

**KULPMONT BOROUGH
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
FEBRUARY 9, 2022
7:00 P.M.**

Opening Prayer by Councilman Mr. Chesney
The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag by the body present,
Kulpmont Borough Council held the meeting for general purpose on
Wednesday February 9, 2022

Roll call was taken, and the following members were present: Mayor Slaby, Michael Balitchick, Stephen Bielskie, Mike Bradley, Robert Chesney, Joseph Dowkus, Stephen Motyka.

ABSENT: none

APPOINTED OFFICIALS PRESENT: Solicitor Edward Greco, Treasurer Paul A. Niglio, OIC Stephen Mazzeo, Borough Supervisor Bruce Graff and Code Official Heather Owens.

OTHERS PRESENT: Joe Politza, Edwin Howerter and Ben Britton

OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO BE HEARD ON ANYTHING THAT IS ON THE AGENDA:

No one spoke

PRESIDENTS REPORT – (Stephen Bielskie)

Mr. Bielskie stated we received one bid on the lots for sale that was received today.

Mr. Niglio read aloud the bid submitted by Stephen Motyka of 1471 Scott Street, Kulpmont PA 17834, bids submitted:

Parcel #1 929-931 Chestnut Street, 30 x 150, Parcel ID 002-00-003-211 \$4,000.00

Parcel #2 – 923 Chestnut Street, 30 x 150, Parcel ID 002-00-003-212 \$4,000.00.

From Mr. Stephen Motyka 1471 Scott Street, Kulpmont PA.

Mr. Bradley asked if there were not any additional bids. Mr. Dowkus stated it cost money for us to advertise. Mr. Bradley questioned if we have advertised this lot before and we did not get any bids. Mr. Niglio stated if these parcels are sold, money will need to be paid back to the County that was given to the borough to take these buildings down and added he does not know what that amount is. Solicitor Greco stated we could table the decision until we find out what that amount is.

Mr. Motyka stated he had planned to get this appraised and would like to donate it back to the borough for a park through a DCED grant and asked council to hopefully look at that when considering his offer. Mr. Slaby stated he thinks the number was around \$11,000.00. Mr. Chesney stated he feels the amount was in the neighborhood of \$5,400.00 each lot and stated he thinks we were asking \$12,000.00.

Mr. Bradley stated if we don't accept this offer, it may not come back around and stated a bird in the hand is better than two in a bush. Mr. Bielskie explained if we sell it we will need to pay the money back, if we do not sell it we don't need to pay the County the money back. Solicitor Greco stated he thought the amount was around \$8,000.00. Mr. Bielskie stated and if the amount of Mr. Motyka's bid covers the amount he does not have a problem with it and added he feels the Borough should wait until we are sure on the amount, we will need to pay back.

Mr. Motyka stated this is going to be donated hopefully for a park and so he does not know why they will not consider taking it. Mr. Chesney stated until we know what we must pay back and understand what we have it is only logical.

MOTION- Mr. Dowkus made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Bradley to accept the offer of \$4,000.00 for each parcel from Mr. Motyka.

ROLL CALL VOTE- BALITCHICK (yes), BIELSKIE (no), BRADLEY (yes), CHESNEY (no), DOWKUS (yes), MOTYKA (abstain), HODGE (yes)
4 YEAS – 2 NAYS – 1 ABSTAIN

MAYORS REPORT- (Robert Slaby)

Mr. Slaby stated the Mr. Mazzeo continues to seek part time officers and stated he is working with some individuals and hopefully we will have some positive results by the next meeting.

Mr. Bradley questioned Officer Mazzeo is there is anything they as council could do and stated the people in Kulpmont want something done and stated the people in Kulpmont think they are dragging their feet and that is not the case. Mayor Slaby stated he does not believe there is and stated coming in as Mayor from council for four years have worked really hard with Mayor Bozza and stated he is expecting the same for himself.

Mr. Bradley asked again if there is anything Mayor Slaby or Officer Mazzeo thinks he or Council could do to let him know. Mayor Slaby stated if he thought there was something and based on also where he works, if there was something he would say something.

Mayor Slaby stated this Council have done everything and stated he understands how important it is to have a police officer respond when you need help. Mr. Bradley stated he is reaching out and offering any assistance and stated to the mayor he is not taking a shot at him; he would be more than willing if there is anything he could do to reach out and help. Mayor Slaby stated please don't think that is how he feels, Council has done

everything they could and so is Officer Mazzeo. Solicitor Greco asked Officer Mazzeo if he is getting any feedback. Officer Mazzeo stated the only difference he could see is we would need to implement what Shamokin is doing, that is not authorized at this time. Officer Mazzeo stated in checking with the academy, Lackawanna had none, everyone already had jobs or were not from the area. Mayor Slaby stated officer Mazzeo is absolutely right and stated that in Shamokin he has a couple that are in the academy right now adding they reserved that back in June or July.

Mr. Bradley asked if there is money in the budget to hire a full-time guy. Mayor Slaby stated yes, there would be. Mayor Slaby stated he, Council and Mr. Niglio would work something out. Mr. Motyka commented the Borough has in the budget for three full time officers.

Mr. Hodge asked about regionalization and asked if that is dead in the water now. Mayor Slaby stated he has not been invited to any of those meetings as Mayor or even when he was the president of council. He continued to say being in this position if he has been, he understands how it works. Mr. Motyka stated we reached out to Coal Township, Shamokin, and Mt. Carmel we are currently working with DCED on a study.

Mr. Niglio commented we are in the process of completing information and stated we were hit here with Covid and stated he was out and now Rhonda is out and stated we are about a month behind in our workload.

Office Mazzeo stated he would caution and stated in talking with Chief Hollenbush because of the shortages and the increases and everything else the cost would be substantial. Officer Mazzeo stated he is not saying it is a bad idea just that the cost is going to be high either way, there is no free ride. Mayor Slaby replied no there is not. Mr. Chesney stated there is nobody out there at the present time.

Officer Mazzeo stated Shamokin is sending candidates to the academy and stated Shamokin is that is 6-month lag to the academy, field training and hopefully they don't get hurt or flunk out. Officer Mazzeo stated he included with his monthly report some information on the last year and stated officers don't like where the profession is at right now and stated Shamokin lost a substantial number of senior officers because of how the profession has changed, Sunbury is in the same position. Mayor Slaby commented in Shamokin they went from 12 full time officers down to six.

Mr. Bradley asked Officer Mazzeo if there is any way the rules could be relaxed to take retired prison guards and giving them part time jobs. Officer Mazzeo replied as long as they are under the two years Harrisburg MOPEC rulings, yes. Officer Mazzeo stated he has officers he reached out to that past that two-year mark and Harrisburg is unsympathetic when you are past two years.

Officer Mazzeo stated you need to pass the physicals and a written test and stated the physical test even at his age are geared to a 25-year-old. Mayor Slaby stated they are trying.

SECRETARY'S REPORT- (Rhonda Wilk)

Mr. Paul Niglio stated approval is needed January 12th, January 26th and January 29th, 2022.

MOTION- Mr. Dowkus made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Bradley to approve the meeting minutes from January 12th, January 26th and January 29, 2022.

VOICE VOTE –

Unanimous

Mr. Niglio stated donations for the flags on Chestnut Street were received from Bruce and Diane Graff of \$100.00, Kulpmont Cruise Association Inc, \$100.00 and the Kulpmont Sportsman Association of \$100.00.

Mr. Dowkus stated the Sons of American Legion will also be making a donation of \$100.00.

Mr. Niglio stated Northumberland County Council for the Arts and Humanities send a membership application and stated that was copied to both Mayor and Council.

MOTION- Mr. Motyka made a motion to complete the renewal membership application for \$100.00 and was seconded by Mr. Bradley.

ROLL CALL VOTE- BALITCHICK (yes), BIELSKIE (yes), BRADLEY (yes), CHESNEY (yes), DOWKUS (yes), MOTYKA (yes), HODGE (yes)
7 YEAS – 0 NAYS

A letter of resignation from Borough Council was received by Mr. Michael Balitchick, effective February 28, 2022.

Mr. Dowkus asked if we want to handle by our personnel committee. Mr. Bielskie replied saying we are going to need to advertise it and this time we want to interview people. Mr. Dowkus agreed and stated we will take care of that through personnel. Solicitor Greco stated Council will need to move to accept his resignation.

MOTION- Mr. Motyka made a motion to accept Mr. Balitchicks resignation effective February 28th and was seconded by Mr. Bradley.

VOICE VOTE –

Unanimous

TREASURERS REPORT – (Paul A. Niglio)

Mr. Niglio stated council received the financial statement and a list of bills to be paid and stated approval is needed to pay the bills.

MOTION- Mr. Bradley made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Chesney to approve and pay the bills.

ROLL CALL VOTE- BALITCHICK (yes), BIELSKIE (yes), BRADLEY (yes), CHESNEY (yes), DOWKUS (yes), MOTYKA (yes), HODGE (yes)
7 YEAS – 0 NAYS

SOLICITORS REPORT- (Edward Greco)

No Report

POLICE CHIEFS REPORT – (Stephen Mazzeo, Officer in Charge)

Report attached

Mr. Dowkus stated he appreciates it being taken care of, the abandoned vehicle on Chestnut and Tenth Street, it was there a few days and there was a blind spot there.

Mr. Bradley stated the report is 11 pages and thanked Officer Mazzeo for his dedication.

Officer Mazzeo stated there are a lot of people coming to town that are not desirable and stated he and the Code officer work together daily to try and keep them out.

FIRE CHIEF REPORT – (Kevin O’Hearn)

Report attached.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT – (Kevin O’ Hearn)

No Report

BUILDING INSPECTOR’S REPORT– (Tri County COG)

No Report

CODE/HEALTH ENFORCEMENT OFFICER’S REPORT – (Heather Owens)

Report attached. Heather Owens stated the snow and ice situation is just a mess, it is freezing and then melts and then is refreezing. Mr. Bradley stated there was a woman that called and complained about her driveway being blocked by the plow going by and

stated Bruce Graff will see what he could do to try and accommodate. Mr. Chesney commented Heather Owens is doing a great job also.

SERVICE AND FACILITIES – (Wm. Mike Bradley)

Mr. Bradley stated he thinks many people in Kulpmont may have transportation issues or are not aware of the food surplus program. Mr. Bradley questioned if we put an ad in the paper once per year for this if there is any advertising for this.

Mr. Niglio replied it is advertised every month, it's in every time we have it that we distribute. Mr. Niglio stated it is advertised in the paper, on the borough web page. Mr. Bradley stated he was going to attempt to reach out to civic organizations to see if he could get people that would deliver to the handicap people.

Bruce Graff added they currently have a handful that they deliver. Mr. Dowkus questioned how many total recipients we have on the list. Bruce Graff replied when he first started working here, we had 200 and now we are down to 25 or 30. Mr. Bradley stated he just wants people to know it is out there. Bruce Graff stated he usually calls the people if they did not come to remind them.

Mayor Slaby stated individual people living by themselves have expressed to him this is a good program. Mr. Bradley stated he would like to make it better. A discussion took place and ideas about possibly passing out a flier to residents to make them aware of the program.

Mr. Bradley questioned the approving of anything over \$75.00 having to be approved and asked if there is a reason why it is so low. Mayor Slaby stated at work he does not need anybody's permission to spend money, Council allows that authority in him and then they vote to pay the bills. Solicitor Greco stated if he needs a quart of oil for the truck then no, he does not need approval.

Mr. Bradley stated you should not need to wait to buy brakes for a police car and questioned if that is the way it works or questions if he is in error here. Mayor Slaby stated that is how it works in Kulpmont. Mr. Bradley stated he is waiting to buy lights for the plow truck because we are over \$75.00, we should not have to vote for that he is going to support it with a receipt and stated it is a very insufficient way to operate. Mayor Slaby stated he agrees, but it is up to these guys.

MOTION- Mr. Bradley made a motion and was seconded by Mr. Dowkus to allow purchases to be made for up to \$250.00.

Bruce Graff stated before he would call the Finance committee and let them know or do an emergency purchase for the cost amount. Bruce Graff stated that is what is doing with the lights for the plow and said he just likes people to know what he is spending before we get it, and it is not a surprise at the monthly meeting.

Mr. Bradley stated Paul Niglio is looking over at him like he is making a mistake here. Mr. Niglio replied to Mr. Bradley stating we have had people come and sit here in these chairs that came in here and there was careless spending, nobody cared and that is why you put the limits in there. Paul Niglio stated the employees have been very frugal and stated Bruce goes and gets the best price there has never been any problems here, it's just that people perceive those kinds of things. Bruce Graff stated he will let Mr. Bradley know; he will let Mr. Motyka know when he must make a purchase.

ROLL CALL VOTE- BALITCHICK (yes), BIELSKIE (yes), BRADLEY (yes), CHESNEY (yes), DOWKUS (yes), MOTYKA (yes), HODGE (yes)
7 YEAS – 0 NAYS

MOTION- Mr. Bradley made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Dowkus to approve the \$110.00 to purchase the lights for the dump truck.

ROLL CALL VOTE- BALITCHICK (yes), BIELSKIE (yes), BRADLEY (yes), CHESNEY (yes), DOWKUS (yes), MOTYKA (yes), HODGE (yes)
7 YEAS – 0 NAYS

Mr. Motyka asked Mr. Bradley to get a price for the filters on the unit here in the Borough Building for the next meeting. Mr. Motyka stated this unit never had the filters changes on it. Mr. Bradley asked how long we are in the building. Mr. Bielskie replied five years ago. Mr. Motyka stated he will work together with Mr. Bradley to get a price for next meeting.

Mr. Bradley announced to Council a certificate of general liability insurance was received for the Mount Carmel Junior Baseball Team.

FINANCE/PURCHASING – (Stephen Motyka)

No Report

CODE HEALTH AND SAFETY- (Stephen Bielskie)

No Report

ORDINANCE COMMITTEE - (Joseph Dowkus)

Mr. Dowkus stated he is working on some ordinances and stated he and the Solicitor will be getting together with the committee.

GRANTS/RECREATION – (Robert Chesney)

Mr. Chesney stated there will be a meeting at the end of February and will be held in Aristes on the 23rd to go over the proper ways to apply for grants for recreation. He continued to say at our last meeting a lot of the grants were explained and initiated. Mr. Chesney stated Mr. Motyka is working on that, applications are in, and we are just waiting to see what is going to come out of that.

Mr. Motyka stated he would like permission to pursue a DCNR grant and stated he also found a PA Council of the Arts to try and develop the parcel on Chestnut Street into a park and stated so with Council's permission he would move forward with that.

PERSONNEL- (Mr. Dowkus)

Mr. Dowkus stated with Mr. Balitchick's resignation he would like to advertise seeking a council person to fill the vacancy and to set up interviews. Mr. Motyka stated if you have the letters of interest by the 23rd that would be two weeks before the meeting.

Mr. Dowkus stated he would like to ask for the letters to be in by the close of business on February 23rd.

MOTION- Mr. Dowkus made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Bradley to advertise for interested persons to send in a letter of interest to fill the vacancy on Borough Council by the close of business on February 23, 2022.

ROLL CALL VOTE- BALITCHICK (yes), BIELSKIE (yes), BRADLEY (yes), CHESNEY (yes), DOWKUS (yes), MOTYKA (yes), HODGE (yes)
7 YEAS – 0 NAYS

FIRE/EMA/POLICE COMMITTEE – (Mr. Balitchick)

No Report

OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

None

OLD BUSINESS-

Mr. Dowkus questioned on if we ever looked into the military surplus. Mr. Bradley asked Mayor Slaby if he had a chance to act on that. Mayor Slaby stated he is sorry, and he forgot about it but stated that he will do so.

Mr. Bradley thanked the street department for the job they are doing with the plowing. Mr. Bradley stated the ice is way worse than snow. Mr. Bradley stated there was a broken water line at night and water was freezing on the street, Bruce took it upon himself and came out and salted the street and stated he appreciates that. Mr. Bradley stated Mayor Slaby also came out for the broken water line and thanked him for that as well.

Mr. Motyka stated he and Mayor Slaby were approached about a letter from the Borough supporting researching if a community college would benefit the area. Mr. Motyka stated if you have that request, he will make a motion to support the researching a community college. Mayor Slaby stated he will have that, David asked him a couple times.

MOTION- Mr. Motyka made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Bradley to support and research for a community college.

VOICE VOTE –

Unanimous

Mr. Motyka stated he and Mr. Chesney approached the Northumberland Count Housing Authority a couple years ago and stated he would like a formal letter written to them to see about getting housing here in Kulpmont as is in Atlas, Mt. Carmel and recently in Coal Township on Trevorton Road. Mr. Motyka stated he would like to see them investing in Kulpmont.

Mayor Slaby stated there is the ARPA Fund and the final version of the ARPA fund is out there and he can get a copy of the final information on what the money could be spent on now and what the deadlines are. Mayor Slaby stated he would suggest contacting Mr. Christiano and Pat Mack to meet with our committee and stated they are always eager to come into communities and help.

MOTION- Mr. Motyka made a motion and was seconded by Mr. Dowkus to send a formal letter to the Northumberland County Housing Authority for consideration in investing in housing in the Borough and ask for a meeting.

VOICE VOTE-

Unanimous

NEW BUSINESS-

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next regular monthly meeting is March 9, 2022

ADJOURNMENT

The February 9, 2022, meeting was adjourned at the call of the Chair

**Rhonda Wilk
Borough Secretary**

Approval date – March 9, 2022