

**Towanda Borough Council  
December 2, 2024  
Regular Meeting Minutes**

The Towanda Borough Council held its regular meeting at the Towanda Borough Municipal Building on Monday, December 2, 2024. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.

**Council Members Present:** President Ryan Eberlin, Vice President Marc Christini, Jean Miller, Philip Roof, Joseph Saring, William Kovalcin, Jonathan Schulze, Michelle Hatch, and Gary Parks.

**Others:** Mayor Garrett Miller, Fred Smith (Borough Solicitor); Borough Officer Randy Epler, Borough Manager Stacy Schoonover, Secretary Diane Kulick, Judy Pousen, Administrative Staff Angie Oliver

**PUBLIC COMMENTS/CONCERNS**

- Richard Anderson, Red Rose Cafe, was present to express concerns regarding the Borough's agreement with NTSWA. He questioned why the Borough could tell him what company he could use when he can get a dumpster \$20 cheaper. He was informed that the ordinance was enacted with NTSWA to help equalize the rates for the borough residents for the next two years. He also questioned the two parking spots that are currently assigned three-hour parking in front of The Red Rose and why his family member was issued a warning that day while parked in one of the spots. Judy Pousen, the Towanda Borough Parking Enforcement Officer, stated that she issued the warning because the owner of the vehicle was parked in the wrong direction of travel which is a violation of the Borough ordinance. Council informed Mr. Anderson of parking up the street to the left which is free and might be more suitable for his employees, leaving the spots surround the café open for customers. M. Christini stated that someone could email the parking map to Mr. Anderson. A. Oliver obtained Mr. Anderson's phone number and email address for that purpose.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion to approve the November 4, 2024 minutes was made by J. Saring, seconded by W. Kovalcin. The motion carried unanimously.

**FIRE CHIEF REPORT**

The detailed monthly report was included in the December packet.

Chief Roof reported;

- November had 13 calls, but most were in the township.

**FIRE BOARD REPORT**

Mr. Parks stated there was nothing new to report.

**MAYOR REPORT**

- Mayor Miller reminded everyone of the upcoming weekend's Hometown Christmas celebration which features a parade at 5:00 pm. He encouraged everyone to attend.

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**POLICE CHIEF REPORT**

Chief Epler reported:

- A DUI Rove operation was conducted in the Borough with 7 arrests.
- Continuing with meetings via Zoom for the Central Square project for the operating system.
- Officers Hades and Hennessy did K-9 training in Luzerne County for Narcotics, article searching, and tracking. They also held a presentation for 5th graders at the Bradford County Rural Health Days.
- The K-9 team searched for contraband at the Bradford County Jail.

**TOWANDA POLICE DEPARTMENT  
MONTHLY REPORT - DECEMBER 2024**

305	COMPLAINTS RECEIVED	1	JUVENILE PETITIONS
55	TRAFFIC CITATIONS	0	K-9 SERVICE (BORO)
8	NON-TRAFFIC CITATIONS	4	THEFT REPORTS
7	DUI ARRESTS	2	ANIMAL COMPLAINTS
43	DISTURBANCE CALLS	3	VEHICLE DOORS OPENED
7	VEHICLE ACCIDENTS	6	WARNINGS ISSUED
2	OUT-OF-TOWN ASSISTS	10	MENTAL HEALTH CALLS
9	CRIMINAL ARRESTS		

**POLICE COMMITTEE**

Mr. Saring had nothing to report.

**CODE ENFORCEMENT REPORT**

The Code Enforcement Report is included in the December packet; B. Thrush was not present

- M Hatch stated that there was an increase in revenue from Park Mobile meaning that people are utilizing it, so the Council should not abandon the option as of yet.

**PUBLIC WORKS/CODE ENFORCEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Parks stated that they only meet as needed.

**BOROUGH MANAGER REPORT**

◦ **UNION**

An agreement has been reached with the Union and Manager Schoonover asked that the Council vote to accept the agreement made between the Towanda Borough and the Teamsters Local Union 118. The motion carried unanimously.

◦ **BUDGET 2025**

The budget for 2025 has been completed and will be posted in the Municipal Building for public viewing once the Council approves. Schoonover has attached the budget summary for review.

◦ **DOWNTOWN CHRISTMAS**

Manager Schoonover reminded everyone that December 6 & 7 is the Hometown Christmas celebration along the Merrill Parkway. The parkway was to originally be closed due to the 5k scheduled, but that was canceled, so the street will not be closed until 2 pm. She thanked the volunteers who helped make swags for the Victorian lights along Main Street and thanked Design 506 for graciously volunteering to decorate the flower pots along Main Street, as well.

◦ **NEW BUSINESS**

The Red Rose Café will be hosting their official ribbon cutting December 6, 2024.

◦ **DUMPSTERS**

Schoonover reiterated that the Borough does have a contract with NTSWA, therefore, those using dumpsters not registered to NTSWA will be receiving fines. Contractors within the borough have been using various companies and need to reach out to NTSWA to schedule their dumpsters.

- **TURNBACK**

Steve Kehoe from PennDot has been in contact with the Borough in regards to the North Towanda Turnback project. Eric Casaneves from Stiffler McGraw Engineering explained that with the newest version of the Turnback, PennDot would initially assist the Borough with upgrading the storm drains and sanitary drains and roadway, but once work is done, the Borough is in charge of upkeeping the storm drains and roadway with no help from PennDot. Previously, PennDot would help fund the turnback projects, but now they would only reimburse boroughs and townships at cost. Since Council previously voted to approve the resolution to accept the Turnback project, but it was not registered with PennDot. Secretary Kulick presented a resolution to rescind the approved resolution from February 2024. W. Kovalcin made the motion to accept the rescindment of Resolution 2024-5, M. Hatch seconded the motion, and the motion to rescind 2024-5 was passed unanimously. Resolution 2024-22 was in effect to override Resolution 2024-5.

- **LSA GRANT UPDATE**

Water and Sewer Superintendent Matt Aikey and Manager Schoonover have been in contact with LSA regarding the grant that was successfully awarded the borough in October 2024. M. Aikey is in the process of ordering a new backhoe for the Water and Sewer Authority.

Manager Schoonover asked if December 30 was suitable for the last meeting of the year to pass the 2025 budget, 2025 Tax Levy Ordinance, and year-end bills for the Borough. All agreed to have the last meeting on December 30<sup>th</sup> which will be advertised.

**BOROUGH SOLICITOR SMITH**

Solicitor Smith stated that he would be meeting with the Planning Commission on December 17<sup>th</sup> to discuss amending some ordinances so if a property owner does not keep the property up to code, the Borough could do said work on the home/land and then bill the constituent for the labor and costs. If they do not reimburse the Borough, a Municipal lien can then be placed so if there is ever a title search of the parcel, it could not be sold without the Borough obtaining the money due to them.

**BOROUGH SECRETARY**

Mrs. Kulick announced she has 21 days until retirement.

**FINANCIAL & ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT**

A motion was made to pay the bills by M. Hatch and seconded by J. Saring. The motion passed unanimously. M. Hatch asked about pages four and five showing bills paid to various townships and boroughs police departments. Schoonover stated that Towanda Borough organizes the DUI Taskforce for Bradford County, who then get reimbursed by the state of PA for anything paid out to various police departments.

**UNION SUB-COMMITTEE**

R. Eberlin stated there was nothing further to report.

**PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT**

M. Christini stated there was no meeting that month but they are continuing work on amending the non-conforming use ordinance.

**RECREATION REPORT**

W. Kovalcin said there was no meeting but they will start in January and he will keep everyone updated.

**TMA/WTMA/REPORTS**

M. Christini reminded Council that Wysox had approached TMA for a possible absorption. They held a workshop to go over the details of this proposed idea. Roger Hatch is reviewing the financials (debts, loans) and how much debt they have per customer which is a major concern. Christini has been reviewing the ordinances which contain two

huge issues, one being the grinder pumps at Lake Wesauking. Every home has a grinder pump and Ordinance 01-2018 states that residents are responsible for paying for the pumps, but no one has ever done this. If their pump burns up, they call someone to come and repair it or replace it, and this is at no cost to the homeowner, which should not be the case. The other issue is the Towanda Municipal Authority's ordinance stating that within all four municipalities that make up the TMA, you can't have any wells. At this time, there is one in Monroeton and one in the Towanda Borough, but there seem to be 100 plus wells around Lake Wesauking that were never forced to disconnect. There could be unknown reasons the systems are separated, like backflow, for example. Towanda Municipal Authority's ordinances regarding the water and sewer are in severe need of updating, but the issue is currently being researched.

#### **LIBRARY REPORT**

There was nothing to report.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion to adjourn was made by W. Kovalcin and seconded by J. Saring. The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



Angela L. Oliver  
Towanda Borough Administrative Assistant