

**Towanda Borough
Regular Council Meeting Minutes
September 3, 2024**

The Towanda Borough Council Regular Meeting was held on Tuesday, September 3, 2024, at the Borough Municipal Building, 724 Main Street, Towanda, PA. President Eberlin called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

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. Tom Bradford of 103 Means Street asked if the former Dandy Mini Mart on Main Street was notified about the vacant ordinance and was it registered? President Eberlin stated that he did not have an answer and would look into it.

A letter from Kali's Mission was included in the packet. The costs for spay and neutering have been increased due to the increase in the cost of supplies. In August, there were 3 males at \$45 each and 3 females at \$75 each, for a total of \$360.00. This amount will be reimbursed by the borough fund.

APPROVAL OF THE PREVIOUS MONTH'S MINUTES:

A motion to approve the August 5, 2024, Regular meeting minutes was made by Mr. Kovalcin, and seconded by Mrs. Miller. Motion passed.

A motion to approve the August 27, 2024, Special meeting minutes was made by Mrs. Hatch, and seconded by Mr. Parks. Motion passed.

FIRE CHIEF REPORT: The Fire Report is included in the packet.

- Chief Roof stated that there were a lot of calls this past month that were smoke detector malfunctions and not fire or smoke.
- The truck the fire department was given from Chesapeake still needs to have lettering. Vinyl lettering is currently hard to get. He is going to check with Bradco Supply.

FIRE BOARD REPORT:

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

MAYOR'S REPORT:

- Mayor Miller had a gentleman reach out to him over a week ago. He is starting a summer collegiate semi-pro baseball league. He was interested in the possibility of renting Memorial Park, so the mayor reached out to the Towanda school board about this. The field would need a lot of upgrades to host it. However, they may be able to get funding for it. This could involve teams from Vermont, and New Hampshire. Technically, it's the school's property, but this is just an informational thing right now. Mayor Miller is going to continue to communicate with the school to see if they want to proceed with this at all.
- Mayor Miller also had a woman reach out to him concerning a program Transforming Health in Your Community. It's a nationwide fitness thing, and they're talking about funding & activating fitness courts throughout the state. As the Mayor gets more information, he will pass it on.
- Mayor Miller thanked Stacy for accompanying him during the Mayor for a Day that was sponsored through the Black Knight Bash with the winner being a young gentleman named Weston (as Mayor for a Day). He wanted everybody to only work half a day immediately which made him popular. They toured the water treatment plant, and Paul and Pat Maynard did a phenomenal job with the tour. They stopped and visited Courtney Oley while she was painting the panels along the Merrill Parkway, and she let him paint a little. Then they toured the sewer plant with Darren & Paul which was, believe it or not, his favorite. He called it the "poop plant".
- They visited the fire station. Chili did a great job up there. Weston actually remembered some of the stuff that Chili taught him in kindergarten. They went to the police station and Brian and Trevor did a great job showing the equipment inside and the police car. They finished the day at the borough building where Bengal showed him the mechanic's garage and he met the office personnel and had pizza & chips. In all, Weston had a great time. Mayor Miller also gave him a little miniature key to the city pin. President Eberlin thanked the mayor for doing this every year, as it seems to be a hit.
- Porch Fest is coming up this Saturday. Hope everybody can get out and participate. You might want to bring an umbrella with you, just in case. But rain or shine it's happening.
- President Eberlin asked about a date for Trick or Treating. Thursday, October 31st was the agreed-upon date. Also, the Halloween parade is scheduled for Saturday, October 26th.

POLICE CHIEF REPORT:

Chief Epler report

- A DUI Rove was conducted in the Borough this month.
- The Axon 3 In-Car cameras are in service and being used by all Officers. They were installed on 8/22. The equipment was installed in all 3 cars, at the station, the K9 car doesn't have a camera. This was the final step in completing the camera update with the grant money that was awarded to us.
- We continue with meetings via Zoom for the Central Square project for our operating system. The static IP address was installed last week so that we can move forward on the project.
- Interim Borough manager, Mrs. Schoonover found that the vehicle grant was not dead and got it to be reviewed. The total was about 400K, which includes money for a new Police vehicle.
- Officers Hades and Hennessy did K-9 training in Scranton for Narcotics, article searching, and tracking in Scranton. They also did presentations for Touch a Truck, Child support awareness family fun days held at the YMCA, and Camp Sensations at Guthrie Towanda.
- The new body armor that was purchased to replace armor that was going out of date arrived and was put into service. There is a grant for that armor that covers 50 percent of the cost. The Tasers are good and the cameras are in the cars.

AUGUST 2024 – Monthly Report

303	COMPLAINTS RECEIVED	0	JUVENILE PETITIONS
46	TRAFFIC CITATIONS	0	K-9 SERVICE (BORO)
7	NON-TRAFFIC CITATIONS	3	THEFT REPORTS
4	DUI ARRESTS	3	ANIMAL COMPLAINTS
75	DISTURBANCE CALLS	2	VEHICLE DOORS OPENED
2	VEHICLE ACCIDENTS	14	WARNINGS ISSUED
1	OUT-OF-TOWN ASSISTS	10	MENTAL HEALTH CALLS
8	CRIMINAL ARRESTS		

POLICE COMMITTEE:

Mr. Saring stated that there was nothing new to report other than the officers are out there doing a great job as you can see in the status report.

CODE ENFORCEMENT REPORT:

Mr. Thrush is not available for the meeting. The Code Enforcement Report is included.

- Mr. Thrush sent a note out to the new owner of the Mulberry Street School to be proactive about the condition of this property. Chief Epler stated the place is not secure as there are a couple of windows broken out. This will be followed up with Mr. Thrush.

PUBLIC WORKS/CODE ENFORCEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT:

There was no meeting last month.

BOROUGH REPORT:

The report included the following:

1. IT Upgrades

Police station: Comcast Business Internet was installed on 8/28/2024. SCT Computers spent two days last week upgrading the internet package to include a static IP address. This was needed for the police to join countywide.

All the employees' computers and emails are now MFA (multi-factor authentication) activated. This is for external cyber security. Employees had the option to use a phone or fob.

2. **Training**

- PSAB webinar Dealing with Blight in Small Towns (which Mr. Thrush had taken also).
- Mayor for the day was a good thing.
- Text My Gov - needs to be used by the public more often. Can be pushed through our website.
- PSAB Wilkes Barre training on September 17th for Municipal Budgeting & Finance.

3. **Porchfest**

September 6th Bishops will be delivering portables, borough employees will distribute trash cans & barricades. The event will kick off Saturday, September 7th.

4. **Downtown Christmas**

I attended the Chamber of Commerce event planning on Friday, August 23rd; the Hometown Christmas date is set for December 6 and 7th. More to come.

5. **Merrill Parkway**

Courtney Oley finished 24 panels. Her goal is to have it all finished by the end of October if the weather cooperates.

6. **Cleaning**

The Parking Garage is looking better with JRC Cleaning Service, but the windows have webs, spiders, and dirt that need to be cleaned. I have reached out for estimates on window cleaning as we do not have the equipment to have our employees clean. County Pest Control sprayed the parking garage and the police station to help eliminate the insects.

7. **TAPS**

Approve **Resolution 2024-16** to change (Towanda Administrative Policy) TAP#1 through TAP #20, highlighted areas.

RESOLUTION 2024-16

Approve changes to TAP #6, #7, #10, #12, #13, #16, & #17 highlighted areas.

Motion made by Mr. Kovalcin and seconded by Mr. Christini

The roll was called and recorded as follows:

AYE/YES: President Eberlin, Mrs. Miller, Mr. Roof, Mr. Saring, Mr. Kovalcin, Mr. Shulze, Vice-President Christini, Mrs. Hatch & Mr. Parks

NAY/NO:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

RESOLUTION 2024-16 - Carried

8. **EQUIPMENT**

2011 Ford Ranger has met the reserve price and needs approval for the top bid of \$2,300.00. A motion was made by Mrs. Hatch and seconded by Mr. Saring to approve the bid for the 2011 Ford Ranger. Motion passed.

BOROUGH SOLICITOR – 2 Ordinances advertised for approval

ORDINANCE 2024-4

ABANDONED VEHICLES updated ordinance.

Motion made by Mr. Saring and seconded by Mr. Kovalcin

The roll was called and recorded as follows:

AYE/YES: President Eberlin, Mrs. Miller, Mr. Roof, Mr. Saring, Mr. Kovalcin, Mr. Shulze, Vice-President Christini, Mrs. Hatch & Mr. Parks

NAY/NO:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

ORDINANCE 2024-4 – Carried

ORDINANCE 2024-5

STREET OPENING PERMIT updated ordinance.

Motion made by Mr. Parks and seconded by Mr. Saring

The roll was called and recorded as follows:

AYE/YES: President Eberlin, Mrs. Miller, Mr. Roof, Mr. Saring, Mr. Kovalcin, Mr. Shulze, Vice-President Christini, Mrs. Hatch & Mr. Parks

NAY/NO:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

ORDINANCE 2024-5 – Carried

BOROUGH SECRETARY – Mrs. Kulick had 2 resolutions for approval

RESOLUTION 2024-14

Appointment of Gary Parks as the new Municipal Emergency Management Coordinator.

Motion made by Mr. Saring and seconded by Mr. Schulze

The roll was called and recorded as follows:

AYE/YES: President Eberlin, Mrs. Miller, Mr. Roof, Mr. Saring, Mr. Kovalcin, Mr. Shulze, Vice-President Christini, & Mrs. Hatch

NAY/NO:

ABSTAIN: Mr. Parks

ABSENT:

RESOLUTION 2024-14 – Carried

RESOLUTION 2024-15

2025 MMO (Minimum Municipal Obligation) for Towanda Borough Police Pension Plan.

Motion made by Mr. Christini and seconded by Mrs. Miller

The roll was called and recorded as follows:

AYE/YES: President Eberlin, Mrs. Miller, Mr. Roof, Mr. Saring, Mr. Kovalcin, Mr. Shulze, Vice-President Christini, Mrs. Hatch & Mr. Parks

NAY/NO:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

RESOLUTION 2024-15 – Carried

FINANCIAL & ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT:

- A motion for the August 2024 bills to be paid for was made by Mr. Kovalcin and seconded by Mr. Christini. Motion passed.

President Eberlin called for an Executive Session at 7:45 PM with the reason being to discuss personnel issues. The Executive Session ended at 8:05 PM.

After the executive session, Mr. Eberlin asked for a motion to extend the Borough Manager contract to Stacy Schoonover. A motion was made by Mr. Saring and seconded by Mr. Schultz. The motion carried unanimously and congratulations were given to Mrs. Schoonover with Council's full support for anything she may need help with.

UNION SUB-COMMITTEE:

Mrs. Miller stated there was no meeting. Mr. Aikey is getting organized and Mr. Eberlin will meet with him this month for a discussion.

PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT:

Mr. Christini stated that he did not attend the last meeting but they did have a quorum and there were at least 2 citizens to be heard, Mr. Bradford and Mr. Haggerty. There is nothing additional that needs to come to council's attention.

RECREATION REPORT:

Mr. Kovalcin stated they are getting ready for the Pumpkin Roll which is October 5th. The actual rolling contest will begin at 4 PM and the event will open at 2:30 PM.

TMA/WTMA/CBPA REPORTS:

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

LIBRARY REPORT:

The Meeting for September is canceled.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Saring and seconded by Mrs. Hatch. The meeting adjourned at 8:08 PM.

Diane M. Kulick
Towanda Borough Secretary