

MUNICIPALITY OF KINGSTON TOWN COUNCIL  
MONTHLY COUNCIL MEETING AND SPECIAL MEETING

APRIL 27, 2020

MINUTES

A regular meeting of the Town Council of the Municipality of Kingston was held in Council Chambers, 500 Wyoming Avenue, Kingston, Pennsylvania, on Monday, April 27, 2020, at 7:00 p.m.

The following members of Council were present.

Mr. Robert Thompson, Jr. – President

Mr. Rob Jacobs    Mr. Jack Schumacher    Mrs. Roberta Rowlands

Mr. Anthony Dicton – Vice-President    Mrs. Nancy Cooper

Mrs. Margaret Neville

Others present: Paul J. Roberts, Jr., Mayor; Paul Keating, Administrator; Harry Mattern, Esq., Solicitor; Julie Norton, Secretary - absent

**CITIZENS REQUEST TO ADDRESS COUNCIL:**

None

**ADMINISTRATORS VERBAL UPDATE:**

None at this time

**AGENDA ITEM:**

It was moved by Mrs. Cooper and seconded by Mrs. Rowlands that **Resolution 2020-11**; Authorizing, Empowering and Directing the Proper Officers of the Governing Board to Appoint a Liaison Between it and Berkheimer, the Duly Appointed Collector of Local Taxes for the District, for the Express Purpose of Sharing Confidential Tax Information with the District for Official Purposes

Motion carried and so ordered.

The vote of Council was recorded as follows:

Mr. Schumacher -Yes    Mr. Dicton – Yes    Mrs. Rowlands – Yes

Mr. Jacobs - Yes    Mrs. Cooper – Yes    Mrs. Neville – Yes    Mr. Thompson – Yes

Motion passes.

It was moved by Mr. Jacobs and seconded by Mr. Schumacher that **Resolution 2020-12**; Modifying the 2017 Taxable General Obligation Note with the Fidelity Deposit & Discount Bank from a Fixed rate of 4.5% Interest to a Fixed Rate of 3.125% Interest and Modifying Payments Thereon

Motion carried and so ordered.

The vote of Council was recorded as follows:

Mr. Schumacher -Yes    Mr. Dicton – Yes    Mrs. Rowlands – Yes

Mr. Jacobs - Yes    Mrs. Cooper – Yes    Mrs. Neville – Yes    Mr. Thompson – Yes

Motion passes.

It was moved by Mrs. Cooper and seconded by Mr. Dicton that **Resolution 2020-13**; Approving a Memorandum of Understanding Between the Municipality and the Kingston Police Department/Fraternal Order of Police Wyoming Valley Lodge No. 36

Motion carried and so ordered.

The vote of Council was recorded as follows:

Mr. Schumacher -Yes    Mr. Dicton – Yes    Mrs. Rowlands – Yes

Mr. Jacobs - Yes    Mrs. Cooper – Yes    Mrs. Neville – Yes    Mr. Thompson – Yes

Motion passes.

It was moved by Mrs. Rowlands and seconded by Mrs. Neville that **Resolution 2020-14**; Extending the Due Date for a Payment at Face of the 2020 Municipal Property Tax

Motion carried and so ordered.

The vote of Council was recorded as follows:

Mr. Schumacher -Yes     Mr. Dicton – Yes     Mrs. Rowlands – Yes

Mr. Jacobs - Yes     Mrs. Cooper – Yes     Mrs. Neville – Yes     Mr. Thompson – Yes

Motion passes.

## **REPORTS:**

Before reports are read, Kingston will be on an “odd ball” schedule for the month of May. A lot was accomplished this evening. Mr. Keating would rather contact Mr. Thompson and give him notice when we need council to act on legislation or policy just for the month of May and get back to the same rhythm in June. Is council on board with this? Feel free to call Mr. Keating with any questions.

The Fire Department responded to 354 calls.

The Police Department responded to 557 calls and 36 were in Pringle. Chief Kotchik is doing a great job.

There are 682 memberships at the Rec Center.

DPW collected 218.06 tons of garbage and 109.94 tons of single stream recycling. This department is doing such a good job.

Finance reports are attached for your perusal.

Having to meet with our departments with voluntary furloughs was difficult and also wanted no employee to lose a paycheck. My staff has been cooperative along with Melanie (Police Clerk). Julie, Michele and Sondra work together and Robert and Rebecca work together every other day. Sondra also works at home remotely. The days they are not working they are using their own time. Not one person raised a stink about this scenario. It speaks a lot about the people that work here. Mr. Keating thanks everyone in their respective position for their dedication.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

Mr. Thompson would like a Motion and a second to appoint Berkheimer to Collect the Recycling Fee and to Authorize the Administration to Enter into an Agreement with Berkheimer for the Collection of the Recycling Fee. It was moved by Mrs. Neville and seconded by Mrs. Cooper.

The vote of Council was recorded as follows:

Mr. Schumacher -Yes     Mr. Dicton – Yes     Mrs. Rowlands – Yes

Mr. Jacobs - Yes     Mrs. Cooper – Yes     Mrs. Neville – Yes     Mr. Thompson – Yes

Motion passes.

Mr. Keating had no comment.

Mayor Roberts congratulated borough employees for their hard work. Kingston is very fortunate that Mr. Keating is here for us. Mr. Keating has worked through many difficult issues.

Attorney Mattern said that the reduction in the interest rate that Mr. Keating negotiated with Fidelity is incredible for Kingston. Great job Paul. At one point Mr. Mattern sent out a letter trying to explain how Municipalities, etc. should conduct meetings. It didn't quite work out exactly what was written, but it was pretty close. The House of Representatives enacted a Bill very quickly and it was a comprehensive Bill to keep everyone in compliance with the Sunshine Law and every other control over public meetings. Senator Scott Wagner said that they were not going to do anything and two weeks later a Rider was attached to a Bill which is basically the same thing as the House of Representatives Bill. That is why there were mixed messages. State Legislature and State Senate were not communicating. The State Senate said get an opinion from the district attorneys association regarding prosecuting a violation of the Sunshine Law should someone have a complaint. That really wasn't helpful. Mr. Mattern just wanted to let everyone know. Since council last met, Kingston has received a favorable opinion from the Commonwealth Court. It was a firm opinion and was very pleased of this outcome. Unfortunately, after the decision date of March 9<sup>th</sup> there begins a period of time that Franconi could ask for Reconsideration of the Commonwealth Court's decision. There has been no appeal request from Franconi, but the courts put everything on hold and extended all of the appeal dates and it is rather inconclusive whether this is still appealable. Mr. Mattern does not think that Franconi will appeal because the court's opinion was firm. It is great that council works together well and also Mr. Mattern thought it was great that council came up with this "we are in this together" approach, by foregoing salaries for two months. This is a very thoughtful gesture.

Mr. Schumacher asked Mr. Keating if there are any Covid-19 cases in Kingston. Paul answered by saying that he does not know how many cases there are, but would like to commend our Fire Chief, who has worked tirelessly as well as Chief

Delaney and others to get part of the Hippa laws relaxed. If somebody had a diagnosed case of Covid-19, the 911 centers would have alerted the first responders that they were going into a structure with a Covid-19 positive diagnosis. That never materialized through State Legislature. Mr. Keating believes there were 78 cases in the 18704 zip code which includes our surrounding areas. Mr. Keating knows of five (5), but we are not entitled to that information due to the Hippa laws. Chief Guido's efforts never came to fruition. Mr. Schumacher thanked Mr. Keating for all the work that is being done for Kingston and, especially, during the past few weeks. Mr. Schumacher told other council members to stay home and stay healthy.

Mr. Jacobs thanked Mr. Keating for all the work that he has done getting this meeting together and the hard work for Kingston. Echoing Margaret's sentiments regarding the pool. Mr. Jacobs thought Mr. Keating had a great idea. The pool means a lot to our residents. Hopefully, this will happen.

Mrs. Rowlands thanked the Administration, Police, Fire, Ambulance, DPW for their hard work during this difficult time. It is greatly appreciated.

Mr. Diction thanked Paul for his hard work. Everyone stay safe.

Mrs. Cooper commended Mr. Keating for all his hard work and working around the clock making residents safe and informed. Mrs. Cooper also thanked the Police, Fire, DPW and the front office for their hard work. Everyone stay safe.

Mrs. Neville same sentiments as everyone else. Looking forward to the clutter clean up. A homeowner has a tree on their tree lawn and looks a little hazardous and wants to know if you can get a tree permit in the hopes that this tree come down. Mr. Keating said that our shade tree applications are not on line. Mr. Keating suggested Mrs. Neville email pertinent information and Kingston could take it from there. Everyone stay well.

Mr. Thompson said that if we need a meeting we will get in touch with council. Stay safe.

There being no further business, it was moved by Mrs. Cooper to adjourn the meeting at 8:07 p.m.

FOR THE TOWN COUNCIL:

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Robert Thompson, Jr. - President

ATTEST:

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Julie Norton, Secretary  
April 27, 2020