

**KULPMONT BOROUGH
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
March 12, 2025
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, February 12, 2025

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

APPOINTED OFFICIALS PRESENT: Chief Stephen Mazzeo, Administrative Secretary Jewel Newbern, Assistant Fire Chief Kevin O’Hearn, Fire Chief Ray Siko, EMA Devin O’Hearn, and Borough Supervisor Edwin Begis.

OTHERS PRESENT: Edwin Howerter, Andrea Martz, Charles Martz, Myron Turlis, John Grinaway, Jennifer Strauss, Tina Treese and Rich Hallick.

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

No one spoke

PRESIDENTS REPORT – (Stephen Bielskie)

No Report

MAYORS REPORT- (Robert M. Slaby)

No Report

SECRETARY'S REPORT- (Rhonda Wilk)

Approval needed for February 12, 2025, meeting.

MOTION- Mr. Novakoski made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Fanella to approve meeting minutes for February 12, 2025, meeting.

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

Rhonda Wilk stated that we received a letter from the Sons of the American Legion for the Vietnam traveling wall memorial and Kulpmont’s Veteran’s memorial park. A discussion of if council should be involved occurred. Copy Mayor/ Council.

Rhonda Wilk stated that we received a letter from the Kulpmont Car Cruise Association. The date of the cruise is June 15th, and the rain date is June 22nd, the time is 2-4 PM. The letter that is provided states that they apply for their own permits but the office assists with the process and it has not been an issue in the past. Copy Mayor/ Council.

Rhonda Wilk states that we received correspondence from the Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance. She explains that the letter is asking to create an advisory council comprising individuals from local and regional government, education, etc. If anyone is interested to email the Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance. Stephen Motyka speaks about this and says they are asking for a member of council or the mayor to attend the advisory board meeting. They have \$300,000 of program money to organize clean up events and other ways to invest into the community. He says they specifically want someone from the Kulpmont borough since we are involved in the projects. Copy Mayor/Council.

Rhonda Wilk stated that we received correspondence from the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. It is a notification that our liquid fuels allocation is \$86,491.12. Copy Mayor/Council.

Mr. Novakoski asks if the council needs to make a motion to approve the car cruise dates. Solicitor Greco replies yes because the streets will need to be blocked off/closed. Rhonda lists the dates once again.

MOTION- Mr. Novakoski made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Staskiel to approve the car cruise dates.

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

TREASURERS REPORT (Paul Niglio)

Mr. Niglio stated financial information and a list of bills to be paid was provided and stated a motion needed to be approved.

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

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

SOLICITORS REPORT (Edward Greco)

Solicitor Greco states that he has not received the survey back from Brinkash.

Mr. Greco states that he is trying to get a conference call together with PPL with Mr. Motyka, but schedules are not aligning. It is the last-ditch effort on the settlement case before further actions need to be taken.

Mr. Greco states that he has had miscellaneous emails on solar, recycling and other projects.

Mr. Motyka asks Mr. Greco if, with a request from the council, he would approach Susquehanna about land transfers for the Veteran field.

MOTION- Mr. Motyka made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Fanella to allow Mr. Greco permission to approach Susquehanna on the land transfers he brought up.

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

Mr. Greco states he would like to have another meeting to address the status on BLIGHT properties with Mr. Chesney. Mr. Chesney agrees and says that he will schedule a meeting. Mr. Greco and Mr. Motyka have a discussion regarding blight and the burnt down property.

POLICE CHIEFS REPORT – (Stephen Mazzeo)

Report Attached.

Chief Mazzeo briefly went over the report statistics. He stated that the arrests and investigations are up, and they are following up on the child abuse cases. He also states, “the part timers are giving us pretty good service”.

Mr. Motyka asks if he is in contact with anyone that is looking for officers still and Mr. Mazzeo says he has been in contact with academies and that there is no one. Mr. Motyka uses this time to let the community know that the borough is looking to hire two full time police officers at \$30 an hour and a \$5,000 sign on bonus.

FIRE CHIEF REPORT – (Raymond Siko)

Report Attached.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT – (Devin O’Hearn)

No report.

BUILDING INSPECTOR’S REPORT– (Tri County COG)

Report Attached

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

No Report

SERVICE AND FACILITIES – (Robert Fanella)

Mr. Fanella states the food distribution will be held March 20th from 8-11 AM at the borough garage.

Mr. Fanella stated that the turf pro contract for the weed control for the park fence, stone wall area and walking track for the 2025 season is \$1850.00.

MOTION- Mr. Fanella made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Novakoski to accept the Turf Pro 2025 season contract at \$1,850.00.

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

Mr. Fanella states that the borough received the quote from Bernie's Lock Service to install the buzzer and lock system at the front door. He says that people believe it is okay for the public to come straight into the building, but times are changing, and we need to make the building safer. He then says he would like there to be a divider between the police station and the rest of the building so anyone looking for an officer could go straight to the door for the police.

Mr. Bielskie says the door would have to be free to open. Mr. Motyka says it would have to be free to exit. A discussion on the interior of the building safety goes on for approximately three minutes. Mr. Fanella says it will be best to table this idea for now. Mr. Greco asks if there would be a microphone to speak to the people at the door outside and Mr. Fanella replies yes. Mr. Niglio asks if there would be a notification in all three offices in the case that someone would not be in the front office. He says there should be some type of notification in each office and that people come in for the police at the front door. Mr. Fanella says that is what we are trying to avoid. A discussion goes on for about 2 minutes.

Mr. Fanella stated that the street sweeper needs a curtain box set at \$440.00 and speed nut screw set at \$115.00 for the total estimate being \$555 in golden equipment. He says if anyone has any questions to ask Ed.

MOTION- Mr. Fanella made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Staskiel to make the purchase for the street sweeper parts.

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

FINANCE AND PURCHASING – (Stephen Motyka)

Mr. Motyka stated for our recycling center we will be in a 3 PHASE service cost. The project cost \$77,000, the borough will only have to cover \$30,000 spread over five years. PPL covers the rest of the cost. Mr. Chesney asks what the thing was before he spoke about the \$30,000. Mr. Motyka says the cost to PPL is \$77,000 but they are ‘eating’ the \$47,000 because some of the poles are bad and they are replacing them on their own. Mr. Staskiel says that it is being spread over a five-year period.

MOTION- Mr. Motyka made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Staskiel to go through with the 3 PHASE service cost.

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

Mr. Chesney stated he needs to do more research.

Mr. Motyka stated that the next item is a reimbursement for his out-of-pocket expenses for the restroom project.

MOTION- Mr. Fanella made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Hodge to reimburse Mr. Motyka for his out-of-pocket expenses for \$683.62.

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

Mr. Motyka asks for volunteers on Saturday for the restroom project. They are starting to get the roof together and say everyone is welcome to volunteer and that there are no skills needed.

CODE HEALTH AND SAFETY- (Stephen Bielskie)

No Report

ORDINANCE COMMITTEE - (Robert Fanella)

No Report

RECREATION/GRANTS COMMITTEE – (Robert Chesney)

Mr. Chesney stated that he has nothing unless Mr. Motyka needs to speak on things.

Mr. Motyka stated that the borough is receiving \$3,000 that he has been working on by next Friday.

Mr. Motyka stated that the state has given us \$10,000 to complete a full analyzation on all the boroughs' sidewalks and that there will be a sidewalk inventory completed. This will help us understand where the bad sidewalks are and where to address.

Mr. Motyka stated that our engineer just submitted a \$30,000 grant draft for an Active Transportation Plan to hopefully help with the Main Street beautification project. He states that the \$13,000 is guaranteed and that there is a high possibility that the borough will receive the other grant money that was just applied to.

He states that we have a brick FEMA stormwater grant for \$203,000 pending and Lycoming County low volume grant that we have not heard back on.

PERSONNEL- (Bernard P. Novakoski)

Mr. Novakoski asks to meet in the executive session and says that he needs the mayor to be present. Mr. Greco asks if he would like to do that now or wait until the end of the meeting. Mr. Novakoski says it can wait until the end. Mr. Greco asks if there is a possible motion that will be made at the end of the executive session and Mr. Novakoski replies "I don't really know for sure".

Mr. Motyka goes back to personnel and says that Rhonda Wilk's resignation letter is listed, and that the council needs to make a motion to accept the letter. A quick discussion is had. Mr. Novakoski states that the executive session is not regarding the letter, it is a separate issue.

MOTION- Mr. Motyka made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Fanella to accept Rhonda Wilk's resignation letter.

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

Mr. Motyka says "we know we can't operate without Rhonda, so I would like to make a motion that we advertise right away and that personnel starts interviewing. How else would we do that?" The council discusses and says that they will speak on it during the executive session. Mr. Greco says that if a decision is made, they can make a motion after.

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

No Report

OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

Tina Treese asks if there is a cap or limit on the number of fines a blighted building/property can receive before it becomes criminal? Mr. Bielskie responds that they are fined until they go to the district magistrate. Mr. Greco says each day can be a separate day and that there is a range for

the citation. Tina replies “so a person that owns a building for 20 years and does nothing to the building and allows it to deteriorate and pays minimal fines, that can happen? I mean it is happening. Can we do something?” Mr. Bielskie asks her for the address and sees if he can do something about it as the building inspector. A discussion is had between her and Mr. Greco about criminal citation for a couple of minutes.

Mr. Motyka brings up an article regarding a situation in Coal Township like this. He says that we need to start criminally charging these property owners or nothing will change. Mr. Greco says that there needs to be lower-level citations before you can get to that level.

Mr. Motyka says that there are probably dozens of properties in Kulpmont that should be at the criminal level at this point. Rich Hallick says that in Shamokin there are strict blight regulations, and it is seeming to help. He states that the blight committee should form a plan and really crack down on this issue. Mr. Bielskie says that Heather has a large stack of citations in her office. Rich says that there could be a lot more done.

Andrea Martz and her husband Charles/ Chuck Martz, 947 Pine St, came to address an issue regarding her son and Mr. Chesney. She says the actions against her autistic son, Hunter, that Mr. Chesney made could be seen as harassment and disorderly conduct. She says that her son was compliant with all police requests and moved his vehicles off the street and other changes in a timely manner. She says our limited police force should be used on higher priority issues in town and that going against an ‘autistic kid’ for his vehicles that are ‘not abandoned’ was over the top and not necessary.

Mr. Chesney says that he went to explain the situation and felt that as council man he felt that he could help to alleviate the situation. A discussion between Andrea and Mr. Chesney goes on for several minutes. Mr. Bielskie eventually bangs his gavel to stop the situation from escalating.

John Grinaway asks the council if there is an ordinance in place to stop the use of utilizing a propane grill on a wooden porch. Mr. Slaby states that Ray Siko, fire chief, may be able to answer his question but does not believe that the borough has one. Mr. Grinaway says that he has researched, and it says you can’t have one on a porch, deck or balcony. Mr. Slaby says that he feels that we do not, but people do not understand the risk of having their grill on them. A discussion between Mr. Grinaway and Mr. Slaby goes on for a couple of minutes. Mr. Fanella asks what the address of the property is. He responded saying 1239 Scott, and he lives at 1237 Scott.

Andrea comes back up to address a separate issue. She says the alley of Walnut between Pine Street has huge potholes. Mr. Bielskie states that the street department is working on fixing them now. She replied saying “great, we just wanted to know when that would occur.

Myron Turlis, 613 Pine Street, addresses the potholes on the 600 block of Walnut Street (disastrous street) and wants to know when they are going to be fixing them. He says he was here back in August or September of last year and spoke to Mr. Bielskie and Mr. Fanella about the issue and nothing was resolved. He says with Mr. Fanella’s approval he took his own skid steer and got a cold patch to fill the holes in himself. He says if you drive through the street going over

5 mph you will either blow a tire or bend a wheel and that there are probably 20 potholes in that one block. He took measurements of the potholes and says the smallest one is 29 inches wide, 36 inches long and 2 inches deep. He says the largest one is 57 inches wide, 48 inches long and over 3 inches deep. He suggests that the council drives through the alley but do not go over 5 mph. He said the borough will need TONS of materials to fix them.

Ray Siko answers John Grinaway's question and says that the code would have to be adopted into the borough for the council to be able to enforce it. He says the fire code recommends that there should be no grills on any porches. He suggests that he find if the borough has an ordinance has something to help. A discussion emerges.

OLD BUSINESS-

Mr. Motyka reminds the public and council members that the Local Climate Action Plan meetings will be starting next Thursday from 5:30- 6:30 PM at the Kulpmont Winery. He welcomes people to come and be apart from the changes happening in Kulpmont.

NEW BUSINESS-

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Bielskie stated the council will now meet in an executive session to discuss personnel matters and possible litigation.

Solicitor Greco stated the council met in an executive session for approximately 35 minutes to discuss personnel matters.

ADJOURNMENT THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

Rhonda Wilk
Borough Secretary

Approval date April 9, 2025