

***MINUTES OF THE  
TOPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL  
MONDAY October 12, 2015***

Members of the Topton Borough Council met on Monday October 12, 2015 at 7:30 P.M. at Borough Hall for the regularly scheduled meeting. The meeting was called to order by Mr. Stauffer with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll call was taken and the following members were present Mr. Gehman, Ms. Lorah, Mr. Jost, Mr. Beck, Mr. Wagaman, Mr. Arndt, Mayor Biltcilff, and Mr. Stauffer. Borough Secretary Marcus Dolny. Solicitor Joan London, Engineer Ryan Kern and visitors were also in attendance.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

On a motion by Mr. Beck, seconded by Mr. Gehman the minutes of September 14, 2015 were approved unanimously.

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

A statement was prepared by the Borough Office in response to ongoing matters relating to the validity of borough water meters. (Formal response is to be included in the record)

Councilman Arndt expressed his disagreement with the letter. Also noting in his opinion that everyone needs to be cleared out, referring to remaining council members and professional staff.

Councilman Gehman asked Councilman Arndt if the meters are wrong. Councilman Arndt replied “no”.

**HEARING OF VISITORS:**

Phillip Rollman stated that he feels the water heater is not the issue based on what he saw with a pressure gauge, stating that any mechanical device has the chance to fail. Reiterated that he doesn't believe the testing the Borough offers is accurate enough to prove his theory. Based on his research he does not feel that the e-coder meters are very reliable. But also wants on record that he does not believe he ever said that all the meters were faulty.

Jackie Isamoyer-Rollman asked for clarification on the reporting to home owners regarding zero readings.

Monica Kunkle asked for clarification regarding what was discussed at the August meeting regarding the meter at 111 E. High St., wanted to know if council was waiting for the upcoming water and sewer bill or the next two quarters. At the time it was only the upcoming bill.

Kelly Helfrich asked if there could be a leak from the street to the house. Response that there could be but that would not be effecting the readings since it is before the meter.

Robert Rauenzahn brought up matters regarding paving at 28 Centre Ave. and 50 W. Weis St. the matter will be investigated and tabled for further discussion. Also spoke regarding fence setbacks and the reasoning and needs for curb painting.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Personnel Committee – (Mr. Stauffer)**

Mr. Stauffer reminded council and those in attendance that the next meeting will be on October 26, 2015 at 7:30 as advertised. This will be strictly a workshop regarding the 2016 Budget.

### **Finance Committee – (Mr. Wagaman)**

Mr. Wagaman made a motion to pay bills as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Jost and passed unanimously.

### **Property Committee – (Mr. Jost)**

Mr. Jost and Scott Steltz meet with Mr. Hawksworth regarding his Eagle Scout Project. The project will progress as scheduled with the small change of mounting the boxes on trees instead of poles.

### **Parks & Recreation Committee – (Mr. Beck)**

Park removal should be completed by the first week in November. Also namesake boards are still available at the Borough.

### **Streets Committee – (Mr. Arndt) –**

Mr. Arndt asked for clarification on extended yellow curbing at the north east corner of Main and Franklin. The reasoning was explained that workers just repainted what had been there at one time. Mr. Arndt made a motion to reduce the length of yellow curbing on the north east corner to the minimum as outlined in the vehicle code. Mr. Gehman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mr. Dolny brought to council's attention abuse of recently posted Stop except right turn sign at the south Haas St. intersection with Keller Street. The office had received complaints that people dangerously making that right turn while crossing into the

opposite lane. Mr. Arndt made a motion to remove the right turn only sign. The motion was seconded by Ms. Lorah and passed unanimously.

Mr. Wagaman also stated that crossing at Main and Centre has become very difficult.

Previously council discussed the intersection at Weis and Haas St. and discovered a sight obstruction on the North East corner. The small tree is out of the Borough's right away. However, with further review the tree is impairing the sight triangle and should be removed. Mr. Dolny will issue notice to the property owner.

**Utility Committee – (Mr. Gehman) –**

Possible Water leak being investigated on Keller and Furnace St.

Mr. Gehman was down with Russ, noted that plans for putting the cover over the screen may have to be pushed off till 2016.

Mr. Arndt revisited earlier discussion involving the billing of 111 E. High Street. Mr. Arndt made a motion that the Borough wait for the fourth quarter billing and use whatever the reading is during that reading to reflect the previous four quarters and issue credit or refund as necessary. Mr. Beck seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

**Public Affairs Committee – (Ms. Lorah) –**

Ms. Lorah complimented the 60<sup>th</sup> annual Halloween Parade, with only minor incidents. There was a lot of positive feedback regard the festivity and the post parade clean up. Also it is to be noted that as far as the Borough knows the Halloween Parade will continue and they look forward to next years.

**Mayor's Report –**

Reiterated the positive comments for the Topton Halloween Parade and stated that the Topton Community Outreach Club is in need of volunteers and always looking for help.

## **Secretary's Report**

- Informed council that District Township is currently evaluating the Township Agricultural Security Area.
- Mr. Dolny presented the first step in the recreation restoration after the removal of Bullet Boardwalk would be the development of a Master site plan in 2016. With the assistance of Barry Isett they would like to obtain a matching Grant for \$30,000. A motion was made by Mr. Jost to budget for 2016 the \$15,000 match for the grant. The motion was seconded by Ms. Lorah and passed unanimously.
- Mr. Dolny gave a report on a minor accident that resulted in minimal damage to the riding mower.

## **Solicitor's Report**

Ordinance 2-2015 Borough of Tipton/Brandywine School District Salt Purchasing Agreement was presented to council for adoption after advertisement in the Reading Eagle on October 5, 2015. A motion was made by Mr. Wagaman and seconded by Mr. Jost passing unanimously.

In regards to The Huck Litigation, the matter is resolved and the continued hearing will be dismissed.

Ms. London gave an update on requests for water and sewage from Longswamp Township residents. A service agreement for the Hilbert's has been returned to Longswamp and we are awaiting comment. Once that has happened a meeting will be arranged with the Hilbert's to begin the process. Also Longswamp has granted preliminary permission to speak with Diakon/Lutheran Home in regards to serving as there sole water supplier.

Ms. London reviewed Longswamp Townships proposed revision and update to their Act 537 Plan, Zoning Map, and Comprehension Zoning Plan. She prepared three letters for comments and council's review. Mr. Wagaman made a motion to proceed with the comments to Longswamp. Ms. Lorah seconded the motion, passing 6 to 1 with Mr. Gehman voting in the negative.

In regards to the upcoming renewal of the cable franchise agreement Cohen Law has sent a proposal for representation estimated to be \$5,520.00 that will be distributed to council for review.

In the matter of the Toad Creek Funding a professional services agreement between the borough and the solid waste authority was presented for council to review.

### **Engineer's Report**

- Sewage Treatment Plant Copper Limit
  - The copper concentration remains within the permitted limits and now that cooler weather has arrive, we do not anticipate any problem with copper until next summer. Russ will continue to adjust the feed rate of the caustic soda in order to keep the chemical costs at a minimum.
  
- Topton Home Water Connection
  - In August, we notified Steve Daniels of Diakon Lutheran Social Ministries that once they obtained a letter from Longswamp Township indicating that they were supportive of the Topton Home becoming a water customer of Topton, the Borough would be willing to meet with Diakon in order to work out the details. To date we have not heard back from Mr. Daniels regarding the status of the Township letter.
  
- Birch Alley Sanitary Sewer
  - Utility Service Group, Inc. of Camp Hill, PA should be performing repairs to sanitary sewer repairs in Birch Alley, between MH 100 and MH 98 and MH 98 and MH 96, from Weiss Street south towards the Borough boundary. They are expected to do these repairs in late October or early November.
  
- 2016 Budget Preparation for Sanitary Sewer System
  - We met with Russ, Marcus and Frank on September 22<sup>nd</sup> to discuss various items relative to the sanitary sewer system that should be considered when preparing the 2016 budget. In order to determine how much should be budgeted for cleaning and TV inspections of the sanitary sewer lines, we were asked to go through the record plans and add up the length of the sanitary sewer pipes. According to the record plans that we were provided, there is a total of 39,447 feet of pipe in the Borough and an additional 4,959 feet of sewer in the Township. A spreadsheet was provided to both Russ and Marcus listing the lengths of sewer pipe by location, size and material.
  
- Water Meter Issue
  - Andrea Martin of our office met with Borough representatives last Tuesday, October 6<sup>th</sup> for the purpose of discussing a claim of artificially high water meter readings at a home along E. High Street.
  - It is our understanding that a claim has been made in the Borough suggesting that water is oscillating back and forth through a water meter at such a low flow rate that when the water flows backwards through the meter, it is not detected; but, when it moves forward it is detected. The claim presents that this action occurs at a rate of 12.8 ounces of water per minute every minute of every day over the course of 3 months (one billing quarter) for 2 billing quarters. The claim indicates that about 14,000 gallon of unused water goes through the meter every quarter which is equal

to about 150 gallons per day. The claim indicates that this condition was first noted pursuant to the installation of a new water heater in the home.

- In a typical residential domestic water supply plumbing system, connected to a public water system, the water supply line branches in two directions, one to the cold water supply and the other to a water heater. Water is pulled into the plumbing system through the opening of valves at a faucet, shower head, toilet tank or other household appliance such as a washing machine or dishwasher. Initially the water heater is filled with cold water and as the water is heated, some thermal expansion occurs. Water is most dense at about 4<sup>o</sup> C (39<sup>o</sup> F) and expands at about a rate of 1.0002 units per every 1<sup>o</sup> C rise in temperature. For example, the water in a 40 gallon water heater, when initially filled with cold water at 13<sup>o</sup> C (55<sup>o</sup> F), and heated to 49<sup>o</sup> C (120<sup>o</sup> F) will expand to 40.29 gallons. If no fixtures or appliances are open in the house, and if there is no thermal expansion tank nor backflow preventer, such as a check valve, the additional 0.29 gallons of water would flow back through the meter towards the public water main. Assuming that the water heater is initially heated to 49<sup>o</sup> C (120<sup>o</sup> F), a temperature drop of about 12.5<sup>o</sup> C (22<sup>o</sup> F) would result in a reduction in volume of 12.8 ounces. An equal increase in water temperature will result in an equal increase in volume. This would mean that the water temperature in the water heater would be continuously oscillating between 49<sup>o</sup> C (120<sup>o</sup> F) and 36.5<sup>o</sup> C (98<sup>o</sup> F). Certainly, one could expect a drop of water temperature during a long shower; however, it would take longer for the water heater to reheat the water, bringing it back up to the original temperature. According to the claim, this condition must be repeated about 1,500 times per day. These rapid changes in water temperature would be physically impossible; therefore, there is no logical explanation how this could happen. .
- Another theory that has been mentioned is that the water pressure in the water main in the street fluctuates to the point that it is causing an oscillation of water flow back and forth through the meter. It was noted that the water main in the street is a 4" water main which would be more susceptible to pressure drops than larger pipes. Although water is subject to thermal expansion, water is non-compressible; therefore changes in the water pressure in the public water main in the street would not cause any backflow, unless there was an illegal cross connection with another water source in the house. Also, a review of the Borough's water system map indicates that the water main in the street is a looped system with a 12" water main near each end of this section of 4" water main; this would minimize any pressure drops during normal water usage in the area.
- It is our understanding that a check valve has been installed inside the home and that the meter readings are currently in line with expected usage. While this may be true, it does not change our opinion that the above mentioned theories related to the water heater or water system pressure fluctuations are illogical. A more logical explanation of why an additional 150 gallons per day of water usage was recorded may be something like a leaking toilet; leaking toilets have been known to leak up to 200 gallons per day. Another possibility could be a garden hose left turned on and leaking around the clock. These are just a couple of possible explanations of why the quarterly water meter reading would have been about 14,000 gallons higher than expected.

- Toad Creek Improvements
  - Preliminary plans have been submitted to the Borough for review. The Borough and BIA will be pursuing additional Grant funding. BIA has been in communication with the Conservation District and will be supplying them with additional information. BIA is preparing a proposal for Design/Approval Services.
  
- Topton Alleys
  - BIA has been soliciting price quotes for Lemon Alley. Two of the contractors indicated they would not be able to perform the work this year. BIA is still waiting to hear back from the other two.
  
- Intersection at Barkley & Callowhill
  - A traffic study was conducted and it is the recommendation to place a 4 way stop at the intersection due safety and the proximity to the local school. A motion was made by Mr. Wagaman to permit Barry Isett and Solicitor London to prepare the needed ordinance to do so. The motion was seconded by Ms. Lorah and passed unanimously.
  
- MS4
  - Topton has now fallen under the mandate and a program will be set up for 2016

### **Old Business**

None

### **ADJOURNMENT:**

Council adjourned at 10:05 PM on a motion by Mr. Arndt, seconded by Ms. Lorah.

The next Borough Council meeting will be held on October 26, 2015 at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted  
Marcus V. Dolny  
Borough Secretary