

**Towanda Borough  
Regular Council Meeting Minutes  
Monday, February 1, 2021**

The Regular Meeting of the Towanda Borough Council was held on Monday, February 1, 2021, at the Borough Municipal Building, 724 Main Street, Towanda, PA. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by President Mark Christini with a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Present:** Mr. Christini, Mr. Eberlin, Mr. Klinger, Mr. Kovalcin, Mr. Roof

**Absent:** Mrs. Ellen Lacek (joined via phone-in), Mr. Jimmy Lacek, Mr. Sweitzer

**CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:**

Mr. and Mrs. Hatch were present and Mr. Doupe joined via phone-in and there were no comments.

*Mayor Miller administered the "oath of office" for the new Borough Tax Collector, Kara Eberlin. Council is very happy to have her step in as our tax collector.*

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

Motion to approve the January 4, 2021, Regular Council meeting minutes was made Mr. Klinger and seconded by Mr. Kovalcin with a minor change in the adjournment motion. Motion passed.

**FIRE CHIEF REPORT:**

Monthly report of incidents was included in packet. Chief Roof stated they had a busy month and everything is in good working order. The Chief also stated that the fire crew will be going over "safety checks" in the near future.

**FIRE BOARD REPORT:**

Mr. Klinger stated he did not attend the last meeting, but Chief Roof said there was nothing new to report.

**MAYOR'S REPORT:**

Mayor Miller thanked Manager Lane for the tour of the new water plant and the waste water treatment plant recently. Also, Mayor Miller is working on something with Central Bradford County Chamber of Commerce to help boost local restaurants (like a food eating contest). He will know more at a later date.

**POLICE CHIEF REPORT:**

Chief Epler was not present, but the monthly report was included in the packets. Mayor Miller reviewed the report as follows:

Officer Ryan Edsell and his wife Nicole welcomed a new baby boy in 2021. All are doing fine.

We have been dealing with battery issues and not starting, along with other issues with the 2020 SUV. Dalton has been working on them and we are currently monitoring the latest fix to see if we have it working.

**JANUARY 2021 – Monthly Report**

252	COMPLAINTS RECEIVED	1	JUVENILE PETITIONS
13	TRAFFIC CITATIONS	0	K-9 SERVICE (BORO)
8	NON-TRAFFIC CITATIONS	6	THEFT REPORTS
1	DUI ARRESTS	2	ANIMAL COMPLAINTS
74	DISTURBANCE CALLS	3	VEHICLE DOORS OPENED
8	VEHICLE ACCIDENTS	5	WARNINGS ISSUED
1	OUT OF TOWN ASSISTS	0	K-9 SERVICES
5	CRIMINAL ARRESTS		

**POLICE COMMITTEE REPORT:**

Mayor Miller stated the committee did not have a meeting this month.

**CODE ENFORCEMENT / PUBLIC WORKS REPORT:**

Mr. Sluyter, Code Enforcement Officer, was present and reviewed the written report for January 2021. President Christini asked Mr. Sluyter about the parking data system update and Mr. Sluyter stated that he was working on getting the AOPC (Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts) side of parking finalized. This system writes the citation with AOPC certification and sends the citation in an email to the District Magistrate's office automatically.

Also, Mr. Sluyter presented a subdivision/proposed land development (in the area of Fourth and Thomas Streets) that was approved by County Planning Commission and sent to the Borough for comments. There are two (2) subdivided lots from an original lot which had that had a home on it, and the home has been sold. The two (2) lots each meet the requirements of the Bradford County Planning Commission for a subdivision/land development. Mr. Sluyter asked Council for "Municipal Consent". A motion to approve the subdivision/proposed land development was made by Mr. Eberlin and seconded by Mr. Kovalcin. Motion passed.

**JANUARY 2021 SUMMARY – CODE ENFORCEMENT STATS**

<b>PERMITS &amp; CONTRACTORS</b>		<b>MONTH</b>	<b>YTD</b>
Permits Issued		7	7
Permit Fees Paid		\$790	\$790
Code Inspections Fees		\$240	\$240
Borough Total after Code Inspections Fees		\$550	\$550
Permit Work Value		\$31,851	\$31,851
Contractors Registered		9	9
Contractors Registrations Amount		\$350	\$350

**UCC Reportable Permits**

	Month	YTD	Fees	Fees YTD
#1 Residential – New				
#2 Residential – Other	1	1	\$4.50	\$4.50
#3 Commercial – New				
#4 Commercial – Other				
<b>TOTALS</b>	1	1	\$4.50	\$4.50

**COMPLAINTS**

	Received		Investigated		Resolved	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	Month	YTD
Single Family Non-Rental	15	15	15	15	12	12
1 & 2 Family Rentals	20	20	20	20	8	8
Commercial Rental Units	10	10	10	10	4	4
Commercial Non-Rental	4	4	4	4	1	1
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>

**Rental Dwelling Unit Inspections**

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

**ZONING PERMITS – JANUARY 2020**

PERMITS	Number Issued		Fees Paid		Number Denied	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	Month	YTD
<b>TOTAL</b>						

**PARKING:**

**Tickets by Status (Year to Date)**

Issued	36
Paid	15
Dismissed	5
Abandoned	
Warning	1

**Tickets by Violation (Year to Date)**

3 Hour Limit	56
Expired Meter	
Parking Outside of Lines	1
Permit Required	
Non-Space	

**Tickets by Street Location (Year to Date)**

Main Street	26
Bridge Street	15
Park Street	6
Court Street	4
Pine Street	3
Washington Street	2
State Street	1
Parking Garage	
John B. Merrill Pkwy	
Second Street	

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

Keith Long	70
Jeremy Sluyter	8

**BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT – FEBRUARY 1, 2021**

1. **PennDOT Turnback SR 3020 –**

Manager Lane met with our Municipal Services (PennDOT) Representative Steve Kehoe and walked through the entire project. Mr. Kehoe was pleased with what he saw and Manager Lane plans to submit the closing documents within the next few weeks. Once he receives the final approval, the remaining funds in the turnback account will be transferred to the Liquid Fuels account.

2. **Flooding August 2018 –**

Manager Lane is still waiting for payment from PEMA. Hoping to see the payment soon. We currently owe the contractor \$58,134 for the repairs to Cash Creek.

He submitted the payment request on December 7th, 2020, for the repair of Cash Creek.

The Mulberry Street repairs are on the schedule to be repaired in house come spring 2021. This will be funded through the FEMA/PEMA disaster relief program.

3. **2020 COVID -19 Supplemental COPS grant**

Chief Epler discussed with Chief Popovich the status of the funding and we were told "the check is in the mail"

4. **Trail Project/Park Master Plan -**

Manager Lane spoke to the grant reviewer and answered some additional questions. The reviewer stated he has reviewed the application and will forward it to the program manager. He did not speculate on an award date.

5. **Municipal Building –**

Manager Lane stated that it was decided to do some minor remodeling to our building. We remodeled the bathroom in the breakroom and the one off of the Code Officials office. We replaced antiquated lighting fixtures with new LED panels in the breakroom and plan to replace ceiling tiles in parts of the building.

Later in the year we are planning to increase the height of the garage door so we can fit the Street Sweeper and Truck 21 (Red Dump Truck) into the garage for maintenance and paint the exterior wall of the garage. We are also planning to pave the upper and lower parking lots.

6. **New Server -**

Our new server was installed on January 7th and 8th. The transition was smooth and we have had only minor technical issues.

7. **Curb Appeal Program -**

As discussed during the 2021 budget's session, the Borough is planning to make \$50,000 available as low interest loans for items like sidewalks, exterior painting and siding. Manager Lane is still working out the details and will submit an application for CDBG funds for sidewalks for residents that meet the income threshold.

8. **YMCA – New Floor -**

As you may recall, the YMCA was awarded a grant from DCNR to replace the gymnasium floor. They are currently seeking consultants to administer the project and they plan to begin work on the floor this summer.

Manager Lane presented two (2) resolutions as follows:

**RESOLUTION #2021-2**

Appoint Jean Miller as 1st Ward Council Member behind Kayla Saxon, who moved out of the jurisdiction. Mrs. Miller's term will end the first Monday in January 2022.

A motion was made by Mr. Kovalcin and seconded by Mr. Klinger

The roll was called and recorded as follows:

AYE/YES: President Christini, Mr. Eberlin, Mr. Klinger, Mr. Kovalcin, Mr. Roof

NAY/NO:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT: Mr. Lacek, Mrs. Lacek & Mr. Sweitzer

**RESOLUTION #2021-2 - Carried**

**RESOLUTION #2021-3**

Appoint Kayla Saxon, as TMA (Towanda Municipal Authority) Board member for a term of five (5) years (behind Mr. Paul DeWitt).

A motion was made by Mr. Kovalcin and seconded by Mr. Klinger

The roll was called and recorded as follows:

AYE/YES: President Christini, Mr. Eberlin, Mr. Klinger, Mr. Kovalcin, Mr. Roof

NAY/NO:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT: Mr. Lacek, Mrs. Lacek & Mr. Sweitzer

**RESOLUTION #2021-3 - Carried**

**SOLICITOR'S REPORT:**

Solicitor Smith joined the meeting via phone-in. He stated that the hearing for the Guthrie tax appeal is still pending and has been moved to April 14th.

Also, Solicitor Smith and Mr. Sluyter were able to settle an old fire escrow account that had been pending for a number of years without resolve (not because of the Borough).

Solicitor Smith has been working on the amendment of the Zoning Special Exception for removing § 325-13C.(7), removing § 325-16C.(1), and rescind Towanda Borough Ordinance No. 2013-4 (added 7-18-2013), plus editor's notes found within it. There were some interconnected provisions that are taking more time to finalize, and then he will advertise them.

*Vice President Christini stated that in January's meeting Council voted to have Solicitor Smith amend **Article II Removal of Grass, Snow, Etc.**, § 264-2 Duty of owners and occupants. B. to "48 hours to remove snow and/or ice from the sidewalk."*

*This month after discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Eberlin and seconded by Mr. Kovalcin to set the fine amount to "no less than \$25 to \$200" for failure to comply (§ 264-3 Violations and penalties). Motion passed.*

**BOROUGH SECRETARY:**

Secretary Kulick did not have anything to bring before Council and was not present due to the snow storm.

**ADMINISTRATIVE:**

Manager Lane stated that he reviewed the book balances starting in January 2020 through December 2020.

Mr. Klinger stated that the yearly report of the Police Pension Plan was very impressive and well explained.

**UNION SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT:**

Manager Lane stated that the Public Works Union Contract is up for negotiations this year for a new contract beginning in 2022. Also, the Teamsters Local 529 is now part of a larger one (Local 118) out of Rochester, New York. Also, currently our employees have a union steward for each of the following: Clerical, Borough Sewer and Borough Water.

**FINANCIAL REPORT:**

Motion to pay the January 2021 bills was made by Mr. Klinger and seconded by Mr. Kovalcin. Motion passed.

**PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT:**

Mr. Christini stated that the next meeting will be on February 16, 2021 at 7 PM.

**RECREATION REPORT:**

Mr. Kovalcin stated that they will have the first meeting of the year this month.

**TMA/WMA/CBPA REPORTS:**

Included in packet.

**MISC:** Mr. Eberlin stated that the remodeled laundry mat on Main Street downtown (named Blue-stone Laundromat) looks really nice and very "state of the art". It was decided to have the Borough send a "Welcome to Towanda" letter to that owner (Frank Sorokach) and also to the owner (Jessica Hilts) of the Petal Post, a new flower shop on Main Street.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Klinger and seconded by Mr. Kovalcin. Meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM.



Diane M. Kulick  
Towanda Borough Secretary