

Council Meeting – October 27, 2014

Meeting was called to order by Council President, Ruby Miller, at 7:00 p.m., opening with recitation of the Pledge to the Flag.

Present:

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

Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

Mr. Rosemeyer moved, Mrs. Opp seconded to approve minutes of the previous meeting of September 22, 2014, including a correction noting that the Public Works Report was given by Mrs. Opp.

Unanimously Carried.

General Public Comments

Ronna Yablonski, from Twin Lakes Center reviewed the Red Ribbon Week Ceremony, addressing steps being taken concerning problems that our community faces with drug use.

Gretchen Lynch, resident at 121 Marker Drive, spokesperson for this area, stated that there are concerns about the Penn Carbose manufacturing plant producing loud noise, debris, and creating huge disturbance to their community.

The DEP has become involved regarding a powder with a toxic smell forming on the roof of the building that also covers vehicles, homes, etc.

A signed petition is being circulated. She said they are hoping that the company could move to Industrial Park.

Payment of Bills

Mr. Shaulis moved, Mr. Rosemeyer seconded to pay the following bills:

<u>Check Numbers</u>	<u>Total Amount</u>
24627 to 24834	\$891,477.42

Unanimously Carried.

Policy Agenda

(a) Union Street Playground Security System

Mr. Vinzani stated that we received quotations from MEI and M&M Hi Tech. Additionally, (SSA) Security Systems of America have yet to provide us with a quotation.

President Miller said this can be tabled for further discussion.

They discussed concerns regarding costs for maintenance. Mr. Cox said this year's report shows more disorderly conduct complaints than vandalism.

(b) Hickory Hill Storage Tank Update

Mr. Reilly said they evaluated repair and replacement of this tank. The work would consist of removing the old liner, repair the concrete and add a new liner, at an estimated cost of \$418,000 lasting approximately 15 years. If the Borough would finance the \$418,000 for 10 years, at interest rate of 4%, debt service would be approximately \$50,000 a year.

Option two is to replace the existing tank at \$1.8 million dollars, same location, which would be eligible for Penn Vest financing, a 20-year loan. Annual debt service for this option is slightly over \$99,000 for the first five years, and \$105,000 for years six through twenty.

Repairing the tank is a lower cost on an annual basis today, but from an overall 50-year life, it is more expensive.

Mrs. Miller asked about the amount of time for making a decision. Mr. Reilly described the tank's condition – leaking water from surface cracks, deterioration; is it 60-70 years old.

Mr. Vinzani said we need the tank from an operation standpoint; it stores water and distributes the water to town. He reminded Council that another priority is the computer system at the water plant, and recommended that it be repaired by next year. In answer to question about grant money, he said there may not be grants available for maintenance; the Penn Vest Program is a low interest loan.

Mr. Reilly said we typically do not receive grant funding unless the project would result in rates going over what Penn Vest calculates to be an affordable rate for the community. Therefore if we can finance the project through their low interest loan

and our user rates are within the affordable rate, we would not receive grant money for the project; they would give us loan money.

Mrs. Miller suggested doing additional research and inquire if PSAB can check with our Congressmen, and call our local people see what might be available.

New Business

(a) Resolution No. 2014-08

Mr. Vinzani presented the following resolution regarding Police Pension Funds:

RESOLUTION NO. 2014-08

WHEREAS, Ordinance No. 1144, Section XI relating to the Police Pension Fund states that the monthly contributions for participants may be reduced or eliminated by an annual Resolution if an actuarial study annually indicates that such reductions or elimination for that year will not adversely affect the actuarial soundness of the fund, and;

WHEREAS, a letter dated October 2, 2014 from Mark K. Dunbar, M.A.A.A., E.A., M.S.P.A. Consulting Actuary, Dunbar, Bender & Zapf, Inc., states that “the Borough may eliminate employee contributions in the Police Plan for 2015 . . .

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the five (5) percent contributions from Police Officers for the year 2015 be eliminated.

Motion

Mrs. Ream moved, Mrs. Opp seconded to accept Resolution No. 2014-08

Unanimously Carried.

(b) Resolution No. 2014-09

Mr. Thomas moved, Mrs. Opp seconded to adopt the following Resolution:

RESOLUTION NO. 2014-09

WHEREAS, the Borough of Somerset has received a direct deposit from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania dated September 23, 2014 in the amount of One Hundred Eighty Nine Thousand, Seven Hundred Sixty One and 32/100 (\$189,761.32) Dollars, representing the Commonwealth’s allocation from the General Municipal Pension State Aid Program, and;

WHEREAS, Act 205 of 1984 provides that pension allocations must be deposited in the Municipal Pension Plan within thirty (30) days of receipt by the Municipal Treasurer, and;

WHEREAS, the governing body must determine by Resolution the amount to be distributed into its various plans;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Forty Four Thousand Three Hundred Fifty Seven and 32/100 (\$44,357.32) Dollars be allocated to the Non-Uniformed Collective Bargaining Pension Plan; and One Hundred Forty Five Thousand Four Hundred Four and 00/100 (\$145,404.00) Dollars be allocated to the Police Pension Plan.

(Mr. Vinzani explained that this is given to us by the Commonwealth)

Unanimously Carried.

(c) **Resolution No. 2014-10**

Mrs. Ream moved, Mr. Rosemeyer seconded to adopt the following Resolution:

RESOLUTION NO. 2014-10

WHEREAS, alcohol and other drug abuse in this nation has reached epidemic stages, and;

WHEREAS, it is imperative that visible, unified prevention education efforts by community members be launched to eliminate the demand for drugs, and;

WHEREAS, Twin Lakes Center for Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation in partnership with Somerset County Drug-Free Communities is sponsoring the Somerset County Red Ribbon Campaign offering citizens the opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to drug-free lifestyles (no use of illegal drugs, no illegal use of legal drugs), and;

WHEREAS, the National Red Ribbon Campaign will be celebrated in every community in American during "Red Ribbon Week", October 23-31, and;

WHEREAS, business, government, parents, law enforcement, media, medical, religious institutions, schools, senior citizens, service organizations and youth will demonstrate their commitment to healthy, drug-free lifestyles by wearing and displaying Red Ribbons during this week-long campaign;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Borough of Somerset does hereby proclaim October 23-31, 2014, as RED RIBBON WEEK and encourages its citizens to participate in drug prevention education activities, making a visible statement that we are strongly committed to a drug-free state.

Unanimously Carried.

(d) **Water Treatment Plant**

Mr. Vinzani said a recommendation was received to have our water plant's computer system replaced. He recommended that Council authorize preparation and advertisement of the bidding documents for replacement of this system, called a "SCADA" system. The system is showing wear, and it controls the water treatment

plant and communicates with the Shaffer Run wells and Coxes Creek plant for reporting purposes, to DEP.

Motion

Mrs. Opp moved, Mr. Rosemeyer seconded to authorize EADS to prepare and advertise documents to replace this computer system.

Unanimously Carried.

(e) **“Beautify the Borough Committee” Request**

A Committee from Somerset Inc. is sponsoring a Christmas decorating contest for residential homes in the Borough. They are requesting a \$50.00 donation to be used for a prize.

Motion

Mrs. Pyle moved, Mr. Thomas seconded to donate \$50.00 for the Christmas Decorating Contest, to Somerset Inc.

Motion Carried 6-1

Mr. Rosemeyer voting “no”

COMMITTEE, ADMINISTRATION, SPECIAL REPORTS

Manager’s Report

Mr. Vinzani reported on the following:

He attended the “Beautify the Borough” Committee meeting.

He and Mrs. Enos attended the Electronics Communication Webinar, sponsored by PSAB. Training consisted of being mindful of sending/receiving emails.

He will be attending a webinar on Wednesday concerning the “Open Records Act and changes made since the last training.

He met with Dave Halverson on October 7, 2014 to review our various insurance policies.

He attended the second Public Hearing on use of our Year 2014 CDBG monies, along with Mrs. Enos. Copies of minutes of this meeting were distributed.

Our Finance Committee met October 17th and reviewed the formalization and finalization of our Year 2015 Budgetary Process.

Mrs. Enos attended the Drought Task Force Committee. She pointed out that precipitation conditions being experienced throughout the County are at approximately seven inches below normal.

Next date for our Leaf Collection will be the week of November 17th through 21st.

He received a call from the WPSU-TV Public Broadcasting Station. They are planning to produce another "Somerset Our Town" video, and will be selling advertisements and approaching businesses and corporate sponsors to fund this video. It is scheduled for broadcast in October of 2015.

We will be putting up our Christmas decorations on Sunday, November 9th, with breakfast at the Public Safety Building Community Room, sponsored by our Fire Department.

"Light-up Night" is scheduled for November 22nd in town. November 6th through 8th is "Holiday Open House in Uptown Somerset. Brochures are available.

President's Report

Mrs. Miller thanked Public Works employees for replacement of faded signs and potholes, and reminded all that leaf bag labels are available at the Borough Office.

The Somerset County Banquet is being held at the Oakhurst Tea Room on November 20th.

Mr. Vinzani stated that three quotes were received from contractors to clean up the burned-out property, if needed.

She thanked the Public Works Department for repairing the water leak on East Main Street.

Engineer's Report

Mr. Reilly reported the following:

Structural repairs have started at the Water Plant.

The Lagoon Liner Project at the Sewage Treatment Plant will begin soon.

Public Works/Equipment Committee

Mr. Thomas provided the Public Works Report:

The Department repaired a water break along North Center Avenue.

They paved South Court Alley and installed a storm sewer along Smith Street.

Stop signs at Kimberly Avenue and Patriot Street were repaired.

A water leak along East Main Street was repaired.

A storm sewer inlet and line along Vannear Avenue was installed.

They repaired a leaking water valve on East Main Street.

They installed curbing along North Vincent Avenue, South Rosina Avenue and Forrest Avenue.

A stop sign was replaced at Tollgate Road.

Street signs were replaced at Church Street and Center Avenue.

They collected 3,800 pounds of leaves on October 20th; 2,980 pounds on Tuesday and Friday they collected 1,690 pounds, for a total of 8,470 pounds of leaves in three days.

Routine work performed consisted of mowing on Borough properties; trash removal; weekly meter pit readings; monthly grease trap inspections at restaurants, and unloading of chemicals at the Water Treatment Plant.

Public Safety Committee

Mr. Rosemeyer reported that the County is placing a new radio system throughout Somerset County. They intend to provide 12 hand-held radios and a base station. In order to have a radio for every police officer we are looking at an approximate price of \$25,000.

Mr. Cox recommended going with a Municipal lease. The interest rate is low and payments are flexible - annually, monthly, quarterly, etc. and at end of the lease the unit is bought for one dollar.

He said he will have the lease proposal prepared and fund the line item for what it would cost for the lease. It is a leasing program designed per PA law, for municipalities.

Motion

Mr. Rosemeyer moved, Mrs. Opp seconded to accept the resignation of Officer Jordan Shaulis from the Somerset part-time Police Roster, effective November 14, 2014.

Unanimously Carried.

Motion

Mr. Rosemeyer moved, Mr. Thomas seconded to declare a vacancy and request a current officer list from the Civil Service Commission.

Unanimously Carried.

Mr. Cox asked for authorization to fill Office Shaulis' part-time position.

Motion

Mr. Rosemeyer moved, Mrs. Ream seconded to authorize the Mayor and Chief to search for an officer to be added to the part-time police officer roster.

Unanimously Carried.

Mr. Cox stated that he is pleased with the Annual Police Department Budget.

Mr. Rosemeyer pointed out the amount of revenue that the Police Department brings to the police budget – hospital detail, school program, Laurel Arts, etc.

Finance Committee

Mr. Rosemeyer presented the Finance Report. We are at the 75% point of our budget year – through September 2014.

General Fund

Revenues: 89.06%

Expenses: 71.25%

Water Revenue Fund

Revenues: 92.19% including PennVest loan program; without PennVest: 81.60%.

Expenses: 76.78 including the Water Loop project; without the project: 68.88%

Sewer System Operating Fund

Revenues: 70.87%

Expenses: 69.98%

Somerset Inc. Representative

Mrs. Pyle reported the following:

Somerset Inc. is beginning to plan for the Fire & Ice Festival.

They have applied for grants for Trinity Park. She said some expressed concern about investments into this park, but it is felt that improvements to this park will become a huge advantage for our uptown community. It will serve many purposes. Fund raising will be broken down into four phases. Donations are coming in for our second round.

Uptown businesses have flyers available outlining plans for the Holiday Season.

She attended the Blight Summit along with Mrs. Enos. This was arranged by Somerset Trust Company and the Redevelopment Authority, focusing on Somerset and Fayette Counties. They will meet again this Spring to discuss possible ways to

identify blight, and she invited those interested to become involved. There are tools to remove blighted properties that do not involve ordinances. She said information is available to see what has worked in other communities, since they also face this problem.

Somerset Fire Department

Mr. Thomas reported on the number of calls – there were 150 vehicle accidents, 120 automatic fire alarms, plus they assisted other fire companies.

Their Golf Tournament generated over \$8,600 dollars.

The Solicitor directed us to the State Ordinance to see if we can do anything with the Fire Alarm Ordinance, as discussed at last meeting.

The Maintenance Department discussed providing a “lift gate” for one of the trucks to help alleviate some of the work problems.

Solicitor’s Report

Mr. Dirienzo stated that he has prepared and advertised the ordinance vacating and cancelling out portions of existing public streets, sections one and two. One deals with the Holiday Inn side and the other with the McDonalds side.

Section three of the Ordinance states that all ordinances inconsistent with this are deleted. Both deeds, acquired from the Holiday Inn side and the McDonald side contained “reverter” provisions, stating that if they stopped being used as public streets they go back to the original owners.

Motion

Mr. Rosemeyer moved, Mrs. Opp seconded to approve the following Ordinance as fully advertised:

ORDINANCE NO. 1364

AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF SOMERSET VACATING AND CANCELLING OUT PORTIONS OF EXISTING PUBLIC STREETS AS WELL AS FORMERLY PROPOSED STREETS ACCESSING THE PENNSYLVANIA TURNPIKE ACCESS ROAD.

Unanimously Carried.

Mayor’s Report

Mayor Walker commended the former Mayor, Chief and Finance Committee for their work with the budget, which came in under one percent.

Officer Shaulis will be joining the PA State Police – our standard letter will be sent to him.

He reported that the Police Department was involved in a hostage situation, to which Officers' Berger and Hall responded. Through their professionalism they turned what could have been a tragic situation, into a favorable outcome.

Executive Session

Motion

Mrs. Opp moved to enter into Executive Session for personnel matters – motion seconded by Mr. Shaulis. Time: 8:29 p.m.

Unanimously Carried.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Thomas; seconded by Mr. Shaulis. Time: 9:08 p.m.

Unanimously Carried.

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