for approval by Borough Council to accept the recommendations listed in the Planning Report minutes (in the packet) and have them reviewed and prepared by Solicitor, Fred Smith before publication notice.*

A motion was made by Mrs. Miller and seconded by Mr. Roof to approve Solicitor Smith to review the (3 motions in the packet of material, from the Planning Commission) recommendations and draft the changes for Council. Motion passed.

The following sections of Towanda Code Chapters - 305 and 298 are now more defined and inclusive for vehicle parking, abandoned vehicles, R.V.'s and motor vehicle trailers.

A. Chapter 305 Vehicles & Traffic, Article VII Commercial Vehicles in Residential Zones. §305-57 B. (2).

B. Chapter 298 Vehicles, Abandoned. §298-1 Definitions. (Change 7 days to 2 days).

C. Chapter 298 Vehicles, Abandoned. §298-1 Definitions.

Abandoned Motor Vehicles – and – Abandoned Motor Vehicle Trailers

Mr. Taylor questioned the wording “Abandoned Motor Vehicle Trailers”, if the word “abandoned” is needed. Also, Mr. Klinger would like to see the borough offer a place for people to park their R.V. or trailers. Mr. Christini stated that this has been discussed by the Planning Commission as a possibility but the Commission has not made any recommendations as of today, but they did toss the idea around.

RECREATION REPORT:

Mr. Kovalcin stated that there was a meeting held but he had no new information to report.

TMA/WMA/CBPA REPORTS:

Status and latest news are included in packet.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Klinger and seconded by Mr. Roof. Meeting adjourned at 8:43 PM.

MEETING RE-OPENED:

Mr. Christini asked to reopen the meeting at 8:44 PM before everyone left. This was to address the “Citizens to be Heard” issue about the “roosters” in the borough.

A motion was made by Mr. Taylor and seconded by Mrs. Miller to have the Planning commission address the issue of rooster/chickens and/or farm animals in the Borough. Motion passed.

Second ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn for the second time was made by Mr. Klinger and seconded by Mrs. Miller. Meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.



Towanda Borough Secretary