

CATAWISSA BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING  
MONDAY, MAY 11, 2015 – 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, Connie Benware, Jay Roberts, Gary Steinruck, Joe Benware, Forest McClintock, Doug Krum, Manager Roger Nuss, Attorney Anthony McDonald.
- Mayor Achy was absent.

READING OF MINUTES:

- Jay Roberts made the motion to dispense with the reading of and approve the minutes of the previous months' meeting with changes suggested by Linda Kashner and Barb Reese. Joe Benware seconded the motion. All aye.

GUESTS TO BE HEARD:

- No guests spoke at this time.

Council President, Scott Keefer announced an executive session was conducted beginning at 5:30 p.m. before the meeting.

At this time Council President, Scott Keefer introduced Mr. Paul Sevison of the Catawissa VFW. Borough Manager Roger Nuss presented a plaque to the VFW 306 for their contribution to the Community.

PPL representatives Terri McBride, Frank Dempsey, Jane Miller and Gary High spoke regarding a proposal of distribution line alternatives and upgrades that would be an expense to the Borough.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- Boy Scouts fundraiser.
- Columbia/Montour Visitors Bureau Annual Meeting. Knoebels June 6, 1:00 p.m.
- Columbia County Traveling Library asked for donations.
- NIMS update from Mike Lindenmuth (EMC) reminding council that all members must complete 100 and 700 training certificates. This will affect the grants the Borough may apply for.
- **Gary Steinruck made a motion** seconded by Doug Krum to donate \$100 to the Boy Scouts of America. All aye.
- **Forest McClintock made a motion** seconded by Gary Steinruck to donate \$50 to the Columbia/Montour Traveling Library. All aye.

MAYOR:

- Mayor Achy was not in attendance to enter a report.

#### MANAGER'S REPORT:

- Manager Roger Nuss gave a summary report of the employee activities for the month of April.
- Roger also gave a summary report of his activities during the month of April.

#### WATER:

- Water Authority Superintendent Cindy Bachman reported a voluntary 5% reduction in water use is in effect for the county.
- The date for the letter for the additional response from the oil and gas act is now due on May 19, 2015. Cindy will submit the letter to the office.

#### CODE ENFORCEMENT REPORT:

- Code Enforcement Officer James Haney reported to council that the office responded to 27 (twenty –seven) issues, wrote 4 letters, hung 5 (five) door hangers, 6 (six) building permits, 2 citations and spent 3 (three) days in court.
- Mr. Haney expressed his displeasure with council donating money to organizations and not paying \$25 to send him to class for flood buy out information.

#### POLICE:

- Police Chief Joshua Laidacker reported that during the month of April the department responded to 153 (one hundred fifty-three) calls for service, as reported by the Columbia County Communications Center. The department also served 15 (fifteen) warrants for arrest.
- The drug take back day received approximately 40 (forty) pounds of unused or expired medication.
- Chief Laidacker received the first Catawissa Borough police badge issued to George Harder back in 1843 donated by Barb and Robert John.
- The department has received some complaints regarding the parking on North Second Street. Chief would like council to discuss a possible solution. Chief suggested possible permit parking and an overflow lot in the area.
- One of the part time police officers hired recently has resigned and the officer hired to fill Officer Witherite's role has informed Chief that due to family problems they will not be able to fulfill the hours promised.
- North Second Street resident, Linda Neyer spoke regarding the issue of street parking.

#### PUBLIC SAFETY:

- Committee Chairperson, Forest McClintock has received many calls about skateboarding in the Borough. Chief Laidacker explained that the department does take care of the skateboarding as much as possible. People need to call the station when this is observed.
- Mr. McClintock received a letter from the uniform union to begin negotiations for the next contract. The officers would like to discuss compensation time or overtime.
- Tony McDonald reminded council that the Borough built the black top area at CARA Park for skateboarding.

- **Jay Roberts made the motion** seconded by Gary Steinruck to instruct the police department to send the skateboarders to the black top area at CARA Par. All aye.

#### UTILITIES:

- Committee Chairperson Connie Benware reported 117 electric and 58 sewer late notices were sent on May 5, 2015. One meter remains off from last month.

#### PARKS & RECREATION:

- Committee Chairperson Joe Benware reported the committee has begun work on “Kid’s Day”, Connie has been working on the Concert Series.
- Concerts begin June 25, 2015.
- May 23, 2015 will be the community yard sale
- Dumpster Day will be June 6, 2015 8-1

#### PROPERTY/BUILDING MAINTENANCE:

- Committee Chairperson Gary Steinruck updated council on the Senior Center project.

#### FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION:

- Committee Chairperson Scott Keefer had nothing to report.

#### UNION NEGOTIATION:

- Committee Chairperson Scott Keefer had nothing to report.

#### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

- Committee Chairperson Doug Krum had nothing to report.
- Linda Kashner asked if the train station has been rented. Mr. Krum had no news.

#### UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- **Doug Krum made a motion** seconded by Joe Benware to table the vote regarding zoning permit fees. All aye.
- **Jay Roberts made the motion** seconded by Connie Benware to appoint Roger Nuss as Borough Treasurer. After a discussion the motion passed with a 5-2 vote. Doug Krum and Gary Steinruck were opposed.
- **Scott Keefer made a motion** seconded by Forest McClintock to table the vote regarding the acceptance of cash payments. All aye.
- **Forest McClintock made the motion** seconded by Connie Benware to adopt Ordinance number 2015-01 raising the duplicate tax fee from \$5 to \$10. All aye.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

- **Scott Keefer made a motion** seconded by Jay Roberts to fence and cement the recycling area.
- **Scott Keefer made a motion** seconded by Jay Roberts to table the above motion until more information can be gathered with the Parks and Recreation committee.
- Cindy Bachman asked about the trash that is put into the recycling bin. It was explained that the trash is removed and sent to the landfill and the recycling is sorted.

- Cindy also asked why the Borough is being charged for the service. No one will do it for free.
- **Jay Roberts made the motion** seconded by Joe Benware to adopt the Code and/or Zoning complaint form and made available in the Office and on the web site. All aye.
- **Forest McClintock made the motion** seconded by Jay Roberts to invite Catawissa Township to participate in Dumpster Day. All aye.
- **Jay Roberts made a motion** seconded by Forest McClintock to discuss the contract extension of the AMP electric contract from 2018-2022 with price blending beginning May 2015. All aye.
- **Gary Steinruck made the motion** seconded by Jay Roberts to extend the AMP electric contract from 2018-2022 with price blending beginning May 2015. All aye.
- **Forest McClintock made a motion** seconded by Jay Roberts to accept the bid of \$1,395.00 from Penokoe for the abatement of hazardous materials on the last flood properties. All aye.
- **Forest McClintock made a motion** seconded by Connie Benware to accept the resignation of part-time police officer Nicholas Thorpe. All aye.
- **Forest McClintock made a motion** seconded by Jay Roberts to advertise for a minimum of 2 (two) part time police officers. All aye.
- **Forest McClintock made a motion** seconded by Joe Benware to discuss the creation of a Civil Service Board.
- **Forest McClintock made a motion** seconded by Scott Keefer to discuss the hiring of a 4 (fourth) full-time police officer. A lengthy discussion ensued.
- **Gary Steinruck made a motion** seconded by Connie Benware to create a Civil Service Board. This is a non-compensatory position. All aye.
- **Jay Roberts stated on the record that he was in favor of paying for a second person to attend the class for flood mitigation.**
- **Jay Roberts made a motion** seconded by Forest McClintock to reimburse Mr. Haney the \$25 for the class he attended. Jim Haney refused the reimbursement

#### FINANCE:

- **Connie Benware made the motion** seconded by Scott Keefer to accept the payment of bills as written. All aye.

#### GUESTS TO BE HEARD:

- Pat Hess complained about the trees that were removed on First Street. Roger Nuss explained the trees were removed on his authority.
- Pat asked about selling the wood from the removed trees. Council explained that the wood was not suitable for sale.
- Sean Spangler asked if council could tell him what the planned use will be for the construction site area on South Third St. He is concerned about section 8 housing development. Council explained that the plans for the housing development are with Columbia County Planning Commission and are intended to be high end housing.
- Pat Hess asked what is going on with the Albertson and Hashagen houses. Council explained that the buy-out has taken place for these properties.

- Barb Reese asked if the sewer plant will be affected from higher flood water in the future. Tony McDonald and council explained that the experts have assured everyone the plant will be safe.
- Barb asked if the Borough is thinking about flood protection. At this point the sewer plant being raised is the only protection action being taken.
- Barb Reese asked if Burger Avenue is going to be fixed between Main Street and Fox Avenue. Council has not had a discussion regarding this.
- Linda Kashner asked if the Boy Scouts could be contacted to clean up the Quaker Meeting House property. Council or Roger will contact them.

ADJOURNMENT:

- Doug Krum made the motion seconded by Connie Benware to adjourn.

MEETING ADJOURNED:

Submitted by:  
Kimberly Rhoades  
Secretary