

**Towanda Borough  
Regular Council Meeting Minutes  
August 1, 2022**

The Towanda Borough Council Meeting was held on Monday, August 1, 2022, at the Borough Municipal Building, 724 Main Street, Towanda, PA. The meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM by President Christini.

**Present:** Vice President Eberlin, Mrs. Miller, Mr. Roof, Mr. Saring, Mr. Kovalcin, Mr. Schulze, Mr. Christini, Mrs. Hatch & Mr. Parks

**Absent:** None.

**CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:**

Alex Piechocki of 15 Locust Avenue spoke about his concern about the potholes on his street. He stated that there is a major pothole at the intersection with York Avenue & Locust Street. He said when you make the left-hand turn onto York Avenue from Locust one of your car tires is going to hit it, and when it is raining the hole is level with the pavement and you can't see it. There is a lot of use of this street because of activity at the Third Ward Playground. He stated that he counted 40 potholes starting at North Main Street & Locust to York Avenue. Manager Egleston stated that this street is on the list to be repaved this summer.

Dixie Cabucci of 103 Second Street was present to talk about a parking situation. Mrs. Cabucci stated that she got a fine excused a couple of months ago when she claims she was downtown for a total half-hour parked in two different places. Today she stated she went to the bank on Main Street for 5 minutes (parked in front of the bank), then drove over to Rainbows End to drop off some clothes (on the opposite side of Main Street) for approximately 15 minutes. She then went home and this afternoon she went back downtown to check on a garbage situation at her tenant building on Main Street, and to sweep up the garbage. When she went back to her car, she found a ticket issued to her at 2:57 PM.

She stated that she did not have her handicap sign in the car hanging but had it on the dash. She asked what the rules are on handicap parking and before she came to the meeting tonight, she said that she read the signs posted for parking in the Borough. She read the "Three Hours Parking", which was in big letters. She then read the bottom part of the parking signage. She said she doesn't understand the parking, and stated that she hears all kinds of complaints about parking and feels she is being penalized.

President Christini explained the ordinance is three-hour parking from the time you first park your car if you park in a three-hour zone. The other option is you can park and pay on the side streets or the parking garage for as long as you want. These options that are in effect now are better due to there being open spaces. The open spaces provide parking for customers who come to town to do business. This makes parking fair and consistent. Mrs. Cabucci stated that she understands the rules, but does not agree with them because she doesn't want to walk a block when she donates to Rainbows End or is delivering cleaning supplies for her rentals. She said that she does have a handicap placard and she was told that the state law is - one can park for free for 1 hour over the local ordinance (which would be 4 hours in Towanda Borough). Mr. Sluyter told Mrs. Cabucci that if the ticket she received was under the 4 hours allowed for handicap parking, it could be forgiven. President Christini also stated that the current system provides for open spaces in every zone at any time of the day and it is better than it was 20 years ago. Mrs. Cabucci can use her handicap parking placard when she is downtown for up to 4 hours. However, she noted that her total time from the morning parking, and then when she came back downtown later in the afternoon was over 4 hours, and she did pay the \$30 fine. Again, she stated that she understands but does not agree.

President Christini read a letter from Reverend Rachel Stahl of 10 Mix Avenue expressing her interest in serving on the Planning Commission. There are currently no openings on the Planning Commission, but we will note this in the August minutes and if there is an opening the process would be to advertise and consider her interest.

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

Motion to approve July 5, 2022, Regular meeting minutes was made by Mr. Kovalcin and seconded by Mr. Saring. Motion passed.

**FIRE CHIEF REPORT:**

Chief Roof stated they had a busy month. On Sunday afternoon they had 2 calls on the river. One could have ended badly. One was in the area where the rapids have trees in the water (the area where they worked on cutting trees down last month), the kayakers must not have been familiar with the right side of the river and the "sweeper" trees. They got caught in these trees and the fire department was able to get them to safety.

The second call was in the afternoon, some canoers came down and got tangled in the "sweeper" trees (7 people), and 6 of them went underwater in the trees. They could see that 2 of them were kids who were "scared to death". Chief Roof stated that people coming down the river should use the left-hand side. The firemen are going to go back down and work on clearing out the trees again on Wednesday, and this time the PA Fish Commission is going to help with clearing the trees. Chief Roof noted that none of the kayakers or canoers had PFDs (Personal Flotation Devices) on.

Also, Chief Roof stated that they are changing all the lights in the station to LED with work being done by a company from Athens. The fire company received a nice discount through Penelec and this should lower the electric bill.

**FIRE BOARD REPORT:**

Mr. Parks stated they had a meeting but there is nothing to report.

**MAYOR'S REPORT:**

Mayor Miller stated called for an Executive Session at 7:35 PM to discuss a police personnel issue. Executive session ended at 7:45 PM.

Mayor Miller stated there was a situation on South Main Street where 2 vehicles were parked end to end in a driveway that caused the sidewalk to be blocked. The person who was walking along there had to go out into the roadway and was almost hit by a car. President Christini stated that he believes that one cannot block a sidewalk and it would be a matter for the police.

Mayor Miller also stated that he will have a couple of Community Service Recognitions to present next month.

**POLICE CHIEF REPORT:**

Chief Epler was on vacation, therefore Mayor Miller reviewed the report.

- I received an email that the in-car computers were to be shipped on the 28th of July from Patrol PC.
- The final part that we were waiting on for the upgrade to the shotguns came back in stock and was ordered, received, and installed. The upgrade is now complete.
- The station's air conditioner had problems and Saring Company was called to repair it. Joe was able to get us back up and running.
- The problem we had with Watchguard's 4RE unit (unit that records in-car video) which was in 2016, has been resolved with it being replaced after a lengthy troubleshooting period and dealing with a warranty issue.
- The drug task force arrested several defendants for drug charges incurred from the illegal sale of narcotics. (ongoing)
- Officer Hennessy and the K9 did several sniffs/searches this month, one for us, one for the drug task force, and one for Athens Twp. He also did presentations for CHOP at 2 Elizabeth St. and FLEA (Family Live Enrichment Adventure) at Mt. Pisgah.

**JULY 2022 – Monthly Report**

243	COMPLAINTS RECEIVED	0	JUVENILE PETITIONS
10	TRAFFIC CITATIONS	1	K-9 SERVICE (BORO)
6	NON-TRAFFIC CITATIONS	10	THEFT REPORTS
0	DUI ARRESTS	3	ANIMAL COMPLAINTS
79	DISTURBANCE CALLS	2	VEHICLE DOORS OPENED

3	VEHICLE ACCIDENTS	6	WARNINGS ISSUED
7	OUT-OF-TOWN ASSISTS	2	K-9 SERVICES
6	CRIMINAL ARRESTS		

**POLICE COMMITTEE REPORT:**

Mrs. Hatch gave a summary of the meeting tonight. Chief Epler was on vacation.

- Mrs. Hatch said that the Civil Service testing date needs to be scheduled. Vice President Eberlin stated that it should be soon.

**CODE ENFORCEMENT / PUBLIC WORKS REPORT:**

Mr. Sluyter, Code Enforcement Officer reviewed the report.

- He stated that he was hoping this week to start with iWorkQ system for permits.

Issues from last month:

- Mr. Parks asked Mr. Sluyter about the 3rd floor of the property at 333 William Street. Mr. Sluyter stated that the floor has been condemned for a long time, and he will check with the owner on it.
- The Red Rose Diner hole in the porch has been fixed
- The old Mulberry School (15 Mulberry Street). They met with the demo contractor and the building needs an asbestos inspection before it can be demolished.
- 16 North Main Street has been padlocked.
- 101 North Main Street – Cleaning up started today.
- 105 Second Street – Padlocks on all the doors, but there was 1 broken window that has not been boarded up.
- 2019 North Fourth and 402 Third Street have not been mowed yet this summer.

**JULY 2022 SUMMARY – CODE ENFORCEMENT STATS**

<b>PERMITS &amp; CONTRACTORS</b>		MONTH	YTD
Permits Issued		18	122
Permit Fees Paid	\$	3,105	15,908.30
Code Inspections Fees	\$	375	4,384.30
Borough Total after Code Inspections Fees	\$	2,730	8,696.60
Permit Work Value	\$	136,648	914,665.34
Contractors Registered		10	88
Contractors Registrations Amount	\$	1000	8800

**UCC Reportable Permits**

	Month	YTD	\$ Fees	\$ Fees YTD
#1 Residential – New		1		4.50
#2 Residential – Other	5	20	22.50	90
#3 Commercial – New		3		13.50
#4 Commercial – Other	1	7	4.50	31.50
<b>TOTALS</b>	6	31	27	139.50

**COMPLAINTS**

	Received		Investigated		Resolved	
	Month	YTD	Month	YTD	Month	YTD
Single Family Non-Rental	15	108	13	95	8	32
1 & 2 Family Rentals	17	112	15	94	6	32
Commercial Rental Units	12	67	11	62	3	14
Commercial Non-Rental	3	32	3	28	2	10
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>88</b>

**Rental Dwelling Unit Inspections**

	Month	YTD
1st Inspection	10	71
2nd Inspection	2	4
3rd Inspection	0	0
<b>FEES PAID \$</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>350</b>

**PARKING:**

**Tickets by Status**

	Month	Year-to-Date
Issued	52	72
Paid	47	292
Dismissed	29	107
Warning	7	74
Abandoned	7	19
Citation	8	170

**Tickets by Street Location**

	Month	Year-to-Date
Main Street	33	239
Court Street	50	110
Bridge Street	15	106
Park Street	8	58
Pine Street	23	91
Washington Street	8	23
State Street	2	20
Parking Garage	3	53
John B. Merrill Pkwy	1	8
Second Street		7
Mix Avenue		
C&N Lot		

Poplar Street		
Other (Towanda)		

**Tickets by Violation**

	Month	Year-to-Date
Expired Meter	86	181
3 Hour Limit	48	427
3 Hour Free Parking, Moved Locations	0	28
Permit Required	1	6
Parking Outside of Lines, Direction of Travel	1	16
Snow Emergency-Second- ary Roads		7
Handicap/Disabled	3	17
Non-Space	2	25
Loading Zone	2	8

Judy Pousen was commended for doing a good job on the Parking.

**BOROUGH MANAGER EGLESTON REPORT:**

1. **Parking**

ParkMobile is up and running in our Parking Garage and side streets. We've added signs to the metered parking streets (Court, Pine, and Washington) clarifying the rules. In the Parking Garage, guests will need to enter the parking stall number (110-132) and then select the amount of time they wish to park and proceed to checkout. For the other zones (street parking) they will need to enter their license plate number, and then proceed to checkout.

2. **Veterans Memorial Park**

Butler Surveying prepared Final-As-Built Drawings for the Veterans Memorial Park to close out the Land Development Application at the Bradford County Planning office. They also developed a brick plot for all of the individual brick pavers. Erica created a new spreadsheet with the brick paver information and simplified the process. We will now be able to create a "kiosk" with all of the information. We also met with the Bradford County Planning and Mapping office to discuss the data and how to integrate it into their GIS database.

3. **Bradford County Action-Youth Program Internship**

As you know, Erica Locke joined us this summer through the BCA Internship program. She is returning to Ursinus College in August as a Junior. Her last day was July 29th. She has been a wonderful asset to the Borough and Authority on numerous projects that she spearheaded and completed promptly and quickly. We will miss her!

4. **DCNR Grant YMCA Gymnasium Floor Closeout**

On July 19th, DCNR Regional Advisor, Christine Dettore came for a site visit to the YMCA to inspect the Gymnasium improvements funded through the C2P2 Small Communities Program. The grant provided \$70,000 towards a new gymnasium floor with lines and markings, new LED lighting in the gym, benches, nets, and new ADA parking improvements. The YMCA Capital Campaign raised \$40,000 to complete the project. The inspection passed, and all documentation has been uploaded into the DCNR Grants Portal, and we should be able to draw down the final 10% of funding to finish out the project.

5. **SCI Pool**

The pool has been leaking pretty badly, and the age is showing. It's time to consider completing a feasibility study on the pool and bathroom area. Manager Egleston is working on getting some proposals to conduct the study.

6. **Parks Master Plan RFP**

Manager Egleston is working on a revised RFP for the Parks Master Plan, per DCED's request because of the potential changes to the scope of work with the school property and Riverside Cemetery. She will try to have it re-advertised before our September council meeting.

7. **Paving Projects and Street Prep**

Bishops Brothers Construction, Inc is scheduled to begin our paving project the week of August 15th. They will start with State Street and Ward Ave. We will coordinate these efforts with the School District, residents, etc. Water, Sewer, and Borough crews have been busy with repairs to the streets that are to be paved. Parking lines and crosswalks will be completed soon.

8. **Snow Emergency**

Since we have been enforcing the Snow Emergency ordinance, and prior to the winter season, Manager Egleston would like to include additional streets for future snow events, including; Poplar Street (Convent Street to Western Avenue) & 4th Street (from Bridge Street to Elizabeth Street). She would like to have these streets to the Ordinance.

9. **Bucket for Loader Truck**

We would like to purchase a 3-3.5 cubic yard bucket for approval for the John Deere Loader. The lowest quote came back at approximately \$13k. Manager Egleston needed the approval to purchase, as the estimated delivery time is 8 weeks.

***Chief Roof made the motion seconded by Mrs. Miller to approve Borough Manager Egleston to purchase a yard bucket for the borough loader. Motion passed.***

10. **July 24th Storm**

The storm on Sunday took several trees and limbs down in the Borough, one on Main Street that struck a vehicle, and another on a house. One resident experienced 4 feet of water in their basement due to a clogged storm pipe. It was found the problem was on the owner's property. Three Penelec Street lights came down during the event on Main Street which brings the count to about 8 since she has been at the Borough. She stated that she needs to address these pole lights with Penelec. Crews came in immediately and cleaned up Sunday evening, and we are still cleaning up debris.

11. **iWorQ Software Update**

We are developing forms online for Code Inspection. These forms include Residential & Commercial Building permits, Contractors License Renewals, and Applications. This will be available on our website and will allow anyone to apply for these applications online. Additionally, we will be able to process credit cards through Xpress Bill Pay. Jeremy will have additional forms created so that he can perform inspections and upon completion can email them directly to the customer.

Next up, public works! We will have a presentation coming up.

12. **Downtown Revitalization Plan**

DCED's Keystone Communities Program is currently open and can assist with planning grants for business improvement districts. The application is due August 31st. Manager Egleston is working on obtaining quotes to complete a Downtown Revitalization Plan in the Central Business District and may need to have a special meeting prior to the deadline to pass the resolution.

13. **Towanda No. 1 Believe and Belong Mural**

"Our Pin" will be painted on the back of the Main Link building. Shvonne Strickland will paint it, and Gannon Insurance has offered to pay for it to get it completed.

14. **Towanda Lions Club & Merrill Parkway**

The Towanda Lions Club will provide \$2,000 towards filling and sealing the cracks on Merrill Parkway. A 25'x25' asphalt pad has been built where the stage was set up for Riverfest. This will eliminate a crew setting up the stage (and rebuilding) for a day and will also be available for other uses throughout the year.

15. **724 Main Street Façade Renovations**

We have begun painting and staining the building. We were having an issue with salt bleeding through the stain and need to apply a primer to block it on the brick exterior. So far, we have received LOTS of

compliments on the improvements and we are all eager to see it done! We have been seeking quotes for the garage door out back, to widen and lengthen the door to fit some of our larger equipment, and pricing for installation/construction. Once the door goes up, we will side that wall with the same material installed out front.

- A. Manager Egleston has contracted with HUNT-EAS to develop some conceptual floor plans for the front office to improve security, and create a secure office for Diane. They will provide several options, and once we decide on an option, we will work on preparing the bid documents to hopefully go out in the early spring of 2023 for completion by the Fall of 2023.

16. **PennDOT Meeting**

Property Acquisition Updated.

At 8:15 PM, Manager Egleston called for an Executive Session to discuss a personnel issue. The Executive Session ended at 8:30 PM.

**BOROUGH SOLICITOR**

Borough Solicitor Smith stated that he is working on the Vacant Property Ordinance and that he is handling some legal issues dealing with Parking in Jeremy's department.

**BOROUGH SECRETARY**

Borough Secretary Kulick presented the following resolution:

**RESOLUTION 2022-8**

The 2023 Police Traffic Services Grant which Towanda PD applies for that covers Bradford & Tioga Counties which Towanda PD will manage \$21,750, and also allocate the funds to appropriate roving patrols such as DUI, occupant safety, and aggressive driver, and pedestrian enforcement.

Motion to approve was made by Mr. Kovalcin and seconded by Mr. Saring.

The roll was called and recorded as follows:

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

NAY/NO:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

**RESOLUTION 2022-8 – Carried unanimously**

**FINANCIAL & ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT:**

- The motion to pay the July 2022 bills was made by Mrs. Hatch and seconded by Mrs. Miller. Motion passed.
- President Christini stated the F&A Committee discussed police department staffing and requested more information from the Police Committee in the near future.
- President Christini and Vice President Eberlin have been discussing TAPS (Towanda Administrative Policies) and felt that there was a hole in the policy concerning some personnel issues. He stated the F&A Committee has authority over these policies and with the direction of the Solicitor and under his advice we drafted three policies (TAPS):
  1. Employment of Relatives (Nepotism) - TAP #39
  2. Conflicts of Interest & Related Prohibitions – TAP #40
  3. Personal Relationships & Activities - TAP #41

President Christini stated that the F&A Committee was in consensus to approve these TAPS and have them added to the TAPS manual. The TAPS book is the guiding principle of the borough. Vice-President Eberlin stated that TAPS is a little outdated, several sections need reviewing and we should go through them. Mr. Schulze stated that he wanted Manager Egleston to know that the town is better every day because of her involvement and he is not sure where the problems are but he feels that we should slow down if there are problems with this policy. The original TAPS has been in effect for years. Vice President Eberlin reviewed the 3 TAPS.

Further discussion will take place on these TAPS. However, President Christini stated that he believes these are the policy's that many companies have in place and Solicitor Smith feels they are needed. Manager Egleston just wants to make sure of how she would roll them out and follow



through on them with our employees. President Christini passed out copies of the new TAPS for everyone to review and discuss further.

- Manager Egleston stated that Dawood completed the first phase of the blight mitigation study for Bradford County. Mr. Sluyter has been in several zoom meetings with Dawood.

**UNION SUB-COMMITTEE:**

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

**PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT:**

President Christini stated there was a Planning Commission meeting (draft in the packet) held on July 19, 2022. Discussed were the following:

**Parking in Residential Districts** – This was discussed at length and he summarized it as follows.

- Sayre's borough manager Dave Jarrett stated that they were moderately successful with their parking ordinance, but enforcement was difficult. They have visitor passes for residential and they are sometimes shared illegally. They have six different zones for parking.
- After discussion, the Planning Commission felt that the residential parking situation in Towanda has been this way for many years, and for the Mix Avenue area Allied Health Services group home has been there for more than 20 years (pre-existing condition). Because of this, the consensus of the Planning Commission was that the Borough is not obligated. The Commission tabled proposing an ordinance for parking in the R-1 district and return it to Council.
- Mr. Sluyter stated that 2011 was the last time there was a Certificate of Occupancy for the address (Allied's). It read there are to be no more than 6 clients with 2 staff members, and 2 cars are allowed to park in front of the location. However, he found out that Allied now has a van. He stated the last time the parking issue came up was in July 2020. He also called the Allied Manager today and she stated if it is an Allied car, it will have a placard hanging from the rear-view mirror. The Allied Manager is very willing to work with the borough. Their rollover for staff is between 3 and 3:30 PM. Mr. Sluyter was instructed to contact Ms. Smiley with the Planning Commission results and give her the breakdown of his discussion with Allied.

**Quality of Life Ordinance** – The Planning Commission is on board with this and will go forward with working on it. The top issues are garbage, rubbish, high grass, and snow & ice.

Mrs. Hatch brought up the "digging through the bags" in front of Rainbows End. She was driving through town and saw person(s) going through the bags, she came back later and it was cleaned up. This is the same person(s) every time that does this. She feels that we cannot have this type of thing occurring with this person or persons digging through the stuff, and they usually leave the contents all over the street. She wanted to know who is going to deal with this situation. She has also seen them going through garbage bags and anything else that is left out on Main Street. Mr. Eberlin stated that the police need to be called, and Mrs. Hatch stated that is what she will do next time.

**RECREATION REPORT:**

Mr. Kovalcin stated that there is 1 more performance at "Concerts in the Park" this coming Thursday. Mayor Miller also thanked Mr. & Mrs. Parks of Kali's Mission for selling hot dogs and drinks during the programs.

**TMA/WMA/CBPA REPORTS:**

Included in the packet.

**LIBRARY REPORT:**

Included in Packet. There will be no meeting in July and August.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Parks and seconded by Mr. Saring. Meeting adjourned at 8:47 PM.



Diane M. Kulick  
Towanda Borough Secretary