

**Borough of Somerset Council Meeting
February 24, 2014 – 7:00 p.m.**

Meeting was called to order by Ruby Miller, Council President, opening with recitation of the Pledge to the Flag.

Present:

Council Members: Ruby Miller, Fred Rosemeyer, Judy Pyle, Pam Ream, Sue Opp, Steve Shaulis and Gary Thomas and Scott Walker, Mayor. Also present: Benedict G. Vinzani, Jr., Borough Manager; Brett Peters, Director of Finance; George Svirsko, Director of Public Works; Tom Reilly, Consulting Engineer; John D. Dirienzo, Jr., Borough Solicitor, and George Svirsko, Public Works Director.

Sign-in sheet is available on file.

Announcement

President Miller announced that an Executive Session was held this date, at 5:30 p.m. for the purpose of collective bargaining negotiations.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Thomas moved to approve the Council Meeting Minutes held January 20, 2014 – motion seconded by Mr. Rosemeyer.

Unanimously Carried.

Payment of Bills

Mrs. Opp moved to pay the following bills – motion seconded by Mr. Shaulis:

Check Numbers: 23298 to 23525

Total Amount: \$729,153.37

Unanimously Carried.

New Business

Parking Fine Structures

Chief Cox stated that the Police Department is ready to re-order parking tickets. The fine structure for the following violations tickets was reviewed: overtime parking, distances from a fire plug, cross-walks, and stop signs.

Also discussed were: head-in parking, parking for handicapped individuals; seasonal parking restrictions, and parking against traffic.

Motion

Mr. Rosemeyer moved for the following changes:

Parking within 15 feet from a fire plug (a vehicle code violation); 20 feet from the crosswalk; and 30 feet from a stop sign, (presently \$15.00 dollars) - they are asking that these amounts be raised to \$25.00.

Request that the “seasonal parking restriction” (a \$50.00 fine) be removed.

The “handicap parking zone” (a minimum of \$50.00) be raised to \$100.00.

Motion seconded by Mrs. Opp.

Unanimously Carried.

Mr. Cox asked the Solicitor about the “head-in parking” Ordinance – whether it includes a penalty section. He said it would be fine if it matched the penalty section of the 2:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m. prohibition, at \$15.00. Mr. Dirienzo said they will be doing an amending ordinance on these items.

PSAB Annual Conference Voting Delegates

Mr. Vinzani said we are requested by PSAB to choose a Voting and Alternate Voting Delegate to represent us at the upcoming PSAB Conference.

Mr. Thomas moved to elect Fred Rosemeyer as the Voting Delegate for the PSAB Annual Conference – motion seconded by Mrs. Opp.

Unanimously Carried.

Mrs. Opp moved to elect Judy Pyle as the Alternate Voting Delegate – motion seconded by Mr. Shaulis.

Unanimously Carried.

Collective Bargaining Agreement

Mr. Rosemeyer moved to ratify the Collective Bargaining Agreement, provided that the Mayor and Chief are in agreement. All terms remain the same as approved by Council and ratified by the Teamsters. Motion seconded by Mrs. Ream.

Unanimously Carried.

Committee, Administration, Special Reports

Manager's Report

Mr. Vinzani reported the following:

Our Drought Task Force met. All water supplies are adequate, no problems reported.

Webinars attended during the past month: Municipal Records Management, Employee Data Security Risks, and Past Practices.

He asked for those interested in attending any webinars to contact him.

Our Finance Committee met February 14th and their report will be available.

Our Ethics Statements must be filed by May 1, 2014.

Our Christmas decorations were removed January 26th.

President's Report

Mrs. Miller reported the following:

The Somerset County Boroughs Association meeting will be held on March 20th at the Berlin Fire Hall.

Stephanie Williams said the Public Works Department did an outstanding job with the Fire & Ice Festival, and thanked them for allowing free parking in the uptown parking lots.

Keith Rothfus sent a letter concerning the Social Security Office closing. His office will be available at 110 Franklin Street, Suite 150 in Johnstown.

Engineer's Report

Mr. Reilly reported that the old water tank is now completely demolished at the State Hospital water tank site. The contractor will continue work after the weather breaks.

The Lagoon Liner Project Construction Permit Package, (part II) is ready for submittal by end of the week.

Public Works

Mr. Thomas submitted the following:

On behalf of the Public Works Department, they assisted the Fire Department in clearing snow from fire hydrants. They used 2,700 gallons of salt brine, 1,366 tons of salt, and 573 tons of anti-skid. Crews removed snow from the Central Business District and parking lots.

They had three water line breaks – one on High street, one at Industrial Park, and one on Route 281 near Maple Ridge School.

They helped shovel and salt Borough sidewalks.

They plowed and salted Borough streets/parking lots, removed trash, performed weekly meter pit readings, monthly grease trap inspections at restaurants, weekly water testing and monthly unloading of chemicals at the Water Treatment Plant.

He emphasized the excellent jobs they performed during the last storms, with reports of appreciation received from the public.

Public Safety Committee

Mr. Rosemeyer presented the following:

The Public Safety Committee will be meeting on the third Monday of each month.

The Chief, Mayor, Mrs. Pyle and Mr. Thomas were present at last meeting, addressing parking ticket issues to re-adjust fines.

They discussed an issue of concern regarding an arrest made at the hospital parking lot. They confirmed that the Greensburg State Police made the arrest in Somerset Borough, not the Westmoreland County Police.

They spoke about possible ways to obtain funding for cameras in police cars, (which can cost up to \$5,000).

They reviewed an earlier agenda item regarding Workmen's Compensation.

Comments were received from the community concerning the medication box in the lobby of the Department, to be used for excess or outdated medication, a courtesy extended to the community.

Finance Committee

Mr. Rosemeyer stated that he attended the Finance Committee meeting, along with the Manager, Director of Finance and Council President. The following report was submitted:

General Fund

Revenues: 3.71% - Expenses: 9.53%

Water Revenue Fund

Revenues: 15.65% (includes Penn Vest proceeds) – Revenues without Penn Vest: 9.21%

Expenses: 13.52% (with the Water Loop Project) – without the Loop Project: 9.31%

Sewer System Operating Fund

Revenues: 7.09% - Expenses: 8.32%

Mr. Rosemeyer asked if a copy of the bill list / checks written should be presented to Council in their packets, or, if it would be sufficient to have the Finance Committee review them. Mr. Vinzani said Council approves each bill at its meetings. President Miller stated that she also checks each bill.

Mr. Rosemeyer said Mr. Vinzani did an excellent job at the Rotary meeting. Mr. Vinzani said he presented a program concerning old Borough Ordinances.

Mrs. Miller confirmed that when calls are received pertaining to a street light out, the police check the pole number and present it to the Manager, who then calls Penelec to have it repaired.

Somerset Inc. Representative

Mrs. Pyle reviewed their meeting:

The total amounts for the Fire & Ice Festival are not in yet, and will be made available.

They discussed future fund raisers at the meeting. Other fund raiser is the “dinner the park”. Alice’s Restaurant donates everything, a great event.

They discussed parking issue options, specifically for the “Flight 93” gathering.

The DCNR grant matching funds was applied for by the Redevelopment Authority, and is moving to Somerset Inc.

They are discussing whether Council would consider amending the “Open Container Law”.

A \$7,500 Marketing Tourism Grant was received from Laurel Highlands.

A meeting was held at Angelitto’s. He offers a set-up area for approximately 50 people, for family reunions, etc.

The Army/Navy Building is moving along; they are considering setting it up for a restaurant.

The FNB Building is empty – the owner is looking for renters.

A massage therapist is going in to the Vieregge Building on East Main Street.

Doctor Cube’s office is combining with another medical professional.

They are considering set-ups in the basement of the Newberry Building. Angelitto offered the hall of his business, at a low price.

Ms. Carberry’s project in the Somerset Office Supply building is moving along.

Discussion ensued concerning a Community Kitchen. It would be licensed, for rent.

An Entrepreneurial Program has been started at the Allegany Community College. Information is available.

Trinity Park – the amount of \$24,600 has been received. We need to have the survey in the park, and have several quotes. The next round of fund raising will be started. Estimated construction date is for early August, so that we can use the park during the summer. Construction will consist of electrical and underground work, with electrical work coming from the Newberry Building.

Concerning storage, Council will be asked about a wooden, free-standing building being placed in the parking lot below the park, for lawn mowers, chairs, etc. Original bricks from the Trinity Church have been stored, until they can be used.

They decided to seek an attorney with expert experience in right-of-way issues, to determine what belongs to “Dave’s Carpet” so that we can move ahead. Mrs. Miller asked if there is a deed showing his boundaries. Mr. Reilly said a survey will establish the surveyors’ professional opinions, although Mr. Ankeny can dispute this with a professional surveyor.

They would like to see the Countryman Building across from Cascio’s come down. The restaurant at the old Sheetz Building will require working through the entire estate, since the license was obtained but the owner is now deceased. Mrs. Pyle said there appears to be no change in the plans.

Fire Department Representative

Mr. Thomas presented the following:

Fire calls have slowed; they are at 183 as of yesterday.

The new utility vehicle has not arrived, but should be delivered soon.

He thanked the Borough for locating the fire hydrants during heavy snows.

A “cash bash” is coming up in May and will help with our expenses. They are selling 500 tickets at 30 dollars each. Last year’s bash was very successful.

Roy Fritz is installing an internet service to enable us to talk on cell phones within the Fire Station. The equipment is ordered and will be installed within the next two weeks, so we can use them when the communication radio is out or overcrowded. We receive our texting on fire calls with our cell phones, instead of buying a pager, at cost of \$450 dollars each.

Mayor’s Report

He attended his first Tableland Board Meeting.

He expressed his appreciation with Tableland’s valuable service to the community.

They discussed their area location and extended an invitation to take a tour of their facility, to board members, etc.

They provide Outreach Programs, to offer help during any major layoff in the community.

Mr. Rosemeyer and the Chief attended the Criminal Justice Advisory Committee meeting, where they were informed of a dangerous new drug coming into the country. Newspapers are referring to it.

Adjournment

Mrs. Opp moved to adjourn, motion seconded by Mr. Thomas.

Unanimously Carried.

7:55 p.m.

Benedict G. Vinzani, Jr., Ph.D.
Borough Manager/Secretary