

City of Towanda
Council Meeting

April 13, 2022

Mayor Jennifer Shaults opened the council meeting at 7:03pm.

In attendance were Mayor Jennifer Shaults; Council President Mike Hayes; Council Members Kendall Pierce, Nicole Vargo, Darrell White, and Holly McAdoo. Also in attendance were Interim City Administrator Paul Erickson, City Administrator Chris Stanyer, City Attorney Rob Lane, City Superintendent Rick Kearney, and Acting City Clerk Rachel Cain.

Motion made by Holly McAdoo to approve the minutes from the March 9, 2022 council meeting. Second by Kendall Pierce (5-0).

Motion made by Nicole Vargo to approve Appropriations Ordinance 3A-2022 for the period covering March 1, 2022 through March 31, 2022 in the amount of \$134,686.06. Second by Holly McAdoo (5-0).

Motion made by Mike Hayes to rescind Rachel Cain as Acting City Clerk effective immediately. Second by Kendall Pierce (5-0).

Motion made by Mike Hayes to rescind Paul Erickson as Interim City Administrator effective immediately. Second by Darrell White (5-0).

Motion made by Nicole Vargo to approve the 2022 mayoral appointments as presented. Second by Mike Hayes (5-0).

A short cake break commenced to formally welcome the new City Administrator.

Treasurer Andy Newbrey presented the current Treasurer's Report as well as the final Treasurer's Reports for October 2021 through February 2022. Mr. Newbrey presented the Budget Execution Report End of Year 2021 showing that the city did not exceed the annual budget as well as the Budget Execution for 1st Quarter 2022. Mr. Newbrey detailed his current work items, including minor corrections on payroll items, the recent sales tax audit and correction of 23 submissions, and continued progress with internal controls and plans for an internal audit.

Mr. Newbrey detailed the discovery of Benton's outstanding debt due for the recreation department, most of which was paid today. Mr. Newbrey presented a recommendation for a recreation oversight board for items such as recreation finances and safety certifications for coaches and other recreation staff. Mike Hayes inquired about current insurance coverage for the recreation department. Mr. Newbrey replied that from discussions with ICI, he was informed they have a policy covering the Towanda Recreation Commission but additionally noted that none of the active recreation groups use this name. Mike Hayes inquired as to how overspending of certain sports was happening since budgets were not being exceeded. Kendall Pierce questioned how the need to volunteers was being made public. Mike Hayes inquired as to if background checks were being done for coaches. Mr. Newbrey replied that they

were not being run by the city itself but they might be run by the board or recreation leaders. Mr. Newbrey noted that he would like to start a second city bank account specifically for the recreation department. Mike Hayes noted and questioned the line item in the budget for recreation and questioned if it affected the mil levy. Mr. Newbrey noted that a previous process of paying referees out of the concessions funds would be changing. City Administrator Chris Stanyer suggested creating an MOU to list out responsibilities between the parties concerning cash process, background checks, etc. Darrell White presented the possible hindrance issue if the recreation department changes to only online registrations and payments. Mike Hayes questioned whether the city in general had line items for late fees to separate them from general payments. Mr. Newbrey responded that it did now.

Mr. Newbrey presented an update on the Towanda Area Historical Museum. Mr. Newbrey noted the museum's High Tea program happening this month and the others upcoming. Mr. Newbrey and Tricia Lee informed the council that the museum was installing a new HVAC system, and after the revenue the museum had raised from events, they were shy about \$4,200 and requested funds to cover the difference. Mike Hayes thought council had included funds in the 2022 budget for this expected repair. Upon request of council, Paul Erickson and Chris Stanyer recused themselves to the city office to research that answer. When they returned, Mr. Erickson informed council that the museum's fund is within the general fund budget, and though \$5,000 was allotted to the museum for general use, anything additional could be granted and would merely draw from the general budget. Motion made by Darrell White to approve \$4,300 be granted to the museum for the HVAC upgrade. Second by Mike Hayes (5-0).

Mike Hayes noted the seemingly low pay Mr. Newbrey had received by salaried pay in correlation to the extensive work he has done and time he has spent in the last few months. Paul Erickson noted that that item was planned for an executive session later in the meeting.

With no representative from the Sheriff's Department present, Paul Erickson noted that he and Chris Stanyer had met with the Sheriff and Undersheriff and were told they would be in attendance at the meeting but were not. No discussion of the monthly report of Sheriff's activities.

Court clerk Rachel Cain presented the monthly municipal court report. No questions from council.

Lisa Hamilton presented the monthly activity report for the Planning and Zoning Department, including an update on the primary school addition and the one active code enforcement court case that had been referred to the Planning and Zoning Board before for returning to court. Mike Hayes inquired about the museum consult/inspection. Ms. Hamilton replied that whenever the museum pursued an update or renovation, they consulted the city on any need for permits, inspections, etc. Ms. Hamilton presented the cleanup flyer that will be mailed to city residents soon, noting the additional information on the flyer about the community storm shelter and the citywide garage sale date, as city staff has had many inquiries into them. Ms. Hamilton noted that she had addressed a couple of the worst code enforcement violations already but will otherwise be starting the enforcement by district shortly. No further questions from council.

Fire Chief TC Pyle presented the monthly activity report for the Fire Department, noting the busyness of the month. Mr. Pyle noted that he thought he had included a bid for a thermal imaging device with his report, but since not, that he would present that to council soon. Discussion pursued about the continued

need for a new fire station as well as an upcoming need for a new engine. Mike Hayes questioned if the fire department carried NARCAN and EpiPen on the first response unit. Mr. Pyle responded no to NARCAN and yes to EpiPen, though it may be expired. No further questions from council.

City Superintendent Rick Kearney presented the monthly activity report for the Maintenance Department. Discussion pursued regarding the city brush site. Mr. Kearney noted that the previous camera bids from Mr. Pastore were no longer on the table. Kendall Pierce asked Mr. Kearney for his opinion on Darrell White's proposal of moving the site north to the city's property adjacent to the ball fields. Mr. Kearney replied that his main concerns would be safety with an adjacent field of tall grass and the proximity to the sewer building. Mr. Kearney noted that with electricity and a quality camera system, the city could prosecute violators adequately and cover the costs for that equipment. Jennifer Shaults directed Mr. Kearney to get a bid from Everyg to run electricity where it would be needed.

Mr. Kearney updated the council on the vandalism of the bathrooms at the city park. Mr. Kearney presented two bids for repair and noted that a third company had inspected the property but had not submitted a bid yet. Holly McAdoo suggested a company that informed her it would be interested in bidding for repairs. Mr. Kearney would get the company information from her and reach out to them. Motion by Mike Hayes to approve an expenditure of up to \$2,500 for the repair of the bathrooms, providing the City Administrator authority to make the final decision once the third bid is received. Second by Kendall Pierce (5-0).

Mr. Kearney presented bids for street repairs. Darrell White questioned Pearson Construction's previous work in town, primarily subsequent cracks maintenance has had to seal. Mike Hayes questioned an area on Highland St. that has no ditch and concern of the ditches that carry water to the area. Mr. Kearney responded with the status of culvert replacement and ditch work he will have complete before street work commences. Motion by Darrell White for Pearson Construction to tear out three blocks of Highland St. and overlay 4" for \$52,660 and to remove and replace 3rd St. at the stop light for both incoming and outgoing lanes for \$44,340. Second by Nicole Vargo (5-0).

Mr. Kearney updated council on his pursuit of chip sealing and fogging Main St. Mr. Kearney will present the bids once he receives them, including a bid for center painting.

Mr. Kearney presented information on the city gas tanks used by the city maintenance department, fire department, and a township employee and security system for use of tanks. Mr. Kearney presented an option for card reading access control. Council discussed that and other security options. No action taken at this time.

Interim City Administrator Paul Erickson noted that budget preparations for 2023 would be starting shortly and requested council send suggestions or recommendations to him before the next meeting.

Paul Erickson presented Resolutions 2022-1 and 2022-2 for approval. Motion made by Holly McAdoo to approve Resolution 2022-1. Second by Darrell White (5-0). Motion made by Mike Hayes to approve Resolution 2022-2 as presented. Second by Nicole Vargo (5-0).

Mr. Erickson presented the need for Chris Stanyer to be added as an authorized signer for checks and required documents. Motion made by Nicole Vargo for Chris Stanyer to be authorized to sign checks and required documents. Second by Mike Hayes (5-0).

Mr. Erickson presented Jack Perry's request for the city to write off part of the large water bill for his mobile home park, as he has discovered that a tenant previously without water tied into his main park line and stole water. Council discussed options. City Attorney Rob Lane recommended that council wait to take any action until Mr. Perry is willing to speak directly to council with further details and the specific amount he is requesting be written off. Council agreed.

Mr. Erickson updated the council on the ARPA funds, including the ability to use the funds on water and sewer infrastructure, which could include electric water meters. Mike Hayes noted that the Kansas Department of Commerce is rewriting their grant program to help serve underserved communities and may assist along with the ARPA funds. Chris Stanyer noted that the city must come in alignment with certain requirements to qualify for such grants, including a comprehensive plan. Mr. Stanyer noted that he and Lisa Hamilton will be working on a patch to hopefully get the city eligible for grants until a comprehensive plan is in effect.

Mr. Erickson briefed council about delinquent water bills that have been submitted to the Kansas Setoff program and city staff's research for an additional or alternative collection agency. Darrell White questioned what deters a debt from being collected through Setoff. Kendall Pierce questioned whether the collection agencies report to the credit bureaus. Holly McAdoo questioned what the total delinquent balance is. Kendall Pierce asked what the requirements are for submitting a debt to collections. Rob Lane informed council that the court began an agreement with a collection agency recently and could provide city staff with that information for use for utility debts as well. Council directed city staff to do such.

Motion made by Mike Hayes to enter into executive session for fifteen minutes to discuss non-elected personnel and to include council, mayor, city administrators, and city attorney.

Mayor Jennifer Shaults called the meeting into executive session at 9:52m.

Mayor Jennifer Shaults called the meeting back into regular session at 10:00pm.

Motion made by Mike Hayes to extend a \$3,000 one-time bonus to Andy Newbrey for financial work completed beyond his regular duties. Second by Darrell White (5-0).

Motion made by Nicole Vargo to adjourn at 10:05p.m. Second by Holly McAdoo (5-0).

Chris Stanyer
City Clerk