

**Towanda Borough  
Regular Council Meeting Minutes  
August 5, 2024**

The Towanda Borough Council Regular Meeting was held on Monday, August 5, 2024, at the Borough Municipal Building, 724 Main Street, Towanda, PA. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by President Eberlin.

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

**Absent:**

**CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:**

Mr. Jack Young of 705 South Fifth Street spoke about a drainage issue making his driveway unsafe and he is concerned about it collapsing. He stated that the irrigation underneath where the drain butts there's a drain pipe that comes down the street which nothing comes out of. He said that he talked to Jim Haight years ago about the problem, and he has also been told that it is because he has a driveway that goes downhill. He stated that he has a tenant in an apartment on the property that he is also concerned about. He has sent emails and pictures to former borough managers as well. There is one little cage that has the drainage that comes from Gorman's Pond on the opposite side of his driveway which may be 10 to 12 inches. He stated that he will continue to bring it to Council's attention and he hopes that we can figure out a way to address this issue. The driveway floods and is undermined, eroded underneath and the pipe is rusted out. Mr. Young stated that he has hired help to clean his driveway each year and it is getting worse and he feels that it is about to collapse at the top. He has had water and debris and chunks of asphalt end up at the bottom of his driveway at times. President Eberlin stated that he would like to be filled in about the runoff from the street and we will get back to Mr. Young.

Mr. Basil Bacorn stated that he is the new Executive Director of the CBCCC (Central Bradford County Chamber of Commerce). He would like to request permission from Council to hold a 5K on Saturday, September 7th, the same day as Towanda's Porch Fest. It will start at the underpass and go down to Pratt Avenue and back which is 3.1 miles. Mr. Kovalcin made the motion to close the Parkway for this event which was seconded by Mrs. Hatch. Motion passed.

On behalf of the Personal Care Home at Guthrie RPH Campus, Mayor Miller asked Council to allow closing the road at the intersection of William Street and Pratt Avenue between the hours of 11 AM to 2 PM (3 hours), on Friday, September 13th. They are having an open house to celebrate their 25th Anniversary of having the Personal Care opened. Mrs. Hatch made the motion to close the intersection during the requested hours which was seconded by Mr. Saring. Motion passed.

Mr. Jeremy Sluyter, 203 Third Street stated that he has a situation similar to Mr. Young's. He said when the Borough did the blacktop project between Poplar and State Streets, Bishops did the driveway across the street at 200 Third Street, and they changed the pitch of the road when they did that. Ever since then, the water has gone straight down to Mr. Sluyter's driveway. He currently has about a 16-inch ditch in his driveway. He stated he was fixing it twice a year and it is getting tiring for him as it is storm runoff. He was told last year when Mr. Strickland was here, that it was getting two catch basins. The only other thing he would add is three days after it was blacktopped, Bishops were back to do different curbing on my side, and Towanda Borough has been back six different times to do temporary curbing. Mr. Sluyter feels that by them already trying to do several things to fix it he feels that it is time to get it fixed properly. Maybe they could mill the edge of the driveway or something so the water doesn't flood him out. Also, he added that it floods the three people out behind him, so it's not just his driveway that it's getting hit. He doesn't feel that this is any different than the situation that was on Watts Street that the Borough fixed, and the previous issues Ann Street had that were addressed too.

President Eberlin stated that he has been in conversations with Matt Aikey and Mr. Sluyter, so it is on the radar. President Eberlin will have Mr. Aikey look at Mr. Young's issue as well. He stated these issues will need to be prioritized.

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

A motion to approve the July 1, 2024, Regular meeting minutes was made by Mr. Parks, and seconded by Mrs. Miller. Motion passed.

**FIRE CHIEF REPORT:**

Chief Roof report was in the packet. He stated that they had a fairly busy month and everything is in good working order. Towanda's fire truck was hit by another fire truck on a call to North Towanda. It is being repaired soon. There was not much damage and their insurance is going to cover it.

**FIRE BOARD REPORT:**

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

**MAYOR'S REPORT:**

- Mayor Miller gave an update on the 2024 Tour of Honor visits to the BCVM Park. Year to date there have been 1,039 registered participants and 24 (at the time of this writing) registered visitors from 8 (at the time of this writing) different states have visited the Quintessential Soldier Memorial at the BCVMPark since April 1st. The highest number of registered visits overall (at the time of this writing) is 52 at (the Congressional Medal of Honor) CMOHR Adolphus Staton Memorial in Rocky Mount, NC.

**POLICE CHIEF REPORT:**

Mayor Miller reviewed Chief Epler's report as he was out of town.

- DUI Rove and Seatbelt enforcement Patrols were conducted in the Borough this month.
- The Axon body-worn cameras are in service and being used by all Officers. We have received the equipment for the In-car systems, with an install date of 8/22. The equipment is for 3 cars to be outfitted.
- We are continuing with meetings via Zoom for the Central Square project for our operating system. I have been in contact with our IT provider about requirements and one thing that will be needed is a static IP address.
- 2 more Taser X2s have been purchased and issued to Officers Hennessy and Carpenter.
- The 2020 Patrol car had a problem with a traction control sensor and was out of service for a couple of weeks until the part came in. It's back in service now.
- We are now able to do electronic filing of non-traffic citations. We will no longer need paper citations for anything.
- Officers Hades and Hennessy did K-9 training in Clark-Summit for Narcotics, article searching, and tracking in Scranton.
- Officer Carpenter is a new father; Grayson was born on 7/29 and both he and his mom are home and doing well.
- Chief Epler had a request for another laptop that will be needed when Officer Campbell returns from military duty.

**JULY 2024 – Monthly Report**

283	COMPLAINTS RECEIVED	0	JUVENILE PETITIONS
65	TRAFFIC CITATIONS	0	K-9 SERVICE (BORO)
15	NON-TRAFFIC CITATIONS	6	THEFT REPORTS
2	DUI ARRESTS	3	ANIMAL COMPLAINTS
68	DISTURBANCE CALLS	6	VEHICLE DOORS OPENED
8	VEHICLE ACCIDENTS	11	WARNINGS ISSUED
3	OUT-OF-TOWN ASSISTS	14	MENTAL HEALTH CALLS
9	CRIMINAL ARRESTS		

**POLICE COMMITTEE:**

There was nothing new to report as the committee did not meet tonight. However, much was covered in the Police Chief's report.

**CODE ENFORCEMENT REPORT:**

Barry Thrush, Code Enforcement Report included.

- President Eberlin asked Mr. Thrush if he reached out to the new owner of the vacant Mulberry School. Mr. Thrush has spoken to him and will keep it on his list to stay in contact with him.

### **PUBLIC WORKS/CODE ENFORCEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT:**

Last month there was a meeting with information that was turned over to Solicitor Smith, and he is tweaking some things.

### **BOROUGH REPORT:**

The report included the following:

- **Borough & TMA Audits**  
Hallock Shannon PC completed the Borough & TMA audits for 2023 with no findings.
- **Janitorial**  
JRC Cleaning proposal for and acceptance of cleaning for the Municipal Building, Police dept, and WWTP, will save approximately \$1,200 per month. In addition, the parking garage cleaning will be done more often.
- **Law Enforcements Grant**  
Police Recruiter grant through PCCD, that was submitted for the 2 new full-time officers (received reimbursement July 29).  
Police LESGP was approved for 3 in-car cameras and 4 body cameras. The body cameras that we have received, have been submitted for \$23,839 and the payment is in process. Next quarter the officers should have the training for the in-car cameras completed. Chief Epler will set up training.
- **Porchfest**  
5K (Merrill Parkway) September 7th. The starting point will be Bradford County Veterans Memorial Park to the corner of Pratt Avenue and Merrill Parkway, then turning around and returning to the start.
- **Borough Paving**  
Glen O Hawbaker has completed the paving on 5th Street between Bridge & Elizabeth.
- **IT**  
Cybersecurity authentication will be taking effect by next month. The IT company has started the process of the changes. Doing this will satisfy the Borough's Insurance carrier.

### **BOROUGH SECRETARY**

The Borough Picnic is being held this Friday, August 9th at 4 PM.

### **BOROUGH SOLICITOR**

- Solicitor Smith stated that the Street Opening Ordinance has been sent on to Mr. Aikey and he will get together with him. He asked for authorization to advertise pending any revisions so Council can review and approve at the next meeting. Pending any revision from Mr. Aikey a motion was made by Mr. Kovalcin and seconded by Mr. Saring to approve the advertising of the Street Opening ordinance. Motion passed.
- Solicitor Smith also drafted the Abandoned Vehicle ordinance but needs to go over this with Chief Epler. Therefore, pending any revision from Chief Epler a motion was made by Mrs. Hatch, and seconded by Mr. Saring to approve the advertising of the Abandoned Vehicle Ordinance. Motion passed.

### **FINANCIAL & ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT:**

- A motion for the bills to be paid for was made by Mr. Parks and seconded by Mr. Christini. Motion passed.

President Eberlin called for an Executive Session at 7:20 PM, with the reason being to discuss personnel issues. The Executive Session ended at 7:37 PM.

### **UNION SUB-COMMITTEE:**

Mrs. Miller stated that she is waiting to hear from the union on starting negotiations. President Eberlin stated that we would wait to hear from the Union Representative as there is not an active union steward in the Borough right now. For now, we will wait for the union to appoint a temporary steward.

### **PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT:**

Mr. Christini stated that there wasn't a meeting held in July. The next meeting will be held on August 20th.

### **RECREATION REPORT:**

The budget for the event was included. Mr. Kovalcin stated that the weather (especially the heat) really hurt them this year. They are going to be taking acts that are less expensive next year, and they will probably change the event date back to August. This is a good time right before the kids go back to school. They didn't have a 5K that they normally have which brings in 3 to 4,000 dollars. It was said that the Chamber should bring BINGO back as it has always been a favorite.

### **TMA/WTMA/CBPA REPORTS:**


The June TMA and WTMA meeting minutes are in the packet.

**LIBRARY REPORT:**

Meetings resume in September.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Kovalcin. The meeting adjourned at 7:46 PM.



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Diane M. Kulick  
Towanda Borough Secretary