

MINUTES KOPPEL BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING
August 15, 2023 – 6:00 p.m.
Koppel Fire Hall

PRESENT

Athena Pangikas-Miller, Mayor
 Acting President – Jeff Dengler
 Susan Krawchyk
 Anna Marie Plavecsky
 Frank Pisano
 Officer Erie Squicquero
 Joe Budicak - Solicitor

GUESTS PRESENT

Tim Brewer, Dave Plavecsky, Brett Plavecsky, Jeff Evans, Josh Konecheck, Jimmy Krawchyk, Gary Ferrigno, Carol Shirilla, Joann Smith, Matthew Cesare

MOTIONS

- A motion was made to accept the minutes from the July 18 and August 1 meetings. All in favor and all approved.
- A motion was made to approve the payment of bills from the General Fund. All in favor and all approved.
- A motion was made to approve the bills for the Fire Department. All in favor and all approved.
- A motion was made to purchase a monitor (approximately \$300) for the police holding cell. All in favor and all approved.
- A motion was made to table the union issue at the next council meeting on September 19 for the two non-compliant employees. All in favor and all approved.
- A motion was made to table the basketball hoop ordinance. All in favor and all approved.
- A motion was made to hire a part-time person for Maintenance. All in favor and all approved.
- A motion was made to have Richardson Inspection Services as our Zoning Officer. All in favor and all approved.
- A motion was made to retain Owen Pella as our enforcement officer to continue to send letters/cite customers for delinquent garbage bills. All in favor and all approved.

POLICE REPORT

- The Dodge Charger police car had to be towed on a flatbed today. They believe the fan bent or became dislodged and cut the radiator. The cost will be around \$800.
- Chief Warren is asking for a monitor (approximately \$300) and an air conditioner to be installed in the holding cell at the police station.

FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Officer Eric Squicquero discussed the possibility of getting a new fire truck and a new utility truck and could the borough contribute any funds for a new truck. He found a used fire truck for \$20,000. There are other used ones from \$20,000 to \$50,000. He stated the current truck is open cab and is illegal but it is grandfathered in for Koppel. Frank Pisano said he is against purchasing. Jeff Dengler would like the fire department to present a plan to council. Susan Krawchyk asked if we would be able to sell the old one. Eric said yes, that would be possible. Eric also stated there are four fire fighters who would like to be certified so that they can respond to medical calls and improve public safety.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

- Update on the proposal to form a bargaining union: received a request from the state asking if we would agree to a joint certification – which would be the two employees other than the police. This was already approved previously, but the Solicitor is asking for approval again so he can answer the state. Jeff Dengler asked how this

affects those positions in the event that an employee would quit and a new employee is hired. Solicitor Budicak said that unionization will stay with that position but a new employee could ask to de-certify from the Union. This issue has been tabled until the next council meeting.

- Solicitor Budicak needed to discuss the details for the basketball hoop ordinance so he can update the final version. This will remain on the agenda for the next council meeting on September 19.

MAYOR'S REPORT

- Had a meeting with EADS, our engineering firm, to discuss the grants that have been received and how they will be used for the stormwater sewers from Arthur to 6th Avenue. The following grants have been received: a CDBG grant for \$90,000, an ARPA grant for \$141,000, an LSA grant for \$200,000, and another ARPA grant for \$75,000. A request was also made for their help in putting together a bid for demolition of the church.
- A grant was applied for through DCED called the Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program for \$240,865.00. This grant is for the development of a community park.
- Talked to Beaver County about demolition of the church, but they are not interested.
- Looked at a low-volume road application for Garden Alley. Will apply at the next available cycle.

GUESTS

- Matt Cesare brought up the topic of possible restoration of the Church rather than tearing it down. He has connections to a preservation group in Pittsburgh which is geared towards high school and college kids. They look to see how buildings can be reinvented thru multi-uses, businesses and other facets. He would like council's approval to get more information and possibly present it at another meeting. Everyone on council agreed.
- Jeff Evans was inquiring about the alleys and when they will be fixed. Frank Pisano said there is a game plan – Rick is working with Youngbloods to possibly get the alleys fixed. Worse case scenario, Rick will fill the potholes with gravel. Jeff also questioned the garbage service during and what/when they are not picking up.
- Gary Ferrigno is concerned about all the water (from 3 downspouts flowing into 1 large downspout) coming onto his property/garage from the fire department building. He went to a fire department meeting and they said they would look into it. This has been going on for a year now (when the new roof was installed on the fire department building). It was determined that the fire department is responsible since they own the property and you are not allowed to divert the natural flow of water. Our Solicitor said the fire department needs to contact the company that installed the roof and have them come back and fix it. Council members said they will follow up.
- Jim Krawchuk stated that the natural flow of water from the Stewart apartments used to flow through a trench from one end of the alley to the other end. Stewart apartments and the owner of the storage units filled in the trench and now the water flows into the neighbor's yard, washes all the gravel from the alley and goes all the way to Mount Street and causes a water problem.

MAINTENANCE REPORT

No Report

GENERAL DISCUSSION

- Brett Plavecsky will donate the cable necessary to hook up the monitor in the police holding cell.
- Jesse Berkebile and Tim Brewer offered free air conditioners for the holding cell. Rick will look at them and see if either of them will fit the window.
- The 3rd Avenue and 5th Avenue properties have been cited by Richardson Inspection Services. The 5th Avenue property is up for upset/sheriff's sale on September 12.
- The mayor asked for help in planning a fall event. Anna Maria offered her help. Very few vendors have requested to participate. Details to follow.
- Discussed what date to have Halloween. Waiting for other towns to announce their dates. Will follow up at next council meeting.
- Potentially have an anonymous donor that may be doing something to benefit the community but that can't be discussed at this time.
- Councilwomen, Anna Maria Plavecsky, called the Ethics Board on August 8 to discuss a possible conflict of interest since she is the mother of Officer Squicquero. They told her that she can discuss and vote on the police department as a whole. The only conflict of interest would be if it is for financial gain, then she would not be able to vote.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 7:24 PM