

Council Meeting May 19, 2014

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

Present:

Members of Council present: Judy Pyle, Pam Ream, Sue Opp, Steve Shaulis, Gary Thomas, and Ruby Miller. Scott Walker, Mayor was present. Also present were: Benedict G. Vinzani, Jr., Borough Manager; Michele Enos, Assistant to the Manager; George Svirsko, Director of Public Works; John J. Dirienzo, Jr., Borough Solicitor; Brett Peters, Director of Finance; Tom Reilly, Consulting Engineer; . (Sign-in sheet is on file)

Presentation

Members of Girl Scout Troop Number 40878, fifth grade students at Eagleview Elementary School, presented an update on their recent activities. Each student introduced themselves and offered the following:

They are seeking the Bronze Girl Scout Award; asking permission to touch up the Union Street Playground; paint railings, floor and tables in their building; restore the signs; plant flowers at the Lions Club Building. They will be searching for donations from local businesses to accomplish these tasks.

They discussed length of time to complete the projects, and Manager Vinzani offered assistance.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Mrs. Ream moved to approve minutes of the April 28, 2014 Council Meeting minutes – motion seconded by Mrs. Opp.

Unanimously Carried.

Bid Opening

PennDOT Transportation Enhancement Grant

Mr. Vinzani presented the following information: We have accepted bids for banners, trash receptacles and planters for our Uptown Area. We received a \$15,000 PennDOT Transportation Enhancement grant. He said we will be awarding the bid based on unit prices for each item, (not total cost).

Mrs. Enos said we are looking to extend the “Welcome to Somerset” banners, trash receptacles, and planters to the 200 blocks and our Uptown Area. We received one bid for the project from “Display Sales”, Minnesota. Unit price for the banners are \$112.00; receptacles, \$811.00; planters, \$690.00.

Mrs. Opp moved to award the bids in the above-mentioned amounts to Display Sales – motion seconded by Mr. Thomas.

Unanimously Carried.

Administrative Business

Payment of Bills

Mr. Thomas moved, Mrs. Opp seconded to pay the following bills:

Checks: 23859 to 23965 Total Amount: \$222,953.72

Unanimously Carried.

Old Business

American Cancer Society

Mr. Vinzani said we tabled this Society’s request to erect a banner across Main Street between Edgewood and Park Avenues. We have been requested to provide liability insurance for this project. He said he informed the American Cancer Society that Council cannot accept the responsibility and liability associated with this project. We need to either approve or deny this request.

In discussion it was mentioned that a banner across a main highway has caused accidents in installing and removing them, high winds, etc. It was decided to suggest that they find a piece of ground large enough to place the banner on posts at ground level.

Mr. Thomas moved to refuse to permit banners across streets in the Borough. Motion was seconded by Mrs. Opp.

Unanimously Carried.

The Solicitor said we may not have a definite ordinance on this; it is a matter of becoming a Policy that Council does not want banners across Borough or State roads. Mr. Vinzani added that the only time we could consider this is if they would assume the responsibilities and hold the Borough harmless, which did not occur in this case.

New Business

The Mayor asked for Council to approve the following Proclamation:

100th Anniversary Mary S. Biesecker Public Library

WHEREAS, March 19, 2014 marks the 100th Anniversary of the Mary S. Biesecker Public Library, and;

WHEREAS, In year 1914, a group of nearly a hundred people gathered at the Somerset County Courthouse to take the initial steps to start a library, and;

WHEREAS, After the third meeting, by-laws and a charter were adopted and in June 1914 the Somerset Public Library opened a room in Miss Margaret Kimmel's home on West Union Street. In 1923, the Library moved to several rooms on the second floor of the Somerset Borough Building, then in 1929 to the second floor of the First National Bank.

WHEREAS, In May 1943 the Mary S. Biesecker Public Library opened its doors at 230 South Rosina Avenue, Somerset, Pa and remains there today representing its true grass roots efforts, and;

WHEREAS, the service of providing informational, educational and recreational materials and programs for all the people of our community, adults and children alike, and;

WHEREAS, The Council of the Borough of Somerset wishes to honor you for the one hundred years that you have remained a valuable asset to this community and also congratulate you; its Staff; Board of Directors and dedicated volunteers and donors on this occasion . . .

NOW THEREFORE, I, SCOTT A. WALKER, along with members of Somerset Borough Council, do hereby proclaim June 14, 2014 to be "Mary S. Biesecker Public Library Day" in the Borough of Somerset, in recognition of their continuing service to our community, and furthermore, extend our sincerest wishes for continued success.

Mrs. Opp moved to approve the Proclamation, seconded by Mrs. Ream.

Unanimously Carried.

Water Treatment Plant

Mr. Vinzani reported that several weeks ago we spoke about repairs at the water treatment plant. We now need to proceed with the engineering.

Mr. Reilly explained that a masonry block has failed on a 10-foot section of wall. The building is 60 years old. Other major issue is the mortar and block joints have failed, creating large gaps.

The project will consist of replacing the block, re-pointing all mortar joints over the flocculation tanks, and painting the exterior of block.

Extra complication to this project is that we may have to design a temporary support system to support the wall roof joist which can be complicated because of the building structure. These repairs need to be completed soon. Estimated price is budgeted at \$160,000

Mrs. Opp moved to enter into an Engineering Agreement with EADS to begin design of the project – motion seconded by Mrs. Ream.

Unanimously Carried.

Committee, Administration, Special Reports

Manager's Report

Mr. Vinzani presented the following:

He attended the Drought Task Force meeting of May 13th. All water companies report adequate supplies.

Our Finance Committee met on May 9th.

He attended the Open Records Act webinar. Upcoming webinars were noted - PEMA's Emergency Operations Center training; the Neighborhood Reclamation and Revitalization Act, and the postponed webinar for Electronic Communication Liabilities will be conducted.

He attended the May 12th Grant Check Presentation to Somerset Hospital. Mrs. Ream said they were pleased to receive the grant, since updates are needed based on new requirements to make the Emergency Department more functional.

Mr. Vinzani said we have a Winter Maintenance Agreement with PennDOT. Adjustments are made during severe winters, and this year we will receive an additional \$494.37.

President's Report

Mrs. Miller referred to uptown parking issues. Apartment tenants are parking all day on Main Street. Chief Cox said the problem is the 2-hour parking; in an 8-hour shift he was able to engage in only one round of enforcement.

Engineer's Report

Concerning the Industrial Park Waterline Loop, Mr. Reilly said final restorations were completed at the water tank. The contractor completed final paving and corrected several issues.

Public Works Department

Mr. Thomas reported the following:

Sanitary sewer lines were cleaned at East Race, West Main, East Sanner Streets, and Musselman Avenue.

They completed the annual Water Flushing Program and the Annual Spring Cleanup Program.

They picked up 10.46 tons of waste at 122 residences, at a total of \$2,109.73.

Potholes were patched on Colby Avenue and the 200 block of West Fairview Street. Streets were swept and uptown flagpole holes cleaned out.

They landscaped behind the curbing along Brierwood Drive and installed a "no outlet" sign along Autumn Drive.

They installed a valve on the Grandview Avenue meter pit for Edgewood Grove and replaced a fire hydrant along the 300 block of West Sanner Street.

Water leaks were repaired and landscaped along Plank Road, Highland Park Drive, High Street, North Rosina and Grandview Avenue.

He said they would like to see a 24-inch milling machine purchased for the Public Works Department for paving/patching, since the one they have will not work on the new machine; cost with a trade-in is \$6,800.00 dollars.

Mr. Thomas moved to purchase the milling machine – motion seconded by Mr. Shaulis.

Unanimously Carried.

Mr. Thomas said they will be painting curbs, crosswalks, parking spaces; then conduct fire hydrant maintenance, clean storm sewers and catch basins, water meter pit readings, restaurant grease trap inspections, weekly water testing and monthly unloading of chemicals at the water plant.

Public Safety Committee

Mrs. Pyle pointed out a situation in exiting off the Pleasant Avenue railroad crossing then turning left onto East Main Street. She said tankers with “stop at Railroad Tracks” placards are not stopping. Chief Cox said he will assess this area since it is a highly controlled crossing.

Finance Committee

Mr. Peters presented the Finance Report:

With approximately one third of the year completed, here is how we stand financially:

GENERAL FUND

Revenues: 25.14%

Expenses: 31.99%

WATER FUND

Revenues: with Penn Vest proceeds, 45.3% - without Penn Vest proceeds, 34.79%.

Expenses: with Penn Vest Waterline Project, 37.52% - without the Project, 31.35%.

SEWER FUND

Revenues: 31.13%

Expenses: 29.73%

Somerset Volunteer Fire Department

Mr. Thomas reported a successful “cash bash”, resulting in approximately ten to twelve thousand dollars. A golf tournament is planned for September 19th, with prizes. They will be looking for sponsors.

They received approximately 265 calls at this point.

Their new Dodge truck is now in service.

Mayor’s Report

Mayor Walker informed all of a DARE Graduation Program to be held at St. Peter’s School. Everyone is invited to attend.

He attended the Veteran’s Free-Golf Outing. The event was very successful, with many sponsors.

Chief Cox referred to the previous railroad crossing item; he explained that every vehicle is required to stop at the crossings, however there are exceptions. One is that any railroad grade crossing at which traffic is regulated by a functioning highway traffic control signal transmitting a green indicator for the direction of travel is accepted, because it is a controlled intersection.

Adjournment

Mrs. Opp moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Shaulis.

Unanimously Carried, 7:44 p.m.

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