

## Council Meeting December 22, 2014

The Borough Council Meeting of December 22, 2014 was called to order by President Ruby Miller, opening with recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

### Present

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

### Announcement

Mrs. Miller announced that an Executive Session was held at 5:30 p.m. on this date to discuss personnel matters.

### Approval of Previous Minutes of November 24, 2014

Mrs. Opp moved to approve minutes of the November 24<sup>th</sup> meeting, to include the amendment clarifying that references to Alexis Park should actually be Trinity Park. – Motion seconded by Mr. Rosemeyer.

Unanimously Carried.

### General Public Comments

Mrs. Ream introduced individual members of the Somerset Golden Eagles Football Team. The following Proclamation was read:

*WHEREAS, the Somerset Golden Eagles Football Team has a record breaking season in 2014 by making it further than any other team in school history, and;*

*WHEREAS, the 2014 Somerset Golden Eagles for the first time District Champions won their first State Playoff game and reached the State's final for the first time, and;*

*WHEREAS, the recognition and celebration of our 2014 Golden Eagles Football Team serves to bring our community together in honoring our students and their coaches for the phenomenal football season, resulting in an impressive 13 to 2 record, and;*

*WHEREAS, the Council of the Borough of Somerset wishes to honor the 2014 Somerset Golden Eagles Football Team, players, coaches and staff for winning the support and capturing the hearts of Somerset by displaying pride, professionalism, team spirits, sportsmanship and perseverance.*

*NOW THEREFORE, along with all of the members of the Somerset Borough Council and Mayor Walker, we do hereby proclaim December 22, 2014 to be “Somerset Golden Eagles Football Day” in the Borough of Somerset in recognition of their outstanding 2014 season; encourage our citizens to join us in congratulating them and furthermore, extend our sincerest wishes for their continued success.*

**Payment of Bills**

Mrs. Ream moved to pay the following bills – motion seconded by Mr. Rosemeyer:

Check numbers: 24976 to 25111

Total amount: \$520,574.72

Unanimously Carried.

**Adoption of Ordinances**

**Motion**

Mr. Rosemeyer moved, Mr. Thomas seconded to adopt the following Ordinance:

**ORDINANCE NO. 1365**

AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF SOMERSET ESTABLISHING PENALTIES  
FOR VARIOUS PARKING VIOLATIONS

Unanimously Carried.

**Motion**

Mrs. Opp moved, Mrs. Pyle seconded, to adopt the following Ordinance amending the Somerset Borough General Borough Employees Pension Plan, as authorized and advertised. Additionally, Mr. Vinzani will receive continuation of “employee-only” healthcare until eligible for Medicare.

**ORDINANCE NO. 1366**

AN AMENDMENT TO THE SOMERSET BOROUGH GENERAL BOROUGH  
EMPLOYEES PENSION PLAN

Unanimously Carried.

**Motion**

Mrs. Ream moved, seconded by Mr. Shaulis, to adopt the following Tax Rate ordinance for Year 2015:

**ORDINANCE NUMBER 1367**

AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF SOMERSET, COUNTY OF SOMERSET,  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, FIXING THE TAX RATE FOR YEAR 2015

Unanimously Carried.

**Act 511 Taxes**

Mr. Vinzani reviewed the current rate on the Act 511 Taxes for Year 2015:

Earned Income Tax – ½%

Real Estate Transfer Tax – ½%

Local Services Tax - \$47.00

Mercantile Business Privilege Tax – ½ of 1 mill

**Motion**

Mrs. Pyle moved, Mrs. Opp seconded to re-enact the Act 511 Taxes for year 2015 at current rates.

Unanimously Carried.

**Year 2015 Final Budgets**

Mr. Vinzani reported that there has been no change in our tentative budget since our November meeting.

## Motion

Mr. Rosemeyer recommended that the Year 2015 Budgets be passed by Council, based upon the information received at the November 24<sup>th</sup> meeting – motion seconded by Mrs. Ream.

Unanimously Carried.

## **Appointment to Boards and Commissions for Year 2015**

Mrs. Pyle moved to appoint Clyde Mostoller to a 5-year term with the Somerset Borough Municipal Authority – motion seconded by Mr. Thomas.

Unanimously Carried.

Mrs. Ream moved to appoint George Shafer to a 4-year term with the Somerset Borough Planning Commission – motion seconded by Mrs. Opp.

Unanimously Carried.

Mrs. Opp moved to appoint Attorney Steve Miller to a 3-year term with the Somerset Borough Zoning Hearing Board – motion seconded by Mr. Shaulis.

Unanimously Carried.

Mrs. Ream moved, Mrs. Opp seconded to appoint Greg Osikowicz to the UCC Code Appeals Board for a 6 year term.

Unanimously Carried.

Mr. Thomas moved, Mr. Shaulis seconded to appoint Delmas Hutzler to a one year term with the Somerset Borough Vacancy Board.

Unanimously Carried.

## **Interim Borough Manager**

Mr. Rosemeyer said interviews will continue for the position of Borough Manager. In the meantime Mr. Vinzani will be available to assist the new Manager.

## Motion

Mr. Rosemeyer moved to appoint Michele Enos as the Interim Borough Manager, beginning February 1, 2015 until a full-time manager is selected – motion seconded by Mrs. Opp.

Unanimously Carried.

## Committee, Administration, Special Reports

### (a) Manager's Report

Mr. Vinzani reported the following:

- He attended the “Beautify the Borough” Committee meeting. They discussed a Flower Display Contest to be held in the spring.
- He participated in the judging for the Christmas Decorating Contest on December 12<sup>th</sup>. Twelve homes were judged; many were decorated but did not participate.
- He met with our Insurance Broker for renewal of our Year 2015 insurance policies. It appears that we will maintain our current coverage at the same amount or less, for year 2015.

### (b) President's Report

President Miller's report:

- Mrs. Enos and staff were thanked for the arrangement of the Christmas party.
- The Eagles donated \$1,000 for the Beautification Program.
- The Lion's Club building (at the Union Street Playground), built on Borough-owned property, was researched and it was discovered that there is no written paperwork connected with it therefore we legally do not have a right to the building.
- Mr. Vinzani said he will review this with the Solicitor. We need to know about the terms, conditions, and how to accomplish a deed, etc. He discovered a reference in the 1954 Council minutes whereby this was discussed with the Lions Club but there is no further record shown.

(c) Engineer's Report

Mr. Reilly reviewed the upcoming projects.

- The Bakersville water treatment plant repairs are completed and the plant is back in service, with some interior/exterior painting to be done in the spring.
- The Lagoon Liner project is ongoing and making progress, to be completed within the next several weeks.
- Mr. Vinzani explained that if we want to finance a project through the Authority, the initiating part comes from Borough Council. They discussed cost of the project, with no rising of taxes, and possibly contacting our State Representatives and Senator. He said Pennvest is probably not a grant option and their loan is at a 4.5% interest, 40-year loan that may be difficult to obtain. He said we can arrange for meeting with financing agencies for options.
- Mr. Reilly said the Hickory Hill tank project could take two to three years because of the wait to get financing – with design, applications, decisions, etc. He said they would remove the old tank and build the new one at the same location. In case of a huge need for water, we would need to turn on the high service pumps at the Bakersville plant to have 2,000 gpm coming into the two circular existing tanks, then feed water back from the State Hospital tanks from the Quemahoning system, and have two water sources.
- He suggested a meeting to come to a decision in order to avoid a burden on the taxpayers. Mr. Vinzani said we can either absorb it, or adjust rates to make up the debt service.

(d) Public Works & Equipment Committee

Mrs. Opp provided the following work list:

- The 36-inch storm sewer line along Cherry Lane was repaired.
- Parking meters were installed along East Patriot Street.
- Harrison Avenue was repaired near the intersection of West Main Street.
- Potholes were patched throughout the Borough.
- Required testing on our Industrial Pretreatment customers was performed.
- A water leak along High Street was repaired.
- A 12-inch water break along Rebecca Street was repaired.
- They ordered 291 tons of salt, 67 tons of anti-skid material and 2,000 gallons of salt brine.

(e) Public Safety Committee Meeting

Mr. Rosemeyer's report:

- The Year 2014 budget was reviewed at their Safety Committee meeting. He thanked the Police Chief and his staff for an excellent job of staying within the budget.
- He pointed out that Officers' Koslowski and Harbart, along with the K-9 Unit, did an outstanding job responding to the recent fire, and he would like to pay tribute to them at next meeting.

(f) Finance Committee

Mr. Rosemeyer said the Year 2015 Budget has been approved. Mr. Peters and Ms. Enos stayed well within the budget and he thanked them for their excellent job.

(g) Somerset, Inc.

- Mrs. Pyle reviewed their Economic Development meeting. New businesses are coming to town, and there are 60 properties for sale in the Borough.
- A new sign on the Turnpike announcing Somerset shows 600 rooms and 40 restaurants between here and Bedford.
- They discussed combining some of the committees such as the Economic Development, and changing the Blight Committee to "Beautify Somerset".
- The Laurel Highlands Model Railroad Club display will be open for the Christmas celebration.
- Concerning the Fire & Ice festival, some e-mails stated that it appeared that we did not make any money. This was clarified; we earned approximately \$16,000 last year.
- Invitations from the Fire & Ice Committee were sent for the Fire & Ice Gala at the Country Club.
- The Trinity Park bids are going out.

(h) Somerset Volunteer Fire Department

Mr. Thomas' report:

- The injured firefighter is improving but still in the hospital intensive care unit.

- In November the Fire Department provided a presentation to the children at the kindergarten level through third grade.
- We received business money to have a company come in to provide a seminar pertaining to fire prevention, for next year.
- During the recent fire, a problem with a hydrant was discovered, but we used another one. Those on West Main Street are fine.
- We are looking at creating a committee to look at a new ladder truck, a 100 foot aerial device with a box on the end. This can be a major expense, but our current one is 22 years old and beginning to break down.

(i) Solicitor's Report

- In the absence of Solicitor Dirienzo, Mr. Vinzani said there appears to be some question on whether the Borough owns Circle Drive. We could not find an ordinance taking it over; therefore it would be appropriate to authorize the Solicitor to make a determination of the Circle Drive status, to ensure that it is a Borough-maintained roadway. We have been maintaining it since the 40's.

Motion

Mr. Thomas moved, Mrs. Opp seconded to authorize the Solicitor to look into the status of Circle Drive and to prepare any necessary ordinance to establish that the Borough in fact does own and maintain this street.

Carried - (Mr. Rosemeyer abstains).

(j) Mayor's Report

Mr. Walker mentioned a suggestion received concerning Christmas trees having been placed on all four corners of the Diamond, and that doing this again and turning it into a contest would be a nice gesture.

Secondly, regarding the drug issue in our community, Twin Lakes Drug Free Association meetings have a "reality tour" to be given at the high school, the second Tuesday of the month. The intent is to educate students. Brochures are available at the police station, a very worthwhile project.

He said he was very impressed last month to learn that one of the Borough officers and Borough employee Blake Hauger had taken the initiative to talk to the City of Pittsburgh about need parking.



Adjournment

Mr. Rosemeyer moved to adjourn – motion seconded by Mrs. Miller.

Unanimously Carried.

8:01 p.m.

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