

CATAWISSA BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY November 7th, 2022 - 6:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER:

- The meeting was called to order by Council President Sue Helwig.

ROLL CALL:

- Present were: Sue Helwig, Jeff Fleming, Gary Steinruck, AJ McKenney, Kevin Ferris, Roy Klinger, Andrew Detwiler, Mayor Todd Burke, Attorney Anthony McDonald

READING OF MINUTES:

- A motion was made by Roy Klinger, 2nd by Jeff Fleming to dispense reading of and approve minutes of the October 19th, 2022 Council Meeting. All Aye

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

- Council President Sue Helwig thanked everyone who made the Halloween Parade & Trick or Treating enjoyable for our residents and everyone who came from outside of the borough.
- Ms. Helwig thanked the Police and Mayor Burke for keeping everyone safe.
- Ms. Helwig reported the November 29th Finance Meeting is open to the public for discussion and finalization of the 2023 proposed budget.
- The Borough will be going to the Southern Columbia School Board Meeting on Nov. 14th to seek approval for the LERTA Tax incentive. Ms. Helwig feels the Borough should have a decision to report at the December Council Meeting.

GUESTS TO BE HEARD:

- Catawissa Township Supervisor Ray Sobelesky and Aaron Eldred with the Columbia County Conservation District spoke to Council about an issue of a debris jam on the head of an island Catawissa Borough owns in the Catawissa Creek. This debris jam directs over flow onto Mountain Rd which causes issues. Catawissa Township would like to apply for funding to clean up the debris with Catawissa Borough's permission to do the work on Borough property. Aaron Eldred explained all of the work and finances will go through Catawissa Township. The scope of work would include removing the debris, removing gravel bars and installing stone deflectors. The deflectors are to centralize the flow of water. A motion was made by Kevin Ferris, 2nd by Andrew Detwiler to add a motion to the agenda. All Aye. A motion was made by Andrew Detwiler, 2nd by Roy Klinger to approve Catawissa Township to use the money they receive from County and other funding to do the work on borough property. Once an agreement is reviewed by the Borough Solicitor and approved, Council may sign the agreement. All Aye

CORRESPONDENCE:

- Nothing to report.

MAYOR:

Mayor Burke thanked everyone for attending the meeting and reported the following:

- The Halloween Parade went well and was well attended.
- Extra officers were on duty for everyone's safety during trick or treating.

WATER:

- Water Authority Superintendent Cindy Bachman informed Council the state still has the drought watch on for 36 counties.

- Peters Consultants are submitting the new plans for the dry hydrant to the Public Safety Committee by Nov 10th for review at the Public Safety Meeting.

CODE ENFORCEMENT REPORT:

- Councilman AJ McKenney read the code enforcement report.

POLICE:

- Chief Laidacker reported for the month of October the department responded to (172) calls for service. Chief Laidacker read his report which stated the following:
- The 2014 sedan driver's seat was repaired.
- Chief submitted the PCCD grant application.
- The department received resignation letters from Officers Krape and Allen. Both positions were advertised to be filled following a special meeting of Council.
- Scheduling for the FT Officer testing has begun at the direction of the Civil Service Commission.

PUBLIC SAFETY:

- Councilman Andrew Detwiler reported the first Safety Committee Meeting was on Friday Oct. 4th. The Committee is ready to operate on their own.

UTILITIES:

- Committee Chairman Jeff Fleming read the utilities report providing open and closed balances for electric/sewer accounts. Mr. Fleming also reported how many late notices were mailed for the month of October.
- A motion was made by Jeff Fleming, 2nd by Roy Klinger to approve the purchase of (5) LED street lights at a cost of \$2063.83 to be paid from Maintenance Equipment/ Vehicle in the Electric Fund. All Aye

PARKS & RECREATION/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

- A motion was made by Andrew Detwiler, 2nd by AJ McKenney to approve Manager of Administration Connie Cole a budget of \$500 to purchase items to assemble 100 children gift bags and set up a stand at Winterfest. Attorney Anthony McDonald announced Marinos & McDonald, LLP will donate \$500 for the 100 children gift bags and set up of stand for Winterfest. Councilman Detwiler and McKenney rescinded their motion. Ms. Cole and Council thanked Attorney McDonald for his firm's generous donation.

PROPERTY/BUILDING MAINTENANCE:

- A motion was made by AJ McKenney, 2nd by Roy Klinger to approve Area on Aging Agency applying for a \$150,000 grant to make improvements to the Senior Center. Improvements the Agency will include are repointing the outside of the building, LED lighting, a new back kitchen door and a metal awning over the front entrance. All Aye

FINANCE:

- A motion was made by Jeff Fleming, 2nd by Andrew Detwiler to approve the adoption of Building Inspection Underwriters of PA Inc. revised fee schedule. Councilman Kevin Ferris asked if other options should be looked at before we approve the fee schedule. Council President Sue Helwig agreed. A motion was made by Jeff Fleming, 2nd by AJ McKenney to table the matter until the BIU contract can be looked at. All Aye
- A motion was made by Gary Steinruck, 2nd by Kevin Ferris to approve a Lease Agreement with Columbia/Montour Aging Office for the year 2023 Senior Center Rental at a sum of \$741.61 per month during the rental agreement. All Aye

- A motion was made by Andrew Detwiler, 2nd by Kevin Ferris selling former Officer David Krape's bulletproof vest to Tamaqua Borough for \$350.00. All Aye
- A motion was made by Gary Steinruck, 2nd by AJ McKenney to approve the purchase of (10) Weis gift cards for the Senior Center Thanksgiving Party. All Aye
- A motion was made by Gary Steinruck, 2nd by AJ McKenney to approve the transfer of \$25,000 from Electric Fund to General Fund for the Pension Fund. All Aye
- A motion was made by Gary Steinruck, 2nd by Jeff Fleming to approve the transfer of \$17,000 from Sewer to General Fund for Pension Fund. All Aye
- A motion was made by AJ McKenney, 2nd by Gary Steinruck to approve the transfer of \$5,000 from Electric Fund to the Capital Fund. All Aye
- A motion was made by Gary Steinruck, 2nd by AJ McKenney to approve the transfer of \$15,000 from Sewer Fund to Capital Fund. All Aye
- A motion was made by Andrew Detwiler, 2nd by Gary Steinruck to approve the transfer of \$1,800 from Community Center Fund to Senior Center Fund to help with heating cost. All Aye
- A motion was made by Jeff Fleming, 2nd by Andrew Detwiler to approve advertising the proposed 2023 Catawissa Borough Budget once it is complete and approved by the Finance Committee. All Aye

PERSONNEL:

- A motion was made by Kevin Ferris, 2nd by Jeff Fleming to approve changing the Hiring Policy for non-uniform employees to a hiring policy and hiring procedure. Council President Sue Helwig explained this is just to come up to date with today's hiring circumstances. All Aye
- Council President Sue Helwig announced the Borough received Letters of Interest for the Zoning Hearing Board 3-year term starting January 1, 2023 from Dan Gregorowicz and Doug Krum. President Helwig asked if any Council Member would like to make a nomination. Councilman Kevin Ferris nominated Dan Gregorowicz, 2nd by Jeff Fleming. Councilman Andrew Detwiler nominated Doug Krum, 2nd by AJ McKenney. President Helwig announced the first candidate with majority vote will get the seat. Manager of Administration took roll call for the nomination of Dan Gregorowicz. Roy Klinger; Aye, AJ McKenney; Aye, Gary Steinruck; Aye, Sue Helwig; Aye, Kevin Ferris; Aye, Jeff Fleming; Aye, Andrew Detwiler; Nay. Motion Carries
- A motion was made by AJ McKenney, 2nd by Roy Klinger to approve re-appointment of Richard Brassard to a 6-year term on the Civil Service Commission starting January 1st, 2023. All Aye
- A motion was made by Kevin Ferris, 2nd by Roy Klinger to approve hiring Judy Snyder as the Part-Time Treasurer, up to 25 hours/week, at an hourly rate of \$18.50/hr. 6-Aye, 1- Nay; Gary Steinruck Motion carries.
- A motion was made by Kevin Ferris, 2nd by Jeff Fleming to approve accepting Letters of Interest for an alternate 3-year term on the Zoning Hearing Board starting Jan. 1st, 2023. All Aye
- A motion was made by AJ McKenney, 2nd by Jeff Fleming to approve accepting Letters of Interest for an alternate 6-year term on the Civil Service Commission starting Jan. 1st, 2023. All Aye
- A motion was made by Kevin Ferris, 2nd by Roy Klinger to approve holding off on hiring a Part-Time Police Officer until further review. Councilman Kevin Ferris and Jeff Fleming asked if the topic was discussed with Chief Laidacker. President Helwig confirmed it was. 6-Aye, 1-Nay; Gary Steinruck Motion carries

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- Council President Sue Helwig reported she spoke with the Borough Solicitor Anthony McDonald and the District Attorney on the legality of chalking tires. Both Attorney McDonald and the District Attorney confirmed it is legal to chalk tires for the purpose of identifying parking violations in the state of Pennsylvania. Ms. Helwig read a statement referencing the parking ordinance not being enforced for many years, Council having a responsibility to address the issue and the lack of parking being a concern

for bringing new businesses to the Borough. Chief Laidacker expressed his concern with not being invited to a meeting he requested on Oct 19th at the Council Meeting with President Helwig and Attorney Anthony McDonald to discuss the chalking of tires. Attorney McDonald stated he did not attend a meeting; it was an email.

- A motion was made by Gary Steinruck, 2nd by Kevin Ferris to direct the police department to chalk tires for the purpose of ticketing violators of the 2-hour parking limit on Main Street with warnings encouraged for the first and second offenses, but tickets issued to ongoing violators. Chief Laidacker asked who was complaining and when is someone saying the issue of parking is occurring. President Helwig stated she couldn't remember names but there were several people complaining at the first public Economic Development meeting. Chief Laidacker passed out photos taken at different times and days that show parking is available on Main St. Councilman Detwiler feels the Police already have a directive to enforce the laws it is already a given and doesn't need a motion. Mr. Detwiler explained there is plenty of parking in town and feels there are more important matters to address first. Mayor Burke feels this motion should have never been put on the agenda (2) months ago. Ms. Helwig expressed this is an ordinance on the books and it should be enforced. Ms. Helwig explained it is Council's job to see that ordinances are being enforced. Attorney McDonald explained how chalking of the tires would work. After further discussion, Attorney Anthony McDonald encouraged Council President Sue Helwig to take a vote for the motion on the table. Manager of Administration Connie Cole took a roll call vote. Andrew Detwiler; Nay Jeff Fleming; Nay, Kevin Ferris; Aye, Sue Helwig; Aye, Gary Steinruck; Aye, Roy Klinger; Aye, AJ McKenney; Aye.
Motion carries

NEW BUSINESS:

- A motion was made by Roy Klinger, 2nd by Jeff Fleming to approve and advertise the Council meetings will be the 1st Monday after the 1st Thursday of each month at 307 Main St. All Aye

FINANCE PAYMENT OF BILLS

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

GUESTS TO BE HEARD

- No guests to be heard.

ADJOURNMENT:

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

MEETING ADJOURNED

Submitted by:

Connie M. Cole
Manager of Administration