

Minutes of Regular Monthly Meeting of Koppel Borough Council for **January 21, 2020**

Council Attendance: **Barbara Gioffre, Athena Pangikas-Miller, Michael Sabino, Frank Pisano, Eugene Docchio, Glenn Marshall, Jr.**

Borough Solicitor: Joseph Budicak Borough Engineer: Brandon Fombelle
Borough Police Officer: Shay Sarcone
Mayor: Tom Vannoy
Absent: Sandy Florie

Guests: Henry Tjerlund, Suzanne Broge, Russ Broge, Jeff Dengler

The meeting opened with a Prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance by Barb Gioffre

A motion was made by Glenn Marshall, Jr. and seconded by Eugene Docchio to accept the minutes from December 17, 2019 and January 6th council meeting. The motion was approved by present council members.

A motion was made by Frank Pisano and seconded by Glenn Marshall, Jr. to approve payment of the Borough bills from the general fund. The motion was approved by present council members.

A motion was made by Athena Pangikas-Miller and seconded by Eugene Docchio to approve payment of the Fire Department bills. The motion was approved by present council members.

Guests

Jeff Dengler questioned the condition of the alleys. Ken Orrico answered that he has met with LTAP to view the alleys and provide the borough with information on repair, costs to repair, and LTAP's opinion of their condition. LTAP will provide the information at a later date. Eugene Docchio asked why the alley behind the borough office and along the railroad tracks was closed. Barbara Gioffre commented that the alley was just repaired by PA American Water and to eliminate the cost of continued repair, it was closed for use by Koppel Borough Maintenance. Jeff asked if Koppel received a letter from Aaron Bernstine regarding passing an ordinance to make all the municipalities second amendment sanctuaries. The letter was received and council will look into it.

Koppel Police Department

The Police report was presented by Shay Sarcone of the Koppel Police Department. Shay asks that residents needing police assistance should call 911 instead of the police office. When the police are out the calls are sent to them directly by 911. By doing this, calls are received in a timely manner and the police can respond quicker. It was suggested to post this information on the website and in the newsletter.

Koppel Volunteer Fire Co.

The report was presented by Suzanne Broge. A pork chop and stuffing dinner is scheduled to be held on February 22, 2020. It will include take-out dinners between 3 pm and 5 pm and serving dinners to eat at the hall between 4 pm and 6 pm. Dinners will cost \$8 for adults, ages 3 to 12 will be \$5, and under 3 free. The next auction will be sometime in February.

Engineer's Report

The report was presented by the Borough Engineer, Brandon Fombelle of Michael Baker International (MBI). Regarding the traffic light, a proposal and an analysis for repair of the light. The light is now working properly. MBI has received signed documents for the repair and improvements for Mount Street and 5th Avenue.

Solicitor's Report

The solicitor asked what the pre-trial scheduled by the County for January 6th was for. Mr. Joseph Budicak is Koppel Borough's new solicitor. Barbara Gioffre explained that properties owned by the borough were assessed taxes and appealed the tax status. The process of appeal was delayed by the previous solicitor and advised not to pay the taxes resulting in those properties being placed for sheriff sale. The taxes were paid to avoid the sale. Koppel is wanting to receive a refund of back taxes that were paid and wanting to know how to go about doing that. Those taxes were paid to the county and school. Mr. Budicak said you must go through the process of asking the County to list you as tax exempt. He will look into the matter.

Maintenance Report

Ken Orrico, Borough Maintenance Manager report was given about the alleys and the condition. He met with LTAP for their opinion on condition and what is the best way to fix them including paving, gravel, and grating. We had record rainfall last year and this year has been the 4th highest rainfall making it difficult to repair. The alleys will be addressed in the springtime. Ken asked that someone should call him from council to let him know when the roads are snow covered. Ken doesn't live in town.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Vannoy has received complaints about burning and animals and said we need to relook at our burning and animal ordinance. He also received complaints about RV's and trailers parked on the street. For the upcoming Potter Baseball event scheduled for the summer, Jeff Potter is asking for a meeting March 3rd at the Koppel Borough Fire hall. The mayor explained that there will be a couple of games played after the clean-up and repair of the ballfield. He asked if the fire department wanted to get involved and have food booths. Jeff Potter asked for housing for the 12 to 14 kids and chaperones who will need a place to stay when they are here. The question was asked when the rectory would be vacated by Brayman Construction so that it might be used by Potter's team. He asked for council's approval to use the rectory as a place for Potter Baseball to stay during their event on July 16th and 17th. A motion to allow them to use the rectory was made and was approved.

New, Old, and Unfinished Business

Potter Baseball

Barbara Gioffre asked if the fire department has Bingo equipment and if it is functioning to use for a fund raiser to help support the costs involved with Potter Baseball. Koppel met its goal in the GoFundMe fundraiser of \$2,500. Russ Broze said the equipment needed some lights repaired but that Koppel would need a temporary license to have a bingo game. Council needs to call Aaron Bernstine for a temporary license.

Snow Removal

Ken Orrico does not live in Koppel and often the weather where he lives is different from Koppel and Barbara Gioffre asked if a volunteer would call Ken to notify him when the roads needed cleared. Shay Sarcone said she has called when needed and would ask the department to do the same.

Police Benefits

A 401K and adding sick days for the police was discussed as a way to retain police officers hired by the borough. It was asked what the council's ideas are for providing these for the department's full-time officers and there was a suggestion by Tom Vannoy to make those benefits available to all borough employees. He also suggested that a job description be written for the police department as was written for the borough secretary and maintenance positions. The suggestion was for three personal days by Skip Docchio and are to be used within the year and not carried over into the next year. It was suggested to waive a 401K and just give the officers a raise by Frank Pisano. A motion was made to give the officers three personal days that are not accumulated and to be used within the year by Skip Docchio and seconded by Bud Marshall. The solicitor asked if Koppel has a written contract with our police. Tom Vannoy said there is no formal policy and suggested again that we write a policy/job description as we have one for the secretary and the maintenance manager. New hire Shay Sarcone was not clear on what her benefits are, a policy would correct this. It was noted that we have two full-time officers and seven part-time officers.

Grants

A grant for PA Small Water and Sewer by EADS was filed in December and is available for review in the office. The EADS Group are looking into applying for another grant for playground equipment and a pavilion with CDBG. A meeting for the upcoming grant was held at the Beaver County Community Development office for the CDBG Grant offering this year and was attended by EADS and Koppel Council President.

Sale of Property

The borough received a letter from Attorney Loll's office and received a check from the money held in escrow for the McGuire properties. A portion of the money from the sale of property to McGuire Homes was held in escrow to pay for liens that were on the lots. After those liens were paid the check amounted to \$3,822.79.

Burning Ordinance

Tom Vannoy said he received complaints about burning on the ground and the need to update the burning ordinance. Other complaints were about smoking fires and fires giving off a bad smell. An updated ordinance would address recreational burning, what materials would be permitted to be burned, hours of burning, and method of burning. It was suggested that recreational fires be allowed for 24-hour burning and other burning allowable with limitation. It was suggested the fine be increased for violating increased for violating the ordinance. The new ordinance will be revised and reviewed for adoption.

School/Church Building

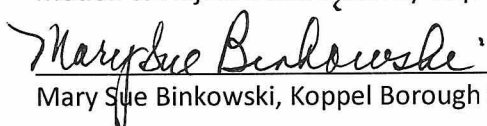
Frank Pisano reported that Koppel Steel is interested in buying the school/church properties. That would include the church and school, the rectory, and land to their gate. Tom Vannoy said the original intent at the time of purchase was to sell the property to Koppel Steel who at the time was interested in purchasing it but because of the delay in closing Koppel Steel for various reasons decided not to buy. They are again interested in purchasing the school/church for offices and would renovate the building. Frank Pisano is wanting a number to give Koppel Steel as an offer. Tom Vannoy said we should ask Koppel Steel to include the 100' of land in the ballfield in the deal. The land has been used for years by the borough and as part of our recreational grant we need to own the property. Skip Docchio said he is in favor to sell to Koppel Steel.

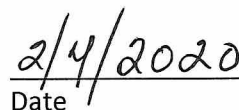
Barbara Gioffre suggested to offer the church/school property in a 10 years lease with a yearly escalation of lease. Where it would pay the remaining mortgage and provide for additional money to be used by the borough. The lease would include a clause where Koppel Steel would be responsible for total upkeep and taxes of the property with the option to purchase at the end of the lease. The lease would pay for the remaining mortgage of the property and several years of the lease would result in a financial gain to the borough plus the sale would recoup the total cost paid for the property and possibly additional financial gain.

The suggestion was made by Barbara Gioffre to use the rectory as a borough building. The current office is not large enough to conduct meetings, the elderly has difficulty getting into the building, and there is not adequate parking. Meetings held at the present borough building sometimes necessitate using the garage area as a meeting room. The rectory has parking and would be accessible to those who are handicapped. The rectory has 4 rooms of which 3 have separate bathrooms, a kitchen, mechanical room, combination living and dining area, a two-stall garage, and a large utility room. It was suggested that the rectory is not big enough for a borough building and it was questioned the number of people who visit the office. Suggestion to address the problems was renovation of the old section of the borough building or expanding the current office out into the garage area.

It was decided by Koppel Council to offer for sale to Koppel Steel the school/church, the rectory, and lot with the inclusion of the additional 100' of property in the ballfield as part of the sale.

Motion to Adjourn was made by Skip Docchio.


Mary Sue Binkowski, Koppel Borough Secretary


Date

Special Council Meeting January 29, 2020 – Police Chief Matt Smock

The meeting was called to order by Barbara Gioffre

Present: Mayor Tom Vannoy, Barbara Gioffre, Micheal Sabino, Frank Pisano, and Bud Marshall

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the resignation of Matt Smock as Police Chief. He has accepted a position with the Ellwood City School District. He has requested that he be able to work part-time, but full-time in the summer months, also to keep his health benefits for a year and a half until his new position benefits become effective, and to keep his current wage.

The request was made by Barbara Gioffre, President for council members to raise their hands to be recognized to speak.

Motion

Bud Marshall made the motion to reject payment of benefits and the same wage.

Second by Michael Sabino

Motion

Bud Marshall made a motion that in lieu of Matt not wanting to take the position part-time, we interview Koppel Borough part-timers that would be interested in the chief position.


Second by Frank Pisano

The discussion was made about Matt working part-time and then full-time in the summer and objections were made that if he is part-time, he would remain part-time and not be permitted to work full time in the summer.


Motion

Bud Marshall made a motion to retain only as part-time.

Second by Frank Pisano



Mary Sue Binkowski, Koppel Borough Secretary



Date