

Somerset Borough Council Meeting

July 28, 2014 – 7:00 p.m.

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

Present:

Ruby Miller, Fred Rosemeyer, Judy Pyle, Pam Ream, Sue Opp, Steve Shaulis, Gary Thomas, Council Members. Also present was Scott Walker, Mayor, Benedict G. Vinzani, Jr., Borough Manager; Michele Enos, Assistant to the Manager; Brett Peters, Director of Finance; Randy Cox, Chief of Police; George Svirsko, Director of Public Works; John J. Dirienzo, Jr., Borough Solicitor and Thomas Reilly, Consulting Engineer.

Announcement

An Executive Session was held at 5:30 pm this date for the purpose of discussing Personnel Matters.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Mr. Rosemeyer moved, Mrs. Opp seconded to approve the June 23, 2014 Council Minutes.

Unanimously Carried.

Bid Opening – Surplus Equipment

1993 International Truck

Mr. Vinzani said we had one bid from Brad Weimer, in the amount of \$369.00 and we had our Public Works Director compare the bid to selling price for scrap, but believe it best to award the highest bid received.

Mrs. Opp moved, Mr. Shaulis seconded to award the bid for the 1993 International Truck to Brad Weimer in the amount of \$369.00.

Unanimously Carried.

1997 Plymouth Voyager

Mr. Vinzani said we had one bid submitted by Mike Dirienzo in the amount of \$188.00. We compared selling it to a scrap yard but believe our best interest is to award it to the bidder.

Mr. Shaulis moved, seconded by Mrs. Opp, to award the 1997 Plymouth Voyager to Mike Dirienzo in the amount of \$188.00.

Vote: Ruby Miller, yes; Gary Thomas, yes; Sue Opp, yes; Pam Ream, yes; Fred Rosemeyer, no; Judy Pyle, yes; Steve Shaulis, yes.

Motion Carried, 6-1

2001 Dodge Ram Pickup

Two bids were received; one from Mike Dirienzo at \$477.00 and one from Gaudino Brothers, LLC. in the amount of \$318.00.

Motion

Mrs. Opp moved to award the bid to Mike Dirienzo, in the amount of \$477.00 – motion seconded by Mr. Shaulis.

Vote: Steve Shaulis, yes; Judy Pyle, yes; Fred Rosemeyer, no; Ruby Miller, yes; Pam Ream, yes; Sue Opp, yes; Gary Thomas, no.

Motion Carried, 5-2

General Public Comments

Monica Morrill – “Beautifying Somerset Community Project”

Ms. Morrill referred to the North Center Avenue Bridge Replacement Project, to make the bridge more attractive. Since the development phase had already been started, we could consider other bridge designs

She said she reached out to a nonprofit group, “historicbridges.org” and has been researching what other counties have done. She pointed out that the stone bridge over the Turnpike, North Center Avenue, would be aesthetically appealing as a stone design, as opposed to the standard concrete design which eventually crumbles, and stone bridges last longer on salted roads. This would create good first impressions as a gateway to Somerset.

She will be meeting with the Somerset Lake Action Committee, and spoke about creating activities on the lake. She met with Governor Corbett in January and suggested an “Adopt a Bridge” plan. Concerning costs, the PA Turnpike Commission has a set budget for the bridge replacement, and a private donor could put up the extra cost and choose the bridge name. It could be expensive, with power line relocation, etc. They want to avoid any cost to the taxpayers but develop a plan to increase the attractiveness of the bridge.

They discussed naming the bridge; if a donation of more than 50% were offered it would be reasonable for the donor to choose the name.

Codes, regulations and utility lines were mentioned. Mr. Vinzani pointed out the bridge in question is actually in Somerset Township. Ms. Morrill said she will be corresponding with the Township Supervisors.

Somerset, Inc.

Mrs. Pyle stated that they listed 13 empty properties within two blocks of the Diamond; five have been filled with businesses.

Somerset Inc. will be having a Clay Pigeon Shoot. They received great response, and applications are available.

Trinity Park – certain issues are being addressed.

Doug Miller 800 Block West Garrett Street

A request was received from Doug Miller living along the 800 block of West Garrett Street. He said he had requested having a street light installed on the utility pole across from his property, and he understood that it was being ordered several months ago. Mr. Vinzani said it was ordered some time ago with Penelec, and Mr. Svirsko had additionally called about it. We cannot promise when Penelec will install it.

Communications

Payment of Bills

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

Check Nos.: 24148 to 24344

Total Amount: \$412,578.14

Unanimously Carried.

New Business

Proclamation Recognizing Somerset's Premier of the Movie, "Zombie Meltdown"

Mayor Walker said this movie was filmed about a month ago. He met Jake Mullikan and his casting crew. They selected Somerset to film it, with over 40 Somerset residents and various Somerset businesses involved. This included 50 nights with Quality Inn, restaurants, etc. Mr. Mullikan informed them that he is working on a week-long film festival in Somerset annually that brings in independent and international film makers - a great potential for revenue for the city.

Motion

Mr. Rosemeyer moved to accept the following Proclamation, "Zombie Meltdown Day" in the Borough of Somerset – motion seconded by Mrs. Opp.

Unanimously Carried.

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Somerset wish to mark the official Somerset Premier of the zombie/comedy movie titled “Meltdown” created and filmed by Jake Mulliken of Lucky4Productions, located in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and;

WHEREAS, his first project was the 32 minute “Meltdown” short, which allowed him to win filmmaker of the year through RAW Artists in 2013, and;

WHEREAS, the movie depicts four comrades who are celebrating a birthday, having a few drinks when the day takes a turn for the worse, while everyone they have ever known transforms and they find themselves in a post apocalyptic wasteland littered with monsters and looming threat of their fellow survivors, and;

WHEREAS, the movie includes Somerset Borough businesses and residents, who play actors and took part in your film production, and;

WHEREAS, the Somerset premier of this movie will be on August 16, 2014.

NOW THEREFORE I, Scott A. Walker, along with the Council of the Borough of Somerset, do hereby proclaim August 16, 2014 as “Zombie Meltdown Day” in the Borough of Somerset.

Subdivision Request

Mr. Vinzani stated that our Planning Commission reviewed the request of Paul Coughenour for consolidation of lots between South Center Avenue and Ankeny Avenue; making one lot out of three. They reviewed it and recommend Council approval.

Mrs. Pyle moved, Mr. Shaulis seconded to approve the lot consolidation of Paul Coughenour.

Unanimously Carried.

Resolution No. 6 – Ratification of Resolution

Motion

Mrs. Ream moved to ratify Resolution No. 6, regarding Columbia Avenue Sanitary Sewer Project, authorizing execution of Penndot’s Highway Restoration & Maintenance Bond – motion seconded by Mrs. Opp.

Unanimously Carried.

Route 31 West – Waterline Relocation Project –Engineering Design Agreement

Mr. Vinzani reviewed our proposed Engineering Agreement with EADS, which allows them to design the project and the Borough to receive 90-95% cost reimbursement. The project is to be done next year.

The Engineer explained that this is a safety improvement project on Route 31 West, beginning at Humberson Drive. They will have storm water and other work affecting the Borough’s water lines.

Motion

Mrs. Opp moved; seconded by Mr. Rosemeyer, to approve the Waterline Relocation Project Design engineering agreement with EADS.

Unanimously Carried.

Light-up Night Parade

Mr. Vinzani received a request from David Mapes for a commitment to sponsor a large balloon for the parade, from donors. He said he will need a verbal commitment by end of July.

Various concerns were expressed – need for a handler, costs, overhead wiring and trees, etc. They discussed possible dangers, route to be taken, etc. Additional information will be sought by Gary Thomas.

Committee, Administration, Special Reports

Manager's Report:

Mr. Vinzani reported that Council sponsored a webinar, attended by our staff and some members of our Volunteer Fire Department concerning the “Swift Reach Emergency Notification” program. We subscribe to this service to notify residents of water problems, quality issues and boil water notices as required by DEP. The Fire Department asked if some of their issues could be incorporated into this program. We could add those who attended the webinar to our notification system, making them aware of issues where we might need to use Swiftreach.

Our Safety Committee had its annual certification training on June 30th.

He attended the meeting of the County Drought Task Force. All water companies report adequate supplies.

He attended the CDL Training webinar for supervisors on “reasonable suspicion” of drug/alcohol use, along with Mr. Svirsko and Ms. Enos - (our required training for this year).

The Turnpike Commission will be discussing the North Center Avenue Bridge. He will provide details for those able to attend the meetings, and encouraged participation, though still in the planning stage.

President's Report

Mrs. Miller reported that the Lions Club would like to place security cameras at the playground.

She asked about parking and ticketing during the Antique Fair on August 9th. Chief Cox explained that the Police Department can cover this; we do not need a resolution, etc.

Mrs. Miller said there have been complaints received about the Somerfest signs installed too early, causing people to avoid parking on the streets because of the parade, and asked if we could have Laurel Arts place them later.

She mentioned that she received a letter from Portland, Oregon, stating: *“Two young community builders are running across America through our community to discover and share examples of successful local public problem solving. Will you please send me a note about difficult public issues so they can resolve this in our community despite difference of interest? We will follow up with research and meet with our folks and tell them how to do this, in November.”*

It was decided to cancel this request.

Engineer's Report

Mr. Reilly reported that the South Columbia Avenue relief sewer project will be starting next week.

The Borough has two projects out for bids – one, repairs at the sewage treatment plant lagoon, and the other is repairs to the Bakersville water treatment plant. They are to be opened August 14th with a recommendation for award at next council meeting.

Public Works/Equipment Committee

Mr. Thomas reported the following:

Public Works Crews installed a 10-inch water line along Parson Alley in preparation for the Columbia Avenue Sanitary Sewer Project.

They began dye testing the storm sewer inlets in the South Kimberly Avenue area to identify possible sources of infiltration/inflow. They found a storm sewer inlet tied to the sanitary sewer and removed the connection.

They repaired a water leak and replaced a service line on West Main Street.

A storm sewer ditch line was cleaned along Hickory Hill.

Downspouts were dye tested along South Kimberly Avenue.

A “Cracked Sealing Demonstration” was sponsored by the Borough and was attended by several municipalities.

They cleaned a ditch line in the Industrial Park area.

A new 10-inch waterline was connected on Parsons Avenue to the existing water main on Union and Main Streets, and a storm sewer installation was made along Cherry Lane.

Routine work: watering uptown plants; grass mowing, trash collection, meter readings, grease trap inspections at restaurants, unloading of chemicals, water testing.

He asked to arrange a meeting with our Equipment Committee, to include Messrs. Svirsko, Vinzani, Shaulis and Ms. Opp. They discussed a time period, and Mr. Vinzani said this will be confirmed.

They are looking at the purchase of a 2009 Dodge Ram 2500 Pickup Truck, with a 4 x 4 cab, to haul multiple people, with a V-8 engine, a trailer tow, bed line, keyless entry, white in color, automatic transmission, air conditioning, locks, and with four extra tires. They would like to have it purchased by the end of the month through Saylor Motors, in the amount of \$14,900.00 – a \$2,000.00 savings.

Motion

Mr. Thomas moved to purchase this truck for the Public Works Department.

Motion then seconded by Mrs. Opp.

Unanimously Carried.

Public Safety Committee

Mr. Rosemeyer said their meeting was held July 21st. Two vacancies need to be filled, (one retirement.) Officer Koslowski returned today. The Solicitor and Council are addressing the Civil Service regulation changes concerning the “physical testing”,

Regarding their vehicles, they have the 2007 Ford Explorer for the K-9 unit; the new detective’s car, with additional equipment to be installed, and Unit 85 is back in service (where the officer was struck by a person with no brakes). He recommended investigating this matter since the driver was aware that he was driving without brakes, and it is costing us \$7,000.

A question/answer session was held concerning the insurance dollar amount, depreciation, and whether the driver was aware of the brake problem. Mr. Dirienzo explained that the law allows someone with an injury to recover the full measure of this amount. Concerning auto damage, it becomes a matter of opinion on the worth of the vehicle on that day, and what salvage remains. The difference between the two is the amount you are entitled to recover. Mr. Rosemeyer said he would like to avoid losing this taxpayer money.

He said they also talked about National Night Out, co-chaired by Officers’ Appel and Evans. They discussed costs for cameras for police vehicles.

Finance Committee

Mr. Rosemeyer reported the June Financial Statement: (We are at the 50% mark of the year)

General Fund:

Revenues 65.56%

Expenses 49%

Water Revenue Fund:

Revenues including Pennvest Waterline Loop Project 65.11%

Revenues without Pennvest Waterline Loop Project 54.53%

Expenses including Pennvest Waterline Loop Project 52.27%

Expenses without Pennvest Waterline Loop Project 46.11%

Sewer System Operating Fund

Revenues 45.87%

Expenses 46.99%

He asked for any questions, and thanked Mr. Peters for a job well-done in maintaining our budget.

Somerset Volunteer Fire Department

Mr. Thomas reported the following:

Calls are slowing; they are at 345 calls so far this business year, with many nuisance calls.

Concerning automatic fire alarms, the Department is working on a proposal for updates.

We will be involved with National Night Out, with their equipment on display.

The “911 Ride” is coming in August, with many motorcycles in town. In the past there has been over a thousand, however he does not believe this ride is as large. They will be assisting with traffic control.

Solicitor’s Report

Mr. Dirienzo said they discussed results of the Trinity Park property survey and noted that a portion of the area behind the park belongs to the Borough.

He and Attorney Boose (representing Somerset Inc.) were working on an Agreement that would cover the Borough granting an easement to Somerset Inc. for the Borough’s portion of the parking lot retaining wall. The electric pole will remain, and Somerset Inc. will be signing the easement to Penelec regarding the pole. If a motion is made, the agreement can then be signed, notarized, and given to Attorney Boose for execution by Somerset Inc.

Motion

Mrs. Pyle moved to grant the Easement Agreement to Somerset Inc. – motion seconded by Mr. Rosemeyer

Unanimously Carried.

Adjournment

Mr. Shaulis moved, Mr. Thomas seconded to adjourn.

Unanimously Carried 8:20 p.m.

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