

MUNICIPALITY OF KINGSTON TOWN COUNCIL

MONTHLY COUNCIL MEETING

September 8, 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 Tuesday, September 8, 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 Diction – Vice-President- Excused

Mrs. Nancy Cooper Mrs. Margaret Neville

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

CITIZENS REQUEST TO ADDRESS COUNCIL:

R. Clark Stewart, 12 Meyers Court, spoke about recycling bins and how they were not delivered to his street in 2019-2020 and the need for sidewalks. Mr. Stewart feels that he is being skipped over for city services. It shows that Mr. Stewart may have missed a few things. In 2011, bins were delivered to everyone, except Meyers Court and spoke to Julie and they were delivered.....no problem. He is not going to gripe, but he was skipped four years ago.

Mr. Keating asked if Mr. Stewart was contending again that he did not receive a recycling bin. Mr. Stewart replied “yes. Mr. Keating asked if he owns property at 111 W. Pettebone? Mr. Stewart replied “yes”. Mr. Keating asked Mr. Stewart to look at a few photos and asked him what was on his porch in Wyoming. Mr. Keating said that that is Kingston’s recycling container that was distributed in 2017 and is now at 111 W. Pettebone in Wyoming. Mr. Stewart said that he does not remember, but he bought this property subsequent to the 2017 date.

Mr. Keating said that you come to these meetings and make all sorts of accusations regarding this town to council and everyone else and this bin is on your porch in another town. Mr. Stewart, you have a lot of explaining to do. Mr. Stewart said that he is not hiding anything. Mr. Keating asked Mr. Stewart to stop asking about these containers when you have one....in another town. Mr. Keating asked why is Kingston's container on your property in Wyoming? Mr. Stewart answered "I don't know". Mr. Stewart said that his wife lives there, he does not.

The bin could have been in Wyoming when the home was bought. A bin was delivered to your address in Kingston and you took it to the 111 address. Mr. Stewart said that he could be wrong. Mr. Stewart said that he will admit when he is wrong and is there is no problem with that.

Mayor Roberts told Mr. Stewart that the bin needs to be returned. The Mayor asked if Mrs. Norton set him up with new bins and Mr. Stewart said it was the blue ones. The Mayor said it is not supposed to be in Wyoming. How did it get to Wyoming? Was it borrowed? If it costs more than \$50.00, it is a misdemeanor charge. Mr. Stewart replied, "no problem". Mr. Stewart was under the impression that he was skipped and what happened with the blue bins were sorted out and doesn't want to chase down silly issues and apologizes for anyone who feels that he was off the rails. If I had a little guidance, I would have known.

Mr. Thompson asked Mr. Stewart why does he need "a little guidance" to take Kingston property to Wyoming to keep on your porch. Mr. Stewart said that people walk away with these things all of the time. There is a bunch of explanations and all that was done was open the door and asked Julie if he was skipped (but she gave the right answer this time) and Julie replied, "I didn't know they were giving out bins." The Mayor said to bring the bin to Mrs. Norton asap.

In a Right-To-Know request, Mr. Stewart asked for a street map with the best possible resolutions and this is what was received (showing the map) and that doesn't help him. Mr. Stewart said google maps is better than the one he received, because he is working on the sidewalks and a good map is needed. People need to have a place to walk. Mr. Stewart handed out pictures of the area behind Kingston Business Park on Lawrence Street and it showed garbage, tires, etc. all over the place. Mr. Stewart brought this up three years ago and you will see there is a Christmas tree and it is going on its fourth Christmas. Mr. Stewart

does not understand why this is not cleaned up. Mr. Stewart believes the pictures speak for itself.

Mr. Stewart feels that progress was made.....his bin was found.....he walks by it two or three times a week and never noticed it was there.

ADMINISTRATORS VERBAL UPDATE:

Mr. Keating started out with the bids for the Multimodal project on Third Avenue. Once again, this project continues to be a challenge, but we will eventually see this through. Mr. Keating thought it was too soon to ask council to award these bids. They were opened on Friday and tabulated the same day. There is a spreadsheet in front of you so that council can follow along regarding this project. This is an \$800,000.00 grant. There were two of the three contracts out there...Contract #1 is the street lighting along Third Avenue and Contract #3 is the new electronic pedestrian crosswalks. In 2018, when this grant was written and the cost estimates were used to put the budget for this. The project budget for street lighting was \$163,126.95. Kuharchik, the lowest bidder, came in at \$288,020.00. There is a difference of \$124,893.05. \$69,018.60 was budgeted for the pedestrian crossings. Low bidder came in at \$184,108.00. There is a difference of \$115,089.40. Kingston has already incurred an engineering bill in the amount of \$80,000.00. If we award base bids only, Contract #3, pedestrian crosswalks, which also includes thermal video detection at the crossings. We don't need the use of alternate paint at the intersections and mast arms, which is out of the window now. Mr. Keating would like to get this project moving in some way. The whole point of this project is the Pedestrian Trailway Connector and there is a shortage of \$92,935.35 \$40,000.00 in easements have been paid to the railroad company. Kingston would have to use General Fund money. Contract #2 will be paving, conduit, etc. The whole project will change the look of Third Avenue. The entire trail will be lit.

We do not know where we stand with LSA to upgrade the Municipal Building. If that grant falls through you are looking at \$500,000.00 to complete what we want to do with this building.

There has been no word regarding the Cares Act Grant. We would like a "custom" fire truck for COVID related materials. The Cares Act grant is \$208,000.00 and the truck costs \$500,000.00. We do have verbal commitments from volunteer fire companies to pitch in. Kingston could also finance the balance.

Mr. Keating wanted council to know that if it is decided to spend \$130,000.00 to \$150,000.00 in bond money and with some of the other things we have spent this year it equals about \$800,000.00 for all new projects out of the bond if we commit to this. Mr. Keating thinks council should take some time and think about this. Mr. Keating would like to see this come through as a lot of time and effort has gone into the projects. Please feel free to call. This can be discussed at the next Work Session and Resolutions can be prepared.

Department heads received letters regarding their budget and are due at the end of this week and, at this time, not aware of any capital requests that are going to be made. The clear runner will be if the LSA grant gets partially funded or not funded at all. This building needs some attention. Please let me know your thoughts.

Does council have any questions on the bids and the recommendation tabling the bid Resolutions until the Special Meeting? There were no questions.

For some good news, we had a call last month with Standard and Poors. For an hour and a half there were rapid fire questioning about our finances in the last five years. Mr. Keating is pleased to tell council that our credit rating is AA- which is an investment grade rating.

Mr. Keating then referenced the document that was emailed to council regarding the bond. At this time, we have debt service appropriated in our municipal budget to be paid in December on the 2015 bond issue. Closing on this bond in September will save us \$213,646.00 this year. We already have a refinancing agreement with Fidelity Bank on the taxable pension side in March which is a \$64,000.00 annual savings over the life of the loan. Provided we don't have a good third and fourth quarter, we will still have almost \$270,000.00 in savings that was built in our budget by doing these things we have not yet seen this year. This transaction was very important for our town. We went very conservative as we are taking a million dollars of new money. It was very tempting to take a big grab. Our percentage rate is 1.943% over 20 years. The total interest on the \$1,000,000.00 loan is \$60,073.00. Hopefully, five years down the road we have put Kingston in a good position. The amortization schedule indicates that there is a \$213,000.00 savings this year. Our debt service will never change.

Motion carried and so ordered.

The vote of Council was recorded as follows:

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

Motion passes.

REPORTS:

The Fire Department responded to 498 calls. At no time in Chief Guido's history did he ever reach nearly 500 calls for one month.

The Police Department responded to 798 calls and 39 were in Pringle.

The pool did not have a good year at all. There were a lot of expenses that were incurred and did not expect. The expansion joints need to be worked on or replaced. The pool will be drained this week. A recommendation will be made to transfer money from the General Fund to the pool.

DPW collected 261 tons of garbage and 114.89 tons of single stream recycling, 300 yards of storm damage and yard waste. \$15,000.00 was spent to assist DPW with removing trees on Union Street with the use of cranes. Wright Avenue and a portion of Pringle Street will be milled to get ready for paving.

Code Enforcement issued 5 violation letters, 4 non-traffic citations and performed 26 pre-sale inspections.

Finance reports are attached for your perusal.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Keating had no comment.

Mayor Roberts had no comment.

Attorney Mattern said that he received confirmation from the Election Board that our two issues will be on the November ballot. Nothing has been received from the Supreme Court regarding Franconi. On a personal note, Mr. Mattern feels that one thing that sets Kingston apart from other towns is that Kingston does tend to this town very nicely.

Mr. Schumacher asked Mr. Keating that happens when a tree is removed and the stump is not removed. Stumps seem to be all over town. Mr. Keating responded by saying that UGI removed many trees in town, but will not remove the stump. Kingston should lead by example and remove the stumps that we are responsible for. Removing stumps is a good Fall project. Mr. Schumacher ended by saying that he does not feel that the burden should fall in Kingston's lap and that whomever took the tree down should also remove the stump.

Mrs. Rowlands said that Greg is a good person and thoughts and prayers are with him.

Mr. Jacobs said that Greg is in our thoughts and prayers. Regarding the pool, he feels that Administration knew that the pool would not do that well this year, but still provided a service for our residents.

Mrs. Cooper commended the Fire Department, Police Department and DPW on a great job tending to the aftermath of the recent storm. They were there when people needed these departments. Greg is in our thoughts and prayers.

Mrs. Neville said that these departments did a great job cleaning up after the storm. Church Street Park looks great. The dog park and the track are being used and residents are very respectful towards each other.

Mrs. Neville asked Chief Kotchik how they could handle a call when there is an autistic child in the home. How well trained is Kingston in this regard? Mrs. Neville said that there was a recent shooting in Salt Lake City and a nonverbal autistic child was shot and killed. Mrs. Neville is concerned because her 13-year old son is severally autistic, and wants to educate the public and the police. There may be an opportunity that we can work together with the police. There should be something that we can do as a community.

Chief Kotchik responded that Kingston handles these types of situations very well. There is mandatory training and on-line classes for the department. The Chief is very much aware and Kingston is on top of this subject. We have gone through de-escalation, racism and several other subject. Mr. Keating and the Chief are working on getting the Police Department accredited, which is big. There would be many changes to this building as part of the accreditation. Policies are being rewritten and training are just a few changes. Becoming accredited is a long process, but it has been started. Sargent Height is the accreditation manager. Mrs. Neville feels it is very important to share this information with the

community. Just the fact that Kingston is willing to change and go through necessary changes, it makes Mrs. Neville very proud.

Sargent Keiper suggested calling 911 to notify them in case there is an emergency. Should there every be a 911 call the information will be relayed to responder.

Mr. Keating suggested we could do something on the police Facebook. Mrs. Neville is grateful for that and any opportunity to get information out there is a good thing.

Mr. Thompson also commended the Police Department, Fire Department and DPW regarding the recent storm. The library is open, but not for people to go in. It is only for drop off or pick up. A book has to be put aside for 96 hours and then disinfected, but the State has changed to rules to 144 hours.

The Mayor believes that the library stated that they will be open in two weeks. There will be plexiglass partitions installed. The Mayor also said that his thoughts and prayers are with Greg. Lastly, the Mayor said that Kingston is very luck to have an Administrator like Mr. Keating. To receive an AA- credit rating is phenomenal and how much we are in the black. Mr. Keating really thought when this pandemic hit, Kingston could have been in trouble, but that is not the case.

There being no further business, it was moved by Mrs. Cooper to adjourn the meeting at 8:03 p.m.

FOR THE TOWN COUNCIL:

Robert Thompson, Jr. - President

ATTEST:

Julie Norton, Secretary
September 8, 2020