

Borough of Somerset Council Meeting
February 22nd, 2021 - 5:00 p.m. (*Teleconference Meeting*)

1. Meeting Called to Order - President Ruby Miller

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call:

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

Also present: Mayor Scott Walker.

Present: Junior Council Member Sierra Urban.

Also present were the following: Borough Manager, Michele Enos; Director of Finance, Brett Peters; Administrative Assistant, Roger Bailey; Chief of Police, Randy Cox; Solicitor, James Cascio; Consulting Engineer, Tom Reilly.

Public Attendance:

a) None

4. Announcements

a) None

5. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings:

a) January 25th, 2021 – Borough Council Meeting Minutes.

Motion

Mr. Rosemeyer moved; Mr. Thomas seconded to approve the January 25th, 2021 Borough Council Meeting Minutes.

Motion Unanimously Carried

6. Award of Bids:

a) None

7. General Public Comments:

a) None requested

8. Administrative Business:

a) Communications (None)

b) Payment of Bills – Month of February 2021

Motion

Mr. Hoffman moved, Mrs. Opp seconded, to approve the payment of bills for February 2021 numbered 36110 - 36247 totaling \$416,390.11.

Motion Unanimously Carried

c) *Department Reports for January 2021 – Consider approving the Departmental Reports for the month of January 2021.*

Motion

Mr. Thomas moved, Mrs. Ream seconded, to approve the Departmental Reports for the month of January 2021.

Motion Unanimously Carried

9. Policy Agenda:

Old Business:

a) *None*

New Business:

a) *Stormwater Ordinance – Authorization to proceed with advertising the changes to the Stormwater Ordinance for potential adoption at March’s Council Meeting.*

Ms. Enos brought out that the original Stormwater Ordinance was adopted by Borough Council last year. She explained that as they worked with the Ordinance in the field for the past year, it was noticed that there should be some correction and clarification on descriptions in the Ordinance.

She explained that the proposed changes to the current Ordinance include the fee structure for the residents. She said that fees for residential Stormwater Project reviews have been dropped from \$150.00 to \$75.00. This is due to fact that it is not costing the Borough that much money to review the resident’s stormwater plans. Ms. Enos added that the Borough’s fees have to mirror the actual time and costs involved in reviewing the plans.

Ms. Enos noted that we are not going back to existing property to tack on any additional fees for the proposed plan requirements. The adjustments to the current Stormwater Ordinance are only going to be for future renovation projects or new construction.

Ms. Enos pointed out that the rest of the proposed changes to the existing Ordinance include better clarified definitions that are more understandable to the user who is adding stormwater controls to their properties.

Ms. Enos pointed out that if Borough Council wishes to move forward with these Stormwater Ordinance changes, the next step in the process would be to advertise those changes in the form of a revised Stormwater Ordinance. Afterwards, it would have to be

available for public inspection. Consideration for adoption of the revised Stormwater Ordinance would follow at the March 2021 Borough Council Meeting.

Motion

Mr. Rosemeyer moved, Mrs. Ream seconded to authorize advertising the changes to the Stormwater Ordinance for potential adoption at March’s Council Meeting.

Motion Unanimously Carried

b) Roadway Opening Ordinance – Authorization to proceed with advertising the proposed Roadway Opening Ordinance for potential adoption at March’s Council Meeting.

Ms. Enos mentioned that a sample of a Roadway Opening Ordinance was sent out to Borough Council a few weeks ago. This was a sample that was used by a neighboring Municipality. Solicitor Cascio reviewed it, and made significant changes to the Ordinance that he felt was necessary. This revised copy, Solicitor Cascio provided for us, was then sent out to Borough Council last week for their review.

Ms. Enos brought out that the Roadway Opening Ordinance is similar to the guidelines that PennDOT had in place for many years for their State Highways. It is designed to protect the infrastructure we currently have.

Presently, we do not have anything in place that will hold a utility company or a contractor responsible for repairing and resurfacing the road after they dig trench lines or are doing work on our roadways. A Roadway Opening Ordinance would be the Borough’s set of regulations that these companies and contractors would be required to follow, so that we can protect our infrastructure and maintain the longevity of our roadways.

Ms. Enos added that the protection the Ordinance would provide for our roadways would include slope & grade for stormwater controls. Instead of trench lines, they would be required, in some cases, to mill and overlay from curb to curb or either curb to the center line of the roadway depending on the amount and size of the project.

Motion

Mrs. Ream moved, Mr. Rosemeyer seconded to authorize advertising the proposed Roadway Opening Ordinance for potential adoption at March’s Council Meeting.

Motion Carried Unanimously

c) Professional Services Agreement – Consider authorizing the execution of an agreement with the EADS Group for engineering services related to the Coxes Creek WTP Backwash Lagoon Project.

Ms. Enos brought out that this was a project that was planned for, and is related to our permit compliances. She said that there have been some compliance changes that will be

affecting our Coxes Creek Water Treatment Plant Backwash Lagoon Project, which were planned for.

Ms. Enos pointed out that this Engineering Agreement is for engineering services related to that project. The project has been approved as part of the Capital Budget for 2021, and the Engineering Agreement has also been budgeted for as well.

The description of services that EADS will be providing for the Borough is going to be a study on how to get into compliance. There will be many different measures that we can use, so the study will determine which one is going to be the best. Also preliminary design and permitting will be a part of Phase I. Afterwards, we will go to final design which involves a public bid project.

Motion

Mrs. Ream moved, Mr. Hoffman seconded to authorize the execution of an agreement with the EADS Group for engineering services related to the Coxes Creek WTP Backwash Lagoon Project.

Motion Carried Unanimously

Mr. Reilly disclosed that the Sewer Line Cleaning is currently still going on, but has been impacted by the weather. It is 47% complete, so progress is being made.

Mr. Reilly brought out that the Smoke Testing is 85% complete. Dye Testing will not occur until the weather breaks.

Mr. Reilly also mentioned that as part of the Corrective Action Plan discussion with DEP they had a tap ban, and subsequently provided available taps to the Borough and the Municipal Authority. He noted that you lose those taps at the end of each calendar year if there are any left. As a result, you have to apply for new taps. DEP did approve a new tap request for 2021 of 20 EDU's or 20 taps, so there will be EDU's available for the Borough to sale to interested customers.

Chief Cox mentioned that last month it was disclosed that the Police Department was given \$25,000.00 from the County under the Cares Act. He said that he reviewed the best way to use the money for the Department.

Chief Cox said that instead of purchasing a used Police cruiser with the \$26,000.00 that Borough Council had already allotted, he would like to take that money and combine it with the \$25,000.00 from the County to buy a new cruiser.

He brought out that the Police Department needs to put a new cruiser into the fleet and retire a 2006 Crown Victoria. He said the interests of the Department would be served much better by getting a new cruiser instead of a used one, for the fact that it is going to be used heavily by Patrol 24/7. He pointed out that they get a good life out of the investment of a new car.

He added that he would like to get Borough Council's blessing in order to move in that direction.

Motion

Mr. Rosemeyer moved, Mrs. Ream seconded to approve Chief Cox to purchase a new Police Cruiser using the \$26,000.00 previously agreed upon by Borough Council, coupled with the \$25,000.00 sent from the County under the Cares Act to the Police Department.

Motion Carried Unanimously

Chief Cox also brought out that the Police Department's Covid rate has been "acceptable", with an overall infection rate of approximately 12% within the Department. He added that all of the cases have come from the outside. No infections have started within the Department.

Chief Cox acknowledged that the steps the Officers are taking in sanitation, hygiene, social distancing and mask wearing are working to their benefit.

Mr. Shaulis disclosed that the Fire Department has had a total of 48 fire calls since January 1st, 2021.

He also brought out that the Fire Department's Annual Fund Drive is underway at this time.

Mr. Hoffman brought out that Somerset Inc. is gearing up this spring for a number of building projects they are hoping to pursue through the previous Façade Grant Program.

He also noted that Somerset Inc. is hoping to finish up their office, where it presently is, and move it along to the Brinker Building.

Mr. Hoffman stated that the goal for Somerset Inc. is to overhaul the Brinker Building property, and lease it out, where it can then be used for future endeavors. He added that the Brinker Building will be officially announced soon.

Mr. Rosemeyer disclosed that there is presently no on-site training through the PSAB, but noted that they are producing a variety of webinars on many different subjects. This is all that PSAB is currently doing.

Mr. Rosemeyer also brought out that The County Association's Meeting that was to be held in March 2021 has been postponed, and may be rescheduled in June 2021.

Solicitor Cascio brought out that a receiver, Fred Young, has been appointed at the trailer park. He added that his office is in the process of foreclosing on the Municipal Lien. Solicitor Cascio disclosed that this will force the end of Divinity, and also the other lien holders, to step aside and allow us to proceed.

Borough Council acknowledged the fine job that Public Works is doing with the roads during the winter months, and noted that they are appreciative of the work being done.

Mr. Baily expressed that the Public Works Department have been working hard. He brought out that they are having some problems getting salt for the roads, but noted that they still have some.

10. Executive Session – None requested.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Motion

Mr. Rosemeyer moved to adjourn; motion seconded by Mrs. Ream.

Motion Unanimously Carried
5:36 p.m.

Michele A. Enos, Borough Manager/ Secretary