

Towanda Borough Regular Council Meeting Minutes February 3, 2020

The Regular Meeting of the Towanda Borough Council was held on Monday, February 3, 2020, at the Borough Municipal Building, 724 Main Street, Towanda, PA. The meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM by President Mark Christini with a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Mr. Christini, Mr. Eberlin, Mr. William Kovalcin, Mr. Lacek, Mrs. Lacek, Mr. Keith Long, Mr. Roof and Mr. Sweitzer

Absent: Mr. Klinger

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:

Kali's Mission – Gary & Charlotte Parks were present to report on the program's progress and financial state (Financial Report included). They have been working diligently doing fundraisers the last few months which have brought in \$869.00. They stated that will continue to do them. Kali's Mission organization has spayed/neutered 75 cats preventing a total of approximately 1,200 new kittens born without homes (feral) which Council members state was great. **In addition, Mrs. Parks asked for a letter of support from Council they could include when applying for funding (They are 501(c)(3) non-profit status now), and asked for Council's support again to keep the program going to reduce the feral cat problem in Towanda. A motion was made by Mr. Sweitzer and 2nd by Mr. Kovalcin to donate \$2,000 to Kali's Mission. Motion passed unanimously.**

Mrs. Chris Griffiths of 200 Thomas Street (First Ward), visited Council tonight, and at the September 4, 2018 meeting to discuss support for a neighborhood watch program. She has had 14 responses on Facebook offering help in the different wards in town. She stated that her church will provide the location for meeting with residents for organization and training. Mayor Miller stated that he will get together with Mrs. Griffith, Chief Epler and the Officers as well to move forward with this idea. Also, Manager Lane stated that the borough has many old parking signs that could be converted cheaply to "neighborhood crime watch" signage by a local company for around \$7.00.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MONTH'S MINUTES:

Motion to approve the February 3, 2019, Regular Council meeting minutes was made by Mrs. Lacek and seconded by Mr. Sweitzer. Motion carried.

Also, President Christini included in the packets, the borough public officials list and Council committees & meeting dates for 2020. If there are any corrections, members are to let Secretary Kulick know.

FIRE CHIEF REPORT:

Chief Roof reported there were 14 calls in January. The tower truck is back sitting at the station. It is not certified and it was brought back from Horseheads, NY, repair company "not fixed" (hydraulic pump). P&G came up and looked at the older engine truck, but he hasn't heard back from them. The closing on the new truck is slated for the week of the 10th. Solicitor Smith will review the paperwork.

FIRE BOARD REPORT:

Mr. Klinger was absent but Chief Roof stated there was nothing new to report.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Miller stated a letter was drafted to be sent to Bradford County President Judge Maureen Beirne concerning Sheriff C. J. Walters' pursuance to have arresting police departments transfer inmates that they arrested from the Bradford County Correctional Facility to their preliminary hearings in the magisterial court and back to the BCCF. It was revealed that a court order from BC President Judge Jeffrey A. Smith in 1994 (which outlined dates & times for court hearings in the magisterial courts) stated that "it shall be the duty of the BC Sheriff's Office to transport any and all detainees housed at the BCCF.

Council reviewed the letter and Solicitor Smith advised that the letter also be sent to the Sheriff's Department of Bradford County, the local borough's and townships with police departments, and the local State Police.

Also, Mayor Miller stated that he will follow up on a neighborhood crime watch program.

In addition, Mayor Miller has plans to start a recognition program for individuals who focus support of the town in different ways.

POLICE CHIEF REPORT:

Chief Epler reviewed his report to Council and discussed the BC Sheriff's announcement above.

CHIEF EPLER REPORTED THE FOLLOWING:

Officer Bellows and Chief Epler had a meeting with State DUI Representative. The Rep went over our grant with them and all looked good on the program.

The new 2020 patrol car was brought home from 911 Rapid Response and the Tahoe was taken down for conversion to the new K-9 vehicle. It was discovered during the trip home that the heater motor did not work, and it was taken to Sherwood's for service. During that time, it was found by Sherwood's that the vehicle had mouse damage under the dash. The dealer that sold us the vehicle is going to stand by the repairs. At the time of this report the vehicle is still at Sherwood's.

Chief Epler did some further research in regards to on-board computers and found a lower price. He also checked with a highway traffic safety person who suggested using the "TraCS system" (The State Police currently use this system), where the cost is now down from \$10,000 to \$5,000 per car. There is also a free part of this program available in October of this year. Also, this system is a standalone system. Athens Borough police department is getting this system put in their police cars and have invited Chief Epler to observe it. Also, Sayre police department is running a different system for their police car. They will be able to compare systems with each other to give them an answer as to which system is the better one.

President Christini stated for Chief Epler to keep Council in the loop as this is not in the budget this year and he would need technical recommendation from the Police Committee. The Chief added that the current camera system used on the officer's shoulder has helped save money on officers going to court.

JANUARY 2019 – Monthly Report

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

POLICE COMMITTEE REPORT:

Items discussed were covered by the Mayor and in Chief Epler's report.

CODE ENFORCEMENT / PUBLIC WORKS REPORT:

Mr. Sluyter, Code Enforcement Officer, presented the report to Council. President Christini stated that he wants to see everything that is active as far as code violations, even if it is months old.

JANUARY 2020 SUMMARY

PERMITS & CONTRACTORS	Month	YTD
Permits Issued	9	9
Permit Fees Paid	\$450	\$450
Code Inspections Fees	\$ 255	\$255
Borough Total after Code Inspections Fees	\$195	\$195
Permit Work Value	\$16,150	\$16,150
Contractors Registered	2	2
Contractors Registrations Amount	\$200	\$200

UCC Reportable Permits

	Month	YTD	Fees	Fees YTD
#1 Residential – New				
#2 Residential – Other	2	2	\$9	\$9
#3 Commercial – New				
#4 Commercial – Other				
TOTALS	2	2	\$9	\$9

COMPLAINTS

	Received		Investigated		Resolved	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	Month	YTD
Single Family Non-Rental	8	8	8	8	4	4
1 & 2 Family Rentals	12	12	10	10	3	3
Commercial Rental Units	3	3	3	3	0	0
Commercial Non-Rental	1	1	1	1	0	0
TOTALS	24	24	22	22	7	7

Rental Dwelling Unit Inspections Month YTD

1st Inspection	2	2
2nd Inspection	2	2
3rd Inspection	0	0
FEES PAID	\$0	\$0

ZONING CODES

PERMITS	Number Issued		Number Denied		Fees Paid	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	Month	YTD
RESIDENTIAL						
COMMERCIAL						
MANUFACTURING						
SIGN						
OCCUPANCY						
OTHER						
TOTAL						
Sign Permits Total:						

ZONING APPEALS

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

PARKING

Tickets by Status (Last 30 Days)

Issued	43
Paid	26
Dismissed	12
Abandoned	5
Warning	8

Tickets by Violation (Last 30 Days)

3 Hour Limit	79
Expired Meter	7
Over Night Parking	
Non-Space	2
Parking Outside of Lines	
Permit Required	
Non-Space	

Tickets by Street Location (Last 30 Days)

Main Street	37
Bridge Street	17
Park Street	12
Court Street	8
Towanda	7
State Street	5
Washington Street	
Pine Street	
State Street	
Parking Garage	
John B. Merrill Pkwy	

BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT:

1. **Downtown Revitalization Project-**

Manager Lane stated the final pay application has been submitted to RACP which will trigger an audit conducted by the Office of the Budget and then release our final reimbursement.

Agreement with County will be forthcoming.

2. **PennDOT Turn back SR 3020 –**

The Engineer and Manager Lane decided to extend (2 weeks) the bidding due date to February 12th. There were several questions from contractors we wanted to make sure there was ample time to answer.

3. **Flooding August 2018 –**

Still waiting on FEMA. TMA project has been obligated. Just waiting for Borough project to be obligated as well.

Manager Lane continues to work with FEMA regarding Cash Creek. Stiffler and McGraw provided a report to satisfy FEMA. The status of the project is sitting with FEMA's "Consolidated Resource Center" to verify costs.

4. **Municipal Building Parking Lot –**

The 2020 Budget included plans to pave our parking lot. It is much past due and Manager Lane plans to seek estimates in the next few weeks. He does not think the price of the project will exceed the public bidding threshold.

5. **YMCA Building Floor replacement – Resolution # 2020-2**

The YMCA has asked NTRPD to apply for DCNR grant funding to assist on replacing the gym floor of the SCI building. The YMCA has raised all the required matching funds for the grant. Because the building belongs to the Borough, the grant application will be run through the Borough. I would kindly request council to make a resolution to apply for DCNR grant funding. I have enclosed **Resolution # 2020-2**.

RESOLUTION 2020-2

Approval for YMCA to apply for DCED grant money for Renovations & Improvements to the facility plus agreement terms.

Motion was made by Mrs. Lacek and seconded by Mr. Sweitzer

The roll was called and recorded as follows:

AYE/YES: President Christini, Mr. Eberlin, Mr. Kovalcin, Mr. Lacek, Mrs. Lacek, Vice-President Mr. Long and Mr. Roof and Mr. Sweitzer

NAY/NO:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT: Mr. Klinger

Resolution 2020-2 Carried unanimously

6. **Ladder Truck – Fire Department – Resolution # 2020-3**

I have secured financing for the new ladder truck. We will be financing \$574,294 over 15 annual payments of \$48,848. This is a municipal lease and at the end of the 15-year period the truck will be ours for \$1. The interest rate is 3.18%

A resolution is required for Council to name Kyle Lane – Borough Manager to be the signatory of all the related documents.

I have enclosed **Resolution # 2020-3**.

RESOLUTION 2020-3

Approve, Authorize & Execute Master Equipment Lease Purchase Agreement No. TOWPA2020-02E between Community First Nat'l Bank as Lessor & Towanda Borough as Lessee for New Spartan 75' Quint Aerial Ladder Truck

Motion was made by Mr. Sweitzer and seconded by Mr. Kovalcin

The roll was called and recorded as follows:

AYE/YES: President Christini, Mr. Eberlin, Mr. Kovalcin, Mr. Lacek, Mrs. Lacek, Vice-President Mr. Long and Mr. Roof and Mr. Sweitzer

NAY/NO:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT: Mr. Klinger

Resolution 2020-3 Carried unanimously.

7. **2019 Financial Audit**

Our auditing firm Shannon & Hallock will be starting our 2019 financial audit this week with the deadline of March 31, 2020 for the report.

8. **Committee appointments –**

Manager Lane kindly requested Council to appoint Ryan Chamberlain as the Towanda Borough Emergency Management Coordinator.

Motion to appoint Mr. Ryan Chamberlain as the Towanda Borough Emergency Management Coordinator was made by Mrs. Lacek and seconded by Mr. Kovalcin. Motion carried unanimously.

Manager Lane also requested Council appoint Frank Innes as a regular Zoning Hearing Board member (opening behind Ryan Eberlin who was elected to Council) along with the appointment of the following board members: Kevin Tama, Mary Krill, and 1st Alternate Matt Tavani. Motion was made by Mr. Long and seconded by Mrs. Lacek. Motion carried unanimously.

Manager Lane stated that we have room for 1 more Zoning Board Alternate if anyone knows of someone being interested.

BOROUGH SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

Solicitor Smith will review the documents for leasing the Fire Department's new ladder truck. He will also review the parking ordinance.

BOROUGH SECRETARY REPORT:

Secretary Kulick stated that the Borough Clean-up will be held on Friday, May 15th & Saturday, May 16th. It will be sent to the paper in April.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT:

President Christini stated that Finance & Admin reviewed the bills received last month and stated they will review the current Borough Fees in the Finance & Admin meeting to make changes, and will bring to Council for approval.

UNION SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT:

The Police union contract discussion will start this summer as their contract will be ending on December 31, 2020.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Motion to pay the bills was made by Mr. Long and seconded by Mr. Kovalcin. Motion passed.

PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT:

The Planning Commission discussed and recommended the following:

Amend code §221-2 Definition of Family as: An individual or two (2) or more persons related by blood or marriage, or a group of not more than three (3) persons, who are not related by blood or marriage, living together as a single housekeeping unit in a dwelling unit. and adhere to zoning rules for single family districts and suggested to Council that we change it from 5 to 3 persons.

Motion to do this was made by Mr. Sweitzer and 2nd by Mrs. Lacek. Motion passed.

In addition, a motion was also made by Mr. Kovalcin and seconded by Mr. Long to eliminate the word "servants" in the amendment.

MISC:

Solicitor Smith stated that he will be working on Code § 325 – Oil and Gas Operations, to eliminate it, as it was voted by Council in a prior meeting to do so.

RECREATION REPORT:

Mr. Kovalcin stated they will be having a meeting next week.

TMA/WMA/CBPA REPORTS:

Included in packet.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn was made by Mrs. Lacek and seconded by Mr. Kovalcin. Meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Diane M. Kulick
Towanda Borough Secretary