

MINUTES KOPPEL BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING
July 18, 2023 – 6:00 p.m.
Koppel Fire Hall

PRESENT

Athena Pangikas-Miller, Mayor
 Tom Sobona, President
 Suzanne Broge
 Frank Pisano
 Chuck Bevington
 Police Chief Justin Warren
 Officer Erie Squicquero
 Joe Budicak - Solicitor

GUESTS PRESENT

Tim Brewer, Anna Marie and Dave Plavecsky, Brett Plavecsky, Josh Konecheck, Denise Green, Susan and Jimmy Krawchyk, Dana Rowles, Carol Ferrigno, Carol Shirilla, Joann Smith, Samantha Hildman

MOTIONS

- A motion was made to accept the minutes from the June 20th meeting. 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 open up the agenda to discuss our current T-Mobile account. All in favor and all approved.
- A motion was made to switch the T-Mobile account for the police from a business account to a government account. All in favor and all approved.
- A motion was made to buy tires for the backhoe – not to exceed \$3,000. All in favor and all approved.
- A motion was made to bring in an exterminator to take care of the carpenter ants in the maintenance building – not to exceed \$1,000. All in favor and all approved.
- A motion was made to purchase \$1,000 of police equipment lost in the cruiser. All in favor and all approved.
- A motion was made to purchase \$800 for a microphone system to be used during council meetings. All in favor and all approved.
- A motion was made to pass Section 9 of the new Traffic Ordinance independently. All in favor and all approved.
- A motion was made to accept the resignation of Barbara Gioffre – Suzanne Broge voted No – All others in favor and approved.
- A motion was made to accept the resignation of Carrie Clerici – Suzanne Broge voted No – All others in favor and approved.
- A motion was made to send the Ellwood City Area Chorale \$125 and the VFW New Galilee Post 8106 \$50 for their participation in the Memorial Day Service. This is approved to be a yearly payment. All in favor and all approved.
- A motion was made to start the process of collecting bids to tear down the church next to the rectory. All in favor and all approved.
- A motion was made to order five 15 ft. poles for flags that will be installed at the park. All in favor and all approved.
- A motion was made to move into an Executive Session. All in favor and all approved.

POLICE REPORT

- Police report was handed out but there were no questions asked about it.
- T-Mobile government department reached out to Chief Warren and wants to change our Business account to a Government account. The savings would be approximately \$100 a month.
- Officer Squicquero attended a meeting at Homewood. They do not want to sign a contract for police coverage at this time because they are trying to purchase a truck. If we do eventually give them police service, it could open up the ability to get grants.

ZONING REPORT

Nothing to Report

FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Questions have been asked as to the status of Fire Chief, Devon Price. He intends to stay on as Chief, even though he works for Shenango fire department.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Solicitor Joseph Budicak has information about the union and the grant contract and will speak to those when the Old and New business topics are discussed.

MAYOR'S REPORT

The mayor will wait to speak when Old and New Business topics are discussed.

GUESTS

Jim Krawchyk asked why there was blue paint (for the handicapped) on the sidewalk in front of councilman Chuck Bevington's house. Chuck replied that the VA showed up with a work order and painted it. Susan Krawchyk, who works for the VA, said the VA doesn't do that. The handicapped spaces in town have been a big issue and many discussions were had during council meetings. These discussions led to council voting to do away with permitting handicapped spaces because there are too many requests and no way to monitor it. It was decided that the paint on Bevington's sidewalk would be removed.

TENARIS

Josh Konecheck followed up with information about the new bag house. For the next month to month and a half, you may hear consistent noise, which will be the pile driving for the bag house. It will only be done during daylight hours from Monday thru Friday. Phase 2 on the paving project has begun.

Officer Squicquero related that there was an issue with someone shooting a gun around 6th Avenue. He stopped to get permission to go onto Tenaris property which would have been good cover and was given a problem by the guard on duty. Josh said he would look into the matter and that the police always have a right to go on the property, if necessary, while on duty.

NEW TRAFFIC ORDINANCE

The new traffic ordinance that was advertised is a combination of 5 other ordinances. There was a discussion about what was new in the ordinance and it was determined that there were only a few minor changes to the traffic portion, however, Section 9 relating to the basketball hoops was new. The solicitor stated this ordinance was overly broad and trying to cover too many issues and if it is adopted, amendments will have to be advertised for each of the old ordinances, which will be very costly.

The Ordinance was advertised for passage in June. It came up for a vote but was tabled. The solicitor said we can agree to pass Section 9 as a separate ordinance and we don't have to pay for it to be advertised. The ordinance will be tabled once more until the Solicitor and council review it before voting to adopt.

MAINTENANCE REPORT

- Carpenter ants have been found on the upper level of the maintenance building and an exterminator will be asked for an estimate.
- There is an issue in the alley behind the Stewart apartments. There used to be an open catch drain to catch any water flow and that drain is no longer open.
- A few months ago, it was discussed that the backhoe needs new tires.

- Rick's helper quit and it would be nice to have a new one.
- Rick contacted Youngblood about the paving from Arthur Street to Westgate. He asked them to give us a bid to take the milling machine thru a couple of the alleys. To keep filling potholes with gravel makes the problem worse and it just keeps washing away into people's yards. This should solve a lot of the water problems.
- Chief Warren offered to submit a bid for sealing of the basketball court.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

- The condemned property on 5437 5th Avenue was for sale but buyers have since pulled out of the sale. A company from New Jersey was going to purchase it as they already own two other properties in town.
- There was a discussion about possibly buying a lot around 3rd Avenue to put a swing set and make a safer place for the children in that area to play.
- Chuck Bevington purchased flags of all 5 military branches to be displayed at the park. Chuck offered to give up his pay for the rest of the year to pay for the poles for the flags but council said that was not necessary.
- The LSA grant that the Borough received has a lot of requirements and responsibilities that have to be met and if they are not, the possibility of paying back the money is an issue. The Solicitor will reach out to the engineers for clarification.
- The mayor brought up the subject of allowing food trucks into town on an on-going basis, and what we could charge for permit fee. Councilman Pisano disagreed with allowing that because it infringes on the lunch traffic at Al's Corner and they have been so good to the Borough thru the years. It also affects other businesses in town that sell food. They should only be allowed when there is an event.
- The mayor stated it would be a good idea to purchase a microphone system so that everyone at the council meetings can hear.
- The grant for demolition of the church has been denied. A request was made to start the process of collecting bids for demolition. A meeting with the engineers will be set up to get their input and help with the bid.

EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

A motion was made to move into an Executive Session to discuss the process for the meeting to unionize the police.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 8:41 PM