

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

PRESENT

Barbara Gioffre, President
 Athena Pangikas-Miller, Mayor
 Tom Sobona
 Suzanne Broge
 Jeff Dengler
 Frank Pisano
 Carrie Clerici
 Justin Warren – Police Chief
 Joe Budicak - Solicitor

ABSENT

Chuck Bevington

GUESTS PRESENT

Anna Marie Plavecsky, Dave Plavecsky, Joann Smith, Carol Shirilla, Tim Brewer, Denise Green, Karen Zito, Dave Zito
 Ryan McConaughy

MOTIONS

- A motion was made to reinstate the part-time maintenance position. All in favor and all approved.
- A motion was made to reimburse police uniforms allowing \$200 per year for each officer. All in favor and all approved.
- A motion was made to update, approve and sign an agreement between Koppel Borough and Big Beaver Borough for cosst associated with repair and maintenance of the traffic light at the intersection of SR 18 and SR 351. All in favor and all approved.
- A motion was made to approve and sign an agreement between Tenaris, EADS and Koppel for the reimbursement of fees associated with the SR 351 repair of water running onto road. All in favor and all approved.

POLICE REPORT

Chief Justin Warren reported that a Tazer used by the department is 20+/- years old and has been showing an error code. He would like to replace the Tazer and gave estimates of cost. He reported that a \$5,000 grant was recently received by the department and could be used to pay for the purchase. A discussion on the importance of the use and need for a Tazer was made and the solicitor suggested that a non-lethal method of force is better and more effective in subduing suspects. It was determined that further discussion and price-comparison is needed, so this item was tabled for a later date and will await a full report by the Chief.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Solicitor Joseph Budicak reviewed an old agreement between Big Beaver and Koppel Borough regarding the traffic light maintenance at SR 18 and SR 351 and stated it needed to be updated. Big Beaver created a new agreement which was sent to the Borough for signatures. The agreement states the following: Big Beaver Borough along with Koppel Borough agrees to pay all costs equally for the traffic light at the intersection of PA State Route 18 and PA State Route 351. These costs shall include all operation, maintenance, and repairs along with any other costs incurred at said traffic light. A motion was made to approve and was passed.

An agreement between Tenaris, EADS and Koppel Borough regarding the repair on SR 351 for water running onto the road near the bridge was also reviewed. Tenaris has agreed to pay for the repairs, with the engineer's cost not to exceed \$7,000. A line item was added to the agreement requesting a 90-day reimbursement. This agreement is for EADS to invoice the Borough, the Borough pays the EADS invoices, and then the Borough invoices and is reimbursed by Tenaris within a 90-day timeframe. This process simplifies the transaction as the Borough is a vendor with Tenaris. A motion was made to approve the agreement and was passed.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Athena Pangikas-Miller reported on the following events:

- May 20th is the Koppel Communitywide Yard Sale. DC Taco's will be a vendor at the event.
- May 29th is the Annual Memorial Day program at the Koppel Memorial Park starting at 9 AM.
- DC Taco's is asking for approval to set up on Mondays from 10 AM to 4 PM between 5th and 6th Avenue on Arthur Street. Council had no objection to this.

There is an interest to get a .gov email address for the police department. This was discussed with website designer Nick Breckenridge and could be done with the current hosting package at no additional cost to the Borough.

CODE ENFORCEMENT REPORT

The report was read by Chief Justin Warren, in absence of Eric Squicquero. The house on 3rd Avenue and Mount Street that caught on fire in November will be torn down in the next couple of weeks. The owner indicated that the demolition was delayed because Columbia Gas would not be able to shut the gas off at the site for 30 days and would push the date of demolition into May. Complaints by residents should be made to the police department at 724-775-0880. This is a non-emergency number.

GUESTS

Karen and Dave Zito received a letter from the Borough in December which said brush was piled on their property and that they were in violation of an ordinance. They expressed that their lawn is mowed, flowers are planted and their property is neat but they had just trimmed some bushes. It has since been cleaned up. Their complaint was that 7 months later they look around and see that there are others who have trash and garbage on their property but nothing is done. They questioned if others received letters like theirs and if not, why only them.

It was agreed that their complaint was a valid one and that other letters were sent and some complied, but not all. The system setup to address property maintenance violations was not adequate and fell apart because it was not enforced. There is a need for a full-time ordinance officer to handle it rather than part-time councilmembers. Since then, Officer Eric Squicquero was hired and additional duties were given him for ordinance enforcement. The procedure going forward for notifying residents of violations was explained.

- First a letter notifying residents of violations will be sent allowing time to address the problem.
- Then if the problem is not addressed, a citation will be given and will allow for an appeal by the resident if there is a disagreement.
- Appeals will be reviewed and decided by the Committee for Code Enforcement. Officer Squicquero was given a local ordinance manual and the International Property Maintenance Code for enforcement. Enforced ordinances will be posted on koppelborough.org.

Rental property enforcement will be handled by Owen Pella and rental inspections are going to begin again.

SEWERLINE REPLACEMENT

A question was asked about a timeline on the paving of roads for sewer replacement. There are many complaints about the condition of the roads which needs to be addressed. A complaint about the speed of the construction workers in their vehicles was made. The project manager will be contacted with questions on completion and complaints about speeding of vehicles.

COMPLAINTS ON PARKING ON 3RD AVENUE AND BASKETBALL HOOPS

Denise Green, a resident, spoke about a basketball hoop in the street near her home and said that 3rd Avenue is a very busy street. Green said that at any given time there can be 5 to 7 kids playing basketball in the street and can be a very dangerous situation where someone could be seriously hurt. The ball rolls under a car and kids are crawling under the car to retrieve the ball sometimes with their legs hanging into the street. Drivers may not be looking down at the road and could run over a child. She said there is a perfectly good basketball court on 6th Avenue that could be used. She is also concerned that her car is being damaged by the balls hitting it. It was noted that some communities have ordinances that state the hoop would need to be placed on the property of the owner and not in the right-of-way. A question was asked about who would pay if a car is damaged. The solicitor indicated that damage would fall under the property owner's homeowner's insurance. The opinions given were that the hoops should be located on the owner's property. This is a safety issue and will need to be looked into by ordinance and could be included in the traffic ordinance. That ordinance is currently being reviewed by the police department.

PARKING AND HANDICAP SIGNS

Lack of parking and handicap signage was brought up. There have been requests for signs. In the past it was determined that due to the number of elderly and others having issues that this might warrant a handicap sign. However, this would mean a handicap sign every several houses and would exacerbate an ongoing parking problem.

POLICE UNIFORM REIMBURSEMENT

Chief Justin Warren suggested that uniform reimbursement and clothing allowance after 6 months be allowable for pants and short and long sleeve shirts. The total allowable reimbursement per officer yearly is \$200 per officer.

MAINTENANCE

The discussion on the purchase of the leaf picker hose was tabled until a later date.

GRASS AND LEAF CLIPPINGS

A question was asked about trash pickup and if grass clippings can be thrown in the trash. Young's Refuse will not take grass clippings or building materials.

For Koppel resident's only, grass clippings and lawn waste can be deposited at the rear of the salt shed, but large bushes and tree cuttings will need to be discussed with maintenance on the allowable size.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 7:23 PM