

**KULPMONT BOROUGH
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
March 13, 2024
7:00 P.M.**

Opening Prayer by Councilman Robert Chesney
The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag by the body present,
Kulpmont Borough Council held the meeting for general purpose on
Wednesday March 13, 2024

Roll call was taken, and the following members were present: Mayor Slaby, Stephen Bielskie, Robert Chesney, Robert Fanella and Marlin Hodge, Bernard P. Novakoski, Stephen Motyka and Charles Staskiel.

ABSENT: Treasurer Paul Niglio

APPOINTED OFFICIALS PRESENT: Solicitor Edward Greco, Borough Supervisor Ed Begis, Code Official Heather Owens, Police Chief Stephen Mazzeo and Borough Secretary Rhonda Wilk

OTHER PRESENT: Edwin P. Howerter, Joe Politza, Gorden Urbanavage and Fire Chief Raymond J. Siko

OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO BE HEARD ON ANYTHING THAT IS ON THE AGENDA:

None

PRESIDENTS REPORT – (Stephen Bielskie)

No Report

MAYORS REPORT- (Robert M. Slaby)

Mayor Slaby read aloud resolution #733 recognizing the elder senior citizens of the Borough of Kulpmont.

Robert Chesney expressed his pleasure in recognition being given to the elder citizens of the Borough. He added this was advertised and announced at a borough meeting to get the word out to submit the names and ages of our elderly citizens to the borough.

SECRETARY'S REPORT- (Rhonda Wilk)

Rhonda Wilk stated a motion is needed to approve the meeting minutes from February 14, 2024, meeting minutes.

MOTION- Mr. Novakoski made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the February 14, 2024, meeting and was seconded by Mr. Hodge.

ROLL CALL VOTE- NOVAKOSKI (yes), BIELSKIE (yes), FANELLA, (yes), CHESNEY (yes), STASKIEL (yes), MOTYKA (yes), HODGE
7 YEAS – 0 NAYS

Rhonda Wilk stated correspondence was received from Northumberland County Tax Claim Bureau regarding the distribution of proceeds from 2023 upset sale and was copied to Mayor and Council.

Correspondence was received from Joe Cesari of the Cruise Association concerning the date of the Kulpmont Cruise to be held on June 23rd and a rain date of June 30th. The Cruise Association is seeking council approval for this event. A second correspondence provides the borough with a copy of the Cruise Association liability insurance and confirmation of traffic control to be provided by Mt Carmel Township Fire Police.

MOTION- Mr. Chesney made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Fanella to approve the Cruise to be held on June 23rd and a rain date of June 30th and approval to the Cruise Association to proceed in obtaining a special event permit with condition of certificate of liability being obtained.

ROLL CALL VOTE- NOVAKOSKI (yes), BIELSKIE (yes), FANELLA, (yes), CHESNEY (yes), STASKIEL (yes), MOTYKA (yes), HODGE
7 YEAS – 0 NAYS

Rhonda Wilk stated Mt. Carmel School District sent a letter to the borough concerning work to be done on the pitching mound at the Veterans Memorial Complex with the cost estimate of \$3,135.00 and requesting the Borough to pay half the cost.

MOTION- Mr. Motyka made the motion to split the cost of the pitching mound repair with the Mt. Carmel School District.

There was no second on the motion and the motion failed due to lack of a second.

Correspondence was received from Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry regarding Covid 19 ARP H20 PA – Water Supply, Sanitary Sewer, and Storm Water projects in Northumberland County for COVID -19 ARPA funds will be used for construction and engineering and may require prevailing wage.

Scott Hayes emailed correspondence, attention of Mayor and Council providing a copy of a letter from Engineer, Brian P. Murphy.

A letter was received from Danielle Wolfgang concerning the Spring Carnival to be held at Mother Pauline Center May 18th from 11-5 p.m. and is asking the alley to be blocked off for the event as last year.

MOTION- Mr. Novakoski made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Chesney to block off the road for the Spring Carnival event as previous years.

ROLL CALL VOTE- NOVAKOSKI (yes), BIELSKIE (yes), FANELLA, (yes), CHESNEY (yes), STASKIEL (yes), MOTYKA (yes), HODGE
7 YEAS – 0 NAYS

A letter was received from the County of Northumberland Office of Commissioners giving a 60-day written notice of closure of the Kulpmont Senior Action Center located in the Municipal Building.

Correspondence was received from the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission regarding Interim Order setting Resolution Conference and was copied to the Mayor, Council, and the Solicitor.

TREASURERS REPORT (Paul Niglio)

Rhonda Wilk stated all Council received a copy of the financial information and the bills to be paid.

MOTION- Mr. Novakoski made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Hodge to approve and to pay the bills.

ROLL CALL VOTE- NOVAKOSKI (yes), BIELSKIE (yes), FANELLA, (yes), CHESNEY (yes), STASKIEL (yes), MOTYKA (yes), HODGE
7 YEAS – 0 NAYS

SOLICITORS REPORT (Edward Greco)

Solicitor Greco stated there is a letter from the PUC which was a copy of the PPL answer regarding the complaint we filed on the complaint. Solicitor Greco stated he in turn filed a response to that and said there is a mandatory conference of the attorneys prior to moving forward and stated it is tentatively scheduled for March 19th at 2:30 p.m. in the afternoon and said that matter is moving forward.

Solicitor Greco stated he received an email from Attorney Mike Finn on the Lamplight Acres property that they have plans, bids and stated hopefully work will commencing. Solicitor Greco then asked Heather Owens if anything had been done.

Heather Owens stated some gentleman came in asking about permitting and said he was going to take measurements. Solicitor Greco asked Heather how long ago that was. She replied, “two days after last month’s meeting.” Mr. Staskiel said his bid is good for thirty days and asked if he has a timeline on that to get something done. Mr. Bielskie replied and said once he gets a permit there is a timeline. The solicitor stated he will reach out to the attorney and say we will start to fine him if nothing is done. Solicitor Greco stated he

will ask to send us a contract, send us something. Mr. Motyka stated this correspondence is dated February 16th and as of March 16th we are thirty days out. Mr. Motyka commented, "Let's not let people to linger on at our expense anymore." Solicitor Greco stated he will follow up with that.

Solicitor Greco stated last year Mr. Motyka offered to donate to the borough the two parcels he purchased from the borough for recreation. Solicitor Greco stated there is a grant opportunity for a pocket park. A letter of intent was signed by Mr. Motyka of his desire to sign those parcels to the borough, a letter of intent by Council authorizing Mr. Bielskie to indicate the intent to pursue that.

Mr. Motyka stated the grant passed the initial review. Solicitor Greco stated part of this grant process is for the borough to take on the land. Mr. Motyka stated recognize there is no grant money unless the borough accepts the parcel claim. Solicitor Greco stated he thinks the council should approve it; accept the donation of the land.

MOTION – to accept and act upon letter of intent, accepting the donation of the parcels from Mr. Motyka was made by Mr. Fanella and seconded by Mr. Novakoski.

ROLL CALL VOTE- NOVAKOSKI (yes), BIELSKIE (yes), FANELLA, (yes), CHESNEY (yes), MOTYKA (yes), HODGE (yes), NOVAKOSKI (yes), STASKIEL
7 YEAS – 0 NAYS

POLICE CHIEFS REPORT – (Stephen Mazzeo)

Chief Mazzeo stated his report is attached and asked if the council has any questions. Mr. Chesney stated he has a question, he stated he remembers months ago about hiring part time police officers. Mr. Chesney stated the question came up about firearms they possibly had in their procession and asked if it would behoove us as a council to have those firearms stored here. Chief Mazzeo stated they are already stored here, and Solicitor Greco added and secure.

Mr. Bielskie asked if there is any truth in catalytic converters being stolen in the borough. Chief Mazzeo stated there were three in the borough and stated Mr. Carmel Borough chased the bad guy and lost them, he said he had a call this morning and will be sent a video. Chief Mazzeo stated it possibly may be a black Mercedes, but he is not sure about that.

FIRE CHIEF REPORT – (Raymond Siko)

Report is attached. Fire Chief Ray Siko stated the KME is due for inspection asking for council approval to take the KME to Ashland Diesel for inspection.

Chief Siko stated ladder testing and pump testing is due. He requested the borough to install 2 drop down extension cords in the truck room, to the rear of the station. After a brief discussion it was agreed to install the drop-down extension cords.

Mr. Staskiel discussed with Chief Siko more on the drop-down extension cords and what needed to be done. Mr. Staskiel said he is an electrician and asked Chief Siko to let him know when he wants to do this.

MOTION- Mr. Fanella made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Novakoski to approve the inspection of the KME.

ROLL CALL VOTE- NOVAKOSKI (yes), BIELSKIE (yes), FANELLA, (yes), CHESNEY (yes), STASKIEL (yes), MOTYKA (yes), HODGE
7 YEAS – 0 NAYS

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT – (vacant)

Vacant, no report

BUILDING INSPECTOR'S REPORT– (Tri County COG)

No Report

CODE/HEALTH ENFORCEMENT OFFICER'S REPORT – (Heather Owens)

Report attached.

Mr. Chesney stated there was a call from the property owners on Spruce Street and said Mr. Scicchitano had proceeded to get a dumpster and obtained a permit. Mr. Chesney stated action is being taken on that. Mr. Chesney stated he is glad something is being done with Mr. Valieko's property.

SERVICE AND FACILITIES – (Robert Fanella)

Mr. Fanella stated food surplus distribution will be held on March 21, 2024, from 8:00 until 11:00 at the borough garage.

Mr. Fanella stated two quotes were received for weed control, Ehrlich at \$,2292.00 and one from Turf Pro in the amount of \$1,850.00.

MOTION- Mr. Motyka made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Fanella to hire Turf Pro for the weed control at \$1,850.00.

ROLL CALL VOTE- NOVAKOSKI (yes), BIELSKIE (yes), FANELLA, (yes), CHESNEY (yes), STASKIEL (yes), MOTYKA (yes), HODGE
7 YEAS – 0 NAYS

Mr. Fanella stated the Hydraulic motor for the spreader needs repair and the cost estimate is \$592.00.

MOTION- Mr. Fanella made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Staskiel to have the Hydraulic motor repaired.

ROLL CALL VOTE- NOVAKOSKI (yes), BIELSKIE (yes), FANELLA, (yes), CHESNEY (yes), STASKIEL (yes), MOTYKA (yes), HODGE
7 YEAS – 0 NAYS

Mr. Fanella stated he received a price for concrete stacking blocks to be delivered from J&S in the amount of \$300.00.

MOTION- Mr. Motyka made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Novakoski to purchase the blocks at a cost of \$300.00.

ROLL CALL VOTE- NOVAKOSKI (yes), BIELSKIE (yes), FANELLA, (yes), CHESNEY (yes), STASKIEL (yes), MOTYKA (yes), HODGE
7 YEAS – 0 NAYS

Mr. Fanella announced a street sweeper schedule change for this month and stated Friday 29th scheduled for Chestnut, Spruce and Poplar will be changed to Monday March 25th due to the Borough being closed on the 29th.

Mr. Fanella stated it has been discussed by the committee for the collection of recyclables to be collected in the alleyways throughout the borough. A brief discussion took place on the collection to be in the alleyways and secondary streets and the council was in agreement.

MOTION- Mr. Chesney made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Fanella to begin to pick up the recycling in the alleyways in the Borough in April.

ROLL CALL VOTE- NOVAKOSKI (yes), BIELSKIE (yes), FANELLA, (yes), CHESNEY (yes), STASKIEL (yes), MOTYKA (yes), HODGE
7 YEAS – 0 NAYS

Mr. Fanella notified the citizens in the borough of recycle bins now being available and stated some resident's bins that were in poor condition were already switched out by the borough workers on curbside pick up day. He stated bins are also available in the borough office.

Mr. Motyka Cardboard compactor design, there will be a meeting on Friday at 1:00 p.m. to meet about three phase power.

FINANCE AND PURCHASING – (Stephen Motyka)

Mr. Motyka stated we all put a lot of effort into the occupation assessment that was sent to the county in September and everyone in this room was understanding there would be

an interim to be sent out for 450 people he would like the solicitor to send a letter to county. He said we need that revenue and added everyone in this room agreed to find these people which took a lot of hard work to do. Solicitor Greco stated he will send a letter.

Mr. Motyka stated we met early January with PennDOT concerning Chestnut Street for safety enhancements and beautification. Mr. Motyka stated he would like the council to move forward on the grant of \$25,000.00 for design and no cost to the borough. He stated we were notified by our engineer of a Department of Transportation grant for the design of State Streets and would like to move forward with that. He stated the construction portion of that should be no match for the borough.

MOTION – Mr. Novakoksi made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Motyka to move forward in pursuing the grants for safety enhancements and beautification of Chestnut Street.

ROLL CALL VOTE- NOVAKOSKI (yes), BIELSKIE (yes), FANELLA, (yes), CHESNEY (yes), STASKIEL (yes), MOTYKA (yes), HODGE
7 YEAS – 0 NAYS

Mr. Motyka, we put out for bid the restoration portion of the Growing Greener Plus grant and it came in a little high. He stated our estimate was \$450,000.00, stated we received one bid and worked with local suppliers to obtain free rocks and extended the time frame to save \$50,000.00. He stated he would like to approve the bid to Flyway with the change order reducing the cost.

After a brief discussion a motion was made to do so.

MOTION- a motion was made by Mr. Motyka and seconded by Mr. Novakoski to approve stormwater project change order with Flyway Excavation.

ROLL CALL VOTE- NOVAKOSKI (yes), BIELSKIE (yes), FANELLA, (yes), CHESNEY (yes), STASKIEL (yes), MOTYKA (yes), HODGE
7 YEAS – 0 NAYS

Mr. Motyka stated in December we approved the police contract and stated we did apply for a \$5,000.00 sign-on bonus grant before we signed the police contract and stated he would like their pay raises to reflect that sign-on bonus. He said council must agree on it and stated advertising for the \$5,000.00 sign on bonus goes in the newspaper today and it was 3-year contract originally with a \$1 the first and second year and stated if they get a \$5,000.00 bonus, he does not want them leaving the next day.

Mr. Motyka questioned the solicitor asking if we could add a retention plan to that bonus. Solicitor Greco replied saying we would have to have them sign an agreement that they are going to be with us at least a year.

Mr. Motyka stated we need to decide on a raise, and we also need to decide if the contract should be longer, pay raises less adding council would need to discuss and agree. It was decided to discuss it in executive session further at the end of the meeting.

CODE HEALTH AND SAFETY- (Stephen Bielskie)

No Report

ORDINANCE COMMITTEE - (Robert Fanella)

Mr. Fanella stated it has been discussed and suggested the borough pursue an Ordinance to eliminate trash pick up on Pine, Spruce, Chestnut, Scott, and Poplar Street in the Borough. Mr. Motyka commented that would make the town look nicer and alleviate a lot of issues and asked if it would be an amendment to the trash ordinance. Heather Owens stated our ordinance says it should be in the back anyway but because they are picking it up front and then there are people that may not be able to do stairs, they don't have any choice and said where else would they put it. Mayor Slaby said it is a real eyesore. Heather Owens's said she agrees.

After a brief discussion on the benefits of the trash being placed on the secondary streets, discussing possible permits to collect trash in the borough the Solicitor agreed to look into an ordinance that would require trash collection to be on secondary streets.

Concerns were raised on homes that may not have access to the alleyway and solutions being those homes to possibly take their trash for collection to the corner or side street and possible permits for trash haulers.

RECREATION/GRANTS COMMITTEE – (Robert Chesney)

Mr. Chesney stated concerning blight, we need to crack down and let people know we are serious and encouraged citizens to report incidents. Mr. Chesney stated he has talked to commissioners and others on the issue and some possible solutions.

Mr. Chesney started to comment on the baseball mound, Kulpmont pays taxes that go toward athletics and stated to him that is just a part of the athletic budget and part of the safety and rules of the game.

Mayor Slaby stated he does not believe the borough of Kulpmont is saddled with that. Mr. Chesney clarified stating the athletic budget of the school district pertaining to all areas of sports. Mr. Chesney stated the cutting of the grass, lining of the field, taking care of the mound is all the responsibility of the athletic budget.

Mr. Chesney stated he does not know that the borough has the money to support it. Solicitor Greco stated on a side note, he believes there was an agreement between the borough and the school district and stated he does not recall the particulars of all that. Mr. Fanella stated the borough replaces benches, concession stand upkeep, receptacles

were installed we have collected donations which Rhonda has accounted for that was and is used for improvements and maintenance.

Mr. Motyka stated the volunteers are the glue that keeps this community together and said we will have a dozen of volunteers at the dog park on Saturday for some concrete work and stated he would like to make a motion to purchase 2B stone to have on hand for the dog park and all the projects we do. Mr. Novakoski stated there is stone sitting there. Mr. Motyka stated his motion is to purchase a truck load at the cost of \$725.00.

Mr. Novakoski questioned if that has been surveyed and where the water runs off. Mr. Motyka stated when surveyed all corners were shot, the water will run off and down over the bank. Mr. Novakoski asked why we will put a retention pond at the end of the block. Mr. Motyka replied we will as part of the storm water.

Mr. Novakoski asked where the water is going to be running; it will go right into the creek asking where there is room for a retention pond on the side of the bank asking why we can't design that it goes down the alley. A brief discussion continued. Mr. Motyka explained when they surveyed, they shot the grades from the corner of the corner of the fence bridge.

MOTION- Mr. Motyka made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Fanella to purchase 2B, approximately 22-ton stone at a cost of \$725.00 delivered.

Mr. Chesney stated he wants to comment on the dog park and said the project was to be that all expenses would be taken care of by the 100. He stated he just wanted to make that comment and said the council could now do what they need to do.

Mr. Novakoski stated he does not consider that to be funding the dog park, we got the shed as a bonus and are trying to make it nice for everybody, and we have volunteers, concrete and asked what seven hundred bucks is. Mr. Motyka stated we said what won't be used at the dog park will be used for our junior baseball and football.

ROLL CALL VOTE- NOVAKOSKI (yes), BIELSKIE (yes), FANELLA, (yes), CHESNEY (no), STASKIEL (yes), MOTYKA (yes), HODGE
6 YEAS – 1 NAY

PERSONNEL- (Bernard P. Novakoski)

Request an executive session.

FIRE/EMA/POLICE COMMITTEE – (Bernard P. Novakoski)

Mr. Novakoski stated he has a question on the letter from the Kulpmont Fire Department Station 200. He said the letter has Matt Siko, health and safety officer for the Kulpmont Borough and asked when we appointed him. Mr. Novakoski stated apparently, he appointed himself and stated he thought health and safety officers are appointed by the

Borough. Mr. Bielskie stated they are. Mr. Novakoski stated well, apparently, he went to the county and said he is our safety and health officer and said we never had a safety officer, we had a health officer.

Mr. Novakoksi stated he does not understand that how someone could go down and say I am the safety officer or health officer without even coming to council. Mr. Novakoski stated that does not make sense to him, we didn't approve of him, we did not even know about it. He said the last health officer he thinks we had was Dr. Kraynak, he was on the health board and a town physician for little league, and he was on the health board and stated he does not remember anybody being re-appointed after that.

Mr. Novakoski stated he thinks that is the council's decision and we should send a letter down to the county. Mr. Chesney stated it is just the appointment of officers. Mr. Novakoski that is the letter he has been appointed and questioned how did he get appointed? Mr. Fanella stated he thinks a letter needs to be sent to the 911 center stating that the council does not recognize that position in this town as of this moment and the

The Ordinance committee is going to sit down and try to update the Ordinance. Mayor Slaby stated the letter states the mayor got a copy of this letter and he stated he begs to differ. Mr. Fanella addressed the mayor and stated that was old, given to us awhile back. Rhonda Stated the letter he is referring is from back in January when they reorganized. It was decided to look at it and discuss it in the personnel executive session.

OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

Mr. Gorden Urbanavage of 1066 Spruce Street spoke about the recent vandalism and thefts by juveniles in the borough and stated he had something stolen off his vehicle's antenna. He asked when something was going to be done about these juveniles, destroying property, banging on doors and windows, and creating havoc. He asked when something was going to be done about this.

Chief Mazzeo responded and said it has already been done stating they have a list of about 15 kids, he stated they talked to the parents and talked to the school district. He stated some of the people involved declined to charge them, or they would have already been arrested. He stated a copy went to the code lady because she deals with Facebook issues.

The resident said nothing against Chief Mazzeo he is only one man, he heard about a police contract, but we need officers to apply and stated these kids know if you call the state police it takes them a half hour to hour for them to get here. Chief Mazzeo stated we do have a part time officer working all nightshifts and stated if you call the county, non-emergency center and if we have a part time officer working, he will respond.

OLD BUSINESS-

Mr. Motyka stated he talked with the Representative concerning federal direct allocation money for the solar and asked anyone with questions to get with him.

Mr. Fanella stated on Fir Street when the pipe was bad, and the pipe was replaced he thinks that would as good idea to take that down now that is a concrete pipe there and when the big fuel trucks come off the state road and go straight up Fir Street.

Mr. Hodge questioned Mr. Fanella about Mr. Greco's property, the driveway. Mr. Fanella stated he met with him, and his recommendation is to just cut it off and put a black top up to that because to try and just put a small piece of concrete it will never stay. Mr. Fanella stated he was going to have someone look at it and make a repair recommendation.

NEW BUSINESS-

None

President, Stephen Bielskie announced council will now meet in executive session to discuss personnel matters.

Solicitor Greco stated the council met in executive session to discuss personnel matters for approximately one hour.

Mr. Bielskie stated Rhonda Wilk withdrew her resignation letter.

MOTION- A motion by Mr. Novakoski and seconded by Mr. Fanella to advertise for a part-time secretary for 20-28 hours per week.

ROLL CALL VOTE- NOVAKOSKI (yes), BIELSKIE (yes), FANELLA, (yes), CHESNEY (yes), STASKIEL (yes), MOTYKA (yes), HODGE
7 YEAS – 0 NAYS

MOTION- A motion was made by Mr. Fanella and seconded by Mr. Novakoski to send a letter to the County stating the Borough does not recognize the position of Safety Officer being non-existent within our Borough Ordinance.

ROLL CALL VOTE- NOVAKOSKI (yes), BIELSKIE (yes), FANELLA, (yes), CHESNEY (yes), STASKIEL (yes), MOTYKA (yes), HODGE
7 YEAS – 0 NAYS

MOTION- Mr. Novakoski made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Fanella for part-time police wages to be raised from \$25.00 to \$27.00 per hour.

ROLL CALL VOTE- NOVAKOSKI (yes), BIELSKIE (yes), FANELLA, (yes), CHESNEY (yes), STASKIEL (yes), MOTYKA (yes), HODGE
7 YEAS – 0 NAYS

MOTION – Mr. Motyka made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Novakoksi for the police contract to be changed from 3 year to 4 year , starting rate \$30.00 with a \$1.00 raise the first and second year and \$.50 the third year renegotiating the contract in the 4th year with a \$5000.00 hiring bonus for new hires in 2024 and 2025, if hiring bonus is accepted officer must stay 1 year or pay the bonus back.

ROLL CALL VOTE- NOVAKOSKI (yes), BIELSKIE (yes), FANELLA, (yes), CHESNEY (yes), STASKIEL (yes), MOTYKA (yes), HODGE
7 YEAS – 0 NAYS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

ADJOURNMENT of the March 13, 2024, monthly meeting

**Rhonda Wilk
Borough Secretary**

Approval date April 10, 2024