

CATAWISSA BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY November 11, 2019

An Executive Session was held before the regular council meeting at 6 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER:

- The meeting was called to order by Council President, Doug Krum.
- The pledge of allegiance was recited.
- Council President Doug Krum thanked all the veterans for their service.

ROLL CALL:

- Present were: Larry Kopp, Doug Krum, Gary Steinruck, AJ McKenney, Roy Klinger, Patsy Hess, Victoria Waugh, Mayor Jeff Achy, Attorney Anthony McDonald. Absent Barbara Reese

READING OF MINUTES:

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

GUESTS TO BE HEARD:

- No guests to be heard.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- Borough Secretary Connie Cole had nothing to report. Ms. Cole reminded council members November 12th was the deadline to RSVP to the Columbia Montour Boroughs Association Meeting to be held November 14, 2019 at Old Forge Brewing in Danville at 6 p.m.

MAYOR:

- Mayor Jeff Achy reported the "Yield to Pedestrians" signs have been really working and without them the street is like a race track. Mr. Achy suggested letting the signs out all the time except during snow.

MANAGER'S REPORT:

- Borough Manager Larry Kopp reported the following:
- Mr. Kopp met with Craig Long & Richard Acciavatti owner of the Opera House. Mr. Acciavatti is interested in volunteering and helping out where he can.
- Mr. Kopp met with Sam Wolfe of AMP the organization the Borough purchases electricity from. Mr. Wolfe gave projected costs of electricity for the next 5 years and has been very responsive to Mr. Kopp's needs regarding electric.
- Mr. Kopp attended two training classes that were very beneficial, ESM training and Your Role as a Municipal Administrator presented by PSAB. Mr. Kopp suggested new council members try to attend PSAB training sessions. The sessions are filled with a lot of good information and will help new council members get up to speed.
- Larson Design is still working on the plan to replace failing piping and valves in the aeration tank of the wastewater treatment plant, estimated cost is \$175,000.
- Catawissa Residents are currently welcome to utilize the Bloomsburg Recycling Facility. In the next several weeks Mr. Kopp and Charles Fritz, who is in charge of the recycling for Bloomsburg

will be meeting to discuss helping with funding, after he gets the approval from Bloomsburg Town Council.

- The final Stakeholders Meeting will be Monday November 25th, 2019 @ 6:30 p.m.
- Acoustic panels for the Community Center will be delivered on Wednesday November 13th. Public Works employees will install them.
- Mr. Kopp thanked the electrical department for their fast work fixing the downed power lines after the storm last week. Mr. Kopp also thanked the street department on the crack sealing and pothole filling that was completed.

WATER:

- Water Authority Superintendent Cindy Bachman had nothing to report.

CODE ENFORCEMENT REPORT:

- Council President Doug Krum read the code enforcement report.
- Council Vice President Gary Steinruck asked Council President Doug Krum what was going on at the service station. Mr. Krum reported tomorrow was the deadline and a meeting is tomorrow. Mr. Kopp stated a flatbed truck is there. Secretary Connie Cole stated the flatbed truck was moving cars this evening as she passed the service station on her way in.

POLICE:

- Police Chief Joshua Laidacker read his monthly report which stated the following:
- During the month of October 2019, the department responded to (144) calls for service.
- Car #2 was taken to Bastian Tire for oil change and tire rotation.
- The 112th Halloween Parade went off with no major incidents or problems.
- A DUI checkpoint was held on October 18th. DUI and drug arrests were made in addition to several traffic violations.
- October 11th, the department gave a presentation to the students of GTAG Home School Group. They wanted to learn about law enforcement, about 30 kids were in attendance.
- On October 29th the department hosted a “Coffee with a Cop” event at Woody’s Place. The department will be doing that again as well.
- The department would like to thank resident Ron Fritz for the donation of his labor and materials to install spouting at the pavilion at the police range.
- On October 20th, the department was presented with an Outstanding Law Enforcement Award by the Women’s Center of Columbia/Montour Counties.
- Two applications for the Full-Time position have been received. Those applicants are schedule for civil service testing on the 8th of November.
- Mandatory updates continue.
- Officer Kinney continues on-the-road training.
- Officer Allen has completed training and is giving the department shifts the best he can. The department is still struggling with part-time availability where the schedule is concerned.

PUBLIC SAFETY:

- Committee Chairperson Doug Krum had nothing to report.

UTILITIES:

- Committee Chairperson Patsy Hess reported there were (49) electric and (22) sewer door hangers that were placed. (2) electric meters were pulled for non-payment in October and both were put back on.
- Committee Chairperson Patsy Hess read the totals for outstanding utility accounts.

PARKS & RECREATION/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

- A motion was made by Patsy Hess, 2nd by Gary Steinruck to approve purchasing (11) picnic tables (6 handicapped; 5 regular) at an updated cost of \$2,445.67. Borough Manager Larry Kopp stated these were voted on previously to purchase but the number of handicapped tables changed. Council Vice President Gary Steinruck stated maybe some of the things should be tabled until a budget is looked at. Borough Manager Larry Kopp stated the increased price was less than \$100. 5; Aye, Gary Steinruck; Nay
- A motion was made by Patsy Hess, 2nd by Victoria Waugh to approve using the Community Center for a concert on Wednesday, April 1st 2020, as part of the Exchange's concert series. Council President Doug Krum asked if they needed a vote for this. Attorney Anthony McDonald stated this does not need a vote it should be the manager's call. Borough Larry Kopp stated he just wanted to make council aware of what was going on.

PROPERTY & BUILDING MAINTENANCE:

- A motion was made by AJ McKenney, 2nd by Roy Klinger to approve updated cost for Elevation Studies for Borough Barns from \$500 to \$1000. Borough Manager Larry Kopp explained Peters Consultants quoted \$500 for both certificates when it should have been \$500 for each certificate. All Aye

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION:

- Council President Doug Krum read the account balances.
- A motion was made by AJ McKenney, 2nd by Victoria Waugh to approve advertising a proposed 2020 Budget for the Borough of Catawissa. All Aye
- A motion was made by Victoria Waugh, 2nd by Roy Klinger to approve a public meeting to present the budget to the public on Thursday November 21st 2019 at 6:00 p.m. All Aye
- A motion was made by Patsy Hess, 2nd by Roy Klinger to approve advertising the public meeting. All Aye
- A motion was made by Patsy Hess, 2nd by AJ McKenney to approve advertising the ordinance establishing the tax rate for 2020. Since the tax rate was not increasing Council Vice President Gary Steinruck stated a resolution could be passed for tax rates. Attorney Anthony McDonald confirmed. Patsy Hess and AJ McKenney withdrew their motions.
- A motion was made by Roy Klinger, 2nd by Patsy Hess to approve Resolution 2019-15 regarding the Tax Rate for 2020. All Aye
- A motion was made by Victoria Waugh, 2nd by Roy Klinger to discuss electric rates. Borough Manager Larry Kopp explained after going over the budget it is short \$100, 000. Mr. Kopp explained the Borough has not raised taxes since 2008 and electric rates since 2012. Mr. Kopp stated information he received from AMP electric transmission rates from PPL are going to increase pretty significantly over the next 4-5 years. Mr. Kopp explained the Borough needs more income to balance the budget. Mr. Kopp proposed raising electric rates and base rates by 5% to help balance the budget and cover capital projects such as the culvert project and street paving. Council Vice President Gary Steinruck stated he feels there are places to cut and

conserve. Attorney Anthony McDonald expressed maybe this is something to discuss at the budget work session that is open to the public. Council President Doug Krum stated he was ok with Mr. Steinruck finishing his answer then the meeting would move on. Mr. Steinruck expressed his concern with the first proposal for the culvert project was for \$180,00 then the borough got the cadillac that doubled the price so the 15% input would not be 50,000 if the borough went back to the original proposal. So that is about \$25,000 that could be saved right off the top of my head Mr. Steinruck stated. Mr. Steinruck also expressed he feels if the borough cuts and freezes the benefits for non-union employees the Borough would save a pile of money. Mr. Steinruck stated he has a real hard time justifying a pay raise for Mr. Kopp when we are going to raise electric rates.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:

- A motion was made by Victoria Waugh, 2nd by Roy Klinger to approve the Borough Manager's full-time salary and benefits. Council Vice President Gary Steinruck expressed his concern with what the benefits and salary increase will cost the borough. Patsy Hess; Nay, Roy Klinger; Aye, AJ McKenney; Aye, Gary Steinruck; Nay, Doug Krum; Aye, Victoria Waugh, Aye. Motion Carries
- A motion was made by AJ McKenney, 2nd by Victoria Waugh to discuss purchasing gift cards for employees for Christmas 2019. After a brief discussion, a vote was taken to purchase (9) \$25 Walmart gift cards for employees for Christmas 2019. The Police Department declined the gift cards if every Police Officer would not receive one. 5; Aye, Patsy Hess; Nay
- A motion was made by Victoria Waugh, 2nd by Roy Klinger to discuss the work schedule on Christmas Eve 2019 for Borough Employees. After a brief discussion, a vote was taken for all Borough Employees except the Police Department to have off for Christmas Eve 2019. All Aye

UNION:

- Committee Chairperson Doug Krum reported they will be meeting one more time with the non-uniform union.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- No unfinished business to conduct.

NEW BUSINESS:

- A motion was made by AJ McKenney, 2nd by Roy Klinger to appoint Tax Collection Delegates for Tax Collection Committee. Primary Delegate AJ McKenney, Doug Krum First Alternate and Victoria Waugh 2nd Alternate. All Aye
- A motion was made by AJ McKenney, 2nd by Patsy Hess to approve Resolution 2019-14 regarding Tax Collection Committee Delegates. All Aye
- A motion was made by Victoria Waugh, 2nd by Patsy Hess to approve advertising a proposed Rental Property Ordinance for the Borough of Catawissa. All Aye
- A motion was made by Roy Klinger, 2nd by Victoria Waugh to approve Council Meeting dates for 2020. Councilman AJ McKenney stated he thought reorganization meeting must be Jan 2nd 2020. Guest Linda Kashner said yes it must be January 2nd 2020. Meetings dates were approved with that date change. All Aye
- A motion was made by AJ McKenney, 2nd by Roy Klinger to advertise Council Meeting Dates for 2020. All Aye
- A motion was made by Gary Steinruck, 2nd by Patsy Hess to approve purchasing (10) Weis gift cards for the Senior Center Christmas Party. All Aye

FINANCE PAYMENT OF BILLS

- A motion was made by Roy Klinger, 2nd by Patsy Hess to accept bills as written. All Aye

GUESTS TO BE HEARD

- Guest Lori Breech wanted clarification on the reasoning for raising electric rates and if it had anything to do with hiring the 5th full-time officer. Mr. Kopp said no. Ms. Breech asked council to be fiscally contentious when looking at feasibility on taking money from other places and raising electric rates not being ram rodded and passed.
- Guest Linda Kashner expressed her concern with electronic voting being done. Ms. Kashner contacted Open Records and stated these are not validate votes. Electronic votes are only to be done in a critical condition. Attorney Anthony McDonald suggest to vote on the matter tonight to clear the record. A motion was made by AJ McKenney, 2nd by Victoria Waugh to increase the donation to the Catawissa Halloween Parade Committee from \$1000 to \$2000. 5 Aye, Gary Steinruck; Nay
- Guest Linda Kashner asked what the executive session was for, it was not announced. Council President Doug Krum replied "Personnel". Ms. Kashner stated the Pennsylvania Law says vague answers are not acceptable. Attorney Anthony McDonald stated personnel is a touchy subject with HIPAA and disciplinary actions. So, it is ok to be vague when it comes to personnel.
- Borough Manager Larry Kopp expressed his concern with a disturbing trend of people like to do the gotcha question. People are not saying anything and then coming to the meeting to say I gotcha to make people look stupid or that they screwed up. Mr. Kopp stated his door is always open and if anyone would like to come talk, he would be happy to do so. He feels openness is a good thing and the more information that is passed is a good thing.
- Guest Sharon Krum expressed her displeasure with how the Meet the Candidate event was done. Council President Doug Krum stated if she stuck around all the candidates were in front of the room and took questions from the audience.
- Council Vice President Gary Steinruck asked what the Borough was going to do with grant money that was awarded for the recycling location. After a brief discussion, Borough Manager Larry Kopp is going to look into the grant and bring the information to the next council meeting.
- Guest Cindy Bachman asked for clarification on what the Public Work Session all entailed.
- Guest Mike Lester asked if the grant received for the recycling could be directed to Bloomsburg to help with recycling since Catawissa Residents are allowed to use the facility. Council stated this was a good idea and will be looked into.

ADJOURNMENT:

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

MEETING ADJOURNED

Submitted by:

Connie M. Cole

Borough Secretary