

***MINUTES OF THE
BOROUGH OF TOPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING
Monday, August 22nd, 2022***

The regular semi-monthly meeting of the Tipton Borough Council was called to order by Council President Lorah at Borough Hall, 205 South Callowhill Street, Tipton, PA 19562 at 7:01 PM. Present were Mayor Biltcliff, Council Members C. Cook, A. Falcone, M. Kunkel, M. Lorah, E. Polinsky, E. Stoudt, and M. Stoudt, Engineer Charley Myers, PE, Borough Manager Stacy C. Milo, and Borough Secretary Courtney M. Corona.

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Lorah started the meeting by explaining the purpose of this meeting is to discuss the impending 2023 budget and needs relating to utilities and property. Mr. Scott Steltz, Tipton Borough Road Master and Water Plant Operator, and Mr. Alex Lord, Tipton Borough Waste Water Operator, were present at the meeting per Council's request.

DISCUSS BUDGET AND CAPITAL PLAN NEEDS – PROPERTY AND UTILITIES

Mrs. Stoudt, Finance and Utilities Committee Chair, presented this portion of the meeting. Mrs. Stoudt started by talking about the proposed utility project of replacing water pipes under the three roads: Keller Street from Haas Street to Henningsville Road; East Barkley Street from Haas Street to Home Avenue; and Franklin Street from Callowhill Street to Klein Street. Mrs. Stoudt met with Mr. Steltz and asked what portions of the water lines are in the worst shape and need to be replaced as soon as possible. Mr. Steltz explained that Keller Street is the street with the most problems. Mrs. Stoudt explained that she would also like to see the Borough replace all transite pipes on Keller Street, East Barkley Street, and Franklin Street. Mr. Steltz explained that the pipes leading from Well #2 to the water treatment plant are all transite pipes. Mr. Steltz stated that the Borough has approximately 6,100 feet of transite pipe. Mr. Steltz informed Council that the transite pipes leading into the water plant give them problems occasionally but not as frequently as Keller Street.

Mr. Myers is looking into different government grants that the borough can pursue funding for a portion of these utility projects that need to be completed. Mr. Myers stated that he will estimate the costs of each street for utilities and repaving of the road. He advised Council that this information would help because, if the Borough does receive funding, it may receive only a portion of the full cost.

Mr. Steltz explained how bad the lines are under Keller Street by informing Council of a time when the fire company closed the hydrant too quickly and the Keller Street line broke in 4 places because of a water hammer that occurred.

Mr. Myers suggested prioritizing which streets and utilities are most important to the Borough and having the match available for any grants. Ms. Lorah asked Mr. Myers for the timeline for currently available grant funding sources. Mr. Myers responded that the Local Share Account (LSA) grant is currently taking applications to possibly be awarded by the beginning of 2023 and advised Council to send letters to state elected officials about the project and to make sure that Council invites the state elected officials to view the project once it is complete. Ms. Lorah asked Mr. Myers how long the Borough would have to use grant money. Mr. Myers responded that it is usually a requirement to use the money within a year, but

that requirement is more lenient if a request is not fully funded. Mr. Myers also informed Council that, in the event that the borough does not receive the full amount of the request, Council should understand there may be monetary holes needed to be filled in the project. He advised Council to be aware of that and make sure the Borough has funding complete the project. Mr. Myers also informed Council that he may be able to add the repaving of the roads into the grant application since the borough will be excavating the roads to replace the utilities below them.

Ms. Lorah questioned if Council should mandate sidewalks for all residents since the Borough are going to need to install curb to repair the roads. Mrs. Stoudt suggested not mandating sidewalks where streets are being reconstructed and stated that some residents are currently upset because some residents got sidewalks for free due to the route of the TASA project sidewalks. Mr. Polinsky clarified that the Borough cannot put sidewalks on private property, but the Borough would have to force property owners to install sidewalks. Ms. Falcone stated that properties without sidewalks have been violation of the Borough ordinances for many years. Mr. Myers explained the requirements and preferences of installing curbing and sidewalks when paving or reconstructing a lane or a street.

Continuing on the conversation of the utility project, Mrs. Stoudt asked Mr. Steltz to prioritize the needed water pipe repair on Barkley and Franklin Streets. Mr. Steltz responded by saying Barkley Street has had more problems but both streets have troublesome water pipes below them.

Mr. Myers also suggested that the Borough may want to consider purchasing the pipe, fittings, and valves for these projects through COSTARS to reduce costs and prevent delays in the projects.

Mrs. Stoudt then asked if the Borough is replacing water pipes, should hydrants also be replaced. Mr. Steltz responded that it would be a good idea to replace hydrants when the Borough replaces water pipes. Mr. Myers agreed and stated that pipe, fittings, valves, and hydrants should be replaced at the same time.

Storm water pipe on Haas Street from Smith Street to Franklin Street was discussed. Mr. Myers stated that storm water pipe is part of MS4 and Christine Mildner could estimate the cost for such replacement.

Ms. Lorah directed Council's discussion to meter replacement and asked Mr. Steltz for a status on water meter replacements. Mr. Steltz explained that the Borough is waiting for ¾ inch water meters to be delivered. Ms. Lorah asked if buying bundles of water meters for residents is included in the budget. Mrs. Stoudt responded yes, there is a line in the budget for such expenses, \$20,000 for 2022. Ms. Lorah asked Mr. Steltz how many water meter switch outs still have to be done. He replied by saying the borough staff have been working on them over the past two weeks and have made great progress with only a few left to replace.

Mrs. Stoudt asked Mr. Steltz the purpose of having a generator at the water plant. He responded that the generator is used to run the water pump, which feeds the plant, and keeps chlorine within the correct range to prevent the need for staff to take manual samples every four hours. Mrs. Stoudt questioned how much it would cost to replace the generator since the current one is in need of replacement. Mr. Steltz said that he is still waiting on a cost estimate that he inquired about last week. Mrs. Stoudt then stated that the roof of the water holding tank also needs to be addressed. Mr. Steltz stated that Mr. Fairchild, another borough water plant operator, is waiting on pricing for that project. Mr. Steltz stressed the fact that it is becoming difficult to obtain pricing for these projects. Mrs. Stoudt stated that she believed the generator should be addressed next year or the year after as well as the roof of the water holding tank.

Mrs. Stoudt and Council discussed the status of the memorandum of agreement/understanding regarding the water well. Ms. Falcone and Ms. Lorah directed Ms. Milo to request a status from Solicitor London.

Mr. Myers indicated that this project will be large and will require large amounts of funding, of which some will be grant eligible.

Mrs. Stoudt asked Mr. Steltz if any other expense needs to be discussed including vehicles. Mr. Steltz stated not at this time. Ms. Milo asked Mr. Steltz about the need for valves at various locations. Mr. Myers explained that they are expensive and a specialty installation and how lengthening the time the Borough would need a valve project completed may help in getting such a project done.

Mrs. Stoudt then began discussing the needs of the Borough's wastewater system. She stated that the Washington Street Pump Station should be the Borough's first priority when it comes to updating the wastewater system. Mr. Lord also agreed that this should be the first priority. Mr. Myers reminded Council that a grant application for this project was submitted for LSA funding and awards should be released in the Fall of 2023. Ms. Milo stated that the pump station is an absolute priority and needs to be completed in 2023 whether or not grant funding is received. Mr. Lord informed Council that the station was installed in 1963, is about 24 feet deep, and services half of the borough.

Ms. Lorah questioned if the borough is putting money away every year in preparation for replacing the reed beds when needed. Ms. Milo said the borough began saving for this task and funds are earmarked if there is money left in the sewer account at the end of each year for the next seven years. Mr. Lord also told Council that the chlorine contact tank needs to be recoated, explaining that every time it is rinsed out, a little bit of sand comes out with it, which is a direct sign of deterioration. Mr. Lord also stated that this is not a dire need at this time, but it should be done within the next two or three years. Mrs. Stoudt informed Council that it has been about 20 years since the tank has been recoated. Mr. Myers explained the process and logistics of recoating and stated that he will work on a cost estimate for this project, but explained that the project falls under maintenance and any maintenance work is not usually grant eligible. Mr. Lord estimates the price would be \$30,000.

Mr. Lord also informed Council that there are two work vehicles that will need replacing in the near future: the white truck (2006 Ford F250) has about 52,000 miles, but it sits outside every day and is beginning to rust; and the green truck (2004 Ford F350) is beginning to have increased maintenance costs.

Mr. Myers spoke about dewatering sludge and sludge hauling pricing and the Borough's contract. He will inform Council the length of the current contract/extension.

Ms. Lorah asked Mr. Steltz, as Roadmaster, about the condition of the salt shed the Borough uses to store rock salt for winter. Mr. Steltz said that the shed is not in good shape and needs to be repaired or replaced. Ms. Milo stated that she has questions about the maximum amount of permeable surface for the property. She asked Mr. Myers if the Borough is over the surface limit of space allowed to be used. Mr. Myers stated that the Borough would not need to consider that if the Borough replaced the salt shed with a similar size salt shed; salt sheds are grant eligible. Mr. Myers will investigate the requirements for replaced a salt shed. Mr. Steltz stated that the Borough building/shop on Keller Street is full. Ms. Milo said that the shop building also needs a new roof. Ms. Falcone asked if there is any other space within the borough that is buildable to offer the shop more space. Ms. Kunkel and Ms. Lorah said that the only usable property would be the area occupied by the pool. Ms. Lorah added that this budget will be difficult to predict since Council needs to decide how to afford what is needed, and she emphasized the importance of planning for the things, big and small, Council knows will needed in the future.

Ms. Falcone asked Ms. Milo when Council should expect a budget proposal from her. Ms. Milo said that she starts working on the budget in late August through October, and the budget will be presented to Council during the second meeting in October.

Ms. Milo continued by reminding Council that because of the TASA project, the Borough has much more surface area that will need to be plowed and she believes this should be prioritized. Mr. Stoudt interjected and stated that he believed this is why the borough bought the Bobcat. Mr. Steltz explained how staff uses the skid loader and the tool cat. Mr. Steltz informed Council that the Bobcat can do these jobs, but they have to be careful not to overkill the equipment by pushing it to do multiple jobs because this leads to more wear and tear and the equipment will not last as long as expected then. Ms. Lorah asked Mr. Steltz if any of the equipment will be able to plow the extra surface area that will be in the park. He replied stating the Bobcat can do the job, but it is used for many other things and it will not last forever. Mrs. Stoudt asked how many mowers the Borough has. Mr. Steltz responded saying there are two mowers, but the John Deere lawn tractor definitely needs to be replaced. Mr. Myers offered some insight stating that tractors are far more versatile for the maintenance that the borough does, and it could last longer and do many more jobs than a regular mower could. Ms. Falcone asked how long the new walkways will be that are being added to the park, which will now have to be maintained by Borough staff, adding work for staff. Mr. Myers stated there will be 2,000 feet of walkways added once the project is complete. Mr. Steltz spoke and stated before the borough gets another specific maintenance machine, he would like to see the town invest in a Kubota or John Deere compact tractor. A compact tractor could be used in many different seasons for many different jobs. He stated that it would be a better utilization of money than buying specific machines for specific jobs. Next, Ms. Milo asked Mr. Steltz how long the bucket truck (1994) will still be in working order. Mr. Steltz stated that he believes it will still be in working order for a couple of years, but it will be harder and harder to get parts for it in the future as it keeps getting older. Mr. Steltz continued by saying that he does not know of any other borough that has the capabilities and the equipment Topton has. The borough has a good fleet because the borough staff takes good care of what they have. Mr. Steltz gave the example that the borough can plow all their streets in two hours; many of the neighboring communities cannot do things as quickly and as well as Topton. Mr. Steltz also suggested replacing the vacuum used for curb boxes and springs in the next few years.

Mr. Myers moved into a conversation of MS4 and stormwater management and how to plan in the budget. Mr. Steltz asked Mr. Myers if and when output testing is done for the borough as part of the annual report. Mr. Myers stated that the engineer performs output testing twice per year as mandated and is reported as required. Mr. Myers stated that the next projects include the watercourse survey and work and deciding whether or not to continue working on the rest of Toad Creek. Mr. Myers explained the permits that may be required to maintain culverts, like East Smith Street or under the Home Avenue Bridge. He also explained the challenges to Topton's stormwater issues. Mr. Myers stated that the MS4 report will continue to give the Borough small things that can be done by staff to keep things in working order, including storm basins being cleared and maintained.

Mr. Polinsky wanted clarification that the Washington Street Pump Station project is already fully planned. Mr. Myers confirmed that he is correct, and that they should be hearing back about the funding in the Fall of 2023. Mr. Polinsky also asked wanted to confirm that grants have not been submitted yet for the transite pipes. Mr. Myers confirmed that he is also correct. Mr. Polinsky then asked to confirm that the borough may able to receive funding for paving projects when submitting grant applications for the utility replacements, like Keller Street. Mr. Polinsky supported paving the alley near the pump station, when the pump station is completed, with Borough funds and liquid fuels funds. Mr. Polinsky suggested working with East Penn to help them with their property along this alley. Mr. Myers also confirmed that is correct. Mr. Myers continued discussing grant funding sources that support water, waste water, and stormwater projects. Mr. Myers stated that since the Borough has some equipment and staff to complete some parts of the projects being planned, there may be a better chance of receiving funding versus if the Borough needed to rent or hire someone to complete the work.

Mr. Polinsky informed Council that there was a joint co-op meeting among the Borough of Tipton, Longswamp, Hereford, and Rockland Townships regarding buying a Zipper machine. He continued by saying Longswamp proposed this machine because the one they have is about 10 years old and needs to be replaced. Mr. Polinsky explained that this machine is used for road resurfacing and removes layers of the existing asphalt. He continued by stating the borough has shared ownership of a paver with the three townships. Mr. Polinsky finished by stating that if Tipton does not get involved in the buying process for the Zipper, Tipton would have to pay costs to the townships every time staff uses the machine, which could cost more than helping to purchase it. Ms. Lorah asked how much the machine costs. Mr. Polinsky answered with \$308,945, discussed payment options, explained this price would be split four ways, and the Borough will only be paying approximately \$18,000 per year if the purchase is financed. Mr. Myers explained how equipment like the paver and the Zipper could be used as match toward grants for street projects. Ms. Falcone added that she cannot believe Deka/East Penn cannot be charged some kind of impact fee for the damage their 18-wheelers do to Main Street and borough roads. Mr. Myers said that fuel taxes are supposed to cover fixing damage to roads caused by vehicles. Mr. Polinsky stated that they are a business inside borough lines, they are part of the borough, and they pay taxes to the borough for having their business here. Mr. Polinsky finished the conversation by stating that he believes Council should take the opportunity to buy the Zipper with the co-op due to pricing expiring at the end of this year and purchasing will save money on usage fees from the Townships. Mr. Steltz confirmed with Mr. Myers that the millings resulting from using the Zipper could be used as a base under asphalt when paving. Mr. Steltz, Ms. Lorah, Mr. Polinsky, and Mr. Myers stated that millings can also be used elsewhere in the Borough. Mr. Polinsky said participating in the purchase will go a long way in community relations and being nice to our neighbors.

Mr. Polinsky added that the Borough should look into getting some of the borough watershed property logged; this can become a source of income for the big projects the Borough is planning. Mr. Myers added that before things are decided about logging, Council will need to look into Longswamp Township's ordinances to see if the Borough may log in their township; then get a certified forester, who would manage the bid and the logging project. Mr. Myers will get information to Council on recent projects like this in the area. He also explained that anyone with an interest in the property would have to be able to provide input prior to such a project. He added that there is a market for wood because there is a hole in the supply chain and would be easy to receive a profit. Mr. Stoudt agreed and stated some of the kinds of timber located in the watershed. Mr. Polinsky agreed.

HEARING OF VISITORS

No visitors were present.

ADJOURNMENT

Council adjourned at 8:43 by a motion by Mr. Polinsky, seconded by Mr. Stoudt.

Mayor Biltcliff reminded Council of the 10th Anniversary of the Tipton Mini-Museum on September 10th.

The next regular Borough Council Meeting will be held Monday September 12th, at 7:00pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Courtney M. Corona

Borough Secretary