

## **Towanda Borough Regular Council Meeting Minutes July 6, 2020**

The Regular Meeting of the Towanda Borough Council was held on Monday, July 6, 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. Klinger, Mr. William Kovalcin, Mr. Lacek, Mr. Roof, Ms. Saxon & Mr. Sweitzer

**Absent:** Mrs. Lacek

**CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:** None present.

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

Motion to approve the June 1, 2020, Regular Council meeting minutes was made by Mr. Klinger and seconded by Mr. Kovalcin. Motion passed.

**FIRE CHIEF REPORT:**

Chief Roof's monthly fire incidents report is included in the packets. Chief Roof stated that it was quiet month and everything is in good working order.

**FIRE BOARD REPORT:**

Mr. Klinger stated they had a meeting, but he had nothing new to report.

**MAYOR'S REPORT:**

Mayor Miller stated that he received a call about the corner where one would turn from York Avenue onto Barstow Avenue. The right side of Barstow often has cars parked too close to the corner. If someone is turning onto Barstow, it is very tight, especially if there is a vehicle waiting to turn off Barstow onto York Avenue. This is an issue that we need to keep an eye on. In addition, Mr. Christini stated that the corner of Main and State Street by Foster Hall is blocked by cars parking too close to corner also, and we need to keep an eye on it. Mayor Miller also state the town received a compliment from some people who were from out of town visiting this past weekend. They complemented that our town is very nice.

**POLICE CHIEF REPORT:**

Chief Epler's monthly report was included in the packets.

Officer Lamanna attended a training webinar for medical marijuana. This was an 8-hour class done completely online.

Officer's Hennessy and Smith participated in a birthday parade for Dave Thomas, a resident of Hillcrest Drive and a WW II Vet who turned 100 yrs old.

Summer vacation season has started and I am giving off as much as we can and still maintain coverage.

Chief Epler said they have handled a lot of curfew violations this past month.

Chief Epler stated that the department has been receiving a lot of thank you's from the public. He was also told that some citizens were going to do a Pro-America, Pro-Police

type of walk with signs showing appreciation for the police department sometime this month. They will be walking on the bridge and the parkway. Mr. Christini voiced his appreciation for the police and the good job they do for the town.

**JUNE 2020 – Monthly Report**

320	COMPLAINTS RECEIVED	0	JUVENILE PETITIONS
10	TRAFFIC CITATIONS	0	K-9 SERVICE (BORO)
5	NON-TRAFFIC CITATIONS	8	THEFT REPORTS
0	DUI ARRESTS	16	ANIMAL COMPLAINTS
92	DISTURBANCE CALLS	4	VEHICLE DOORS OPENED
7	VEHICLE ACCIDENTS	5	WARNINGS ISSUED
2	OUT OF TOWN ASSISTS	0	K-9 SERVICES
5	CRIMINAL ARRESTS		

**POLICE COMMITTEE REPORT:**

Mr. Lacek stated the Committee had a small meeting buy nothing to report.

**CODE ENFORCEMENT / PUBLIC WORKS REPORT:**

Mr. Sluyter, Code Enforcement Officer, was present and reviewed the written report for June 2020.

**ADMINISTRATIVE**

Mr. Sluyter, Manager Lane and President Christini went to Danville Borough to talk to that borough’s Code Enforcement Officer about their “Quality of Life” ticketing ordinance and how it is enforced. The Code Enforcement Officer in Danville stated that since this ordinance was adopted, the number of repeat property maintenance violators has gone down. The ticket fines and penalties are numbered offenses within a twelve-month period, and with each violation the fines become larger. Also, the Magistrate judge will become involved if the violators refuse to comply to the terms of the ordinance.

**JUNE 2020 SUMMARY – CODE ENFORCEMENT STATS**

<b>PERMITS &amp; CONTRACTORS</b>	Month	YTD
Permits Issued	14	41
Permit Fees Paid	\$1,092	\$2,723.80
Code Inspections Fees	\$762.80	\$1,467.80
Borough Total after Code Inspections Fees	\$330	\$1,256
Permit Work Value	\$74,700	\$177,885
Contractors Registered	9	52
Contractors Registrations Amount	\$650	\$4,000

**UCC Reportable Permits**

	Month	YTD	Fees	Fees YTD
#1 Residential – New				
#2 Residential – Other	2	13	\$9.00	\$58.50
#3 Commercial – New				
#4 Commercial – Other				
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>\$9.00</b>	<b>\$58.50</b>

**COMPLAINTS**

	Received		Investigated		Resolved	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	Month	YTD
Single Family Non-Rental	12	61	10	38	6	16
1 & 2 Family Rentals	20	72	17	62	5	16
Commercial Rental Units	4	28	4	23	2	3
Commercial Non-Rental	1	12	1	10	0	2
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>37</b>

**Rental Dwelling Unit Inspections**

	Month	YTD
1st Inspection	4	24
2nd Inspection	0	5
3rd Inspection	0	0
<b>FEES PAID</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>

**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:						
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**ZONING APPEALS**

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

**PARKING**

**Tickets by Status (Last 30 Days)**

Issued	35
Paid	17
Dismissed	2
Abandoned	
Warning	6

**Tickets by Violation (Last 30 Days)**

3 Hour Limit	59
Expired Meter	1
Parking Outside of Lines	
Permit Required	
Non-Space	

**Tickets by Street Location (Last 30 Days)**

Main Street	31
Bridge Street	19
Park Street	2
Court Street	4
Towanda	
State Street	1
Washington Street	
Pine Street	1
Parking Garage	
John B. Merrill Pkwy	

## **BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT**

Manager Lane reported on the following:

Manager Lane stated we received the 2019 audit reports from our auditor late last week and he believes it was approved by DCED. He commended Susan Miller for keeping neat, efficient books that are also acknowledged by our auditors.

### **1. PennDOT Turnback SR 3020 –**

The project is in full swing. The water main replacement from Convent Street to Western Avenue is complete. The sewer main from Western Avenue to Third Street is currently under construction. They also started stormwater work on Third Street. Overall, project is moving at a solid pace. The "Big Dig" of Cash Creek will be coming in the next few weeks.

### **2. Flooding August 2018 –**

Manager Lane received the project scope and cost offer for the two damaged sites of the Cash Creek Stormwater system. He has accepted the offer and plan to move forward. If all moons align, he will have the work completed with a change order from Sikora Brothers. The offer includes \$42,228.78 for the Mulberry Street and Fifth Street stormwater repairs and \$703,576.51 for the section between Third Street and Second Street. The amounts are not fixed. FEMA will reimburse for the actual amount spent. It may be over or under depending on what they find when work begins.

### **3. CDBG Demolition Project Mason Alley -**

The demolition project of 12 & 13 Mason Alley is complete. Manager Lane has submitted for payment from the CDBG program. He anticipates payment within the next few weeks. The cost details are below:

Reimbursement Summary: Total Cost of Project = \$33,067.41

1. Labor – \$4,154.70
2. Borough Equipment - \$1,220
3. Materials - \$546.91
4. Equipment Rental - \$1,950
5. NTSWA – \$24,860.80
6. Permit Cost - \$335

### **4. 2020 COVID -19 Supplemental COPS grant**

Manager Lane submitted a letter on behalf of the Borough to County Probation Department Chief Justin Popovich requesting a portion of the COVID-19 funds the County will receive. He does not anticipate the program to move quickly.

### **5. Route 6 Alliance Façade Program**

Manager Lane has been informed the Façade program has notified business owners downtown of their awards. He hopes to see work begin soon. Manager Lane handed out the list of award recipients for the program.

### **6. Redevelopment Authority**

Manager Lane and Tony Ventello are traveling to Pittston tomorrow July 7th to visit with the

NEPA Land Bank Executive Director Joe Chacke. The purpose of the meeting is to gather information on the mechanics of how the Land Bank operates and gauge if it fits our goal to eliminate blight in the County.

### **7. Trail Project/Park Master Plan**

In the packets Manager Lane presented **Resolution (2020-10)** authorizing him to submit an application to the “Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program” for funding to update our SCI complex master plan and to include a master plan for all Borough owned parks. He will be applying for \$100,000 with a 15% match. The Borough cost would be \$15,000 if we are awarded.

#### **RESOLUTION 2020-10**

Greenways, Trails & Recreation Program (GTRP) Grant – Master Park Plan for Borough of Towanda

A motion was made by Mr. Kovalcin and seconded by Ms. Saxon

The roll was called and recorded as follows:

AYE/YES: President Christini, Mr. Eberlin, Mr. Klinger, Mr. Kovalcin, Mr. Lacek, Ms. Saxon, Mr. Roof & Mr. Sweitzer

NAY/NO:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT: Mrs. Lacek

**Resolution 2020-10 Carried.**

### **8. Towanda Borough Fee Schedule – (Resolution 2020-9)**

Manager Lane stated that we have updated the borough’s fee schedule that was presented and discussed last month. In further discussing the Rental Properties Inspection Proposed Fees, it was decided that we add “\$50 1st Inspection fee is WAIVED/REFUNDED if rental passes inspection 1st time” to give the rental owner an incentive. He asked for the resolution be approved by council to adjust the fee schedule which will include the above “waived/refunded” part as well as instruct the Borough Solicitor to adjust any ordinances that are associated with the fees.

#### **RESOLUTION 2020-9**

Adoption of Fees Imposed by Towanda Borough (with \$50 1st inspection fee WAIVED if rental passes inspection 1st time). A motion was made by Mr. Sweitzer and seconded by Mr. Lacek

The roll was called and recorded as follows:

AYE/YES: President Christini, Mr. Eberlin, Mr. Klinger, Mr. Kovalcin, Mr. Lacek, Ms. Saxon, Mr. Roof & Mr. Sweitzer

NAY/NO:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT: Mrs. Lacek

**Resolution 2020-9 Carried.**

#### **SOLICITOR'S REPORT:**

Solicitor Smith stated he attended magistrate hearing with Mr. Sluyter (Code Officer) for 3 recent cases under the International Property Maintenance Code. He feels that we will need to do more of these types of cases through the Magistrate. He stated that we won 1 case and lost 2 with the same owner. He feels that we should take more of the citations to a higher judgement level and he will review and attend more of these cases with Mr. Sluyter.

It was proposed that we make the minimum fine for violation of Property Maintenance Code to be \$200. Motion was made by Mr. Sweitzer and seconded by Mr. Kovalcin. Motion passed.

In addition, it was proposed that Council direct Solicitor Smith to appeal the cases that were lost at the Magistrate level. Motion was made by Mr. Sweitzer and seconded by Mr. Klinger. Motion passed.

**BOROUGH SECRETARY:**

Mrs. Kulick stated that the "Color Run" will be held in October by Towanda High School Senior class.

**UNION SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT:**

Manager Lane stated that they came together with the police and reached an agreement for the next 3 years. We are waiting for the final approval from the union that the officers ratified the agreement. He stated that some clean-up language was changed for "holiday" to be clear. Wage increase will be 2 & 1\4% raise each year starting in January 2021. The Health insurance (HRA Plan) cost for the police will increase 4% the first year and 6% for the second year and 4% for the third year of the police contract.

**FINANCIAL REPORT:**

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

**PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT:**

The Planning Commission discussed some different towns and boroughs vacant property ordinances, and the next meeting is July 21st.

Ms. Kayla Saxon was formally appointed to the Planning Commission. Motion was made by Mr. Kovalcin and seconded by Mr. Klinger. Motion passed.

**MISC:**

Manager Lane stated that the garbage contract with NTSWA will be up for renewal soon. Aside from that, they have offered for us an opportunity to hold a Fall Clean-up possibly in October. We need to think about this and discuss it in the August Council meeting.

**RECREATION REPORT:**

Mr. Kovalcin stated the first "Concerts in the Park" with "Nate the Great" went well and they had well over 100 people in attendance. He did a great job. The next one this Thursday, and will be "Five Man Trio".

**TMA/WMA/CBPA REPORTS:**

Included in packet.

Manager Lane stated that TMA is looking at the first week of August to turn on the water at the new water (system) plant. Not for use yet, but just to turn it on. There will be some complicated steps with testing, and disinfection before connecting to the existing public water system. We will have a date for a tour as soon as the system is ready.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Klinger and seconded by Mr. Roof. Meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.



Diane M. Kulick  
Towanda Borough Secretary