

**The City of Towanda, Kansas
City Council Minutes**

**Towanda City Hall
110 S 3rd St.
June 8, 2022 at 7:00 PM**

Governing Body

Present

Mayor – Jennifer Shaults
Council President – Mike Hayes
Council Member – Nicole Vargo
Council Member – Darrell White
Council Member – Holly McAdoo

Staff

City Administrator – Chris Stanyer
City Attorney – Rob Lane
City Superintendent – Rick Kearney
Planning/Zoning Administrator – Lisa Long
Fire Chief – T.C. Pyle
Court Administrator – Rachel Cain

1. Call To Order

- Mayor Jennifer Shaults, 7:03pm

2. Roll Call

3. Approval of Minutes & Claims

- *Motion by Darrell White to approve the minutes from the May 11, 2022 regular council meeting as presented. Second by Mike Hayes. Motion carried (4-0).*
- *Motion by Nicole Vargo to approve Appropriations Ordinance 05-2022 for May 1, 2022 through May 31, 2022 in the total amount of \$122,368.49. Second by Holly McAdoo. Motion carried (4-0).*

4. Police & Court Reports

- Butler County Sheriff Montey Hughey, Captain Walker Andrews, and the four contracted deputies for Towanda were present.
- Captain Andrews presented the monthly report of Sheriff's activities and reviewed certain Towanda statistics and comparisons between current and previous years as well as other contracted cities, also noting the average response time in Towanda year to date.
- Darrell White inquired about receiving the monthly deputy schedule again. Sheriff Hughey requested that any schedule supplied to council members or city staff not be released to the public.
- Mike Hayes inquired as to if the warnings listed in the Sheriff's report are written and if the city could be furnished a listing of those for possible duplicate concerns. Deputy Tom Moore noted that most warnings given are verbal. Captain Walker replied that he would work on a warnings report and speak with Mike Hayes about it.
- Mayor Shaults conveyed the city's gratitude to the Sheriff's Department.

- Court Administrator Rachel Cain presented the monthly activity report for the Municipal Court. No questions from council.

5. Speakers

- Towanda resident Bill Wolf supplied council with a proposal for improvement in the city easement south of 102 Sunset Ln., the costs of which would be paid for privately.
- *Motion by Mike Hayes for the approval of the improvement of the proposed area. Second by Nicole Vargo. Motion carried (4-0).*

6. Public Comment

- Towanda resident John Bardin requested the city address a dam in the drainage ditch south of Mechanic St. and S 5th St. Darrell White questioned the estimated length of the issue area. Darrell White proposed a cement ditch channel. Mr. Bardin also requested the city address another drainage issue at 108 S 5th St. Mayor Shaults replied that the city will investigate and address the issues.
- Towanda resident Patsy Bardin addressed the council in regards to aggressive, speeding drivers around S 5th St. and Mechanic St.
- Towanda residents John and Patsy Bardin addressed the council about blight concerns within the city. Mayor Shaults noted that the city addresses blight properties per its code and policies.
- Towanda resident Grant Smith addressed the council about a drainage concern with the concrete drainage pan at 1106 Rainbow Dr. Mayor Shaults replied that the city will investigate and address the issue.
- Towanda resident Grant Smith addressed the council about a discrepancy between the recent water rate increase, the city code, and recent ordinances and resolutions. Mr. Grant also inquired if the city had conducted a rate analysis of surrounding cities and other water source options. The city had researched other source options but will keep an analysis in mind as negotiations with Rural Water District #5 continue in regards to a new contract. The city will also provide Mr. Grant transparency on the proposed discrepancies and other information requested.

7. Treasurer's Report

- City Treasurer Andy Newbry presented the monthly treasurer's report, noting a recent adjustment made to the Sewer Debt Service Fund. Mr. Newbry and City Administrator Chris Stanyer noted that the General Fund balance had been lower than expected and subsequently lessened the cushion of the fund. With a correction in one payroll break-out and the recent tax revenue received from Butler County, that fund is more cushioned. They recommend that in the future, a minimum be set to be kept in the General Fund.
- Mike Hayes inquired about the \$60,423.30 of the Water Surcharge Reserve Fund. No decisions have been made for those monies yet, but staff still plans them to be considered with the ARPA funds project(s).
- Mr. Stanyer requested council set a date for the next budget workshop. Date tentatively set for June 23, 2022 at 8:00pm.

8. Planning/Zoning

- Planning and Zoning Administrator Lisa Long presented the monthly activity report for the Planning and Zoning Department.

- City Attorney Rob Lane inquired into the specific blight property John Bardin had brought up during public comment. Ms. Long responded that it was a property she had researched and had not been able to see the reported blight from public access around the property.
- Ms. Long and Chris Stanyer updated the council on research they had conducted concerning ATVs, per the council's request last month. Mr. Stanyer provided council with a draft ordinance. Discussions pursued. Mike Hayes recommended requiring road-worthy criteria and requested the League's position on the subject. Nicole Vargo recommended speaking with the deputies about strongly enforcing the current ordinance and giving warnings or citations for violations. Mr. Lane interjected that the upcoming STO has updates to all of the sections in question and recommended council await those updates before moving forward with any changes.
- Ms. Long updated the council on the status of the comprehensive plan update, starting with the economic housing and population portions with Foster & Associates, which she should receive back soon. She will continue to update council as the plan or portions thereof are received.

9. Fire Department

- Fire Chief T.C. Pyle presented the monthly activity report for the Fire Department. Mr. Pyle is strongly focusing on recruitment and retention of volunteers. Mayor Shaults inquired if the Butler Community College Fire Science program has or could send students to TFD to volunteer and receive college credit. Mr. Pyle replied that the fire station's lack of sleeping quarters hinders that. Darrell White recommended supplying gas gift cards for the volunteers. Nicole Vargo recommended an incentive program for the training and work days. Mr. Pyle noted that he plans to speak with the director of the Fire Science program at Butler about obtaining certifications and college credits for current and new volunteers.
- Mr. Pyle inquired into what salary he can advertise for the empty assistant position. Council referred him to review the Fire Fund within the budget.
- Rob Lane requested he be invited to a meeting of the next fire board meeting in regards to plans for a new fire station.

10. Maintenance

- City Superintendent Rick Kearney presented the monthly activity report for the Maintenance Department. Mr. Kearney updated council on the status of the library playground, which he expected would be complete within two to three weeks.
- Mr. Kearney noted that construction should begin on Main St. in about two weeks, with construction on Highland St. following. Mr. Kearney also noted that the pool was running well and that the baseball fields were in good shape.
- Mr. Kearney presented information in regards to Pine Ridge Estates Mobile Home Park from bits and pieces of documents found from around 1998. The documents state that the city is responsible for the water mains, sewer mains, and water meters within the park. Mike Hayes inquired into how much cost the city has spent annually on maintenance work that is not being reimbursed. Mike Hayes asked Chris Stanyer what the revenue loss is in unpaid utility bills for accounts within the park. Mr. Kearney estimated a new 10" main park meter with two valves and parts at \$15,000 - \$16,000.
- Mr. Kearney presented one bid for a tornado siren to be added to the north side of town. Mike Hayes recommended considering the bid in the 2023 budget workshops.

11. Administration

- City Administrator Chris Stanyer noted that the water contract update had been discussed previously in public comment.
- Mr. Stanyer noted that there had previously been no off-site or cloud back-up for the city's electronic files and that the city is now using Dropbox as a back-up for those files.
- Mr. Stanyer asked council if they wished to have city-specific email addresses that constituents could contact them through. All of council declined.
- Mr. Stanyer presented council with information on an offer the city had received for a buy-out of the cell tower contract. Council agreed that they are not interested in the buy-out at this time.
- Mr. Stanyer removed the economic development discussion item from the agenda.
- Mr. Stanyer presented information about a peddler's license application the city had received for an individual who had several questionable items arise in a background check. As the city code currently refers investigations of applicants to the chief of police and a subsequent disapproval of an application for unsatisfactory character or business practices to come from the chief of police, Mr. Stanyer requested direction from council regarding this specific application.
- *Motion by Mike Hayes to give power to the city administrator to deny the application in question upon information discovered in the background check. Second by Holly McAdoo. Motion carried (4-0).*

12. Executive Session

- *Motion by Mike Hayes, to recess into executive session for a non-elected personnel matter for a length of fifteen minutes. The session is to include the Governing Body, City Attorney, City Administrator, and City Superintendent. Second by Holly McAdoo. Motion carried (4-0).*
- Entered into Executive Session at 10:20pm.
- Resumed open meeting at 10:57pm.
- No action was taken as a result of the session.

13. Adjourn

- *Motion by Mike Hayes to adjourn at 10:58pm. Second by Holly McAdoo. Motion carried (4-0).*

Approved by Council at 7/13/2022 Regular Council Meeting

Chris Stanyer

City Clerk