

CATAWISSA BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY July 12th, 2021 - 6:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER:

- The meeting was called to order by Council President, Doug Krum.

ROLL CALL:

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

READING OF MINUTES:

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

GUESTS TO BE HEARD:

- Guest Sarah LeBarbera wanted to introduce herself. Ms. LeBarbera spoke of a property on Merceron Street she is looking to purchase for an Airbnb. Ms. Lebarbera explained she wants to place elevated tree houses on the property. Ms. Lebarbera explained she will be meeting with the Zoning Hearing Board.
- Guest Mike Leister inquired about the renovations at the Quaker Meeting House. Council President Doug Krum explained the bids the Borough has received none of the contractors have experience doing this type of work. The Commissioners are looking into the bids that were received and the Borough has not heard anything back.
- Guest Gary Steinruck stated when he was on Council, he got a quote from Dolittle Construction for the work on Quaker Meeting House back then. Mr. Steinruck thought something got messed up and the money was used for the retaining wall but he can't recall the whole thing.
- Guest Daniel Johnson asked questions about part-time police being asked to resign, is it fair market value for the guns, does the Borough plan on replacing these officers and will it affect overtime, why can't we keep the guns and why isn't unfinished business on the agenda the next month so the public knows where things stand. Council President Doug Krum and Councilwoman Victoria Waugh spoke on (2) items that are being worked on. Chief Laidacker explained the resigning Officers have full-time positions elsewhere and availability was an issue for them. The impact will be minimum for the schedule, the guns are fair market value and there are extra guns if needed.
- Guest Gary Steinruck spoke of the price of guns going up and he feels the price of the guns being sold is a steal.
- Guest Daniel May spoke about Ordinance 04-2020 regarding nuisance vehicles. Mr. May expressed his concerns with the police not enforcing the ordinance. Mr. May stated he reported a van with an expired registration and inspection. Chief Laidacker asked Mr. May if he is involved in a civil litigation with the vehicle owner, Mr. May stated yes. Attorney Anthony McDonald stated the Borough cannot get involved if he is in a litigation.
- Guest Sharon Krum asked if there is a leash ordinance within the Borough. Ms. Krum explained a dog in her neighborhood is going on other people's property and does his business. The owner is cleaning it up but the dog is chasing other dogs. Chief Laidacker asked Ms. Krum to contact the Police Department and they will look into it. Ms. Krum stated she did contact the police department a year ago and no one has done anything about it. Chief Laidacker asked Ms. Krum to call the police department so they can discuss the matter.
- Guest Sue Helwig asked Council not to make decisions about things that affect next year's budget and request no decisions be made until a majority of Council will be on for next year. Ms. Helwig asked if new job descriptions were made for the new promotions and what are they taking on. Ms. Helwig asked if the new managers will be supervising Borough Employees? Council President Doug Krum said yes somewhat. Ms. Helwig expressed her concerns with funds being spent and a budget for next year. Ms. Helwig expressed concerns with the new Council maybe wanting to change having a Borough Manager. Ms. Helwig stated she is in disagreement of the raises for the promotions and feels it should only be until December 31st, 2021, so the next Council can decide what they want to do about a manager. Attorney Anthony McDonald stated he would hate to see for this Council giving these raises and the next Council takes them away. This would cause turmoil in the office. Attorney McDonald also stated this happened in years past with Code Enforcement Officers and they both resigned. Ms. Helwig asked if a study was done.
- Guest Gary Steinruck stated it all boils down to what the Borough can afford. Mr. Steinruck expressed his concern with the Electric Department trimming his tree and blowing the shavings from chipping in his yard. Mr. Steinruck also feels a notice should be given when electric service is going to be worked on at any time. Mr. Steinruck feels there should be a policy.
- Council President Doug Krum thanked Councilwoman Victoria Waugh for working a week in the office for no pay when Secretary Connie Cole was on vacation.

- Guest Sue Helwig asked Attorney Anthony MC Donald why (2) items were being brought back up when they did not pass last month. Attorney McDonald explained items can be brought back up.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- Borough Secretary Connie Cole reported the Borough received an email from Jason Fitzgerald with Penn Strategies informing the Borough there is \$114,145 remaining from the Flood Mitigation Grant. Mr. Fitzgerald noted some key items the Borough needed to keep in mind when using the funds.

MAYOR:

- Mayor Todd Burke thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.
- Mr. Burke reported the full-time police officers are doing a great job.
- Mr. Burke spoke of an incident that happened a month ago regarding an officer needing assistance and another department came and took our officer to the emergency room.

WATER:

- Water Authority Superintendent Cindy Bachman asked Council if signage can be put up at Cara Park bathrooms concerning water usage. Council gave permission for the temporary signs to be hung. Councilman Roy Klinger explained to Ms. Bachman what kind of signs are used in state parks. Mr. Klinger stated the committee was discussing looking into those. Ms. Bachman also inquired about something being put on the reservation papers concerning the water. Secretary Connie Cole informed Ms. Bachman that was already taken care of. Secretary Connie Cole offered to laminate the temporary signs for Ms. Bachman if she needed the temporary signs laminated, she could do that for her. Council gave permission for this to be done.
- Ms. Bachman inquired about a letter of opposition regarding the Senate Bill 597 regarding utilities under the PUC control. Councilman Roy Klinger stated he has a draft of the letter that he would like Ms. Bachman to look over before it is submitted.
- Ms. Bachman met with Dale Hendricks to go over possibilities to fix the dry hydrant. An idea was to cut a road closer to the creek to put the hose right into the creek. Ms. Bachman volunteered to make engineering inquiries to look at the dry hydrant project. Council gave Ms. Bachman permission to gather information to keep the project going. Council Vice President Corey Yule asked Ms. Bachman how many more times does the dry hydrant need cleaned out now compared to before. Ms. Bachman answered three more times as often.

CODE ENFORCEMENT REPORT:

- Council President Doug Krum read the code enforcement report.

POLICE:

- Chief Laidacker reported for the month of June the department responded to (197) calls for service. Chief Laidacker read his report which stated the following:
- The SUV repairs have been completed and returned to service.
- Officers volunteered at Kid's Day with the Bearcat, Rita's and Fingerprinting.
- Special thank you to Mayor Burke for the donation of the raffle prize and to Councilwoman Waugh and her son for donating time.
- Officer McNelis and Officer Kistner attended a class on Identifying Criminal Activity.
- Chief Laidacker thanked Hemlock, Montour and Locust Township for their assistance with an incident in the borough.
- A motion was made by Roy Klinger, 2nd by Victoria Waugh to approve the resignation of Police Officers Brandon Beck, Daniel Patel, Daniel O'Donnell and Jeremy Moyer. 5: Aye, 1: Nay AJ McKenney
- A motion was made by Corey Yule, 2nd by Victoria Waugh to approve the sale of duty weapon to each resigning officer at a cost of \$300.00. All Aye

PUBLIC WORKS:

- Nothing to report.

PUBLIC SAFETY:

- Nothing to report.

UTILITIES:

- Committee Chairman Corey Yule reported a meeting was held 2 weeks ago. Topics that were discussed were the wind & solar ordinance, a policy on pulling meters, discussing the bugs with the meter reading system.

PARKS & RECREATION/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

- Nothing to report

PROPERTY & BUILDING MAINTENANCE:

- A motion was made by Victoria Waugh, 2nd by Roy Klinger to approve the electronic vote on 6/14/2021 for repairs of the Air Ventilation Unit in the Sewer Plant wet room that release gases for a cost of \$3,072.41. All Aye
- A motion was made by Victoria Waugh, 2nd by Corey Yule to approve movement against the Performance Bond for the Culvert Project. Attorney Anthony McDonald asked Council if they wanted him to move against the bond or the engineer. Council stated they wanted Attorney McDonald move against the bond. Council President Doug Krum asked guest Nick Fletcher to explain the issue that is going on with the drain box on the church property. All Aye

FINANCE:

- Committee Chairman Doug Krum reported the Financial Statement for 2020 from the Borough Audit has been received and will be in the paper July 15th.
- Half of the Coronavirus Recovery Funds in the amount of \$76,722.53 has been received. Council is not 100 percent sure of what the funds can be spent on so none of the funds will be spent right now.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:

- Committee Chairman Doug Krum reported police negotiations are in process.
- A motion was made by Victoria Waugh, 2nd by Corey Yule to approve promoting Borough Secretary Connie Cole to Manager of Administration with a raise of \$3.50/hr. retroactive back to July 5th, 2021. 4: Aye, 2: Nay Roy Klinger, AJ McKenney Motion carries
- A motion was made by Corey Yule, 2nd by Janel Patel to approve promoting Borough Treasurer Nancy Yost to Manager of Finance with a raise of \$3.50/hr. retroactive back to July 5th, 2021. 4: Aye, 2: Nay AJ McKenney, Roy Klinger Motion carries

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- A motion was made by Victoria Waugh, 2nd by Corey Yule to discuss a permit system versus vacating an alley. Councilwoman Victoria Waugh reported Council President Doug Krum and herself met with Borough Solicitor Anthony McDonald. The conclusion was come to in order to make it fair for everyone not to vacate an alley. The best solution is to come up with a permit system. There would be rules for everyone to follow. The idea is to have (2) different permits. Attorney McDonald explained now the permit system and rules need to be developed. A motion was made by Victoria Waugh, 2nd by Janel Patel to approve moving forward with developing a permitting system for the use of an alley by commercial businesses and nonprofit organizations. All Aye

NEW BUSINESS:

- A motion was made by Corey Yule, 2nd by Roy Klinger to approve Code Enforcement Officer Bob Jones to attend training at North East Training Institute for 5 days at \$1995.00. All Aye
- A motion was made by Roy Klinger, 2nd by AJ McKenney to discuss giving Catawissa Hose Company a donation for the Firefighters Carnival. A motion was made by Roy Klinger, 2nd AJ McKenney to approve donating \$1000.00 to Catawissa Hose Company for the Firefighters Carnival. All Aye
- A motion was made by Roy Klinger, 2nd by AJ McKenney to discuss Letters of Interest for the vacant council seat. Attorney Anthony McDonald gave a recommendation of appointing one of the two people that are assured to win the seat in the fall. Council President Doug Krum asked for nominations for the seat. Councilman AJ McKenney nominated Gary Steinruck, 2nd by Roy Klinger. Councilwoman Victoria Waugh nominated Marnie Yeick, 2nd by Janel Patel.
Roll Call Vote for Gary Steinruck: Janel Patel; Nay, Victoria Waugh; Nay, Doug Krum; Nay, Corey Yule; Nay, AJ McKenney; Aye, Roy Klinger; Aye. Motion doesn't carry
Roll Call Vote for Marnie Yeick: Janel Patel; Aye, Victoria Waugh; Aye, Doug Krum; Aye, Corey Yule; Aye, AJ McKenney; Nay, Roy Klinger; Nay. Motion carries
- A motion was made by Victoria Waugh, 2nd by Janel Patel to approve Resolution 2021-09 to fill the Borough Council vacancy seat with Marnie Yeick. 4 Aye, 2: Nay AJ McKenney, Roy Klinger Motion carries

FINANCE PAYMENT OF BILLS

- A motion was made by Roy Klinger 2nd by Victoria Waugh to accept bills as written and any others that may arise before the next council meeting. All Aye

GUESTS TO BE HEARD

- Guests Sue Helwig asked Council President Doug Krum for clarity on what he meant by the comment he made about the Rental Ordinance. Council President Krum stated we need one.
- Guest Kevin Ferris also expressed his dissatisfaction of the comment Council President Doug Krum made concerning the Rental Ordinance.
- Guest Nick Fletcher asked if the sink hole that opens up should be filled while waiting for repairs. Attorney Anthony McDonald advised Mr. Fletcher to stop filling the sink hole and put orange fencing around it while the movement against the Performance Bond is in progress. Mr. Fletcher asked how long this could take. Attorney McDonald explained the things that could happen.
- Councilman Roy Klinger gave a better explanation of conserving energy during peak load times. Councilman Klinger gave an example of if your cooking dinner don't do a load of laundry at the same time.
- Guest Pat Hess asked why the Letters of Interest were not read before nominations were made. Councilman Doug Krum asked Attorney Anthony McDonald if he had to read them. Attorney McDonald stated no you did not. Ms. Hess stated it would be nice for the public to know who put letters in. Council President Doug Krum read off the following names: Jared Learn, Marnie Yeick, Sue Helwig, Gary Steinruck, Daniel Gregorowicz and Jeffery Fleming.

ADJOURNMENT:

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

MEETING ADJOURNED

Submitted by:

Connie M. Cole
Borough Secretary