

Towanda Borough Regular Council Meeting Minutes March 7, 2022

The Towanda Borough Council was held on Monday, March 7, 2022, at the Borough Municipal Building, 724 Main Street, Towanda, PA. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Vice-President Eberlin.

Present: Mr. Eberlin, Mrs. Miller, Mr. Saring, Mr. Kovalcin, Mr. Schulze, Mrs. Hatch, Mr. Parks

Absent: President Christini & Mr. Roof

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:

Candace Chilson of 103 York Avenue was present to voice her concern over Mercur Alley and Third Street drainage issues that affect her property. She has lived there approximately 3 years and has constant issues with flooding, mud, water, & basement leakage damages. She said that every time they repair these issues, they repeat them over again.

She stated that she met with Mr. Sluyter, they looked at the deed work and found that Mercur Alley has not been addressed since 1991, and neither the citizens nor the Borough has any responsibility for this alley as it is private. However, it is causing a lot of damage. Her property is next door to the Hatch's and she has spoken to them also. She asked if the borough can look at her situation because "It is really wreaking havoc on our property."

Vice-President Eberlin asked Mr. Sluyter to comment. Mr. Sluyter stated there are different alleyways, whether they are public, private, or abandoned, and this alley is listed as private. He proposed installing curbing to stop the water from coming onto the properties as one possible solution. Mr. Roger Hatch, 101 York Avenue was present and stated that Mr. Sluyter and he had talked about the water moving into his property's carriage house, as it consists of old rock and the water runs into the building and down through & over top of the inside stone and across the wood. Last year they repaired the 2nd floor where the alleyway goes. Mr. Hatch said this is a historical problem. Vice-President Eberlin agreed but stated this is a new problem for Council, and the borough will look at this problem as it is the fair thing to do.

Ms. Chilson stated that she can't afford to keep fixing the water issue and currently she has about 2 inches of mud that her children have to walk through to walk up to her car to go to school every day. She said she is putting money into mulch and plants and they just get washed away. Vice-President Eberlin asked that Ms. Chilson give Council some time to look into this situation and to discuss possible solutions.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MONTH'S MINUTES:

Motion to approve the February 7, 2022, Regular meeting minutes was made by Mr. Kovalcin and seconded by Mrs. Miller. Motion passed.

FIRE CHIEF REPORT:

The Fire report was included in the packets.

FIRE BOARD REPORT:

Mr. Parks stated there was a meeting but there is nothing new to report.

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Miller stated that there was a police committee meeting held tonight which will be discussed later in the meeting. Also, he said he wanted to start the community service award program that he talked about before COVID-19 hit back in 2020. He will meet with Borough Manager Lauren to discuss this soon.

POLICE CHIEF REPORT:

Chief Epler gave his report.

- Officer Roberts has been moved to overlap shifts where he can continue to gain experience with the support of senior Officers while helping out with single coverage issues.
- We purchased two refurbished X-2 Tasers and they have been put into service. They were purchased at a cost of \$899 apiece. That cost included a battery, 2 cartridges, and a holster.
- We had several burglaries into businesses last month. Two have been solved and the suspect's arrested, more arrests coming on one of those cases. There were also two rapes charged and two strangulations charged.
- We have been receiving a number of 104's from CYS. These are time-intensive investigations of child abuse cases that require a forensic interview to be done with the child and many other interviews, along with several meetings with the DA's Office to get a successful ending.
- The 2016 was taken today to Keystone Communication for the repair of the interior. This damage was from last fall's incident with the juvenile who ripped out the wiring and interior headliners.

FEBRUARY 2022 – Monthly Report

| | | | |
|-----|-----------------------|----|----------------------|
| 288 | COMPLAINTS RECEIVED | 3 | JUVENILE PETITIONS |
| 8 | TRAFFIC CITATIONS | 0 | K-9 SERVICE (BORO) |
| 11 | NON-TRAFFIC CITATIONS | 10 | THEFT REPORTS |
| 1 | DUI ARRESTS | 1 | ANIMAL COMPLAINTS |
| 78 | DISTURBANCE CALLS | 2 | VEHICLE DOORS OPENED |
| 3 | VEHICLE ACCIDENTS | 4 | WARNINGS ISSUED |
| 3 | OUT OF TOWN ASSISTS | 0 | K-9 SERVICES |
| 12 | CRIMINAL ARRESTS | | |

POLICE COMMITTEE REPORT:

Mrs. Hatch stated gave a summary of the meeting tonight.

- 2 new tasers were ordered, received, and are now in use.
- New car computers – recently received a quote from L-TRON, approximately \$9,000. She asked if the committee needed to get other quotes. Manager Egleston asked SCT Computers for a quote and they stated that \$9,000 was a good price, plus everything is under warranty if they go directly through L-TRON. She suggested getting 1 more quote before they make a decision.
- A new stopwatch was ordered because to have someone come to the station and calibrate one would be \$150, but to order a new one was \$79.99 and it comes calibrated & certified.
- Tasers calibrations – The tasers need to be calibrated every 90 days, so 1 goes out at 45 days, he still has 1 to carry. Plus, our PD is getting together with other local police departments to have the tasers calibrated together.
- There is a PD grant he and Lauren applied for.
- The PD received a quote for video surveillance from SCT for \$4500 for a 24-camera unit. Chief Epler thinks there is a wiser way to do this by maybe getting a larger system that has a few cameras at the station and they will tie in together with cameras installed at the Parking Garage. This would be a better use of our funds.

- As noted in Chief Epler’s report, squad car 2016 went in for repairs for approximately 3 to 4 days.
- Mayor Miller asked in the meeting how the department stands as far as service guns and shotguns. Chief Epler stated that down the road we would need to upgrade some of them. Mrs. Hatch stated that half of the guns are generation 3 (the service weapons) and half are generation 4. The generation 4 you can adjust the grip and the generation 3, you can’t adjust the grip. Some of the officers find generation 3 hard to use because they can’t be adjusted.
- The PD will need a new squad car in 2023 and will probably have a 6 to 9 months lead time for ordering the vehicle

CODE ENFORCEMENT / PUBLIC WORKS REPORT:

Mr. Sluyter, Code Enforcement Officer reviewed the report. Citations have gone out this past month for the garbage situation on Main Street.

FEBRUARY 2022 SUMMARY – CODE ENFORCEMENT STATS

| PERMITS & CONTRACTORS | | MONTH | YTD |
|---|----|--------------|------------|
| Permits Issued | | 5 | 25 |
| Permit Fees Paid | \$ | 800 | 3,848 |
| Code Inspections Fees | \$ | 0 | 1,723 |
| Borough Total after Code Inspections Fees | \$ | 800 | 2,125 |
| Permit Work Value | \$ | 11,942 | 218,442 |
| Contractors Registered | | 4 | 7 |
| Contractors Registrations Amount | \$ | 400 | 700 |

UCC Reportable Permits

| | Month | YTD | \$ Fees | \$ Fees YTD |
|------------------------|--------------|------------|----------------|--------------------|
| #1 Residential – New | | | | |
| #2 Residential – Other | 2 | 5 | 9.00 | 22.50 |
| #3 Commercial – New | | | | |
| #4 Commercial – Other | | 1 | | 4.50 |
| TOTALS | | | 9.00 | 27.00 |

COMPLAINTS

| | Received | | Investigated | | Resolved | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|------------|---------------------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Month | YTD | Month | YTD | Month | YTD |
| Single Family Non-Rental | 20 | 28 | 16 | 23 | 6 | 10 |
| 1 & 2 Family Rentals | 12 | 21 | 10 | 16 | 7 | 13 |
| Commercial Rental Units | 6 | 12 | 5 | 11 | 3 | 5 |

Borough Council Meeting Minutes March 7, 2022

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|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Commercial Non-Rental | 4 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 4 |
| TOTALS | 42 | 68 | 35 | 55 | 18 | 32 |

Rental Dwelling Unit Inspections

| | Month | YTD |
|---------------------|------------|------------|
| 1st Inspection | 12 | 18 |
| 2nd Inspection | | |
| 3rd Inspection | | |
| FEES PAID \$ | 100 | 100 |

PARKING:

Tickets by Status

| | Month | Year-to-Date |
|-----------|-------|--------------|
| Issued | 42 | 54 |
| Paid | 30 | 53 |
| Dismissed | 11 | 18 |
| Warning | 13 | 25 |
| Abandoned | 1 | 1 |
| Citation | 6 | 28 |

Tickets by Street Location

| | Month | Year-to-Date |
|----------------------|-------|--------------|
| Main Street | 40 | 69 |
| Court Street | 15 | 22 |
| Bridge Street | 11 | 25 |
| Park Street | 13 | 18 |
| Pine Street | 11 | 16 |
| Washington Street | 3 | 6 |
| State Street | 4 | 7 |
| Parking Garage | 5 | 15 |
| John B. Merrill Pkwy | | |
| Second Street | | |
| Mix Avenue | | |
| C&N Lot | | |
| Poplar Street | | |
| Other (Towanda) | | |

Tickets by Violation

| | Month | Year-to-Date |
|--|-------|--------------|
| Expired Meter | 5 | 16 |
| 3 Hour Limit | 76 | 137 |
| 3 Hour Free Parking, Moved Locations | 6 | 6 |
| Permit Required | | |
| Parking Outside of Lines, Direction of Travel | 6 | 19 |
| Permit Required | 2 | 2 |
| Handicap/Disabled | 2 | 2 |
| Non-Space | 5 | 6 |
| Loading Zone | | |

BOROUGH MANAGER

Borough Manager Egleston reported the following:

1. **Parking**

Jeremy and Manager Lauren had their kick-off meeting with ParkMobile last week. We need to provide information to them regarding the “zones” or streets and the parking garage that we will utilize for metered parking. ParkMobile will integrate with our existing software through UPSafety and handheld device for customers to pay. Signage will be provided through ParkMobile regarding information on how to utilize their system to pay for parking.

2. **Security Cameras**

To date, here are the quotes received for security cameras throughout the Borough.

The Municipal Building:

Boggs Hi-Tech Solution: \$7,970.50

Teledair Hi-Tech Solution: \$8,949 (Includes one camera to Veterans Memorial Park)

SCT Computers: \$6,160

Veterans Memorial Park:

Boggs Hi-Tech Solution: \$3,347.20

Parking Garage:

Teledair Communications and Security, Inc.: \$18,489

Police Station:

SCT Computers Inc.: \$4,300

3. **USDA Community Facilities Grant**

Lauren submitted a grant to purchase a new Chevy Silverado 3500HD Truck for the Borough. Pending final approval, USDA will grant the Borough \$17,500 towards buying the vehicle, and the Borough will cover the balance of \$32,775.00 for the total purchase cost of \$50,275.00 through Bob Fisher Chevy. The vehicle should be ready for the Borough to take ownership within the next month.

4. **PennDOT**

After Steve Kehoe from PennDOT District 3-0, came to meet with Chad and Manager Egleston to review the Borough's potential roads for paving consideration for 2022, he provided them with an estimate for fourteen different projects. Upon review of the estimates, the list of roads that will be submitted for bid proposals next month includes the following:

Barclay/Railroad Street (Main St to Borough Line)

S. 4th Street (Thomas to Dead End)

Mulberry/Western (5th Street to Dead End)

State Street (Main to N. 4th Street)

Maple Street (Main to 3rd Street)

Ward Ave (Third Street to Mill Street)

5th Street (Pine to Bridge)

N. 3rd Street (Huston to Dead End)

Barstow (Main to N. Main)

Oak Street (York to N. 4th Street)

The bid documents along with advertisement and wages will be sent to her by March 18th, giving her time to review and advertise to open for our April 4th council meeting.

5. **Municipal Assistance Program Grant**

Two Consultants provided quotes to complete the Regional Central Bradford Comprehensive Plan in conjunction with North Towanda Township and Towanda Township. One came in at \$61,500 and the other at \$38,000. A Municipal Assistance Program Grant was submitted to DCED requesting \$19,000 from the grant program, and the three municipalities (Towanda Borough included) passed resolutions for \$6,333 to complete the joint Comprehensive Plan. In addition, Senator Gene Yaw, Representative Tina Pickett, and the Bradford County Planning and Mapping Office provided letters of support for the project. Announcements for grant awards are anticipated in the fall of 2022, and then we will determine how to proceed. In 2008, the three municipalities adopted the latest Comprehensive Plan. An up-to-date comprehensive plan can assist with future grants for various projects. Manager Egleston stated that she appreciates the cooperation and last-minute coordination through North Towanda and Towanda Township to get this submitted in time.

6. **305-307 Third Street Property**

On February 25th, the Daily Review published an advertisement to receive bids for the purchase of 305-307 Third Street. There were no bids received.

7. **Local Share Program Statewide**

DCED has created a "statewide" Local Share Program through the Gaming Act funds. Projects must improve the quality of life of citizens in the community and may apply for funding from \$25,000 to \$1,000,000 without a match requirement. We have met with HUNT EAS to develop cost estimates for stormwater drainage improvements on Ann Street to Watts Street close to Huston Street. In order to apply for the grant, a **resolution** has to be passed by Council. Manager Egleston asked that Council pass this resolution so that we may submit the application before the March 15th deadline. The total probable cost is \$929,352.06, which came from HUNT EAS.

RESOLUTION 2022-5

Apply for funding from DCED Local Share Program Grant for Storm Water Drainage Improvements on Ann Street to Watts Street, close to Huston Street.

The motion was made by Mr. Kovalcin and seconded by Mrs. Hatch

The roll was called and recorded as follows:

AYE/YES: Mr. Eberlin, Mrs. Miller, Mr. Saring, Mr. Kovalcin, Mr. Schulze, Mrs. Hatch, Mr. Parks

NAY/NO:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT: President Christini & Mr. Roof

Resolution 2022-5 – Carried

8. Stormwater Report

We have met with the Property Maintenance Manager at 510 Ann Street to discuss some remedies to stormwater drainage about their detention pond to alleviate immediate issues we have monitored during past (extreme) storm events. We will schedule a follow-up discussion to determine what they are willing to complete. The recommendations should be pretty easy to do.

9. 2022 Chevrolet Silverado MD 4WD Reg Cab Work Truck-Trade In

We have obtained quotes to trade in Truck #4, a 2020 F-550 Super Duty Dump Truck for a 2022 Chevrolet Silverado MD 4WD Regular Cab (Bob Fisher Chevrolet). The 2020 truck is a 12-volt system that does not work for the Borough's needs, as we need a fully hydraulic truck. The Chevy is a diesel, and better suited for Borough operations. Based on three quotes, with trade-in, the Borough would need to approve the purchase for a total price of \$36,356.61. This could come from the liquid fuels fund that currently has \$94,095.92 available for equipment purchases. Manager Egleston asked council to pass a **resolution** to trade in Truck #4, use liquid fuel equipment funds to purchase the 2022 Chevrolet Silverado MD 4WD Regular Cab, and utilize Bradco to upfit the truck for a total of \$36,356.61. Vice-President Eberlin stated that this was discussed in the Finance & Administration meeting and it was decided that this is probably a good time to trade this truck due to the high dollar trades that are currently being offered.

RESOLUTION 2022-6

Trade-in truck #4 & utilize liquid fuels equipment funds to purchase the 2022 Chevrolet Silverado MD 4WD Regular Cab & utilize Bradco to upfit the truck for a total of \$36,356.61

The motion was made by Mrs. Hatch and seconded by Mr. Saring

The roll was called and recorded as follows:

AYE/YES: Mr. Eberlin, Mrs. Miller, Mr. Saring, Mr. Kovalcin, Mr. Schulze, Mrs. Hatch, Mr. Parks

NAY/NO:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT: President Christini & Mr. Roof

Resolution 2022-6 – Carried

10. TextMyGov

Manager Egleston stated that everyone not forget to sign up to receive notifications by texting "TOWANDA" to 91896, and to report an issue by texting "Hi" to 570-627-6277. Several residents have reported garbage and street light outages. Mr. Strickland has been driving around checking for outages before daylight and he found 28 street lights that were out and they have been reported to Penelec.

11. Snow Emergencies

Manager Egleston thanked the Borough Police Department for assisting our Plow Crew in getting vehicles removed from roads during the last Snow Emergency events; it has helped with our ability to remove snow from these streets more efficiently. Her recommendation would include additional streets for future snow events, including; Poplar Street (Convent Street to Western Avenue) & 4th Street (from Bridge Street to Elizabeth Street). She asked our Parking Committee to meet again regarding these changes.

12. Police Updates

- a. Patrol Car Computer quote
 - i. L-Tron Quote - \$9,013.77
- b. Tasers:
 - i. Accredited Security - \$1,798 for two tasers (obtained & in-service)

13. DCNR YMCA Gymnasium Grant

The project has been completed, and a final inspection with Christine Dettore from DCNR is scheduled for April 4th. As long as the inspection goes well, we will receive the remaining 10% of grant funds. We are waiting for the benches to arrive and that could be mid-July.

14. Riverside Cemetery

Manager Egleston has met with Elizabeth (Betsy) McKean of the Riverside Cemetery Association to discuss the ongoing projects and maintenance at the cemetery. We will work together to complete the EMHR Mini-Grant for signage at the cemetery.

15. Hallock & Shannon, PC

Hallock & Shannon, PC came to our office to audit the Borough and TMA accounts on February 22nd & 23rd. They were very complimentary of our records, and tax records this year. Awaiting a final report, but do not anticipate any findings. Our staff and tax collector did a great job!

BOROUGH SOLICITOR

Borough Solicitor Smith reported the following:

- Amended agenda item which is a draft ordinance amending Chapter 305, Article XI, pertaining to commercial zone parking regulations to add metered parking spaces on Court, Pine, and Washington Streets under sections 305-71. A. (2), (k), (l), & (n) respectively.
- Delete Sections 305-74. A., pertaining to illegal parking in 3-hour parking spaces and **re-place** with a provision making it illegal to park in a 3-hour parking space for more than 3 consecutive hours calculated from when a vehicle is first parked.
- 305-307 Third Street - Since there were no bids, the statute allows us to advertise again and if there are no bids within 15 days for a second time, we can do a private sale of the property. *A motion to advertise the property a second time was made by Mr. Kovalcin and seconded by Mr. Parks. Motion passed.*
- Riverside Cemetery acquisition – Attorney Mark Smith has decided to not be involved in the Riverside Cemetery Association (RCA) in the future, and executive director Marguerite Fox Picou has recently passed away. Solicitor Smith does not know if the 2 remaining board members will keep the association going or not, and has asked Attorney Smith to send him a copy of the by-laws.

BOROUGH SECRETARY

Borough Secretary Kulick stated that the Borough Spring Clean-Up will be held on Friday, May 13th, and Saturday, May 14th this year.

FINANCIAL & ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT:

Motion to pay the February 2022 bills was made by Mr. Parks and seconded by Mrs. Miller. Motion passed.

Vice-President Eberlin stated that this year's Per Capita and Occupation Tax will be delayed being sent out due to an error by the printing company. The tax collector normally sends them out in the property tax envelope. However, they should be out in a couple of weeks.

UNION SUB-COMMITTEE:

Mrs. Miller stated there was nothing to report at this time.

PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT:

- Vice-President Eberlin read a letter sent to Council by James B. Lacey who is regrettably resigning from the Planning Commission. *He asked Council to make a motion to accept Mr. Lacey's resignation. A motion to do so was made by Mr. Kovalcin and seconded by Mrs. Hatch. Motion passed.*

RECREATION REPORT:

Mr. Kovalcin stated the Committee will have more information next month on the planned activities. Also, Vicki Wells has resigned from the Rec Board and she will be missed. The group honored her with a dinner.

TMA/WMA/CBPA REPORTS:

Included in the packet.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn was made by Mrs. Hatch and seconded by Mr. Saring. Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.



Diane M. Kulick
Towanda Borough Secretary