

Minutes of Regular Monthly Meeting of Koppel Borough Council for January 19, 2021

Council Attendance: **Eugene Docchio, Frank Pisano, Barbara Gioffre, Athena Pangikas-Miller, Michael Sabino**

Borough Solicitor: Joseph Budicak
Mayor: Tom Vannoy

Borough Engineer: Brandon Fombelle

Borough Police Officer: Chief Smock

Guests Present: Dave and Anna Plavecsky, Tim Brewer, Suzanne Broge, Russell Broge

Absent:

The meeting opened with a Prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance by Barbara Gioffre

A motion was made to **accept the December 15, 2020 Minutes**

Motion made by: Frank Pisano

Motion seconded by: Eugene Docchio

Roll call –

***The motion was approved by all present members of council.

A motion was made to **pay the borough General Fund bills.**

Motion made by: Athena Pangikas-Miller

Motion seconded by: Michael Sabino

Roll call -

***The motion was approved by all present members of council.

A motion was made to **pay the borough Fire Dept bills.**

Motion made by: Athena Pangikas-Miller

Motion seconded by: Eugene Docchio

Roll call –

***The motion was approved by all present members of council.

A motion was made to **hire a new Police Officer – Kenneth Gawley**

Motion made by: Athena Pangikas-Miller

Motion seconded by: Michael Sabino

Roll call –

***The motion was approved by all present members of council.

A motion was made to **accept the paper work for the new police car and sign the contract on the condition of the Solicitor's approval**

Motion made by: Athena Pangikas-Miller

Motion seconded by: Frank Pisano

Roll call –

***The motion was approved by all present members of council.

A motion was made to **advertise an amendment to the Garbage Ordinance**

Motion made by: Frank Pisano

Motion seconded by: Athena Pangikas-Miller

Roll call –

***The motion was approved by all present members of council.

A motion was made to **contract Michael Baker as the Borough's Engineering company.**

Motion made by: Frank Pisano

Motion seconded by: Athena Pangikas-Miller

Roll call –

***The motion was approved by all present members of council.

POLICE REPORT – CHIEF SMOCK

Michael Sabino spoke about why she wanted to be on council. It was because of problems concerning drugs in the community and these issues are still her concern. She asked “What is being done about this”? Chief Smock said that if there is frequent activity such as traffic in and out of houses, and vehicle license plates from various places, then a pattern can be established. Once a vehicle leaves the residence, then an attempt to stop these vehicles can be done. If there is any evidence like narcotics, the vehicle can be impounded and an application for a search warrant made. The police department could bring in the country drug task force. The first step is for residents to report this type of activity to the Koppel Police Department.

Michael Sabino said that her experience was a house on her street was thought to be a drug house. Neighbors also noticed a lot of activity. She saw drug deals happen in front of her house. After residents on her block reported the problem and nothing was done, she contacted another source and undercover narcotics officers were able to investigate and stop the problem. The people living there have since moved, but Michael asked what is being done to proactively prevent people like this from moving into the town and selling or distributing drugs. There are issues involved drug overdoses and now her concern is that so many other people are renting houses in town and no one knows who they are. The Mayor told of instances where drug busts were made and it was also suggested a neighborhood watch could be helpful for this problem in identifying this kind of activity. Neighborhood Night Out was suggested by Chief Smock. Michael expressed concerned that the officers protect themselves by having Narcan available in case of accidental contact.

Chief Smock asked for an executive session regarding a personnel matter. The council and solicitor excused themselves and went into an adjacent room for discussion of the personnel issue.

Hiring of Ken Gawley

The meeting was reconvened. A motion was made and passed to hire Ken Gawley to fill in for Art Shidemantle retroactive to January 5, 2021. There was a minor incident with our police car. Officer Gawley was on Intersection of 18 and Arthur and a tractor trailer was north bound to turn down into Koppel. The tractor trailer could not make the turn and Gauley attempted to back up and made contact with the vehicle behind him. It cracked the light of the vehicle behind him and a claim was turned into the insurance companies. An estimate of \$360 was made for repair. Ken Gawley reported to his insurance company and a police report will be made. Koppel's insurance and Ken Gawley insurance will sort it out.

Police Vehicle

The paper work for the purchase of the police car was addressed. Solicitor Joe Budicak said he will review and advised that the signing, if agreed upon, be approved tonight on the condition of his approval. The solicitor asked if this is being purchased by a government entity and was it put out for bid. The Mayor and Chief Smock said the dealer is a COSTARS dealer. COSTARS purchase does not have to be put out for bid. A motion was made to approve the signing of contract on the condition of the approval of the solicitor. Once it is all signed, a copy of all the paper work will be sent to the leasing company and also to the bank with the first initial check.

ENGINEER REPORT

A motion was made and approved for Michael Baker Engineers to remain as the Borough's engineering company and Brandon Fombelle as engineer. A copy of the contract will be signed and sent to Baker Engineers.

MAINTENANCE REPORT

Interviews for maintenance manager were done. On January 21, 2021 Council voted to hire Michael Stabryla as Maintenance Manager at \$18 per hour with health benefits.

SOLICITOR REPORT

The purchase of a property by an individual that is located in Koppel Borough and Big Beaver Borough and is situated between Norwood Drive and Rt 18. The house is on a parcel in Big Beaver and is zoned residential and the vacant land is in Koppel Borough and is zoned commercial C-2. They have requested to build a garage, but because of the zoning, would have to build by commercial standards and at increased costs. The other expense would be to go through the zoning board. The owner does not want to do that because of the cost and is asking for a variance to build it as a residential building that would be used to store vehicles. The solicitor will send a letter to allow for use as a storage for cars only and as an accessory to the residential parcel in Big Beaver. It was noted that there is a gas line in that vicinity but this would not be a concern for Koppel Borough but a concern for the property owner in complying with building near a gas line.

Garbage Ordinance Amendment

The solicitor questioned if a motion had been made for the amended garbage ordinance to be advertised. Barbara Gioffre said it was not advertised and wants the Solicitor to review it. The amendment is to add “other municipal services” and a statement should also be added to allow for “increase of fees” in the future. A motion was made for the solicitor to advertise the amended garbage ordinance.

Borough Council Committees

Council President Barbara Gioffre assigned committees to each member of council and appointed a chairperson for each committee. Their expected duties were defined in the packet they received. Each chairperson for each committee will be expected to give a report of what they did for the current month.

GUESTS

SR 18 Potholes

A pothole on Rt 18 is very deep and causing damage to vehicles. It is a PennDOT maintained road. It was suggested that people can go online and register a complaint by visiting www.penndot.gov and clicking on “Submit Roadway Feedback.”. Or call PennDOT at 1-800-FIX-ROAD to report potholes and other roadway concerns on state roads.

PSC Metals Complaints

Complaints of explosions from PSC Metals that are damaging the property of Dave Plavecsky. He reported that three windows were broken. Eugene Docchio also complained of damage to his house. A water system is supposed to be used when they are shredding. The water system is not working properly and is not being used. Explosions begin at 10:30 at night and there have been as many as 8 explosions in one night. Residents are in contact with DEP and OSHA.

EMC

It was suggested by Susanne Broge that Devon Price is interested in being the Emergency Management Coordinator. The Public Safety Committee can look into what the requirements are. It was suggested that Devon Price come to the next meeting. Koppel’s current EMC is John Stubbs. John expressed some time ago his interest in stepping down if someone else became interested.

Potter Baseball

Potter Baseball announced that they will be in Koppel on July 8th. Put it on your calendars.