

CATAWISSA BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, APRIL 8, 2013 6:30 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER:

- The meeting was called to order by Council President Scott Keefer.
- The pledge of allegiance was recited.

ROLL CALL:

- Present were: Scott Keefer, Barb Reese, Linda Kashner, Gary Steinruck, Joe Benware, Tim Benner, Mayor Achy, Borough Manager Chris Moonis, Attorney McDonald.
- Forest McClintock was absent.

READING OF THE MINUTES:

- Joe Benware made the motion to dispense with the reading of and approve the minutes of the previous month's meeting. Linda Kashner seconded the motion. Barb Reese made the following corrections: 1) On page 3 (three) under Parks and Rec number 5 the band is named Frog. 2) Under Property and Maintenance Gordner is spelled incorrectly. All aye.

GUESTS TO BE HEARD:

- Council members entered into a discussion with property owner and landlord Susan Helwig regarding the legality of passing a resolution without notification of public, the making of landlords responsible for tenants electric bills, and the lack of a meeting with the landlords and council. Attorney McDonald explained that council can pass a resolution at any time. Linda Kashner explained that the Borough attempts to collect from the tenant first by going to the District Magistrates Office and a collection agency. Making the landlord pay is the last resort. Susan is asking for a meeting with members of council and the landlords to discuss these actions. Scott Keefer stated the council will have a meeting with the landlords to discuss any issues.
- Ms. Cotner asked about the status of the condemned building neighboring her home on Walnut Street. Attorney McDonald explained that the lien has not been satisfied as of this time. Council will not take action until the lien is resolved.
- Rachael Markow asked when the debris from the old shirt factory on South Third Street was going to be cleared away. Chris Moonis explained that he has been in touch with the contract company prior to the April 1, 2013 deadline, and they were to have a plan to him by the day of meeting. However, no contact has been received before council meeting. Ms. Markow expressed her concern regarding a chemical smell coming from the demolition site. The Code Enforcement Officer will site the contractor beginning the next business day. The District Magistrate will set the amount of the fine. If the Borough would clean the property the cost would be approximately \$20,000. A lien would have to be placed on the property. A special public meeting will be held if further action will be required.
- Chad Romig with the Catawissa Fire Company asked permission to hold a boot drive during the WVIA Day at Knoebles. Fire Company volunteers will be placed at the main intersections in the borough for donations. Police Chief Anthony Kopitsky has been made aware of the request from the fire company and he has no objections as long as safety regulations are followed.

- Scott Keefer made the motion to allow the Fire Company to hold a “Boot Drive” in May on the day of the WVIA Knoebles event. Tim Benner seconded the motion. All aye.

CODE ENFORCEMENT REPORT:

- Code Enforcement Officer James Haney reported to council that during the month of March he investigated 11 issues, 2 citations, issued 5 warning, and spent 1 day in court.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- An invitation to the Columbia/Montour Boroughs Association Meeting to be held on April 16, 2013 beginning at 6:30 p.m. at the Capital Restaurant in Bloomsburg.
- Fire Chief Donald Traugh submitted the third quarter Emergency Services Report for the year 2012.

WATER:

- Catawissa Water Authority Superintendent Cindy Bachman was not in attendance for this meeting. Kim Rhoades, borough secretary, read the report Cindy submitted.
- On May 6, 2013, the water authority will be flushing hydrants.
- The May 1st billing will include the annual water quality and update letter.

BOROUGH MANAGER REPORT:

- Borough Manager Chris Moonis reported a summary of the activities of the employees during the month of March.
- Mr. Moonis updated the buy-out activities with FEMA/PEMA.
- Mayor Achy asked about signs indicating the cost of fines for vehicles not stopping for pedestrian at the crosswalk. Chris will speak to Clair Kingston regarding the signs.
- Harold Kitchen reported a pot hole at the intersection of Shuman and Church Streets.

FINANCE & UTILITIES:

- Committee Chairperson Linda Kashner reported three (3) limiters are still active. This month meters will be removed and any accounts that presently have limiters, will have meters removed. There were One hundred fifty-eight (158) electric late notices and seventy-eight (78) sewer late notices mailed.
- The finance committee will be meeting sometime during the week of April 8th to begin with health care options.
- Linda requested permission to attend a meeting with Brown and Brown regarding health care options.
- Gary Steinruck made the motion to allow Linda Kashner and any other council member and the borough manager to attend the Brown and Brown conference. Joe Benware seconded the motion. All aye. The borough will pay mileage. Linda Kashner abstained.

POLICE:

- Police Chief Anthony Kopitsky reported that during the month of March, the police department responded to 189 incidents according to the Columbia County Communications Center.

- There are no major issues with the police vehicles at this time.
- Chief reported that two (2) officers need their updates for the year.
- Chief Kopitsky granted the Montour Area Recreational Authority access to the route outlined for the annual race on May 14th. The Borough has given permission for this run for the last five (5) or six (6) years due to the minimal impact to the traffic through the borough.

PUBLIC SAFETY:

- Acting Committee Chairperson, Scott Keefer, had nothing to report at meeting time.

MAYOR:

- Mayor Achy reminded drivers to stop for pedestrians at crosswalks.
- Council asked that Ms. Hummer's verbal request for removal of the handicap parking area be put into writing. She no longer has a vehicle to warrant the parking space.

PARKS & RECREATION:

- Committee Co-Chairperson Barb Reese reminded everyone that "Dumpster Day" will be held on Saturday, April 20, 2013 from 8 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. Residents participating will enter via South Fourth and exit via South Third St. This will help with organization of the event. Household garbage, paint, electronics, no Freon, or recycling products will not be accepted. Tires will cost \$5 a piece.

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:

- Committee Chairperson Barb Reese spoke about the progress made in the development of the Dollar General Store. The projected opening is late spring into early summer months.
- Chris Moonis undated council on a developer planning to place a café in the area.
- Chris also reported that persons interested in purchasing the Maxi building for multiple businesses.
- Scott Keefer informed council that a sewer hook-up was requested for another area at the building purchased by Steve Shannon in the old lumber company area.

PROPERTY/BUILDING MAINTENANCE CHAIRMAN:

- Committee Chairman Gary Steinruck asked that the sale of the belt press at the sewer plant be placed on hold. Mr. Steinruck would like to obtain more information before selling the press.
- Gary Steinruck made the motion to suspend the bidding process for the sewer plant belt press. Tim Benner seconded the motion. All aye.

PERSONNEL/ADMINISTRATION CHAIRMAN:

- Committee Chairman Scott Keefer announced that there will be an executive session after the meeting to discuss personnel matters.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- Scott Keefer made the motion to adopt a resolution known as the 2nd Amendment Preservation Resolution which provides directives for Catawissa Borough Council or the Catawissa Police Chief in the preservation of the 2nd amendment of the U.S. Constitution and Article 21 of the PA Constitution. Tim Benner seconded the motion. All aye.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Tim Benner made the motion to award a contract to Northeast Tree Service for the removal of one (1) tree at Wolfgang Park and the grinding and removal of a stump at Union Cemetery. Joe Benware seconded the motion. Linda Kashner and Barb Reese objected to the removal of the gum tree at Wolfgang Park. Chris explained that the tree produces gum sized shells that have sharp spines that the staff believes is a safety hazard. Roll call vote to remove both the tree and the stump. Tim Benner-no, Joe Benware-no, Gary Steinruck-no, Linda Kashner-no, Barb Reese-no, Scott Keefer-yes. Motion does not pass.
- Barb Reese made the motion to remove the stump at Union Cemetery. Gary Steinruck seconded the motion. Chris Moonis reported that the quote given to him by Northeast Tree Service for the removal of the tree trunk is \$145.00. All aye.
- Laura Kalfas introduced herself and announced she would be opening the Opera House soon. The will provide parties, events, classes, music studio, gym, yoga, Zumba etc. Laura and Andre are open to suggestions from the community regarding ideas for uses for the Opera House.

FINANCE:

- Linda Kashner made the motion to accept the payment of bills as written. Tim Benner seconded the motion. All aye.

GUESTS TO BE HEARD:

- Doug Krum asked about the progress of the contract negotiations. Scott Keefer explained that the executive session he announced earlier in the meeting is regarding the negotiations.
- Pat Hess asked about the progress of updating the borough web site. Chris Moonis explained that a new web master has been designing a new web site. The previous web designer did not meet the borough expectations.
- Pat Hess asked if there is more wood for sale. Council explained that wood is available and will be added to as tree trimming around the borough is completed.
- Laura Kalfas asked who is responsible for the stone wall behind the opera house. Chris Moonis and council explained that according to the Columbia County mapping system that parcel of land is owned by the Prescott's.
- Sharon Krum commented that the stone the borough placed on Creek Road is gone. Chris Moonis explained the road deteriorated faster than anticipated. Clair Kingston will place more stone on the road.

ADJOURNMENT:

- Tim Benner made the motion to adjourn. Joe Benware seconded the motion. All aye.

MEETING ADJOURNED:
Submitted by:
Kimberly Rhoades
Secretary