

CATAWISSA BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY January 11, 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, Roy Klinger, Janel Patel, Jamie Cotner, Victoria Waugh, Borough Manager Larry Kopp, Mayor Todd Burke, Attorney Anthony McDonald.
- Council President Doug Krum announced AJ McKenney is the official time keeper for speakers.

READING OF MINUTES:

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

GUESTS TO BE HEARD:

- Guest Barbara Reese asked who was going to maintain the dog park that Council wants to spend \$30,000 on. Borough Manager Larry Kopp replied Borough Workers. Ms. Reese said the reality is people leave dog dirt around town and don't clean it up. Ms. Reese does not want to see her tax money or electric money used on something the Borough could really use, as a boat ramp, parks, cemeteries and economic development.
- Guest Sue Helwig stated she agreed with Barbara Reese.
- Guest Patsy Hess also stated she agreed with Barbara Reese and \$30,000 is too much to spend on a dog park and the Borough Workers will be stuck cleaning up the mess.
- Guest Sue Helwig brought it to Council's attention the Degenstein grants are for pandemic reasons right now and Magee Foundation only gives up to \$5000.
- Guest Cindy Bachman asked if either grant is matching that the Borough is looking at. Borough Manager Larry Kopp informed Ms. Bachman there is no match. Ms. Bachman asked if the funds ear marked for the upkeep of the dog park could be used for the streets.
- Guest Sue Helwig asked about over time for the Police Budget. Ms. Helwig stated they were told at the last meeting there was no overtime but there was 929 over time hours for 2020, 600 of those hours came after the 5th Officer was hired. Ms. Helwig wanted to know who is watching the budget and why isn't the accurate information given out? Councilman Corey Yule asked Ms. Helwig if she recalled who told her there was no overtime hours. Ms. Helwig replied she believes it was Josh. Chief Josh Laidacker stated there must be miscommunication because he never said there was no over time. Chief Laidacker reported at the end of last year there was some COVID situations. Chief Laidacker continued to explain how overtime is calculated in the borough payroll system including holiday pay and DUI checkpoints are calculated as overtime. Chief stated the number of overtime hours are deceiving how the payroll system looks.
- Guest Patsy Hess stated she remembers Linda Kashner asking Chief Laidacker about overtime because there was none on the budget for Police and Chief said he didn't need any. Chief Laidacker replied that is absolutely not true, he did not say he didn't need any. Ms. Hess asked Linda Kashner if she could verify if that's what was said. Guest Linda Kashner stated Chief stated he did not need the overtime because they have the 5th Officer. Chief Laidacker replied there must have been some miscommunication because there is no Police Department in this state that can operate with no overtime, it is impossible.
- Guest Sharon Krum asked what is the Vacancy Board Chair. Borough Manager Larry Kopp told Ms. Krum that the Chair is required by the state and they come in when a Council Member leaves. The Chair comes in and heads the process of bringing another Council Member on. Ms. Krum asked Borough Manager if the sink for the Community Center came in. Borough Manager

Larry Kopp stated it did come in but is not installed yet. Borough Manager Larry Kopp told Ms. Krum to give him a call the next day, he would take her to the Community Center to see it.

- Guest Sue Helwig asked about the electronic vote for transfers that were done between meetings. Ms. Helwig stated according to the Sunshine Act these motions should be done at an open meeting and does not feel this was an emergency. Council President Doug Krum stated these transfers had to be done by the end of the year and they were neglected being put on the agenda for last month's meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- Brough Secretary Connie Cole reported the Borough received a letter from DCNR reporting the grant for the Catawissa Kayak Launch Project was not picked to be funded.

MAYOR:

- Mayor Todd Burke stated things are going well with the police department.
- Mayor Burke reported (2) Officers had been out with COVID and (1) Officer is out on COVID time now. Mayor Burke stated the police have procedures in place. They are also being careful to mitigate the spread of COVID.

MANAGER'S REPORT:

- Borough Manager Larry Kopp reported the following:
- A grant application was submitted to DCED/CFA for \$1,458,313 for our Main St. Streetscaping Project.
- An application was submitted for a DCED Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program Grant for \$401,261.90 for Eyer Park Development.
- Met virtually with members of Amp R.I.C.E. Peak Shaving Project, nothing new to report.
- Meetings are being coordinated with Columbia County Commissioners and the Southern Columbia School District to gain support for LERTA Tax Incentives. The Local Economic Revitalization Tax Act (LERTA) allows improvements on commercial properties to be exempt from taxes at the full assessed value for a period of up to 10-years.
- Serious Flooding was avoided over Christmas Weekend. Flood Emergency Procedures for the Borough were put together.
- A meeting was attended with AMP. Amp recommended to have a policy in place for Roof Top Solar. This is something Mr. Kopp and the Utilities Committee will be working on.
- Policies and procedures are being worked on for the Eyer Park Fund.
- Musical acts to perform on the 2021 Summer Breeze Concert Series is being drafted. Council President Doug Krum asked Borough Manager Larry Kopp if he applied for the grant with the Degenstien Foundation for the Summer Breeze Concert Series. Borough Manager Larry Kopp stated it will depend on if we want the dog park or not because we cannot apply for two grants.
- Waiting for update from Columbia County Housing & Redevelopment Authority on bidding procedures for the Quaker Meeting House Repairs under the CDBG Grant. Work is scheduled to start in April 2021.
- Waiting to see when the 90-day appeal period will begin for other communities in Columbia County.

WATER:

- Water Authority Superintendent Cindy Bachman reported a large tree came down near the dry hydrant during the potential flooding. The Borough Electric Department pulled the tree out without incident. A substantial amount of sediment covered the suction line; the Water Authority blew it away with an air compressor which created a large pool. Ms. Bachman

reported the Water Authority will try again this week with the air compressor and the dry hydrant is functional.

CODE ENFORCEMENT REPORT:

- Council President Doug Krum read the code enforcement report.

POLICE:

- Chief Laidacker read the monthly report which stated the following:
- During the month of December 2020, the department responded to (149) calls for service.
- Under advisement of the District Attorney's Office the department remains under COVID precautions when dealing with suspects, such as temperature readings and recording suspects symptoms and temperatures. This also includes screening of officers as they report for duty.
- The 2021 schedule was approved.
- Officer Hayes officially began his Corporal duties January 01,2021.
- Training for officers McNelis and Krape was cancelled in December due to COVID concerns. They are re-scheduled in March for the same training.
- Officers Kistner and McNelis are scheduled for Standardized Field Sobriety Training during the month of January.
- Officers are scheduled for mandatory CPR/First Aid training on the 13th of January.

PUBLIC SAFETY:

- A motion was made by Roy Klinger, 2nd by AJ McKenney to reappoint Paul Allen as Emergency Management Coordinator with the Borough. All Aye
- A motion was made by Roy Klinger, 2nd by AJ McKenney to approve Catawissa Hose Company #1 refinancing Tanker #52 truck. All Aye

UTILITIES:

- Committee Chairperson Corey Yule read the account balances.
- A motion was made by Roy Klinger, 2nd by Jamie Cotner to discuss a Solar Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) from AMP. Borough Manager Larry Kopp received an email from AMP recommending municipalities having a certain amount of solar purchasing. AMP also recommended the Borough to stay where they are with our purchasing.

PARKS & RECREATION/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

- A motion was made by Jamie Cotner, 2nd by Janel Patel to approve submitting grants for \$30,000 to the Degenstein and Magee Foundations for the establishment of a Dog Park in the Borough. Council President Doug Krum asked Borough Manager Larry Kopp if he was correct and the Borough did not need to match funds. Manager Kopp stated correct. Councilman Corey Yule asked if he heard correctly if we apply for this grant it could hurt the Borough for getting future grants. Borough Manager Larry Kopp stated yes with Degenstein and the only other grant we apply for with them is about a \$1000 for the Summer Breeze Concerts. Councilwoman Victoria Waugh asked Borough Manager Kopp where the dog park was going to be located. Mr. Kopp replied at the open lot on 1st Street across from where Melick Aquafeed Plant use to be. Councilwoman Victoria Waugh asked if that is in a Flood Zone. Manager Kopp replied yes but you can build this because it doesn't have four walls. Ms. Waugh continued to express her concerns of clean up. Ms. Waugh feels the money could go to clean up Wolfgang park instead for example. Councilman Corey Yule expressed his concerns with clean up and fingers being pointed with no camera to monitor things. Councilman Yule doesn't want to see things go that route. Councilwoman Victoria Waugh asked if anyone checked into liability insurance. Borough Manager Larry Kopp responded he did not. Councilman Corey Yule asked for materials needed for the dog park be checked for availability. A motion was made by Roy Klinger, 2nd by Corey

Yule to table this matter until next month. Motion was tabled for further information to be gathered. All Aye

PROPERTY & BUILDING MAINTENANCE:

- A motion was made by Roy Klinger, 2nd by Victoria Waugh to to approve rental contract for 2021 from the Columbia/Montour Aging Office for the Senior Center with a 3% increase. All Aye
- A motion was made by Corey Yule, 2nd by Roy Klinger to approve a bid for limb removal and tree maintenance on the grounds of the Quaker Meeting House & Cemetery. Councilman Corey Yule asked if Northeast Tree Service was insured. Borough Manager Larry Kopp stated yes. Councilwoman Victoria Waugh asked what was the difference between the Susquehanna Tree Care and Northeast Tree Service quotes. Susquehanna had everything listed with details and Northeast's quote is general with no details. Borough Manager Larry Kopp stated quite honestly, he didn't know the difference but it's pretty obvious what limbs need to be removed and which ones don't. Mr. Kopp also expressed he felt Northeast Tree Service has been doing this awhile and has a well establish customer base. The other guy just went all out and gave every detail. Councilman Corey Yule asked if Northeast Tree Service did work near or on a road when they did work within the Borough. Borough Manager Larry Kopp stated they did trees on the grounds of Quaker Meeting House and the cemeteries before. Councilman Yule expressed he was just concerned if they needed flagman and if that was an expense included. Borough Manager Larry Kopp stated they would not need flagman. Councilwoman Victoria Waugh asked Borough Manager Larry Kopp if this was in the budget. Borough Manager Larry Kopp stated \$7300 was budgeted. A motion was made by Corey Yule, 2nd by Roy Klinger to approve Northeast Tree Service to remove limbs and tree maintenance on the grounds of the Quaker Meeting House. All Aye Councilman Corey Yule stated for the record the quote was for \$7,300.

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION:

- A motion was made by AJ McKenney, 2nd by Roy Klinger to approve, if needed, an online payment of \$3,636 to Amtrust for the December payment on the Borough's Worker Compensation Policy. Borough Manager Larry Kopp explained the payment for December was mailed out and Amtrust did not receive the payment. This course of action will only be taken if the payment has not arrived to Amtrust by next week. All Aye

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:

- A motion was made by Jamie Cotner, 2nd by Corey Yule to discuss reimbursing Code Enforcement Officer Bob Jones for mileage at the established IRS Rate (2021 Rate: \$.56/Mile). After a brief discussion concerning redoing the policy and where the money is coming from since it was not put in the budget. A motion was made by Corey Yule, 2nd by Victoria Waugh to table this matter until next month.
- A motion was made by Victoria Waugh, 2nd by Corey Yule to discuss providing the Personnel Committee the authority to discipline non-union employees. Attorney Anthony McDonald reviewed the Borough Code referring to Borough Manager and the Employee Handbook. Attorney McDonald stated it looked to him the Personnel Committee has the authority in between meetings and then report to Council at the following meeting what they did. Attorney McDonald suggested cleaning up the 2nd sentence of the discipline chapter in the personnel handbook so the sentence clearly states it is in the hands of the Personnel Committee and they have authority between meetings and report to Council at the next meeting the action that was taken.
- A motion was made by Janel Patel, 2nd by Corey Yule to discuss COVID-related leave provision for Borough Employees. Borough Manager Larry Kopp spoke to Eric Brown who feels we should have a policy. Councilwoman Victoria Waugh expressed her concerns with the budget. Borough

Manager Larry Kopp was asked if he could work from home. Councilwoman Victoria Waugh asked Borough Manager Kopp if Borough Treasurer Nancy Yost could work from home and Borough Manager Larry Kopp stated yes and explained how that would work. Borough Secretary Connie Cole explained she was set up to work from home, listing what could be done and what would have to wait until she returned. Councilwoman Jamie Cotner expressed she feels employees should still get paid if they are out for COVID reasons. Chief Laidacker stated the police are covered under the Heart & Lung Act. Borough Manager Larry Kopp stated correct it is Act 17. Council President Doug Krum expressed he feels everyone should still get paid. A motion was made by Janel Patel, 2nd by Roy Klinger to approve COVID Paid Leave Policy. All Aye

- A motion was made by AJ McKenney, 2nd by Roy Klinger to discuss updated COVID Safety Policies for the Borough. Council President Doug Krum explained they are the same Guidelines that were in place and the Personnel Committee made a few changes to keep Office Personnel and everyone safer. A motion was made by Roy Klinger, 2nd by Victoria Waugh to approve the updated COVID Safety Policies for Borough Employees. All Aye

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- A motion was made by Corey Yule, 2nd by Victoria Waugh to discuss a proposed Sign Ordinance, Resolution and Application Form. Councilwoman Victoria Waugh expressed her concern with #6 which stated all signs already up would give people time to bring their signs up to code within 60 months. Attorney Anthony McDonald wanted to caution Council of this clause. Attorney McDonald stated #6 can be removed and you can just grandfather all existing signs in or let the clause in but it could lead to litigation. A motion was made by Victoria Waugh, 2nd by Jamie Cotner to remove #6 from the Sign Ordinance. All Aye A motion was made by Victoria Waugh, 2nd by Jamie Cotner to advertise Sign Ordinance for the next meeting. All Aye Attorney Anthony McDonald asked Borough Manager Larry Kopp will you do the advertising or will I do it. Manager Kopp responded how about I do it and send it to you for review. Attorney McDonald replied sounds good.

NEW BUSINESS:

- A motion was made by Roy Klinger, 2nd by Corey Yule to appoint Jeff Achy as Vacancy Board Chair. All Aye
- A motion was made by Janel Patel, 2nd by Roy Klinger to approve the Zoning Hearing Board's 2020 Annual Report. All Aye
- A motion was made by Jamie Cotner, 2nd by Roy Klinger to reappoint Tom Long as a member of the Zoning Hearing Board to a three-year term, February 1, 2021 – January 31, 2024. All Aye
- A motion was made by Roy Klinger, 2nd by AJ McKenney to approve Borough Manager Larry Kopp as Secretary of the Zoning Hearing Board. Borough Manager Larry Kopp gave an explanation what the Secretary of the Zoning Hearing Board does. 5; Aye, Councilman Corey Yule Nay Motion carries
- A motion was made by AJ McKenney, 2nd by Roy Klinger to reappoint Howard Sodergren to a five-year term on the Water Authority Board, for the period of January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2025. All Aye
- A motion was made by Jamie Cotner, 2nd by Roy Klinger to approve the electronic vote of 12/23/2020, authorizing moving \$1,700 from the Community Center Fund to the Senior Center Fund to defray expenses for heating. All Aye
- A motion was made by Roy Klinger, 2nd by AJ McKenney to approve \$1,454.72 for new tires for the Sewer and Electric Ford F-350 trucks (\$727.36 per truck). Factory tires were not doing well in the snow. All Aye
- A motion was made by Janel Patel, 2nd by Corey Yule to discuss the Borough Council Committee meeting schedule for 2021. Councilman Roy Klinger stated his work schedule changed. All other

Council Members were ok with the way they were. Council President Doug Krum asked Borough Manager Larry Kopp if he could work around Roy's schedule. Borough Manager Larry stated he will work something out.

FINANCE PAYMENT OF BILLS

- A motion was made by Corey Yule, 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

- Councilwoman Victoria Waugh stated there was a question on the chat asking if the COVID Safety Guidelines could be put on the website. Borough Manager Larry Kopp responded we can put them on tomorrow.
- Guest Maureen Hulse asked Council if she could donate (2) tether balls, (1) for each park in memory of former Mayor Tim Benner. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Roy Klinger, 2nd by Victoria Waugh to have Borough Workers put the (2) donated tether balls in. Councilman Roy Klinger rescinded his motion and Councilwoman Victoria Waugh rescinded her second. A motion was made by Roy Klinger, 2nd by Victoria Waugh to have the Borough Workers put the (2) tether balls in the parks and dedicating them in memory of Tim Benner. All Aye

ADJOURNMENT:

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

MEETING ADJOURNED

Submitted by:

Connie M. Cole
Borough Secretary