

**Towanda Borough  
Regular Council Meeting Minutes  
April 4, 2022**

The Towanda Borough Council Meeting was held on Monday, April 4, 2022, at the Borough Municipal Building, 724 Main Street, Towanda, PA. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by President Christini.

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

**Absent:** Mr. Roof

**BID OPENING: Paving Project Contract**

We received 3 sealed bids which Manager Egleston opened in alpha order. The M. R. Dirt representative attended the bid opening. The bid amounts were as follows:

#	Bidders	Price	Bid Bond Included
1	Bishop Brothers Construction	\$338,460.21	Yes
2	Glenn O. Hawbaker	\$407,266.20	Yes
3	M. R. Dirt	\$548,275.75	Yes

Bishop Brothers Construction was the lowest bid received, and Manager Egleston asked Council to approve this lowest bid, pending review by a PennDOT Municipal Services Representative to determine that the bid is in compliance with the specifications. ***Mrs. Hatch made the motion to accept this bid pending review, and it was seconded by Mr. Kovalcin. Motion passed.***

As far as the Bid Opening for the property on 305-307 Third Street, there were no bids received.

**CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:**

Hans and Heather Heyer, owners of H&H Knight Out LLC., located at 3 Bridge Street, were present as a follow-up to their letter request for a loading zone area in front of their business for doing deliveries of food and to unload inventory and supplies. ***A motion was made by Mr. Eberlin and seconded by Mr. Kovalcin. Motion passed. Mr. Sluyter will work with the Heyers on the exact location of the sign.***

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

Motion to approve the March 7, 2022, Regular meeting minutes was made by Mr. Parks and seconded by Mr. Kovalcin. Motion passed.

**FIRE CHIEF REPORT:**

Chief Roof was absent and the Fire report was included in the packets.

**FIRE BOARD REPORT:**

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

**MAYOR'S REPORT:**

Mayor Miller stated that Christine Griffith of 200 Thomas Street attended the Police Committee meeting held earlier tonight and discussed with the committee about starting a neighborhood crime watch. She and a small group of people will talk to the police department so the department will know who is involved in this group. They have been doing this for a while and she has purchased some signage already, but has asked the police to kick in for more signage if

needed. The Police department fully supports it. Mayor Miller stated that the group welcomes any citizen who is interested in helping out.

Mayor Miller stated that Saturday, April 30, 2022 is opening day for Towanda Little League.

**POLICE CHIEF REPORT:**

Chief Epler gave his report.

- They had 2 burglaries at Towanda businesses last month. The same person who has been charged with both crimes is currently in Bradford County Jail. This is the same person that was arrested for the Keystone Theater and the Main Street Laundry Mat burglaries who was out of jail on supervised bail. That is 4 burglaries in Towanda (in 30 days) by that same person.
- The stolen vehicle from the Main Link parking lot was recovered in Athens Township after being abandoned. It was found on a “no winter maintenance” road, and the driver struck a tree and rolled over several times. Two other individuals were in the car with him and were hurt and went to the RPH Emergency Room for treatment. The suspect has been arrested and he was out on bail from firearms charge from last month. He is currently in Bradford County jail.
- Towanda PD arrested a male for aggravated assault for stabbing another male several times, including once in the back. He is also currently in Bradford County jail.
- The Drug Taskforce has continued to be active this past month. Chief Epler will be meeting soon with the task force to see how they will proceed with these arrests. The bulk of what has been taking place is in and around Towanda.
- The 2016 Explorer police vehicle was taken to Keystone Communication for the headliner repair and is back in service.
- Officer Hennessy and the K-9 Hades did a drug sniff (a ritual before a class trip) on the THS Junior’s and Senior’s luggage prior to them leaving on their class trip to Florida.
- Chief Epler stated they covered a lot of topics at the Police Committee meeting tonight. He presented to the committee a couple proposals that he will forward to Council to cover a second bid on the in-car computers. Chief Epler asked the county DA if he would give the department some of the money from an incident that occurred back in September where they executed a search warrant for marijuana and discovered almost \$17,000 in currency, in addition to a stolen handgun, and additional other items used in illegal sale and distribution. The DA agreed. Therefore, Chief Epler will give him a proposal of the cost the department had in mind for the in-car computers.

**MARCH 2022 – Monthly Report**

301	COMPLAINTS RECEIVED	1	JUVENILE PETITIONS
14	TRAFFIC CITATIONS	2	K-9 SERVICE (BORO)
8	NON-TRAFFIC CITATIONS	18	THEFT REPORTS
1	DUI ARRESTS	2	ANIMAL COMPLAINTS
83	DISTURBANCE CALLS	3	VEHICLE DOORS OPENED
3	VEHICLE ACCIDENTS	7	WARNINGS ISSUED
2	OUT OF TOWN ASSISTS	0	K-9 SERVICES
9	CRIMINAL ARRESTS		

**POLICE COMMITTEE REPORT:**

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

- The bulk of the meeting was spent with Mrs. Griffith and Sergeant Lantz concerning the Neighborhood Watch Program.
- New car computers – Chief Epler came back to the committee with another quote from Advanced Electronic Design Inc., for 2 RhinoTab®F5 UltraRugged® Fixed Mount Tablets, on dash mounts, printer capabilities, and other necessary accessories. This system was a little more money than the L-Tron Corp. quote, but it is built to order (to our officers' specifications).
- Mayor Miller and Mr. Saring attended the finance meeting and they will have Officer Lake go look at new shotguns and get quotes as soon as possible.
- Concerning the neighborhood crime watch, Mayor Miller gave Mrs. Hatch information on what they will be doing. They will be meeting over the next couple of weeks to identify the other borough wards and the people who will be involved in those wards.

**CODE ENFORCEMENT / PUBLIC WORKS REPORT:**

Mr. Sluyter, Code Enforcement Officer reviewed the report.

**MARCH 2022 SUMMARY – CODE ENFORCEMENT STATS**

<b>PERMITS &amp; CONTRACTORS</b>		<b>MONTH</b>	<b>YTD</b>
Permits Issued		13	38
Permit Fees Paid	\$	1,465	5,313
Code Inspections Fees	\$	125	1,848
Borough Total after Code Inspections Fees	\$	1340	3,465
Permit Work Value	\$	77475	295,917
Contractors Registered		10	17
Contractors Registrations Amount	\$	1000	1700

**UCC Reportable Permits**

	<b>Month</b>	<b>YTD</b>	<b>\$ Fees</b>	<b>\$ Fees YTD</b>
#1 Residential – New	1	1	4.50	4.50
#2 Residential – Other	3	8	13.50	36.00
#3 Commercial – New				
#4 Commercial – Other		1		4.50
<b>TOTALS</b>		10	18.00	45.00

**COMPLAINTS**

	<b>Received</b>		<b>Investigated</b>		<b>Resolved</b>	
	<b>Month</b>	<b>YTD</b>	<b>Month</b>	<b>YTD</b>	<b>Month</b>	<b>YTD</b>
Single Family Non-Rental	6	34	6	29	4	14
1 & 2 Family Rentals	15	36	13	29	8	21

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Commercial Rental Units	9	21	9	20	4	9
Commercial Non-Rental	3	10	3	8	2	6
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>50</b>

<b>Rental Dwelling Unit Inspections</b>	Month	YTD
1st Inspection	9	27
2nd Inspection		
3rd Inspection		
<b>FEES PAID \$</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>150</b>

**PARKING:**

**Tickets by Status**

	Month	Year-to-Date
Issued	39	93
Paid	22	103
Dismissed	10	36
Warning	9	37
Abandoned	1	3
Citation	2	44

**Tickets by Street Location**

	Month	Year-to-Date
Main Street	35	122
Court Street	7	29
Bridge Street	17	46
Park Street	9	28
Pine Street	13	33
Washington Street	1	7
State Street	3	13
Parking Garage	2	27
John B. Merrill Pkwy	1	1
Second Street		7
Mix Avenue		
C&N Lot		
Poplar Street		
Other (Towanda)		

**Tickets by Violation**

	Month	Year-to-Date
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Expired Meter	3	29
3 Hour Limit	65	225
3 Hour Free Parking, Moved Locations	7	15
Permit Required		2
Parking Outside of Lines, Direction of Travel	3	12
Snow Emergency-Second- ary Roads		7
Handicap/Disabled	6	9
Non-Space	4	14
Loading Zone		

Borough Manager Egleston reported the following:

1. **Parking**

We have provided ParkMobile the necessary information to begin with our metered streets and parking garage signage. The revised parking ordinance was advertised on March 26th, but we revised it to add more metered spots. The streets to be metered include: Washington Street from Seebick Alley to Merrill Parkway, Pine Street from Main Street to Merrill Parkway, and Court Street from Main Street to Merrill Parkway. This will add 51 metered parking spaces to the Central Business District at \$0.50/per hour, Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. through 5 p.m. Customers can pay via their phone or computer through ParkMobile's website or app. There will also be a QR code they can scan with their phone to pay for their spot. Customers will need to list their license plate number to reserve their spot. ParkMobile does charge an additional fee to customers per each transaction. Manager Egleston walked around downtown today and stopped at many businesses to inform them of what the borough is proposing and she was very well received. The only concern was the elderly using the app and those that don't have phones. With these modifications, Solicitor Smith can

2. **USDA Community Facilities Grant**

I am still waiting on the final approval for the Chevy Silverado Truck, but have been assured that when the vehicle is ready for us to pick up, we will be able to do so without penalty or losing the \$17,500 grant towards the vehicle. The Borough will cover the balance of \$32,775 for the total purchase cost of \$50,275 through Bob Fisher Chevy.

3. **PennDOT**

We have approached PennDOT with a potential property acquisition, and I would like to discuss the opportunity with Council before moving forward.

4. **305-307 Third Street Property**

The second advertisement was submitted to the Daily Review to solicit bids for the purchase of 305-307 Third Street.

5. **Hallock & Shannon, PC**

Hallock & Shannon, PC came to our office to audit the Borough and TMA accounts on February 22nd & 23rd. The Financial Report is available for review if anyone would like to take a look at it. There were no findings. It will be posted in the newspaper.

6. **Towanda Borough Parks Master Plan**

We have advertised for RFPs (Request for Proposals) for Professional Services to develop a Parks Master Plan for the Borough Parks, and proposed Trail project. Proposals are due back

by Friday, April 8th at 3 PM. Numerous firms requested the materials and hopefully we will receive some competitive pricing.

7. **Bradford County YMCA**

Charity Field, Director of the YMCA, has accepted another position with the Twin Tiers Community Foundation. Her last day was March 31st. We are sad to see her go, but want to wish her the best. I will meet with her replacement once they have been selected to bring them up to speed. President Christini stated that Council appreciates the contributions Charity has made these last 10 years. She has taken the local YMCA to the next level of growth. Mr. Eberlin stated that if anyone knows of a candidate that may be interested in applying for Charity's position and might be a good fit, to let him know, as he is on the local YMCA board. He also stated that this YMCA is the 1st branch to get back to pre-COVID membership levels.

8. **Local Share Program Statewide**

DCED has created a statewide Local Share Program through the Gaming Act funds. Council did approve the resolution last month for a stormwater grant. The program was allocated \$140 million for distribution this year. We submitted the grant for stormwater improvements on Ann & Watts Street for \$929,352. Grants for consideration may range between \$25,000 and \$1,000,000 without any matching funds. DCED received 1,900 applications for approximately \$1 billion in requests. It's unclear how many larger projects will be selected for funding, but it was encouraged to engage your legislators (which we did do) for the larger projects in the process.

At 7:50 PM, President Christini called for an Executive Session to discuss a property acquisition issue.

The Executive Session ended and Council came back in order at 7:58 PM.

**BOROUGH SOLICITOR**

Borough Solicitor Smith reported the following:

- There will be a change concerning part of the ordinance amending Chapter 305, Article IX, 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. Plus, he will add the loading zone that will be located on Bridge Street near H&H Knight Out LLC in the revision.

(k) Court Street between Main Street and Merrill Parkway: three-hour parking spaces will be **23** metered parking spaces instead of 16.

(l) Pine Street between Main Street and Merrill Parkway: three-hour parking spaces and 14 metered parking spaces (**no change**).

(n) Washington Street between **Seebick Alley** and Merrill Parkway: three-hour parking spaces will be **14** metered parking spaces instead of 16.

Section II. Chapter 305, Article IX, Section 305-74.A. shall be deleted in its entirety and replaced with the following:

Section 305-74.A. Three-hour parking. During a parking day, it shall be unlawful for the registered owner of a vehicle to park, or cause or allow that vehicle to be parked in one or another three-hour parking space in excess of three consecutive hours calculated from the time when the vehicle is first parked.

Section III. This Ordinance shall be effective immediately and shall remain in force until modified, amended or rescinded by the Borough of Towanda, Bradford County, Pennsylvania.

***Motion to authorize Solicitor Smith to re-advertise the revision with these changes was made by Mr. Kovalcin and seconded by Mrs. Miller. Motion passed. Solicitor Smith will readvertise the amended ordinance again with these changes.***

- Concerning 305-307 Third Street - Since there were no bids, the statute allows us to do a private sale of the property.
- Concerning Mercur Alley and Ms. Chilson's drainage issues, public record has it as a subdivision since the 1800's. The owners have the use and also the maintenance responsibilities. There is no record of it being anything other than a private alleyway. Solicitor Smith stated that he will write Ms. Chilson a letter explaining this to her.
- Riverside Cemetery acquisition – Solicitor Smith received a copy of the by-laws (states 5 members) and charter. They may have 1 more volunteer member to add that will make them a 3-member association, but it doesn't look promising that they will be able to continue. It's up in the air right now.
- Solicitor Smith is working on the Vacant Property Ordinance.

**BOROUGH SECRETARY**

Borough Secretary Kulick had nothing to report.

**FINANCIAL & ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT:**

Motion to pay the March 2022 bills was made by Mr. Kovalcin and seconded by Mr. Saring. Motion passed.

**UNION SUB-COMMITTEE:**

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

**PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT:**

- President Christini stated that they had 1 person apply for the opening on the Planning Commission behind Jimmy Lacek. Mr. Roger Hatch, 101 York Avenue, sent a letter of interest to Council with the request to join the Planning Commission. There were no other interested candidates, therefore a motion was made by Mr. Kovalcin and seconded by Mrs. Miller to nominate Mr. Hatch to be on the Planning Commission. Motion passed.

**RECREATION REPORT:**

Mr. Kovalcin stated the Committee has 1 magician and it looks like 7 bands are lined up for the summer schedule. Mr. Parks has offered to join the Recreation Committee behind Vicki Wells.

**TMA/WMA/CBPA REPORTS:**

Included in the packet.

*Note: The Borough "Spring Clean Up" will be held on Friday, May 13th and Saturday, May 14th. Information will be in the newspaper and it is on-line also.*

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Saring and seconded by Mr. Parks. Meeting adjourned at 8:28 PM.



Diane M. Kulick  
Towanda Borough Secretary