

**MINUTES OF THE  
BOROUGH OF TOPTON  
BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING  
Monday, December 26th, 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 7:09 PM. Present were Mayor Biltcliff, Council Members C. Cook, A. Falcone, M. Kunkel, M. Lorah, E. Polinsky, E. Stoudt, and M. Stoudt, Solicitor Joan London, and Borough Manager Stacy C. Milo.

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Polinsky made a motion to approve the minutes from December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Ms. Kunkel seconded the motion. Ms. Cook clarified that the minutes did not include that she stated that she wanted to save Tipton taxpayers money, did not want to see events cancelled, and wanted alternative funding sought out rather than having Tipton taxpayers pay for events. The motion passed unanimously.

**HEARING OF VISITORS**

Jesse Kemp asked Council about his percentage of a raise in wage compared to the other employees' percentage of raise. Mr. Polinsky answered Mr. Kemp's question. Council discussed job responsibilities and required certifications with Mr. Kemp.

Kathy Hassler stated that she was dismayed to know that Ms. Corona had resigned and wanted to wish her well in her future endeavors.

**BOROUGH MANAGER**

Ms. Milo stated that Council held an executive session prior to tonight's meeting to discuss personnel matters.

Ms. Milo stated that Ms. Corona submitted her letter of resignation as Borough Secretary. Ms. Milo read the resignation letter that Ms. Corona sent to Council. Mr. Polinsky made a motion to accept Ms. Corona's resignation. Mr. Stoudt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Polinsky made a motion to direct Ms. Milo to advertise for the Borough Secretary position. Mrs. Stoudt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Scott Arndt interrupted the meeting by asking where all of the borough's money went. Ms. Lorah answered Mr. Arndt by explaining increases in operating costs, the borough's assessment amount and how this relates to millage, sewer loan, and other costs. Ms. Lorah also answered questions regarding the pool not generating revenue. Ms. Falcone explained the breakdown of the borough's tax parcels, the budget's funds, and details of the general fund's budget, including

personnel costs. Ms. Milo explained that the three funds cover personnel costs. Mrs. Stoudt compared the revenue from taxes to the cost of personnel. Mrs. Stoudt also explained the debt that the borough currently has. Ms. Lorah explained that the debt was incurred by previous Councils. Ms. Milo explained that the borough did do a bond issue last year to “refinance” two loans to save money. Council discussed the 229 W. Weis Street property, grants for projects, liquid fuels funding, library funding, and grant funding reported in the budget with visitors.

Ms. Milo explained Council’s previous decision on sitting hours for the tax collector, which will be printed on the interim tax bills. Ms. Milo also explained the County of Berks requirements of sitting hours that will be printed on the 2023 tax bills. Mr. Biltcliff explained his discussions with previous tax collectors, area collectors, and Berks County. Mr. Biltcliff presented Council with his proposed sitting hours. Mr. Polinsky made a motion to adopt the sitting hours for tax collection in 2023 as presented by Mr. Biltcliff. Mrs. Stoudt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Milo informed Council that Mr. Biltcliff submitted his letter of resignation as Mayor. Mr. Polinsky made a motion to accept Mr. Biltcliff’s resignation. Mr. Stoudt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Milo reminded the public that Council is accepting letters of interest to appoint a mayor for 2023 and will interview candidates on January 9, 2023 at 7:00PM. Ms. Milo stated that the Borough has not received any letters yet. Ms. London explained the process of appointing a mayor.

Ms. Milo presented Council with a final version of the 2023 budget, including a 20% increase to water and sewer rates as well as using more of the ARPA (COVID) funding the borough received. Ms. Falcone asked questions on health insurance premiums and returns of premiums, fund balance under general fund, and the pool fund. Ms. Cook asked questions about the pool expenses in the 2023 budget. Mr. Polinsky made a motion to adopt the 2023 budget as presented. Mr. Stoudt seconded the motion. The motion passed with a vote of 6 to 1 with Ms. Lorah voting in opposition.

Ms. Milo presented Ordinance 8-2022, which would raise water and sewer rates by 20%. Mr. Polinsky made a motion to adopt Ordinance 8-2022. Mrs. Stoudt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Stoudt made the following statement: Now that this council has gone through the preparation of the budget, many of us for the first time, I had a few things I wanted to reflect on.

First off, I would like to suggest that next year we agree or at least discuss raises and if any water/sewer rent increases or tax increases are necessary in October before the first draft of the budget comes out. This will accomplish a few things; we should not need to go through so many drafts of the budget which tends to just confuse people and create unnecessary concerns and it would get us all on the same page much earlier in the process. Second, is communication. After speaking with many residents, staff and other council members it has come to my attention that there have been a lot discussions happening outside of council meetings. While discussion is a

good thing, there should not be discussions happening involving pay increases, or potential changing of job descriptions with staff or residents before council makes decisions about them. This causes people to assume what they are told is in fact happening and undermines council as a whole. Lastly, I want to remind everyone that our main purpose here is to serve our community. Not as easy as it sounds as this borough has a lot of moving parts. We have to weight those moving parts equally whether that be staff, equipment, infrastructure, entertainment or the many other facets. Our borough is nothing without all of these things so we can not single out one over the other. We have to prioritize of course, having drinking water certainly takes precedence over a concert in the part but they are both important. In these uncertain times with the cost of everything everyone uses including the borough rising we must remember to maintain that balance as best we can.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Council adjourned at 7:57PM by a motion by Mr. Polinsky, seconded by Mrs. Stoudt. The next regular Council meeting will be held on January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 7:00PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stacy C. Milo  
Borough Manager