

CATAWISSA BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY July 6, 2020 - 6:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER:

- The meeting was called to order by Council President, Doug Krum.
- The pledge of allegiance was recited.

ROLL CALL:

- Present were: Doug Krum, Corey Yule, AJ McKenney, Roy Klinger, Janel Patel, Victoria Waugh, Borough Manager Larry Kopp, Mayor Todd Burke, Attorney Anthony McDonald.

READING OF MINUTES:

- A motion was made by Victoria Waugh, 2nd by Roy Klinger to dispense reading of and approve minutes of the previous month's meeting. All Aye

GUESTS TO BE HEARD:

- Guest Sue Helwig reiterated a few points made at previous meetings as Council gets ready to make a decision about a rental ordinance that many feel is unnecessary.
- Guest Kay Nazarchyk suggested now that there is a Code Enforcement Officer in place that the Borough try the landlord's suggestions for a year and see how things go.
- Guest Wayne Levan expressed his concerns with the burden of the costs associated with the rental ordinance.
- Guest Dena Snyder shared her concerns with the burden of the costs that the rental ordinance will put on the landlords and how those costs will be passed on to the tenant. Ms. Snyder felt it wasn't fair to put the burden on the landlord or the tenant
- Attorney Anthony McDonald made Council aware that Attorney Frank Kepner reached out to him about 5:00 p.m. today and had a cordial telephone conversation. Attorney Kepner is representing a group of Catawissa Borough landlords. Mr. Kepner asked if the brakes could be put on the ordinance until his group can get together and go over some thoughts, concerns and ideas with Council. Attorney McDonald told Council he is always interested in talking instead of litigating.
- Attorney Frank Kepner via teleconference stated he is representing a number of landlord's, who have some concerns with the Rental Ordinance. Attorney Kepner asked Council if they could postpone voting on the ordinance and explore different alternatives.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- Borough Secretary Connie Cole reported the Borough received the following:
- A letter from Fire Chief Dale Hendricks Catawissa Hose Co #1 concerning the out of service dry hydrant caused by the recent culvert project.
- A letter from Nicole Slusser regarding her disagreement with the proposed rental ordinance and her disgust with borough council.

MAYOR:

- Mayor Todd Burke had nothing to report.

MANAGER'S REPORT:

- Borough Manager Larry Kopp reported the following:
- The first Summer Breeze concert had about 125 people in attendance. Mr. Kopp thanked the VFW for sponsoring the concert, Pastor Mike with Catawissa Christian Church for all he did to make the concert succeed and the Lion's Club for selling beverages at the concert.
- The 2nd Summer Breeze Concert is Tuesday July 7th with Ricky & Harv performing.
- Mr. Kopp has been working with Steve Cappelli on doing an insurance audit to make sure all properties are covered and working to get better insurance coverage.
- Mr. Kopp is working on the traffic sign inventory.
- The concrete pad for the pavilion at Cara Park is complete.
- A demonstration is scheduled for July 16th with Software Solutions for utility billing.

WATER:

- Water Authority Superintendent Cindy Bachman requested if street projects are going to be discussed under capital projects please keep the Water Authority informed so they can replace water lines at the same time.

CODE ENFORCEMENT REPORT:

- Council President Doug Krum read the report.

POLICE:

- Chief Laidacker read the monthly report which stated the following:
- During the month of June 2020, the department responded to (282) calls for service.
- Car #1 is out of service due to the AC unit not functioning. The repairs should be covered under the vehicle warranty.
- Josh Walsh was contacted referencing moving the camera from the recycling center to the area of the post office. He will be using a special cable to set the camera up using the department's internet. The work was completed today.
- Officers are currently working on online mandatory updates.
- Officers will begin mandatory firearms training during the month of July.

PUBLIC SAFETY:

- A motion was made by Roy Klinger, 2nd by Victoria Waugh to discuss the Borough's stormwater outfall into Catawissa Creek and the existing dry pipe. Borough Manager Larry Kopp asked Water Authority Superintendent Cindy Bachman to explain the situation. Ms. Bachman explained the new design of the storm drain fell short of the original pipe that ran into the creek. The recent rain storm runoff ran into the pool which is utilized to pull water out of the creek for fires. The dry line pipe has filled with stone and sediment. The Water Authority tried using their compressor to clear the sediment but could not get it all out. Then another rain came and pushed more stone and sediment into the line. The dry line has been out of service since June 18th. Ms. Bachman respectfully requests the Borough has the dry line hydro vacuumed and cleared for service until a permanent solution can be done. Borough Manager Larry Kopp spoke with Roger Services to vacuum flush the dry line and was quoted \$1500 but could be less. Councilman Corey Yule asked if the hydro flushing would be one time to get the dry hydrant back in service. Borough Manager Larry Kopp stated yes with the current situation. Councilman Yule asked if another rain came could it fill up again. Borough Manager Kopp replied "yes". Council President Doug Krum asked Borough Manager Larry Kopp if that was the only quote, he got. Mr. Kopp replied "yes". A motion was made by Corey Yule, 2nd by Roy Klinger to approve

getting more quotes for hydro vacuuming the dry hydrant and to have the hydro vacuuming done at the lowest cost not to exceed \$1500. All Aye

Water Authority Cindy Bachman asked Council if they would be committed to doing the hydro vacuuming if this happens again until a permanent solution can be found. Council President Doug Krum stated personally he feels the Borough needs to do this as many times as needed until a permanent solution can be found. Councilman Corey Yule asked Borough Manager Larry Kopp where the money would come from. Mr. Kopp stated the funds would come from General Fund. Ms. Bachman stated once the vacuuming is done, they will try to keep on top of it the best they can.

UTILITIES:

- Committee Chairperson Corey Yule read the totals for outstanding utility accounts.

PARKS & RECREATION/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

- A motion was made AJ McKenney, 2nd by Victoria Waugh to approve the Borough's new logo. All Aye.
- A motion was made by Roy Klinger, 2nd by AJ McKenney to approve Resolution 2020-09, approving the submission of a Multimodal Transportation Fund grant. All Aye

PROPERTY & BUILDING MAINTENANCE:

- A motion was made by Roy Klinger, 2nd by Corey Yule to approve the sale of the Electric Department's 2002 Ford F-250 Truck to Paul Cernovshy for \$7,900. All Aye
- A motion was made by Janel Patel, 2nd by Victoria Waugh to discuss allowing The Coal Dock to use Borough Property adjacent to the Catawissa Dam for additional/overflow parking. Borough Manager Larry Kopp stated the property adjacent to the Coal Dock is not Borough owned. The Borough owns the gravel property down by the damn and that would be the property being voting on for allowance. Borough Manager Kopp explained the dry hydrant at that location could not be blocked only the 2 or 3 gravel parking spots could be utilized. All Aye

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION:

- A motion was made by Roy Klinger, 2nd by Cory Yule to discuss the Borough's Capital Projects. Borough Manager Larry Kopp reported the following:
- Culvert Project total cost was \$ 280,000, the Borough's responsibility is \$29,779.52. The grant is going to pay \$250,000.
- The 3rd St. Paving project total cost was \$123,883.88 which came in under budget.
- Roth Cemetery Services will begin working on the Greenwood Cemetery June 25th.
- A structural engineer is coming to look at the Quaker Meeting House in regards to the repair/replacement of logs under the CDBG Grant that was funded in 2018. The concern is additional damage to logs that might occur when replacing the logs. Councilman Corey Yule asked Borough Manager Larry Kopp if there was a cost to bring the engineer in. Mr. Kopp replied "no it is all covered by the county".
- A motion was made by Roy Klinger, 2nd by AJ McKenney to approve \$123,883.88, \$80,000 from Liquid Fuels Fund and \$43,883.88 from Capital Fund, to Gutelius Excavating for paving South 3rd Street. All Aye
- A motion was made by Corey Yule, 2nd by Roy Klinger to approve \$43,894.47 from the Capital Fund to Gutelius Excavating for the Culvert Project. All Aye
- A motion by Janel Patel, 2nd by Roy Klinger to approve the Final Audit and Financial Report Year Ended December 31st, 2019. All Aye
- A motion was made by AJ McKenney, 2nd by Roy Klinger to approve advertising the 2019 Financial Report. All Aye

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:

- Committee Chairperson Doug Krum had nothing to report.
- Councilwoman Victoria Waugh asked Borough Manager Larry Kopp if he was still going through job descriptions. Borough Manager Larry Kopp stated he will have them ready for the next personnel meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- No unfinished business to attend to.

NEW BUSINESS:

- A motion was made by Victoria Waugh, 2nd by Janel Patel to discuss the letters of interest for the one vacant Council seat. Council President Doug Krum read the letters of interest from Kevin Ferris and Jamie Cotner.
- Council President Doug Krum asked if there were any nominations.
- A motion was made by Victoria Waugh, 2nd by Janel Patel to nominate Jamie Cotner.
- A motion was made by AJ McKenney, 2nd by Roy Klinger to nominate Kevin Ferris.
- A roll call vote was taken to see who was voting for each candidate. Janel Patel: Jamie Cotner; Doug Krum: Jamie Cotner; Corey Yule; Jamie Cotner; Roy Klinger: Kevin Ferris; AJ McKenney: Kevin Ferris; Victoria Waugh: Jamie Cotner. Majority vote was Jamie Cotner for the (1) vacant Council Seat. Motion carries
- A motion was made by Victoria Waugh, 2nd by Janel Patel to approve Ordinance 03-2020 establishing a Residential Rental Property Registration, Licensing and Occupancy system. Councilman Corey Yule stated given the attempt for further communication he is in favor of the rental ordinance and is open to sitting down for further conversation and to hear what the landlord group has to say. A motion was made by Corey Yule, 2nd by Roy Klinger to table 03-2020 Ordinance for a month. Councilwoman Victoria Waugh asked about the order of motions and if they had to be voted on. Attorney Anthony McDonald explained that both motions cannot be ignored and Ms. Waugh and Ms. Patel could withdraw their motion and just vote on tabling. Ms. Waugh stated she did not want to withdraw her motion.
- A roll call vote was taken to table 03-2020 Ordinance. Janel Patel: Nay; Doug Krum: Nay; Corey Yule: Aye; Roy Klinger: Aye; AJ McKenney: Aye; Victoria Waugh: Nay; Mayor Todd Burke: Nay. Motion does not carry
- A roll call vote was taken to approve 03-2020 Ordinance. Janel Patel: Aye; Doug Krum: Aye; Corey Yule: Aye; Roy Klinger: Nay; AJ MCKenney: Nay; Victoria Waugh: Aye. Motion carries
- A motion was made by Victoria Waugh, 2nd by Corey Yule to approve Resolution 2020-08 establishing fees for the Residential Rental Property Registration, Licensing and Occupancy system. A roll call vote was taken. Janel Patel: Aye; Doug Krum: Aye; Corey Yule: Aye; Roy Klinger: Nay; AJ McKenney: Nay; Victoria Waugh; Aye. Motion carries

FINANCE PAYMENT OF BILLS

- A motion was made by Corey Yule, 2nd by Janel Patel to accept bills as written and any others that may arise before the next council meeting. All Aye

GUESTS TO BE HEARD

- Guest Nicole Slusser asked how is it fair that all properties are not going to be inspected, not just rental properties. Borough Manager Larry Kopp and Council President Doug Krum explained if there are complaints or violations, other properties will be inspected. Attorney Anthony McDonald explained generally speaking a person who lives in their home takes better care of their home than ones that do not. With the transient nature of tenants that is one reason for

the ordinance. Attorney McDonald told Ms. Slusser it is clearly spelled out in the ordinance the reasons Council wants the ordinance.

- Guest Cindy Bachman expressed her opinion about the impact of the rental ordinance on tenants. Ms. Bachman is concerned tenants will be moving out and properties becoming vacant. Ms. Bachman is concerned with the fees being charged; she doesn't understand them. Ms. Bachman hopes things get worked out.
- Attorney Anthony McDonald recommended to council that it is not too late to sit down with landlord's and their attorney to talk and workout issues with the ordinance. Attorney McDonald explained just because the ordinance is passed doesn't mean it cannot be changed later there may be good ideas out there you may have not heard yet.
- Guest Cindy Bachman expressed that the timing of the passing of the rental ordinance is inappropriate as you know we are all having problems hearing each other in here and online. Ms. Bachman was hoping to table the matter while still having to operate under these conditions. Ms. Bachman is hoping everyone can learn to work together.
- Guest Wayne Levan asked who the Zoning Officer was and when was he in the office. Borough Manager Larry Kopp stated Bob Jones is the Zoning Officer and he is in the office Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

- A motion was made by Victoria Waugh, 2nd by Corey Yule to adjourn. All Aye

MEETING ADJOURNED

Submitted by:

Connie M. Cole
Borough Secretary