

Towanda Borough Regular Council Meeting Minutes June 3, 2019

The JUNE regular meeting of the Towanda Borough Council was held on Monday, June 3, 2019, at the Municipal Building. Council President 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. Lacek, Mrs. Lacek, Mr. Long, Mrs. Miller, Mr. Sweitzer

ABSENT: Mr. Roof

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:

Gary and Charlotte Parks 306 William Street, who spoke to Council last month were present to talk about the first meeting they held for Kali's Mission (TNR – Trap, Neuter or Spay, Return) program that was held on Wednesday, May 29th (Addendum attached with the report of Kali's Mission meeting). Mrs. Parks stated they had 15 people attend the meeting held last week.

The organizations present at the meeting were the Bradford County Humane Society, Animal Care Sanctuary from East Smithfield, Towanda Creek Animal Hospital and Your Too Animal Rescue. They discussed the local veterinarians' availability, and costs for each of their services, and deposit amounts for the traps that are used to capture the cats (Note: You Too Animal Rescue does not require a deposit).

In addition, they discussed a tracking system and advertising options they would use. They received information from "Alley Cat Allies" on how to start a TNR program and forms that can be used to track cats who were in the TNR program. They would use social media, the Towanda Borough website (free media) and the Daily Review (as a free news item or local brief).

Mrs. Parks stated that Tractor Supply donated three 13-pound bags of cat food to get them started. Also, she stated they will solicit for donations as the program moves along. They will apply for grants that may be out there too. One grant available through Bissel is closed now but will be available in November 2019, and they plan on applying. They need to be a 501C (non-profit), therefore they have signed up with "You Too Animal Rescue" to make that happen.

Mr. Christini thanked Mr. and Mrs. Parks for their commitment to this project. He feels that we should support them with a monetary amount on a trial basis for now to see how the program works out.

A motion to approve financial support of up to the amount of \$2,000 for costs associated with veterinarian charges in this program was made by Mr. Kovalcin and seconded by Mr. Klinger. Motion passed.

Manager Lane stated that they should submit the invoices before our month end so it can be approved for payment at Council's Finance and Administration meeting before the monthly Council meeting.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MONTH'S MINUTES:

Motion to approve the May 6, 2019, Regular meeting minutes was made by Mrs. Lacek and seconded by Mrs. Miller. Motion passed.

FIRE CHIEF REPORT:

Chief Roof was absent (doing community service at THS Graduation). The fire department's incident report for May is included in the packet.

FIRE BOARD REPORT:

Mr. Klinger did not attend the meeting.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Miller was absent (doing community service).

POLICE CHIEF REPORT:

Chief Epler stated that Officer Smith and Bellows were involved in a chase that ended on Bridge Street after the pursuit was called off. The suspect crashed after the officers ended the pursuit. The suspect was arrested the following day and is currently in the Bradford County Jail. There was no damage done to any property in the Borough.

Chief Epler stated that Officer Hennessy and K-9 Hades trained on May 14th in Vestal, NY. They also did a presentation for the 3rd and 6th grade classes. At the request of Sayre, they did a drug sniff of the senior class luggage prior to their departure for their senior trip, and did the same for Towanda senior class members' luggage.

Also, Chief Epler talked about the incident which is on-going concerning Officer Hennessy and his neighbor's dog. State Police investigated (as a third party to investigate) Officer Hennessy's shooting of this dog while off duty on May 26th after the dog attacked him and his own personal dog. The State Police investigation found Hennessy was justified in the action he took. Mr. Jim Johnson, the PA State Dog Warden had placed the dog that was shot on the "dangerous dog" list for Pennsylvania a week prior to the shooting incident. In addition, Chief Epler said in the week prior to the shooting this dog also attacked Officer Hennessy and his K-9 Officer Hades (on May 19th). Officer Hennessy has been on sick time since May 20th, and will be able to return to duty on June 3rd (today).

Chief Epler handed out his 2018 Yearly Report and reviewed it with Council.

MAY 2019 – Monthly Report

391	COMPLAINTS RECEIVED	7	JUVENILE PETITIONS
36	TRAFFIC CITATIONS	0	K-9 SERVICE (BORO)
7	NON-TRAFFIC CITATIONS	5	THEFT REPORTS
2	DUI ARRESTS	11	ANIMAL COMPLAINTS
78	DISTURBANCE CALLS	6	VEHICLE DOORS OPENED
4	VEHICLE ACCIDENTS	9	WARNINGS ISSUED

2	OUT OF TOWN ASSISTS	3	K-9 SERVICES
11	CRIMINAL ARRESTS		

POLICE COMMITTEE REPORT:

There was no meeting.

CODE ENFORCEMENT / PUBLIC WORKS REPORT:

Mr. Sluyter, Code Enforcement Officer, presented the report to Council.

MAY 2019 SUMMARY

PERMITS & CONTRACTORS	Month	YTD
Permits Issued	16	87
Permit Fees Paid	\$688	\$5,764.14
Code Inspections Fees	\$125	2,267.14
Borough Total after Code Inspections Fees	\$563	3,497.00
Permit Work Value	\$49,332.00	\$349,777.61
Contractors Registered	17	74
Contractors Registrations Amount	\$1,400.00	\$5,800

UCC Reportable Permits

	Month	YTD	Fees	Fees YTD
#1 Residential – New				
#2 Residential – Other	4	18	\$18.00	\$81.00
#3 Commercial – New				
#4 Commercial – Other	1	10	\$4.50	\$45.00
TOTALS	5	28	\$22.50	\$126.00

COMPLAINTS

	Received		Investigated		Resolved	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	Month	YTD
Single Family Non-Rental	19	83	19	92	2	19
1 & 2 Family Rentals	5	61	5	70	2	28
Commercial Rental Units	2	26	2	28	0	10
Commercial Non-Rental	2	11	2	12	0	5

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TOTALS	28	181	28	202	4	62
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Rental Dwelling Unit Inspections	Month	YTD
1st Inspection	7	32
2nd Inspection	5	16
3rd Inspection	0	8
FEES PAID	\$0	\$0

ZONING CODES

PERMITS	Number Issued		Number Denied		Fees Paid	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	Month	YTD
RESIDENTIAL	1	4		10	\$10.00	\$40.00
COMMERCIAL		0		0		
MANUFACTURING		0		0		
SIGN	2	4	1	1	\$80.00	\$160.00
OCCUPANCY		0		0		
		0		0		
OTHER		0		0		
TOTAL	3	8		11	\$10.00	\$200.00
Sign Permits Total:		2				\$160.00

ZONING APPEALS

Name	Hearing Date	Address	Type	Fees Paid
Year-to-Date				\$0.00

PERMITS ISSUED YTD

10	Building	39
4	Electrical	14
2	Plumbing	14
	Mechanical/HVAC	6
	Energy	0
	Accessibility	3
	Fire Protection	0
	Demolition	0
	Sidewalk	0
	Other Driveways	0
	Administrative	11
16	Total Month	87

Compliance Action – MAY 2019

22	New Violations
21	Unresolved
1	Resolved

Status of **PAST** Compliance Action

6	Prior Violations Unresolved – 2018 (& prior years)
11	Prior Months' Violations Unresolved - 2019 (current year)
0	Resolved

Rental Inspections Status – MAY 2019

12	Total Inspections in May 2019
6	Passed 1st Time
6	Failed 1st Time
0	Failed 2nd Time
5	Passed 2nd Time

Status of PAST Rental Inspections		Passed on 2nd or 3rd Time
8	Failed	1
2	Failed 2nd time	1
0	Failed 3rd time	

Note: 1 that failed in July 2016 is now condemned & torn down in May 2019.

PARKING REPORT – MAY 2019

YEAR-TO-DATE

# Green Tickets Issued:	-	0	21
# Yellow Tickets Issued:	-	1	14
# Green Tickets Forgiven	-	0	0
# Yellow Tickets Forgiven	-	0	0
# Green Tickets Excused	-	0	1
# Yellow Tickets Forgiven	-	0	1
# Paid W/N 48 Hrs @ ½ Cost	-	1	11
\$ Amount Paid w/n 48 Hrs	-	\$10	\$120
# Paid After 48 Hrs	-	1	8
\$ Amount Paid After 48 Hrs	-	\$10	\$150
# Tickets to Magistrate as Citations	-	0	0
Amount Received from Magistrate	-		\$0
Delinquent Tickets before Citation	-		

\$		\$80	\$540
Revenue from Reserved			
Parking Spaces	-	\$2,380	\$11,940
Hours on Parking per Month	-	30	160
Police - # of Tickets Written	-	11	78
\$ Amount Paid W/N 48 Hours	-	\$40	\$330
\$ Amount Paid After 48 Hours	-	\$100	\$520
TOTAL REVENUE		FEB TOTAL	YTD
		\$2,620	\$13,600

BOROUGH MANAGER’S REPORT:

1. Downtown Revitalization Project-

The Contractor and Architect agreed that “Substantial Completion” of the garage was reached on May 15, 2019. A punch list of items was created and provided to the contractor for completion. The anticipation is that the punch list items will be complete with 30 days.

Manager Lane stated we are still waiting for the gates and kiosk to arrive. He is working with software company setting up the “back office” software and the handheld device.

2. PennDOT Turnback SR 3020 –

Tentative Schedule for SR 3020 Project is the following:

The Field Surveying & Mapping is currently in process, and once surveys are complete, Preliminary design will continue over the next three months. Final Design and Contract documents will be done by October, November time frame.

Advertisement for bids is anticipated to be after the November council meeting. Bid opening and award is projected for January 2020 and construction would end by December 2020.

3. PennDOT Building – York Ave. (R-4 District)-

The latest information Manager Lane received was the project is still in the hopper, however it is currently sitting still.

4. Street Sweeper – USDA/CBPA –

Situation is still the same as last month. Manager Lane is waiting to hear something USDA. He was advised they passed our application to Harrisburg for approval. Once approved we will be sent a letter of conditions and funds will be obligated. As of later afternoon, on Friday, Chuck from USDA will be bringing the paperwork here on June 12th.

Dalton and Manager Lane did get a chance to demo a new Elgin Pelican (\$211,000) last Wednesday. The machine is exactly what they are looking to purchase.

5. Flooding August 2018 –

On May 22nd, Mr. Strickland and Manager Lane met with Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and showed them the damages to Cash Creek (23' deep / 350' long) caused by the August 2018 flooding disaster. It is his understanding once their report is submitted and approved, we will know whether they will provide financial assistance to make the repairs.

6. Paving 2019 –

Valley Energy will be replacing some antiquated gas main from Elm Street to Wilmot Drive. This work is scheduled to start the second week of June.

7. Ladder Truck – Fire Company –

In order to purchase a new ladder truck, Manager Lane has been researching to piece together a funding package. The cost of a ladder is more than the State Fire Commission's Volunteer Loan Assistance Program (VLAP) allowable loan amount. Manager Lane will discuss this with the USDA official when they come to the Borough on June 12th.

8. FEMA – FIRM Update –

FEMA recently announced the appeal period for Bradford County will start on June 13th and end on September 11, 2019. This is the time any property newly added into the Special Flood Hazard has to appeal the new maps.

Unlike the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) update in 2014, the Borough does not have any scientific data that will provide a valid argument regarding the State Housing Financing Agency (SHFA).

COMMERCIAL PARKING RATES

Mr. Christini stated that at the Finance & Administration (F&A) meeting on May 30th, the Committee discussed making changes to the Commercial Parking rules and establishing rates for the new Parking Garage covered under Ordinance 305 - Vehicles and Traffic, Article IX - Commercial Zone Parking Regulations, Chapters §305-68, 69, 70, 71, 74, 75, and §305-82 & 83.

After some discussion, Mr. Christini made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Lacek to set parking rates for the new Parking Garage at \$.50/hour (\$4.00/day) for the ground floor, and \$40/month for the gated floors above. Motion passed.

The existing rates for on-street downtown and 2nd Street parking spaces would remain at \$30/month and \$20/month, respectively.

An increase in parking violation fines in the Commercial District was discussed, and Mr. Christini made a motion to raise the parking violation fine from \$20 (as in §305-75) to \$30, and there will no longer be a 48-hour 1/2 reduction of the parking fine (as in §305-77). In addition, Council recommends that Solicitor Smith clean-up and advertise Article IX Commercial Zone Parking Regulations ordinance. Mrs. Lacek seconded the motion and motion passed.

The F&A Committee would also like Solicitor Smith to take a look at §305-86 amendment procedure, which says "This Article IX, in regard to the number, type and location of public parking spac-

es within the commercial parking zone, may be amended by resolution of the Council of the Borough.”

BOROUGH SOLICITOR’S REPORT:

Solicitor Smith was on vacation; however, his paralegal was present to take notes for him.

BOROUGH SECRETARY REPORT:

Secretary Kulick had a request to place a banner up across Means Street for a local company to display that they have open job positions available. Council’ consensus was no for now, as we have always placed the banners up for non-profits and local community events.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT:

Included in packet.

UNION SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT:

Nothing new to report.

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

PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT:

The next planning commission meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 18th.

In the meeting of May 21st, the Planning Commission members present appointed Jim Lacek as the new Planning Commission Chairman (behind Larry Kacyon).

RECREATION REPORT:

Mr. Kovalcin, Recreation Committee Chairman stated the Thursday’s “Concerts in the Park”, starts this month. He also stated that the handball wall at Third Ward Playground has been taken down and the 4th basketball backboard and hoop is up.

TMA/WMA/CBPA REPORTS:

The latest minutes are included in the packets.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn was made by Mrs. Lacek and seconded by Mr. Long. Meeting adjourned at 8:42 PM.



Diane M. Kulick
Towanda Borough Secretary