

Minutes of Regular Monthly Meeting of Koppel Borough Council for August 18, 2020

Council Attendance: **Eugene Docchio, Glenn Marshall Jr., Frank Pisano, Barbara Gioffre, Sandy Florie**
Athena Pangikas-Miller, Michael Sabino

Borough Solicitor: Joseph Budicak
Mayor: Tom Vannoy

Borough Engineer: Brandon Fombelle

Borough Police Officer: Don Lusby

Also Present: Martin Sheeler, Tracy Ierino, Ken Orrico, Carol Shirilla

Absent:

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

A motion was made to **accept the July 21, 2020 Minutes**

Motion made by: Michael Sabino

Motion seconded by: Athena Pangikas-Miller

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: Sandy Florie

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: Glenn Marshall, Jr.

Motion seconded by: Athena Pangikas-Miller

Roll call –

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

A motion was made to hire Hans Spencer to the Police Department as a part-time officer starting on August 6, 2020

Motion made by: Glenn Marshall, Jr.

Motion seconded by: Eugene Docchio

Roll call –

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

A motion was made to move \$100,000 from a CD into the General Fund.

Motion made by: Sandy Florie

Motion seconded by: Eugene Docchio

Roll call –

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

A motion was made to appoint Sandy Florie to review financial documents as a control procedure for transfers, reconciled items and Earned Income Taxes on a monthly basis.

Motion made by: Athena Pangikas-Miller

Motion seconded by: Eugene Docchio

Roll call –

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

Engineer's Report

Brandon Fombelle is continuing to coordinate with Mahoning Builders on a start date for the revamping of the entrance to Koppel Steel from 5th Avenue onto Mount Street. The plan is to pave the road in concrete because of heavy truck traffic and the road breaking down and move the storm drains so that trucks are not hitting the area head on as they enter that area. He will let the Borough known when Mahoning start date is announced. Brandon is also reviewing ordinances that pertain to SALDO, Land Sub-division and Street Excavation. He also reviewed a plan to update part of the sewer treatment plant construction by PA American Water and the sewer line and waterline replacement being done on 3rd Avenue and Richard Street. He noted a request was added that the water company replace existing surface grass, pavement and curbs. In utility and piping, both public and private, and making note to ensure there is compliance to borough ordinance.

Solicitor's Report

Joe Budicak is working on a traffic ordinance per the police chief's request and approval. He advised that changes will need to be advertised.

He phoned Mike Larecka of the Norfolk and Southern Railroad to discuss the condition of the property along the tracks. He said the railroad would spray for vegetation, but the trash is the borough's responsibility.

Bud Marshall asked a question about shrubs that are hanging over cars onto the roadway on 3rd Avenue. He also asked if he could cut the shrubs and stated that vegetation is growing over the public roadway. "You can barely get out against the curb". It is not permitted to have vegetation growing on a public right-of-way. Barbara Gioffre said that a list of ordinance violations will be given to the police department. Tom Vannoy said that Code Enforcement Officer Owen Pella can send a notice that the vegetation is in violation. It will be addressed.

Athena Pangikas-Miller spoke about Bud's daughter dealing with her neighbor at 233 Richard Street whose debris is attributing to roaches and rodents. The landlord and his son were cleaning up the vacant side of the duplex. The solicitor was asked:

- can an eviction take place if a tenant has made a mess on the property?
- can a renter be evicted during Covid for reasons other than non-payment of rent?

The solicitor stated that an eviction for other than non-payment can occur. Owen Pella, Zoning Officer is handling this.

Maintenance Report

The potholes will continue to be repaired. Grass cutting has slowed down and time has been used for updating barriers at the end of streets on Ida, Mary, and Richard Streets. Maintenance will be painting and putting up signs. The wind blew the porta-potty over at the ball field and it was reset and secured.

Many thanks to Bud Marshall for giving Koppel a tamper that is being used for pot holes. The tamper was broken and Bud repaired it and gave it to the borough.

A request for a raise was made by Ken Orrico Maintenance. Currently, he is paid \$17.50 per hour plus health benefits. All agree that Ken does a terrific job. This will be discussed at another council meeting.

Mayor's Report

A police officer has resigned due to illness. A resolution was made to hire Hans Spencer retroactive to August 6. The department is looking to hire one other person and will be interviewing. The applicant is moving from another area. He will be getting his firearm certification.

Guests

PA American Water Sewer and Waterline Replacement

Councilwomen Athena Pangikas-Miller and Michael Sabino spoke about the large trucks ripping down wires, leaves and branches on 2nd Avenue. The trucks are traveling on 2nd Avenue to Youngbloods where they are storing their equipment. The trucks are also loaded with stone and dirt and are covered but material still falls off. The trucks are being used for the water and sewage replacement.

It was noted that Koppel has a 10-ton weight limit on its streets. It was asked if a street is posted and damaged can recourse to repair them be taken. The solicitor noted that the ordinance has to be in effect, post the ton limit sign on

streets and if trucks are exceeding the weight limit you can have police enforce it. Could a sign be placed on SR 351 noting that all streets are 10-ton limit on local roads rather than purchasing signs for the entire town? Brandon Fombell said placing a sign on PennDOT's right of way may be a problem. The solicitor stated that an ordinance would need to be adopted and a weight limit of 10-ton posted and done by required PennDOT specifications and regulations.

After much discussion to resolve the issue, it was determined that PA American Water would be contacted and if possible asked to move material to the low alley. The solicitor stated that if trucks are coming through and causing damage, he didn't think the borough can do anything if there is personal loss.

PA American Water was contacted and an alternate route was not able to be found that could accommodate the ability of the trucks for traveling to their destination. It is a temporary situation and the work needs to be done. It was requested that the trucks reduce their speed.

Liquid Fuels and Electric

It was asked if the Borough could use liquid fuels to pay for street lights. In the past money was transferred out of liquid fuels into the general fund to pay for the electric. It was determined that this is currently being done.

Investment Money Transfer

The money that was moved from an investment into the general fund was questioned if it had been approved by council. Before this transfer a call was made to the auditor Ken Loll to ask if this was an allowable transaction and he responded that it was. A suggestion was made that a motion be made to approve that retroactively. A motion was then made to approve that. It was approved by all of Council.

After researching, it was found that a motion had previously been made to allow for the transfer of \$100,000 into the general fund. This motion and approval was recorded in the May 19, 2020 minutes.

Police Fund

Saundra Florie asked where the money came from that is in the Police Fund. Tom Vannoy said it was donated by Koppel Steel and was to be used toward the purchase of police equipment or a police car. The money is also budgeted for the Police Department.

Audit Review Suggestions

In a review by the auditor it was revealed that another person should review the financial accounts and Earned Income Tax and signed off by that person to be in compliance with accrual basis of accounting. Earned Income Tax and all of the bank statements will be reviewed. A motion to approve Saundra Florie to review and sign off was made and approved by all of Council.

The Rectory

The rectory has been vacated and inspected by Ken Orrico. The rectory was left in a good state. Ken found an extinguisher that needed inspected. It is suggested that the rectory be rented again, as the mortgage is too high to sell it. The solicitor said the rectory would have to be sold for enough to pay off the loan.

Liability and Workmen's Comp – the Reservoir

In requesting information about liability and coverage for the ball field and the increased cost of Workmen's Comp and liability, a call was made to PSAB to inquire about coverage elsewhere. The added cost to the Workmen's Comp and liability insurance was due to the raises given to the police department. The question of the reservoir and dam was made in the application. Council has questioned the option of selling the reservoir.

Meeting was adjourned.