

Borough of Somerset Council Meeting
May 24th, 2021 - 5:00 p.m. *(In-Person 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.

Absent: Junior Council Member Sierra Urban.

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

Public Attendance:

None present

4. Announcements

a) None

5. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings:

a) April 26th, 2021 – Borough Council Meeting Minutes.

Motion

Mr. Rosemeyer moved; Mr. Hoffman seconded to approve the April 26th, 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 May 2021.

Motion

Mrs. Opp moved, Mrs. Ream seconded, to approve the payment of bills for May 2021 numbered 36538 - 36680 totaling \$450,055.18.

Motion Unanimously Carried

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

Motion

Mr. Thomas moved, Mr. Shaulis seconded, to approve the Departmental Reports for the month of April 2021.

Motion Unanimously Carried

9. Policy Agenda:

Old Business:

a) None

New Business:

a) Coxes Creek Grant Project – Authorization to execute a “Funding Commitment Letter” for the local share of this project in the amount of \$63,702.19, which would represent the required 15% match.

Ms. Enos stated that this is the Flood Control Project that the Borough is responsible for maintaining at Coxes Creek. There is an 85% DCED Grant funding opportunity for the Borough to seek. This is based upon inspection reports that we get back regarding its condition, and what the Borough has to do to be in compliance. Currently, the Borough has a “minimal acceptance” rating. As a result, we have to address soil erosion, rip rap and remove siltation.

Ms. Enos mentioned that there was an adjustment to the cost of this project. In 2019, the Borough applied for this type of grant, so those project estimates were based on those 2019 rates. Currently, the total project is estimated to cost \$424,681.25. The DCED Grant that the Borough is applying for would cover 85% of those costs, or \$360,979.06. The Borough’s portion of that, representing the 15% match, would be \$63,702.19.

Ms. Enos added that this is all based upon just the application, and we do not know if the Grant will be awarded or not.

Ms. Enos added that the Borough’s responsibility in the motion that Borough Council was being asked to consider, would be knowing that if the grant is awarded, \$63,702.19 would be the Borough’s share of the total project cost.

Motion

Mrs. Ream moved, Mrs. Opp seconded to authorize the execution of a “Funding Commitment Letter” for the local share of this project in the amount of \$63,702.19 which would represent the required 15% match.

Motion Unanimously Carried

b) *Resolution No. 2021-03* – *Authorizing the submission of a DCED Grant Application for the Coxes Creek Flood Protection Project. (Total amount of the project is \$424,681.25)*

Ms. Enos brought out that this is part of the grant application process where Borough Council authorizes the Resolution to submit for the funding.

Motion

Mrs. Ream moved, Mrs. Opp seconded to authorize the submission of a DCED Grant Application for the Coxes Creek Flood Protection Project.

Motion Carried Unanimously

**BOROUGH OF SOMERSET, SOMERSET COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
RESOLUTION NO. 2021-03**

A RESOLUTION OF BOROUGH OF SOMERSET TO APPLY FOR A FLOOD MITIGATION PROGRAM GRANT THROUGH THE PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AS WELL AS, AUTHORIZING THE PRESIDENT AND MANAGER TO SIGN ALL DOCUMENTS NECESSARY TO APPLY FOR THE AFOREMENTIONED GRANT.

Be it RESOLVED, that the Borough of Somerset of Somerset County hereby request a Flood Mitigation Program (FMP) grant of \$360,979.06 from the Commonwealth Financing Authority of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to be used for the Coxes Creek Flood Protection Enhancement Project.

Be it FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Applicant does hereby designate Ruby Miller, Borough President, and Michele A. Enos, Borough Manager, as the official(s) to execute all documents and agreements between the Borough of Somerset and the Commonwealth Financing Authority to facilitate and assist in obtaining the requested grant.

I, Michele A. Enos, duly qualified Secretary of the Borough of Somerset, Somerset County, Pennsylvania, hereby certify that the forgoing is a true and correct copy of a Resolution duly adopted by a majority vote of the Borough of Somerset at a regular meeting held May 24, 2021 and said Resolution has been recorded in the Minutes of the Borough of Somerset and remains in effect as of this date.

c) Mary S. Biesecker Library Board of Directors – Consider the re-appointment of Mr. G. Henry Cook to serve a 3-year term on the Mary S. Biesecker Library Board.

Motion

Mrs. Opp moved, Mrs. Ream seconded to re-appoint Mr. G. Henry Cook to serve a 3-year term on the Mary S. Biesecker Library Board.

Motion Carried Unanimously

d) Mary S. Biesecker Library Board of Directors – Consider the re-appointment of Reverend Matt Deal to serve a 3-year term on the Mary S. Biesecker Library Board.

Motion

Mr. Rosemeyer moved, Mr. Shaulis seconded to re-appoint Reverend Matt Deal to serve a 3-year term on the Mary S. Biesecker Library Board.

Motion Carried Unanimously

e) Subdivision Request – A request was submitted by Korn/Mosholder to subdivide one parcel into two separate parcels. Somerset Borough Planning Commission has reviewed the request and is recommending its approval.

Mayor Walker brought out that this request was made by his office on behalf of Mr. Korn and Mr. Mosholder.

Motion

Mr. Rosemeyer moved, Mr. Hoffman seconded to approve the request submitted by Korn/Mosholder to subdivide one parcel into two separate parcels.

Motion Carried Unanimously

A question was raised by one of the Council Members about the status of the Grant for the Uptown Sidewalks.

Ms. Enos stated that the Borough has applied for a Multi-Modal Grant for North & South Center Avenue Sidewalk Project. She said that the Borough was hoping to do a similar project on Center Avenue that was done on West Main Street. The total project cost to do the same type of project is approximately \$754,000.00. The Grant application the Borough applied for through Multi-Modal was \$754,000.00. She added that there is no match required for this Grant.

Ms. Enos brought out that notification was received from Senator Stefano and Representative Metzgar that, although they “pushed” for this project, the only amount that they could get for the Borough was \$250,000.00.

Ms. Enos explained that our Community Development Block Grant Funding was leveraged, which is also Grant funding. To qualify for the CDBG Funding, there was an area in the sidewalk Project that fit into the “low to mod” census tract. So we were leveraging those funds to do some type of matching Grant situation.

Ms. Enos said that since the Grant has been scaled back from the original \$754,000.00 to \$250,000.00, she and Mr. Bolby scheduled a meeting with Steve Spochart from the Redevelopment Authority. Before any designing takes place, they wanted to be certain of the amount of funding that can be utilized. The Project is going to have to be downscaled as a result of the \$250,000.00 Grant received. It is presently undecided to what degree, so this is the reason this subject was not brought before Council earlier.

Mr. Bolby brought out that you are allowed to do some minor modifications as to the location of where you want the sidewalks done, but generally you have to stick with the description that you originally submitted with the grant.

Ms. Enos noted that we still do not know where Community Development Block Grant Funding will come into play because we can only use that money in areas where it qualifies. She said that portions of the 100 block of North Center falls within that “low to mod” census tract, so we are hoping to utilize that money in that area.

Mr. Bolby stated that these types of programs come up every 1-1 ½ years, so with the next application, we can apply for the 200 block of North Center Avenue.

Mr. Rosemeyer brought out that the PSAB Fall Conference is scheduled in Erie, PA in October 2021. He added that a PSAB Board Member Meeting is scheduled in 2 weeks in Hershey, PA.

Mr. Hoffman mentioned that a small amount of asbestos was removed in the Brinker Building. As a result, more volunteers were needed to be in the building, along with contractors to get estimates for work to be done.

Also, “Chalk the Block” is scheduled to be held this year, along with the Running Race.

Mr. Bolby brought out that the Cleaning & Televising Project is about 70% complete. The Smoke Testing is 100% finished. Dye Testing is about 33% complete. He added that the Borough is putting door hangers at people’s homes in advance of the crews coming into their areas, so that homeowners get notice before the work starts.

Mr. Bolby continued the conversation about Sewer Laterals, as he did with the Municipal Authority, by presenting to Borough Council a brief summary on the Sewer Lateral Testing Program Options.

The five different Sewer Lateral Testing Options include:

1) None

a. Inflow & Infiltration will remain and may worsen.

2) Visual Inspection – Exterior Only

a. Check of external integrity of pipe during installation or repair.

3) Camera Inspection

a. Check of internal and external integrity of pipe during installation or repair.

4) Water Column

a. Verifies that the sewer lateral pipe is watertight. This test can be difficult to administer and ensure all pipe is tested.

5) Air Pressure

a. Verifies that all sewer lateral pipe is airtight. This is the most effective test.

Mr. Bolby explained that the chosen items will be included in the Rules & Regulations and, ultimately, will be a part of the program related to the Sanitary Sewer System.

Mr. Bolby stated that the conversations will continue to be developed with Borough Council Members, as with the Municipal Authority Members, until a final decision is made at the end of this year, or beginning of next year.

Ms. Enos disclosed that decisions were made on which Borough streets will be repaired this year. She added that we will be going to bid for paving, so those awards will be disclosed at the June Council Meeting.

Ms. Enos brought out that she, Solicitor Cascio, Mr. Peters, Chief Cox and Mayor Walker met regarding the cat problem at Brierwood. The strategy discussed to solve this issue was to potentially treat this as a Public Nuisance. This would be structured and handled through the Police Department.

Ms. Enos explained that Chief Cox was unable to be present at the Council Meeting, but provided Ms. Enos with a section of the “Crime Code” for “Public Nuisances” that she read to Council Members.

She added that Chief Cox is presently investigating the cat problem, because there are certain guidelines you have to fall into to make this issue a Public Nuisance.

10. Executive Session – To discuss personnel matters.

Motion

Mrs. Opp moved, seconded by Mrs. Ream to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel issues.

Motion Unanimously Carried
5:33 p.m.

Back in Session

5:45 p.m.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Motion

Mrs. Opp moved to adjourn; motion seconded by Mrs. Ream.

Motion Unanimously Carried
5:45 p.m.

Michele A. Enos, Borough Manager/ Secretary