

**KULPMONT BOROUGH
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
May 14, 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, May 14, 2025

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

ABSENT: Stephen Motyka

APPOINTED OFFICIALS PRESENT: Solicitor Greco, Treasurer Paul Niglio, Chief Stephen Mazzeo, Borough Secretary Jewel Newbern, Fire Chief Ray Siko and Borough Supervisor Edwin Begis.

OTHERS PRESENT: Edwin Howerter, Myron Turlis, Ann Martino, Tina Treese, Rich Hallick, Al Rosetta, Doug Katalinas, Vinny Clausi, Steven Wagner, Bob Garrett, Greg Sacavage, Joey Sylvester.

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

No one spoke

PRESIDENTS REPORT – (Stephen Bielskie)

Mr. Bielskie states that there is a resolution that needs to be passed. He read the resolution out loud to council and the public. The resolution number is 780 and provides the Lower Anthracite Transportation System funds amounting in \$721 to match state funds provided.

MOTION- Mr. Chesney made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Novakoski to pass resolution number 780 and pay Local Match \$721 fee.

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

Mr. Bielskie opened the bids for the street paving. Mr. Bielskie opened Meckley's bid. Solicitor Greco read the bid amount for Meckley's bid: \$108,122. Mr. Bielskie opened HRI's bid. Solicitor Greco read the bid amount for HRI's bid: \$133,649.30. Mr. Bielskie opened H&P Construction's bid. Solicitor Greco read the bid amount for H&P's bid: \$137,530. Mr. Bielskie opened Glenn O. Hawbaker's bid. Solicitor Greco read the bid amount for Glenn O. Hawbaker's bid: \$140,161. Mr. Bielskie opened New Enterprise Stone & Lime Co., Inc's bid. Solicitor Greco read the bid amount for New Enterprise's bid: \$104,796.

MOTION- Mr. Fanella made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Novakoski to accept New Enterprise's Paving bid, contingent on the solicitor's review and legal specifications.

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

MAYORS REPORT- (Robert M. Slaby)

No Report

SECRETARY'S REPORT- (Jewel Newbern)

Jewel stated that approval is needed for the April 9 and 23, 2025 meeting minutes.

MOTION- Mr. Novakoski made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Fanella to approve meeting minutes for April 9 and 23, 2025, meeting minutes.

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

Jewel reads out correspondence numbers 1-4,7 and 10-12. The correspondences are for street closure request for Kulpmont Winery, street closure requests/ firework display for Kulpmont 100, street closure request for Mother Pauline, Veteran Memorial Field usage request for St. Pauline, car cruise permit approval, street closure/firework display request for Holy Angels. Copied Mayor/Council.

MOTION- Mr. Fanella made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Novakoski to permit correspondence numbers 1-4,7,10-12, as written on the agenda, pertaining various street closures, usage of veteran memorial field and firework displays in the borough of Kulpmont.

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

Jewel stated that our Main Street Matters grant was denied. Copied Mayor/Council.

Jewel stated that the Shamokin Creek Restoration Alliance funds are frozen. Copied Mayor/ Council.

Jewel stated that there was an audit done for the Kulpmont Police Recruitment grant and that it was suggested we ask for a one year extension for the grant. Jewel said that the request is in the system, and we are waiting approval. Copied Mayor/Council.

Jewel stated that the borough received a letter from the Kulpmont Sportsmen Association asking for a donation for their upcoming fishing derby. She added that last year council made a motion to donate \$100. Copied Mayor/Council.

MOTION- Mr. Chesney made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Novakoski to donate \$100 to Kulpmont Sportsmen Association for upcoming fishing derby.

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

Jewel stated that we received to letters form the Department of Economic Development & Planning pertaining completed reviews of the Kulpmont Winery property and 823 Scott St. Copied Mayor/ Council.

Jewel stated that the borough received a letter from the Kulpmont 100 requesting a donation. She added that last year council made a motion to donate \$100. Copied Mayor/ Council.

MOTION- Mr. Chesney made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Novakoski to donate \$100 to Kulpmont 100.

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

Jewel stated that Department of Economic & Planning sent the borough letters that they elected to amend SWMO and SALDO and that there are copies of the amended sections available in the office. Copied Mayor/Council.

TREASURERS REPORT (Paul Niglio)

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

Mr. Chesney added that the list of bills are higher this month compared to what they normally are and asks Paul if he thinks we are financially stable to pay them all. Paul replied yes it is in the budget.

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

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

SOLICITORS REPORT (Edward Greco)

Solicitor Greco says that council needs to approve Mt. Carmel/ Borough Veteran Field Usage for 50 years' agreement . He says that there has been a few adjustments and reads over some key points from the agreement. Mr. Novakoski questioned the 50 years and Solicitor Greco replied that it what the last one was but when it is amended it has to be approved again. Mr. Chesney added that the biggest part is that the cleaning supply costs will be shared and that it is great. Mr. Fanella questioned that there is a part that says our Kulpmont police will patrol and does there

not need to be an agreement with the Mount Carmel Township since that is where the field is. Solicitor Greco replied yes, the borough will need to try to enter into a cooperation agreement with the township. Chief Mazzeo added that Kulpmont patrols it but calls the Mount Carmel Township when needed. Mr. Novakoski asked if the borough needs to ask Mount Carmel School District for permission to use the field. Solicitor Greco replied no. Mr. Chesney added that Mount Carmel does not have any events planned around when the borough has events planned currently.

MOTION- Mr. Novakoski made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Chesney to approve the Mount Carmel Area School District and Kulpmont Borough Veteran Field usage agreement for 50 years.

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

Solicitor Greco said that last month in a last ditch effort to try to resolve a PUC matter with PPL and those negotiations have not turned into any realistic settlement and we are going to proceed with a hearing before the PUC. Mr. Novakoski asked if we could sue them and Solicitor Greco replied that we have already sued them we are just continuing it. Solicitor Greco added that there are many other communities that are also dealing with this issue. Mr. Staskiel asked if there any limitations on what the borough can do. Solicitor Greco replied yes but we are already in the case and proceeding and that he needs a motion to authorize him to be able to go forward.

MOTION- Mr. Staskiel made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Novakoski to authorize Solicitor Greco to proceed with a hearing before the PUC on PPL matter.

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

Solicitor Greco said that the last survey done for Kulp Lane with Brinkash is completed and he will go over the survey results with him and then he will bring it to council.

Solicitor Greco said that there is no additional report regarding the negotiation with Susquehanna Coal regarding the property next to the field where the water ways are.

Mr. Chesney asked, for a citizen on Kulp Lane, what the orange stakes were for in front of his property. Solicitor Greco replied that he is not sure exactly, but the surveying was just recently done so it could have been with that.

POLICE CHIEFS REPORT – (Stephen Mazzeo)

Report Attached. Chief Mazzeo said that the calls for service and investigations were up. The arrests were around the same as last month. The part time officers have done a few traffic controls. He said that there is a correction at the bottom of the report and goes over the updated. He added a new addition for public nuisances.

Mr. Chesney asked Chief Mazzeo if there is an update on the trespassing at the mill on Chestnut. Mazzeo replied that the entire property is not posted, and the owner has to go through with reporting it. He added that there is someone else also patrolling the mill and that the property needs to be better posted and secured by state law. Mr. Chesney said that this is something that we should be strongly looking at because there are many people going in and out taking a lot of stuff.

FIRE CHIEF REPORT – (Raymond Siko)

Report Attached.

Mr. Chesney thanked the fire department for continuously working, even in harsh conditions.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT – (Devin O’Hearn)

No report.

Mr. Fanella asked Ray if Devin was here and Ray replied no he is at an honor society with his brother. Mr. Fanella asked if Devin could stop in and we can give him a copy of our outdated emergency operation plan and see if he can upgrade it.

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

Mr. Fanella stated that Jewel is willing to take the task on to order new hometown hero banners for the next year and that this year some of the banners won’t be put up because they are faded.

Mr. Fanella stated that the police Tahoe needs tires for \$701.92.

MOTION- Mr. Fanella made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Novakoski to purchase new tires for the police Tahoe for \$701.92.

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

Mr. Fanella stated that there will be no parking on Chestnut Street May 15th from 7:30 AM to 4 PM for the street department to hang flags along Chestnut.

Mr. Chesney added that he would like to ask Solicitor Greco a question. He asked if Kulpmont Code Office could post in the paper their violations like Mount Carmel does. Solicitor Greco replied yes because it is public knowledge once the violation is written but unless it is a big problem property he would not suggest posting it in the paper.

FINANCE AND PURCHASING – (Stephen Motyka)

No Report

CODE HEALTH AND SAFETY- (Stephen Bielskie)

No Report

ORDINANCE COMMITTEE - (Robert Fanella)

Solicitor Greco asked Mr. Fanella would like to meet and discuss the reserved parking ordinance since there was no new information provided today. Mr. Fanella replied yes.

RECREATION/GRANTS COMMITTEE – (Robert Chesney)

Mr. Chesney stated that the Main Street Matters grant is a no go. The Shamokin Creek Restoration is also a no go because of their bureaucratic problem that they are going through.

Mr. Chesney stated that the Growing Greener reimbursement funds will be paying for Flyway invoices.

Mr. Chesney stated the B E Equipment for the recycling will be paid by the recycling grant and that is something being figured out currently.

PERSONNEL- (Bernard P. Novakoski)

Mr. Novakoski stated that he would like to hire a third full time street department employee because the crew now cannot get everything done. He added that they are in three places at once and nothing is getting completed. He said if people in Kulpmont want the potholes fixed than we need more people. He added that if the borough needs to raise taxes than so be it and if we can advertise for hiring police officers than there is enough money in the budget for street department employees. He said that he would like to make a motion to advertise for a third full time street department employee and that Ed can list qualifications for what he would need and that they can determine an amount later. Mr. Chesney said that it would need to be researched more before you could hire and Mr. Novakoski said the motion would be just to advertise. Mr. Chesney said that the street department is currently doing more work than expected of them right now and they are being stretched thin. Solicitor Greco asked if there are sufficient funds to hire another full time employee and Paul replied no and that the finance committee should meet and

make the recommendation. He said that we would have to hire a police officer if they came in looking for a job, which Mr. Novakoski replied the first priority is to fix the streets, Paul then said the first priority is actually hiring a police officer based on what council approved for. Mr. Bielskie said that the motion would just to be advertised.

MOTION- Mr. Novakoski made the motion and was seconded by Mr. Hodge to advertise for hire for a 3rd full time street department employee.

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

Mr. Novakoski also asked for an executive session at the end of the meeting to discuss with the attorney.

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

No Report

OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

Greg Sacavage, 359 Chestnut St/ Bob Garrett, Chairman of Greater Susquehanna of Chamber of Congress: Greg asked if the council or mayor received the letter or not in the mail pertaining Wolf Stock event at the dog park on April 25. Greg said the event would be in interest for culture in the community by hosting an event at the dog park in Kulpmont. Bob added that the event is on August 23rd focused around the dog park. He said the event would be focused around music and celebration of dogs by using the veteran memorial field. He said that since the K100 and Chamber of Congress is involved they have liability insurance that they can provide. They came seeking permission to hold the event, since council did not receive the letter they did not make a motion. Bob said that he will resend the letter.

Vinny Clausi and Steven Wagner: Vinny said that he and Steven should both get three minutes each for the topic and Mr. Bielskie replied no and that Vinny does not speak for Steven. Vinny said that he represents Steven and that he is the power of attorney. Mr. Bielskie said that he gets three minutes just like anyone else. Vinny presents and hands out lawsuit against the borough of Kulpmont from the PA Human Relation office to Mr. Bielskie, Mr. Slaby and Mr. Greco. He asked Steven to explain the situation. Steven said that he provided payment to the Chief in 2023 and in 2024 he put it in the box himself. He said that he did not pay for this year because he did not realize he got the letter. Vinny said that council accused him in the newspaper of not paying his fee, which Mr. Bielskie said according to the records, but got cut off by Mr. Greco. Vinny explained that the complaint is because Steven was discriminated against and was left without a sign. He said that it was filed with Human Relations and will be moved up to the federal court.

Tina Treese: brought a page from the 70 page PA law addressing Blight and printed out a page for each councilman. She stated that she has been coming to the meetings for the last two months regarding blight issues in town and everyone has been telling her that nothing can be done but in

Chapter 3 Section G is what she was asking for. The law provides a certain amount of time a new property owner has to bring the property up to code. She said that this law should be pertaining to the mill, especially. Mr. Bielskie said that over fifty percent of the properties need work, and we can fine the owners \$1000 but nothing will get done because they don't have money to even pay their fine, Tina asked, so there's nothing you can do about it. Mr. Novakoski said the county sells the houses and dumps bad property owners on us for us to try to fix the issue. He said that the county does not care since they got their money. Tina said well maybe if the code laws were enforced we would be getting more money and Mr. Novakoski replied that the code office has a huge stack of citations and Tina said that the borough should hire another code officer than. Mr. Bielskie said that it is easier said than done. Jewel provided Tina the brough email for her to send the full 70-page Night to Blight law.

Ann Martino, 23 South 7th Street, wants an update on the street and said last month council said they would have an engineer come look at it, but the problem is only getting worse. Mr. Fanella said the engineer has not come out yet. Ann said that the sidewalk is now getting destroyed and she refuses to pay for it. She finishes with saying that she will be back next month.

Myron Turlis, Pine Street, came for another update on his alley. He said that it is sad that he has to keep coming to the meetings for the same issue. He said that he knows council opened bids tonight and wants to know if the borough has the means to go through with the lowest bid and was going to ask Mr. Niglio but he left. Mr. Fanella replied yes. He wants to know when the bid will be awarded, Mr. Bielskie said after review. He then asked when will the project begin, Mr. Fanella replied it is up to the contractor, and that it is up to them. He wants to know if the borough has any plans on filling the potholes on Walnut Street and said that council said on April 16th, there would be hot mix and said the holes were filled in with dirt. Mr. Fanella told him there is no sense in spending money filling in potholes on a road that the borough is going to get paved right because there are numerous other streets that need to be fixed as well. Myron replied that as a taxpayer we will just have to snake up the alley and Mr. Fanella listed other bad alleys. Myron asked why isn't the street department hot patching then if the borough has the means to do it and Mr. Fanella said that the street department is working on a handful of other things. A short discussion amongst participants and council occurred for a few minutes. Myron asked if he could fill the holes in himself with his own equipment, free of charge and not working for the borough. Mr. Chesney said that is a question for the solicitor in case an accident would occur. Solicitor Greco said well he would not be working for the borough. Mr. Staskiel said he would not get a citation for it, would not get in trouble for it and no one would stop him for doing it. He said there would be zero repercussions for anything that he does. Mr. Slaby and Ann have a discussion about her street and how everything in the borough costs a lot of money, especially when we have not raised taxes in a long time. Ann said that her street is more than just a fix it is going to cave in and someone's car is going to ruin it even more.

OLD BUSINESS-

None

NEW BUSINESS-

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jewel reminds the public and council members that the last Town Hall meeting is tomorrow night at 5:30 at the Kulpmont Winery.

Mr. Chesney wishes the public a happy Memorial Day.

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 15 minutes to discuss personnel matters.

ADJOURNMENT THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

Jewel Newbern
Borough Secretary

Approval date June 11, 2025