

Borough of Somerset Committee of the Whole

September 9th, 2019 5:00 p.m.

1. Meeting Called to Order - President Ruby Miller

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call:

Council Members present: Ruby Miller; Fred Rosemeyer; Pam Ream; Sue Opp; Steve Shaulis and Gary Thomas.

Council Member absent: Judy Pyle.

Also present: Mayor Scott Walker.

Also absent: Junior Council Member Jonathan Wagner.

Also present were the following: Borough Manager, Michele Enos; Director of Finance, Brett Peters; Solicitor, James Cascio and Consulting Engineers, Tom Reilly and Jake Bolby.

4. Announcements:

(a) None

5. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting:

(a) All minutes are approved at the regular Council Meeting.

6. General Public Comments:

(a) None registered

7. Policy Agenda:

Old Business:

(a) None

New Business:

(a) Request form submitted by Manager Enos:

1. Christine Trent - To discuss options to address feral cat colonies.

Ms. Trent was present to suggest options to alleviate the feral cat problem in Somerset Borough.

She explained how cats can reproduce quickly in a years' time, thus leading to an overpopulation of cats, if not controlled with spaying and neutering. Ms. Trent stated that she knows that there is a problem with feral cat colonies in the Borough.

Ms. Trent disclosed how she has personally assisted, at her own expense, to help control the feral cat issue. She has taken multiple feral cats into her home to kennel until they could be adopted out. She has also personally taken feral cats to be spayed, neutered and vaccinated, then subsequently released them where they were found.

Ms. Trent offered suggestions on how to control the feral cat population, such as “catch & kill”, which involves humane euthanizing methods, and “trap & release” which incurs a cost for spaying & neutering. Nuisance animal control removal services can be used for either suggestion. Ms. Trent brought out that the Humane Society will not accept every animal that is surrendered because they are full.

Ms. Enos expressed that Borough residents do not know what to do about the feral cat nuisance problem in the Borough. She added that it is the goal of Borough Council that all feral cats be treated in a humane way.

Ms. Enos brought out that Borough Council wanted to gather their options on the feral cat issues before any Ordinance is established and put into place.

Ms. Enos also disclosed that she reached out to Nardecchia Spay & Neuter, and they are willing to help the Borough with this issue if Council decides to utilize their services. Time will also be needed to clean up and manage the feral cat issue.

Ms. Trent brought out that she is also willing to help, in this regard, in any way that she can.

8. Executive Session – *To discuss litigation and AFSCME Contract Negotiations.*

Motion

Mr. Shaulis moved, Mrs. Opp seconded, to go into Executive Session to discuss litigation and AFSCME Contract Negotiations.

Motion Unanimously Carried

5:26 p.m.

Back in Regular Session

6:01 p.m.

2. Sale of Surplus Property – *Update on the progress of selling surplus property.*

Ms. Enos distributed a list to Borough Council regarding Borough surplus property.

Ms. Enos stated that she had to establish what the value is on the equipment, because it is a little more than scrap. She brought out that based on the Borough Resolution, four estimates were needed for each individual unit to establish a baseline price.

Ms. Enos disclosed out that we have to sell surplus property by resolution, also naming the buyers.

She brought out that this surplus equipment costs too much to repair, and it cannot be inspected due to “frame” issues.

Ms. Enos added that a resolution will be prepared for the next meeting.

3. Public Works Brush Drop-Off Site – Discussion concerning potential changes for the drop-off site.

Ms. Enos handed out pictures of the drop-off brush site to members of Council.

She disclosed that some individuals are using it as a garbage dump. They are dumping off whole trees, wood piles with nails, mattresses, garbage, appliances and other items that should not be taken there. She mentioned that the Borough now has the expense of getting rid of all the garbage dumped there.

She suggested fencing off the area, monitoring it and having an open gate on rollers where trucks can go in. She brought out that we are mandated by DEP to be a Recycling Community, so we cannot close the area.

Ms. Enos added that stone and milling materials, used for our jobs, are also being stolen.

Discussion was held among Council how to solve this problem.

Suggestions were given regarding getting an estimate on fencing the area off, the hours available for residents to be able to use the area to drop off their brush and how the area can be monitored by staff.

This drop-off site will be discussed during the budget process for the spring of 2020.

4. Donation Requests:

(a) Humane Society of Somerset County.

Ms. Enos stated that the Borough just received this donation request from the Humane Society. She disclosed that the Borough sent an annual donation of \$500.00 to the Humane Society at the end of 2018 during their campaign.

Mr. Peters stated that we typically send a donation during that time.

Borough Council agreed to send the Borough’s annual donation to the Humane Society at the end of this year, as previously done, during their campaign.

(b) Year to Date Financial Report – Provided through the month of August 2019.

Mr. Peters distributed the Year to Date Financial Statements through August 2019. He mentioned that we are 8/12’s of the way through the year or 66.67%.

General Fund:

Revenues – 91.77%

Expenses – 71.20%

Water Fund:

Revenues – 66.53%

Expenses – 72.13%

Sewer Fund:

Revenues – 62.60%

Expenses – 62.94%

Mr. Peters added that if Borough Council had any questions on any particular line item, please feel free to contact him, and he would answer any questions the best that he can.

(c) Manager's Report – Reports distributed to Council for all departments for the month of August 2019.

(d) President's Report - Given by Ruby Miller.

Mrs. Miller mentioned that that the County Banquet is on September 19th, 2019. She also congratulated Mr. Shaulis on his award from the National Weather Service.

(e) Somerset Inc. Report - Given by Judy Pyle.

(Mrs. Pyle was absent, therefore, no report was given to Borough Council)

(f) PSAB Report – Given by Fred Rosemeyer.

Mr. Rosemeyer mentioned that the PSAB Conference is at the Nittany Lion Inn in State College. He added that it looks like it is going to be a good conference if anyone would be interested in going.

Mr. Rosemeyer mentioned that he received a phone call from the Governor's Office in regards to their wanting to talk about initiatives for Somerset Borough.

He brought out that, tomorrow, he and Ms. Enos will be meeting with Jessica Walls-Lavelle, the Regional Coordinator for South Western Pennsylvania for this purpose.

Mr. Rosemeyer said that Ms. Enos put together various initiatives to discuss with Ms. Walls-Lavelle regarding the Borough. He added that we will also be informed as to what the Governor also requests from the Borough.

(g) Somerset Volunteer Fire Department Report - Given by Steve Shaulis.

(Mr. Shaulis did not receive a report from the Fire Department to report updates to Borough Council)

(h) Engineer's Report – Given by Jake Bolby.

Mr. Bolby mentioned that the Borough's two Sewer Projects are still on the same schedule, therefore, are to begin in September / October 2019.

Mr. Bolby disclosed that regarding the Small Water & Sewer Grant Project, the construction was pushed forward to begin in the spring of 2020. He added that we will still meet all the Grant deadlines, because the Grant does not expire until 2021. Consequently, we will still be within schedule to start that project.

Mr. Bolby also brought out that inspections being done in the Borough for the sanitary and storm water issues, are coming to a close for the summer.

Mr. Bolby stated that on the Somerset Borough website, there is a link under the "Public Works" section to report a stormwater incident. This will give individuals the means to get information to the Borough.

Mr. Bolby said that in 2019, the Borough hasn't had the same type of storms that we experienced in 2017 & 2018.

Mr. Shaulis added that the Borough's precipitation, for this summer, has only been 1/4" above normal.

(i) Mayor's Report – Given by Mayor Walker.

Mayor Walker mentioned that "National Night Out" was held on August 13th, 2019, and was well attended.

He also mentioned that Mr. Shaulis has only missed 4 days in the last 25 years regarding his work with weather forecasting.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Motion

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

Motion Unanimously Carried
6:45 p.m.

Michele A. Enos, Borough, Manager/ Secretary