

SOMERSET BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING
May 20, 2013 – 7:00 p.m.

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

Present:

Paul Urbain, Ruby Miller, Judy Pyle, Fred Rosemeyer, Wanda Miller, Scott Walker, Council Members.

Benedict G. Vinzani, Jr., Borough Manager; Michele Enos, Assistant to the Borough Manager; George Svirsko, Director of Public Works; Brett Peters, Director of Finance; Tom Reilly, Consulting Engineer; John Dirienzo, Borough Solicitor; Randolph Cox, Chief of Police; William Meyer, Mayor; Jerry Lyons, Somerset Fire Department.

Approval of Previous Minutes

Ms. Wanda Miller moved, Mr. Rosemeyer seconded to approve the previous Council meeting minutes of April 22, 2013.

Motion Unanimously Carried.

General Public Comments

Jerry Lyons, Somerset Fire Department, reported the following:

The new fire truck will be arriving in June. It is a combination of a rescue truck and a pumper.

Work is beginning on pre-plans for local, commercial and industrial facilities. This will help to improve our ISO insurance rating, which would be beneficial to all involved, including residents/business owners of the Borough.

Volunteers are busy with equipment maintenance, fund raising, training, etc.

Chief Cox mentioned a recent incident involving an elderly gentleman whose car caught fire. He was rescued by the Police and Fire Department, along with two pedestrians walking in the area who assisted in removing the man from the burning car.

Payment of Bills

Ms. Wanda Miller moved, Mr. Walker seconded to pay the following bills/requisitions:

Check Nos. 21770 to 21933 Total Amount: \$370,311.64

Motion Unanimously Carried.

New Business

Barron/Koontz Zoning Modification

Mr. Vinzani reported that the Barron/Koontz Zoning Modification Hearing was held this evening and comments from the public were requested and received. At this point we can consider their request. We have recommendation of the Planning Commission.

Motion

Mr. Rosemeyer moved, Mr. Walker seconded to have our Solicitor prepare and advertise the amending ordinance concerning the Barron/Koontz Zoning Modification request.

Motion Unanimously Carried.

Somerset County Flag Committee

Mr. Urbain said the Somerset Flag Committee presented a donation request of \$200.00 towards repair of flags, at a cost of \$400.00. They have collected \$280.00. He said the Finance Committee recommends that Borough Council donate the \$120.00 to complete the required amount.

Motion

Mr. Urbain moved, Mr. Rosemeyer seconded to have Council donate \$120.00 for flag repair.

Motion Carried, 5-1
(Mr. Walker voted “no”)

James Onstead Re-zoning Request

Mr. Vinzani said Mr. Onstead’s request is to rezone two properties that he owns at 219 and 241 Plank Road, from R-3 to B-1. We initiate this by sending it to our Planning Commission for recommendation as required, before proceeding. He explained that B-1 zoning consists of light businesses.

Motion

Mrs. Pyle moved, Mr. Rosemeyer seconded to refer this request to the Planning Commission for recommendation.

Motion Unanimously Carried.

PSAB Conference

Ms. Wanda Miller gave a report on the PSAB Conference she attended.

Mrs. Pyle also reported that the conference discussed using the media to gather information. They spoke about combining with other municipalities to save money on insurance costs such as Workmen's' Compensation. Another session consisted of the question of whether "to chase or not" presented by an Attorney. He spoke about there being very few situations where police would chase, because of lawsuits to the Borough.

President Ruby Miller congratulated Fred Rosemeyer on his appointment to the Executive Board of PSAB for Western PA.

Mr. Rosemeyer spoke on the sessions he attended. "Hiding from the Internet" was presented by an FBI Agent, a Computer Crime Detective. He described the state-wide Pennsylvania State Boroughs Association. They have 958 boroughs plus educational events such as the conferences that they attend. They met with Senator Kasunic, Representative Metzgar, and other Senators and Representatives, to discuss initiatives for the Association for year 2013.

Manager's Report

Mr. Vinzani reported that the Coxes Creek Stream Improvement Project is inspected yearly by DEP, and the Army Corp of Engineers inspects it every other year. No problems were observed; they did suggest that we apply for a grant to perform maintenance items, which we may apply for within the next 8 weeks.

Consumer Confidence Reports are required by DEP to be sent to all of our water customers annually. They are currently being sent out.

Spring Cleanup was held last week. Ms. Enos said this year there were less stops and more tonnage.

At last report we received slightly over one thousand dollars from FEMA for our Hurricane Sandy reimbursement. The second and final request was received last week, in the amount of \$8,858.18 which amounted to approximately \$10,000.00 of reimbursed expenses.

The Annual Flushing Program of our water system started last Friday.

The Public Works and Finance Committees met. A report is forthcoming.

He and Mr. Peters attended a seminar on Health Care Reform, to take effect in year 2014.

A meeting was held with our health care brokers concerning significant changes in healthcare reform.

He attended two PSAB Webinars on roads and streets, along with Mr. Svirsko.

The bird houses received as an Eagle Scout Project have been placed at our Union Street playground.

President's Report

Mrs. R. Miller reported the following:

She attended the County Borough Association meeting, along with Messrs. Urbain and Rosemeyer. Eight boroughs were represented.

We have changed from our checking/savings account to just an interest-bearing checking account instead of two accounts.

Next meeting will be September 17, 2013 in Meyersdale, PA.

Engineer's Report

Mr. Reilly reported that they expect to have the lagoon liner specifications finished soon.

Public Works Department

Mr. Walker said the Department examined their older equipment. Some need to be replaced, and we will be looking for funds.

They discussed painting of the uptown stalls

Water lines are being flushed.

Catch basins are being repaired.

He reported that they had to replace "speed limit" and "no parking" signs that were stolen. They also had to repaint the Union Street Playground Pavilion due to graffiti. They discussed having either more lighting or a camera system. Mr. Vinzani stated that additional lighting was installed, along with motion detectors.

Public Safety Committee

Chief Cox spoke about the Sergeants position. The testing is difficult, with a high failure rate. Four were tested for this position, and two passed. Their oral interview is scheduled for Friday and a recommendation request will be on the next Council meeting agenda.

Concerning the School Resource Officer, Council and the School Board approved the Agreement. Missing is the agreement with Somerset Township to extend the powers and immunities for the purpose of Maple Ridge, which is not

within the Borough. The program is getting started with the three Borough schools, (high school, middle school and Eagle View).

Solicitor Dirienzo said the Township is now on board and he will prepare and advertise the ordinance for next meeting. Chief Cox added that this will go into full effect by August. The school students and teachers are very appreciative to have the officers present.

Finance Committee

Mr. Urbain presented the report for April 30, 2013, first one-third of the year, and 33% of the Budget, with no red flags:

General Fund Revenues, 28.45% - Expenses, 29.82%

Water Fund Revenues, 33.05% - Expenses, 32.14

Sewer Fund Revenues, 32.29% - Expenses, 31.21%

Somerset Inc.

Mrs. Pyle reported on her attendance at the May 15, 2013 meeting. They spoke about helping to promote uptown businesses. The “Living History Tours” will be sponsored by the Somerset Trust Company. August 16th and 17th is “National Tell-a-Joke” – they are attempting to have some comedians come in. “Art in the Park”, July 25th, is primarily photography. She mentioned a brochure offering rental space options for uptown yard sales. They are looking forward to interest being shown in some of the empty uptown buildings.

Solicitor’s Report

Discussion ensued concerning parcel annexation. Regarding question of whether the Maple Ridge property could be deeded over to the Borough, Mr. Dirienzo pointed out that this requires a referendum of both parties. In this case it does not generate any tax because it is a tax exempt property.

Mayor’s Report

Mr. Meyer announced the arrival of an electric car being shown at the Technology Center on June 4th, where it will be charged. He invited all to view the car.

A letter was received concerning the problems created by feral cats in certain neighborhoods. An ordinance was suggested. Mr. Cox said the Crimes Code does not address feral cats, other than cruelty. They discussed options of other boroughs, trapping, fees, possible grant money and contacting the Humane Society.

Adjournment

Ms. Wanda Miller moved to adjourn; motion was seconded by Mrs. Ruby Miller.

Motion Unanimously Carried.
7:53 p.m.

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