

***MINUTES OF THE
BOROUGH OF TOPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING
Monday, May 8, 2023***

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 7:00 PM. Present were Mayor Miller, Council Members C. Cook, M. Kunkel, M. Lorah, E. Polinsky, E. Stoudt, and M. Stoudt, Solicitor Joan London and Engineer Charley Myers, PE. Ms. Falcone and Ms. Milo were absent.

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

No minutes were presented for approval.

COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Lorah advised she would review communications and the Borough Manager's agenda items in Ms. Milo's absence.

Ms. Lorah presented the proposal from Redeemer Bible Fellowship Church for a block party on August 26th. Mr. Polinsky made a motion to approve the request. Ms. Kunkel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. There was a brief discussion with a representative from Redeemer Bible Fellowship Church following the motion. Council indicated Redeemer Bible Fellowship Church was approved to proceed with planning of the event, but additional requirements and steps needed completion prior to the event. The representative from Redeemer Bible Fellowship Church indicated this event was held in previous years and the church was familiar with the additional requirements: certificate of insurance, request street closures.

Ms. Lorah reviewed the details requested from the Brandywine Community Library for their fundraiser on August 12; the map of the racecourse was still pending. Ms. Cook requested additional details on how they were planning to control the kids along the creek. Ms. Kunkel questioned if the pavilion would also be needed for the event. Council decided to table a vote and request additional information, with the understanding the vote would need to take place at the next meeting on June 12th.

Ms. Lorah directed council members to the Berks County Planning Commission informational flyer in their packets, which provided websites where additional details could be located online:

BCPC 2022 Annual Report – bit.ly/BCPC2022AR

Berks County Greenway, Park and Recreation Plan – [bit.ly/Greenway Recreation](https://bit.ly/GreenwayRecreation)

Ms. Lorah indicated Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church received a permit to place a clothing donation bin on their property and the Borough waived the \$35.00 permit fee.

Ms. Lorah communicated that Troy Fairchild submitted his retirement request letter and that his last paid day would be 7/31/23.

Mrs. Lorah indicated the Berks County Commissioner's "On The Road" meeting would be held in Topton on Thursday, June 29th at 7:00pm.

MAYORS REPORT

Mayor Miller advised he had attended a few community events recently: he attended the 1) "Meet and Greet" event for first responders; 2) "Tidy-Up Topton" event, which was attended by 30-40 people, who managed to collect 20 bags of trash; 3) the well-attended Toad Creek Fishing Derby, held by TCOC. The mayor indicated by the smiles on the kids' faces, the TCOC event appeared to be a huge success.

POLICE REPORT

Ms. Lorah indicated there would be no police report tonight as they were unable to attend.

HEARING OF VISITORS

Colleen Kristula had two items to discuss. The first was if Council would consider relocating meetings to enable more residents to attend and be comfortable attending. Ms. Kristula specifically referred to the upcoming June 29th County Commissioners' meeting. Ms. Kristula asked if it is not possible to relocate, would it be possible to re-orient the current space to allow more community members to attend, indicating in the past there had been occasions where there was "standing room only". Mr. Polinsky inquired if Ms. Kristula had suggestions for locations and Ms. Kristula indicated larger facilities, such as the Fire Company or the Grange, might be suitable.

The second concern raised by Ms. Kristula was accessibility to the Borough Hall's parking lot. Ms. Kristula mentioned it was indicated previously that accessibility of the entrance and exit to the Borough office building parking lot would be fixed when PennDOT improved the sidewalks. Ms. Kristula expressed concern around the fact that lower clearance vehicles can scrape when entering or exiting due to the curbing in place. The slope of the parking lot was also a concern and Ms. Kristula suggested relocating accessible spaces to along the building where it is flat. Ms. Kristula felt a committee should be formed to look at accessibility issues throughout the Borough. Ms. Lorah indicated that accessibility has been a topic of discussion by Council. Mr. Polinsky indicated there had been an ADA insider evaluation performed previously, but funding is an obstacle at this time. Mr. Polinsky acknowledged some requests may be easier to accomplish, such as moving the accessible parking spaces to along the building. Ms. Kristula explained that the parking lot on Weis Street and pathway is not well lit.

Mr. Myers noted the challenge with leveling the Borough parking lot entrance and exit as it related to stormwater management. Mr. Myers explained if the curbing were lowered to accommodate low clearance vehicles, all the stormwater would be brought onto the site. Mr. Myers indicated there had been discussion of providing another entrance option as a way to alleviate this issue. Mrs. Stoudt indicated that expanding the pool parking lot was discussed, as well as moving the accessible parking to along the South side of the Borough building. Ms. Kristula asked how long it would take for those changes to be put in place and Mrs. Stoudt reiterated the issue was funding. Ms. Lorah noted that the Recreation Committee was being re-established and that Ms. Kristula might consider joining in order to have the opportunity to provide direct input as part of a committee.

Robin Ream asked about what was happening with the pool. Ms. Lorah confirmed the pool will not be re-opened and the Recreation Committee being formed will discuss how to utilize the property moving forward. Council reiterated that the borough will not be including a pool on the property.

SOLICITOR

Ms. London reported that there was a publicly advertised joint meeting held on May 3rd with Longswamp Township and that a motion was passed that allows for a feasibility study to be conducted for a secondary well site. Ms. London explained that the motion also rescinded terminations of prior Borough ordinances, which would discontinue service provided to Freehall Street and Woodside Avenue, Longswamp Township, and rescinded the actions of Longswamp Township; there is no longer a need for a Memorandum of Understanding and the next step will be for the Borough to prepare a request for proposals or qualifications for a consultant to perform the study for the secondary well site. Ms. London stated that once the study is completed, the agreements regarding services to Freehall Street and Woodside Avenue and a master Inter-Municipal Agreement for cooperation on water and sewer should be discussed. Mr. Myers confirmed Barry Isett already provided scope and fees for this study, but the Borough needs an agreement with the Fire Company. Mr. Polinsky made a motion to authorize the solicitor to prepare an agreement with the Topton Volunteer Fire Co., No. 1 for a feasibility study. The motion was seconded by Mr. Stoudt. The motion passed unanimously.

BOROUGH MANAGER

Ms. Lorah advised there is nothing to report on the Residential Water and Sewer Service Policy nor the report on the Public Works, Drinking Water Plant and Wastewater Treatment Plant.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Public Safety and Personnel Committee

Ms. Lorah advised that an Executive Session would be held after the Council meeting regarding personnel with no action to be taken by Council; therefore, the meeting would be adjourned following that session.

Ms. Lorah introduced Terry Hook as the candidate for the Borough office part-time administrative assistant position. Ms. Lorah explained the details for the position: no more than 35 hours per week at a pay rate of \$18.00 per hour; 40 hours of paid time off were granted at the date of hire and will expire 12/31/2023; at the end of Ms. Hook's 90 day probationary period, her performance will be evaluated and it will be determined if any additional time off or pay rate changes will be considered. Mr. Polinsky made a motion to approve hiring Terry Hook. Ms. Cook asked Ms. Hook her understanding of the duties of the position and if she felt those would be satisfying. Ms. Hook replied with expectations of the position and reconfirmed her interest in the position. Mrs. Stoudt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Relations and Quality of Life (Kunkel)

Ms. Kunkel had nothing to report and stated the Topton Community Ambulance Board meeting is next week.

Environmental and Quality of Life Committee (Cook)

Ms. Cook confirmed the meeting scheduled for May 14th, 2023 has been canceled and that the next meeting is scheduled for September. Ms. Cook reviewed the balances for their bank accounts. Ms. Cook confirmed that Carl Christman will fill the vacant position on the Museum Preservation board as a member.

Ms. Lorah inquired if there were any updates for Quality of Life and Ms. Cook confirmed there were none.

Special Events and Policy Committee (Falcone)

No report on Policy.

Ms. Falcone's report indicated a "Meet and Greet" event for first responders was held on April 15th and a "Tidy Up Topton" event was held on April 22nd and that everything went as planned for these events.

The next planned event in the borough is the "Community Yard Sale" on May 20th. The Borough will not be doing anything for this event other than organizing and publishing a list of items for sale by individuals having yard sale. No permit is needed to participate. There is a form available in the Borough office and as an online link where participants can list their address and items being sold. To be included in the list circulated, forms should be completed and returned by May 15th. E. Shnake will complete the list of addresses and items being sold to assist people in locating specific items for purchase.

Upcoming events in the planning stages are the “Park Party” to be held June 25th from 11am-8pm and the “Classic Cars & Classic Music” event on July 23rd. Volunteers from Council will be needed to participate in organizing and assisting in these event details and activities.

Streets and Property Committee (Polinsky)

Mr. Polinsky reported that Longswamp Township had advised that they would be paving near Electro-Space on High Road through the CO-OP and wanted to know if the Borough was interested in continuing paving and include High Street; a rough cost had been provided by Mr. Steltz for the stretch of High Street out to Main Street. Mr. Polinsky indicated it seemed like too much to spend at this time. Mr. Polinsky stated there are rough stretches where it may make sense to consider improving now. Ms. Lorah inquired about the scheduled time of the project but it was unknown, though Mr. Polinsky indicated because it was a CO-OP project it may move quickly. Ms. Lorah agreed that with manpower and equipment already in place, evaluating it was worth further evaluation to determine if there were sections of the street that could reasonably be improved. Ms. Lorah also mentioned there was interest in demonstrating cooperation as it related to the CO-OP agreement. Ms. Lorah confirmed she had spoken with Mr. Steltz and that the rough cost provided was likely high, covering 6” surface. In terms of the use of Liquid Fuel funds, Mr. Myers mentioned the Washington Street project may not be ready until spring of 2024. Mr. Stoudt asked if it would make sense to reach out to Electro-Space to see if they might contribute to the costs. Mr. Polinsky noted that the surface in front of Electro-Space was one of the better stretches along the road. Ms. Kunkel noted that Electro-Space is not the only user of that road. Mr. Polinsky noted it was worth reaching out to Electro-Space. Mr. Polinsky proposed that he and Mr. Steltz evaluate paving rougher sections of High Street and Council agreed.

Parks and Recreation Committee (E. Stoudt)

Mr. Stoudt indicated the Recreation Committee would be started up again; the areas remaining to address are the pool, the parking lot by the pool and the t-ball field. Mr. Stoudt stated committee meetings would be held at the Borough Hall at 7:00pm on the second Tuesday of each month. The initial meetings would involve brainstorming and Mr. Stoudt welcomed everyone to attend. Ms. Lorah asked if Mr. Stoudt planned to contact the previous members, such as baseball and softball, to see if they had representatives that would attend. Mr. Stoudt indicated there were no plans to contact former members as the decision on what to do remains with the Council, but stated separate meetings were being held with baseball and softball currently. Ms. Lorah noted that there was an ordinance for the Recreation Committee. Ms. London confirmed if the ordinance was never repealed, the previous committee still exists. There was further discussion to address questions from Mr. Polinsky on why it was necessary to engage the original committee members. Ms. Lorah clarified that because the ordinance was created specifically to fund the park improvements/master plan, use of the remaining funds would require governance by the same committee created in the ordinance. There was

further discussion on whether or not the ordinance could be repealed to allow for a new Recreation Committee to be formed. Ms. London explained that if the ordinance was a condition of the funding, it is necessary to retain the ordinance. Ms. London suggested contacting organizations with voting members and asking them to provide a representative; it would be acceptable to contact alternate organizations in town to replace organizations that are now defunct as long as there are nine total representatives. Ms. London confirmed the ordinance could be amended to reflect the finalized members. Mr. Stoudt asked Ms. London if a Recreation Committee may meet. Ms. London confirmed that a committee may meet but not make any decisions. Mr. Stoudt stated that the committee will meet on June 13 at 7:00pm.

Finance and Utilities Committee (M. Stoudt)

Mrs. Stoudt reviewed the Borough account balances presented by the Borough Treasurer.

On-Line Bank Account Balances as of 5/9/2023:

General Account:	\$ 563,964.36
Water Account:	\$ 41,804.75
Sewer Account:	\$ 91,237.32
Reeds Beds – Sewer	\$ 5,003.99
Payroll:	\$ 1,613.52
Recreation/Park Project:	\$ 305,334.63
Liquid Fuels:	\$ 336,180.05
Fire Fund:	\$ 94,930.40
Ambulance Fund:	\$ 35,228.44
ARPA Funding	\$ 217,631.73

Mrs. Stoudt made a motion to approve the list of bills and transfers. Mr. Polinsky seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Stoudt confirmed the current outstanding accounts receivable amount for Water & Sewer is \$180,000.

Mrs. Stoudt confirmed there are 50 Hometown Hero banners installed, 10 ready to install, and 10 ready to order. Mrs. Stoudt explained that there are 7 spots remaining in town and 20 total remaining. There was discussion if additional streets should be added. Council agreed, all banners currently completed could be mounted, and to wait until more spots were needed to finalize additional streets.

ENGINEER'S REPORT

1. PADEP Sewer and Water

- a. Media Replacement for Water Plant – DEP does not have a record, we are resubmitting.

2. **DEP MS-4**
MS4 Annual Report to DEP – Isett scheduling remaining outfall inspections for May.
Perennial Stream Work – On Hold. No change

3. **Topton Transportation Alternatives Trail Connection Project**
Construction should be complete soon.

4. **Grants:**
 - A. LSA Grant: Application is in for Keller Street: \$620,000 – Not awarded
 - B. East Barkley - \$385,000, Small Water & Sewer – expect award in summer

5. **Washington Street Pumping Station**
Received Grant award, contract with grant agency signed, getting info from them for specs.
Expect to send out for bid shortly.

6. **DCNR – Oak Alley Project**
DCNR has approved the alternate project, funds are being held for possible use on either Oak Alley or TASA.

OLD BUSINESS

No Old Business

ADJOURNMENT

Council recessed to executive session at 7:48PM by a motion from Mrs. Stoudt, seconded by Ms. Kunkel. Mr. Polinsky made a motion to end the Executive Session at 8:18PM and return to the regular meeting. Mrs. Stoudt seconded the motion. Mr. Polinsky made a motion to adjourn at 8:18PM. Ms. Cook seconded the motion. The next regular Council meeting will be held on June 12, 2023 at 7:00PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Terry L. Hook
Administrative Assistant