

**JOINT MEETING – Somerset Borough Council & The Municipal Authority of the Borough of Somerset
November 22nd, 2021 - 5:00 p.m.**

JOINT MEETING AGENDA

1. Joint Meeting Called to Order

- a) Borough Council Meeting Called to Order – President R. Miller

- b) Municipal Authority Meeting Called to Order – Chairman Flower

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call:

- a) Council Members present: Ruby Miller; Fred Rosemeyer; Lee Hoffman; Pam Ream; Sue Opp and Gary Thomas
Council Member absent: Steve Shaulis

- b) Mayor: Scott Walker also present

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 Engineers, Tom Reilly and Jake Bolby.

Roll Call:

- a) Municipal Authority Members present: Vince Jacob; Ruby Miller; Jessica Sizemore and Ben Flower.

Public Attendance:

- a) None

4. New Business – Joint Discussions

- a) Sewer Project – Discussion concerning the private sewer lateral options and the costs associated with each option.

Mr. Bolby stated that the Sewer Projects have been discussed for several months. He distributed information that was previously discussed. The information is presented again for a review so that it can continue to be fresh in mind moving towards a decision in February 2022.

Mr. Bolby said that in all the previous discussions being focused on, the private side lateral has been the pivotal decision in any of the Sewer Project options.

Mr. Bolby first reviewed the ***Lateral Replacement Program Options List & the Sewer Lateral Strategy Matrix List***.

He explained that the *Lateral Replacement Program Options List* shows what could potentially be done with the sewer lateral. The *Sewer Lateral Strategy Matrix List* corresponds to the *Lateral Options* and shows what type of project we could eventually have.

Referring to the ***Lateral Replacement Program Options***, Mr. Bolby said that the **1st Option** is ***to leave the laterals as they are***. This would lead us into a project that is a Transport & Treat and Equalization. This would essentially make everything bigger to accommodate the 16 million gallons/per day that we are seeing at the Sewage Treatment Plant.

The **2nd Option** is ***to replace the sewer lateral from the main up to the property line***. Mr. Bolby brought out that is something that was done on the most recent sewer projects that were conducted at the Columbia Avenue Relief Sewer Extension, and also on projects that occurred in the early 90's. He said that this is a pretty standard construction practice. He explained that a portion of the infiltration & inflow is removed both in the main and in the private lateral. With the partial replacement, you have a few more of the Techniques available to you.

The **3rd Option** is ***to replace from sewer main up to the exterior wall of a foundation*** of a home that has basement service. Mr. Bolby disclosed that this would remove about 10% more of the infiltration & inflow by replacing the section from the viewport up to the foundation. He said that a lot of the infiltration & inflow is coming from the private sewers that are underneath the slabs of the foundations where the private laterals currently are.

The **4th Option** is ***to replace the sewer main the whole way through the structure***. Mr. Bolby said that this would be replacing both basement service, and 1st floor only services, the whole way through. Whenever this option is done, pressure testing of that sewer lateral would be done. He said that pressure testing is the most effective way to verify it is leak-proof and preventing infiltration & inflow from getting in.

Referring to the ***Sewer Lateral Strategy Matrix List***, Mr. Bolby said we are seeing full replacement, partial replacement and none. He brought out that as we replace more laterals, the size of the public infrastructure can be decreased, because we are removing infiltration & inflow.

Mr. Bolby now reviewed information regarding cost estimates of ***Sanitary Sewer Lateral Replacement, Public Infrastructure Replacement, along with Cost Comparisons of the two***.

Mr. Bolby pointed out that this information covers what the financial benefit of replacing laterals are in full verses providing larger public infrastructure that can collect the infiltration & inflow.

Mr. Bolby stated that the goal is to not have an overflow from the system, and also not to be hydraulically overloaded at the Sewage Treatment Plant.

He said that, currently, the Plant is allowed to have 2 million gallons/per day on average. He explained that if you don't see that for 3 consecutive months, you are considered hydraulically overloaded. Also, if they are pumping or overflowing from the Sanitary Sewer System, that is also considered a hydraulic overload. Right now, the Sewage Plant has both of these conditions happening.

Mr. Bolby said that to replace all of the private sewer laterals, the whole way from the main through the structure, is what the **Sanitary Sewer Lateral Replacement** cost estimate list exposes. He said that when this information was developed, they had 2,715 customers. The Borough added 3-4 new customers this year.

The **TOTAL COST** that we estimated **to replace all of the private sewer laterals**, both Residential and Non-Residential, would be **about \$21 million dollars**. We are comparing that Capital cost, using the PennVEST loan, to the public infrastructure using a PennVEST loan as well. We are estimating that **the public infrastructure** would be **\$45 million dollars**. We are accommodating 9 million gallons of that infiltration & inflow of flow with the public infrastructure.

Mr. Bolby explained that what they are trying to compare is an equal amount of infiltration & inflow accommodated, or equal amount of overflow prevention. He said that in past projects, we have seen about 50% of infiltration & inflow being removed when the under slab and private sewer laterals are replaced.

Mr. Bolby said that they know that 14 million gallons per/day, in these storms that we are seeing that cause the overflow, is infiltration & inflow. So 7 million gallons of infiltration & inflow in a certain storm would be removed if we replaced all of the sewer laterals under the slabs. We are using 9 million gallons on the public side to account for the problems that exist with the private sewer lateral continuing to get worse and not get fixed, so we have to go with an investment to accommodate what is an existing issue that has the potential to grow. The costs to remove 1 gallon of infiltration & inflow through private side lateral replacement is cheaper than providing that same gallon removed on the public side. The public infrastructure is more costly to construct.

Mr. Bolby reiterated that in terms of the monthly debt service, with no grants and all being raw cost, **the sewer laterals** would cost **\$21 million dollars** verses **the public infrastructure** cost of **\$45 million dollars** paying for it over 20 years.

He said that like the Borough has experienced on the Water side, where there was loan forgiveness, we would hope that these types of projects would be looked at the same, always trying to go after Grant money to reduce this total cost. But we cannot count on that. The only time you will see whether or not you got a grant is after we submit a Grant Application through PennVEST or other Programs.

Mr. Bolby added that this information demonstrates that the economics of replacing private sewer laterals is more effective than providing the same amount of infiltration & inflow removal through public infrastructure, which is going to be larger.

Solicitor Cascio asked Mr. Bolby if he is assuming, in all of this, if it would be the combined entities of public funds that would borrow all of the money to replace all of the laterals. Mr. Bolby answered by saying that, through PennVEST, you can fund the replacement of private sewer laterals. The Municipal Authority borrows that money, but they add onto the customer's bill the amount that it costs to replace the lateral. So the Municipal Authority gets the good deal of the 20-year PennVEST money at the 1%, but there are a couple different steps to it. The customer will get the PennVEST loan through the Public Body.

Solicitor Cascio asked, "Some of the difference in the overall costs the customers are paying is 100% of the increased capacity if you didn't touch the laterals? He added, "So part of the difference in cost would cost you basically handing off to the property owner?" Mr. Bolby said that the increase is more costly to build public infrastructure and equalization tanks than it is to replace the pipe. And it is more effective to replace the pipe that has the issue, than letting the infiltration & inflow in rather than accommodating it elsewhere. But we have to provide additional capacity.

Solicitor Cascio then asked if there was an option that this could all be a part of the Municipal costs in replacing the laterals. He asked if it costs the same with whoever does it. Mr. Reilly answered by saying it doesn't cost the same. He said that to perform the construction under a Municipal entity, you are going to have to pay the prevailing wage rate, which probably doubles the cost verses hiring a local plumber.

Mayor Walker asked Mr. Bolby a question about the Sanitary Sewer Lateral Replacement verses Public Infrastructure total estimated cost page. He asked if the Estimated Average Monthly Customer Debt Service cost was projected over 20 years. Mr. Bolby answered by saying that it was.

Mayor Walker asked if everyone would be paying an equal share. The answer was "yes." Mr. Bolby said that the Water Project is a lot cheaper per/customer. He said that there is half the amount of Sewer customers than there are Water customers. This is why the "sticker shock" is felt "twice-over" compared to a Water Project.

Mr. Bolby next reviewed photos he handed out to show examples of what is seen during a typical Sewer Project, as well as the private-side lateral replacement.

Ms. Enos next spoke and said that they do not want Council or the Authority to feel pressured into making a decision, knowing full well that the decision will have to be made. She said that our deadline is February of 2022.

Ms. Enos said that there have been discussions, and reviewing of these Projects, and we have been talking about how the sewer laterals will actually be the defining moment. She added that what we choose to do will then foretell the rest of the design to accommodate for this overflow.

Ms. Enos expressed that she wanted to have a very real, candid conversation with everyone at the Meeting, because she doesn't want them going in with the expectation that any of these decisions will be easy ones.

She said that as previously discussed, even with Staff, the reason why we are here is because we are hydraulically overloaded. We have too much infiltration & inflow in the sewer system that our Plant cannot handle. She said that we pump from our sanitary sewer system because we are trying to prevent sewer backups into homes and businesses in the Borough when these rain events occur. We have been experiencing this, and it has been ongoing, for decades.

Ms. Enos said that the time has come to make a decision, but really wanted the Authority & Council to think about this. She brought out that there are multiple ways of handling the overflow. Some may have a larger price tag to them. If you are selecting to take this on from a Borough standpoint where you are just involving the public side, which would be the side we own, without any interruption to the private side, it will probably be a project that will be easier from a public prospective.

Ms. Enos disclosed that it is very difficult to live through a Project like this, and to be a part of going under a slab foundation, if that decision is chosen. She expressed that this is going to be a very big deal. She acknowledged that there is going to be a lot of chaos, and a lot of complaints, to a degree that Council & the Authority has never seen before.

Ms. Enos pointed out that this is a huge decision, and once it is made, we have to stand behind it because we will be permitting it and designing it. She said that we cannot stop in the middle of it because we are receiving pressure and go back to the drawing board. It will be too late at that point to do that. She added that there will be money spent, and there will be things that we choose to do that will guide that design.

Ms. Enos said that this is the reason why we have spent so much time on this topic. It will define what we will do throughout the rest of the design to handle this overload. Ms. Enos expressed that she wants the Authority & Council to feel good about whatever decision they decide to make as we move forward in the upcoming months.

Ms. Enos said that Mr. Bolby's pictures that were shown "tell the tale." It is easy to make a decision that sounds like it is the best decision for the Borough, the most practical or less costly, but you are going to have to live with those effects for years to come, and it is not going to be pretty.

Ms. Enos pointed out that everyone had seen what Mrs. Ream had to go through with just Fence Hours at the Public Works Garage. And that will be nothing compared to what this Project will be.

She said that you may be asking people to tear up their finished basements. It is going to look like the pictures that Mr. Bolby showed with the trenches and the basement floors.

Ms. Enos brought out that in one way or another, we have to deal with the infiltration & inflow. So however the Authority & Council choose to do that is not the wrong decision. She said that they just want to make sure that whatever that decision is, that the Authority & Council can live through it, market it and see it the whole way through. She stated that she wanted to set the stage with everyone to start thinking about that. She asked, "What can you live with?"

Ms. Enos said that there may be decisions from a day to day standpoint that we can say, "Hey, this is the best bang for our buck!" But that doesn't really matter if the Project gets stalled midway, or you get so much pressure that you can't see it through. She added that this is not going to benefit us in the long run.

Ms. Enos pointed out that it has to be whatever the Authority & Council can afford to live with once they make the decision, because it's going to be huge.

Ms. Enos added that she wanted to gauge what everyone's thought processes were, not asking for commitment or not stating that you can change it at any time.

Mr. Jacob asked if this is a Borough Council decision or is the Municipal Authority a part of it. Ms. Enos answered by saying that the decision will come down to the Municipal Authority Board, but it will be supported by Borough Council. She said that the four Municipal Authority Board Members can make that decision on the Board, but the Borough Council Members are going to hear about it every day.

Mr. Thomas asked if this includes every residential home and business in the Borough. Ms. Enos answered by saying it depends on what decision is made. She said that if the decision is to do some type of lateral replacement, whether it is to the wall of the foundation on the private-side, or under slab, it will involve every residential home and every business in the Borough, including churches and hospitals. She said that everything flows to the Borough Plant.

Ms. Enos said that it is easy to make decisions when there is no opposition. But when there is a massive amount of opposition, it is much harder. She said that she would rather it be a decision that they are comfortable with. The Authority & Council will be given the options and the price-tag of those options. It will be disclosed what will need built when the selection is made. Ms. Enos asked, "What can you all survive with?"

Mr. Thomas stated that we will have structures that won't need the updates. Ms. Enos replied by saying that we would pressure test, and if the property passes, then they wouldn't need replaced.

Mr. Reilly said that only Smoke & Dye Testing was done in the Borough. No Pressure Testing was done. He added that there will be very few residential and commercial structures that will pass pressure testing. Probably 95% will fail Pressure Testing.

Following conversation about home sales, Ms. Enos disclosed that discussion occurred at a Municipal Authority Meeting regarding adopting an Ordinance that would include a property passing a pressure test before it goes up for sale, and replacing pipes if needed.

Mr. Hoffman asked what would happen if people just refused to allow this to take place, or what recourse is there.

Solicitor Cascio said there are ways under various codes that you can enforce it, or say that the place is not fit for habitation.

Depending on what decision is chosen, Mrs. Ream asked how the construction will be phased-in. Will it be by neighborhood, sections or how is it done? Mr. Reilly answered by saying that it would make more sense to tie it into the public-side of the Project. He said that you are going to want to have the public-side done, and ready to be connected, before you allow the private property owners to do their work and connect into the rehabilitated public-side.

Mr. Reilly also brought out that if the Authority & the Borough would make the decision to replace the private laterals, then consideration should be given to doing a "Sell Ordinance" right away, which would make a current homeowner correct their lateral before transferring their home to new home owners in a property sale.

Ms. Enos asked if everyone had a full understanding as to why we have to make the decisions we have. She said that the bottom line is that our Sewer Plant is treating stormwater when it should be treating sewer. Inflow & infiltration is getting into the sewer system that should not be getting in there. That comes from cracked pipes, disjointed pipes and connections. Cleaning & Televising was done to see what our public-side looked like. We found out that our public-side doesn't look so great. So we know that we are going to do line replacements. She added that you can understand why the laterals set the stage. Because if we choose not to affect the private laterals, then we are going to be enlarging, much greater, those pipes that need replaced.

Following conversation about building a fund for customers, through smaller rate increases before a decision is made, Ms. Enos stated that before deciding the financing of this situation, we need to figure out what we want to do first because this will guide our next decision. There could be a way to prepare for that once we know what we are doing.

Speaking about Public Education for this Project to the Residents, Ms. Enos disclosed that this was brought up multiple times during Municipal Authority Meetings. Questions that

will need answered for the residents are, “Why we are here?”, “Why we have decided on what we are doing.”, “How do the residents feel about it?” and “What is this going to cost me?”

Ms. Enos said that she does not want to have Public Outreach Meetings when we do not have any of those answers for them right now because we have not made any of those decisions. Once there is more information, the intention is to have Public Outreach Meetings for our residents. Ms. Enos said that she doesn’t want to go into a meeting and tell the residents that she doesn’t know what decision is made, how much it will cost them, or how much their rates will be. Those are the things that they are going to want to know.

Ms. Enos brought out that we have a few months left to talk about the lateral discussions. She said we have a Corrective Action Plan that we are following, and that is the timeline that we have set in our Corrective Action Plan. We have a direction to submit to them as to how we are going to handle this hydraulic overload.

She said that Mr. Bolby has strategically, over the last several months, gone over the Flow Testing, Smoke & Dye Testing and Sewer Cleaning & Televising. We wanted to make sure that Council & the Authority had all the information on the condition of the public-side. She said that the answers were unknown until testing was done and the results came back.

Mr. Jacob asked if it was proper to ask our Consultants what was the most efficient way to go. Mr. Reilly answered by saying that he doesn’t think it matters. The most efficient way to go is to replace the laterals. He said that this is a Political decision and is not an Engineering decision. He pointed out that it is how much controversy and heat that the Authority and Borough Council can take based on the decision they make. He added that that this is a really difficult decision to make.

Mr. Reilly expressed that the worst thing that can happen is to make a decision and change it half way through the process. He said that they have seen this again and again. He noted that decisions have been made with the best intentions by Municipal bodies all over our area, but Municipal bodies change their makeup and their people over time.

Mrs. Ream expressed that we need to be responsible, and are we being responsible by choosing sewer mains to the property line or sewer mains to the foundation, because it is still going to cause us a problem. Mr. Reilly said that most efficient solution is to replace the laterals. He asked, “What do you think you can live with all the way through the end of the Project?” Mr. Reilly noted that he is not trying to “cop out” on an answer.

Mrs. Ream brought out that she agrees with Ms. Enos in that there needs to be a lot of thought in the decision that will be made because there will be a lot of backlash with that decision.

Ms. Enos added that it is easy to pick the best route based on being analytical, and saying that “We get the most by replacing under the slab”, but there is no opposition in that answer when no one is around. It is when the backhoe shows up on the property of a homeowner and puts a hole through their basement that they have worked on for 20 years to

replace. This is a real problem that elected and appointed Officials have to face, and we live through it on a daily basis when there is an issue.

Ms. Enos stated that any of the designs that were discussed will get rid of the infiltration & inflow and we will not have the hydraulic overload at the Plant. So the biggest thing is “What can you live through from start to finish?” She said that once it goes to design and permitting, we do not want to be in the middle of this, not be able to take the heat, then go back and rethink it. She expressed that this is the reason she is stressing this.

Mr. Rosemeyer asked Mr. Reilly & Mr. Bolby if there was more information coming before they make the decision. Mr. Reilly said that they can answer specific questions, but there is no additional information to follow that will really change the decision. At this point, it is how much controversy and how much heat they can take. He said that they have seen this again and again with the public over these kinds of decisions.

Mr. Reilly pointed out that Property Owners do not tend to pay much attention to the Outreach letters being sent to them by the Borough, or they do not attend the Meetings, until it is really late in the process, so it can get really messy.

He pointed out that they have also seen decisions change *after* they have already started building the public infrastructure. In these instances, you have a Project that is permitted, funded, and you are building, but you have too much infiltration & inflow for what you are building.

Ms. Enos pointed out that the decision that will be made on the lateral-side, is going to affect what we do on the public-side.

She expressed that it is important that elected and appointed Officials, throughout the Community, are able to survive and live through the decision-making. She said that Mr. Reilly is 100% correct. They will face ridicule and criticism, and their phones will be ringing off the hook. She said that she is not “sugar-coating” it. That is exactly what is going to happen. She said that they need to know that before going into it, so he wants them to choose something that is going to be something they can live with.

Mr. Flower expressed that, as somebody who does this every day, he tries to look at this Project and think of what type of shape the Borough is going to be in 20-25 years after construction. He asked “How big is the equalization going to be?”, and “Will it be big enough?” He said that infiltration & inflow will never get any better, so that is the way he tries to look at this Project.

Ms. Enos stated that they wanted the Authority & Council to be prepared, because it will have longer affects as to what they decide to do. She added that we do have some time.

She concluded by saying that if there was something that the Authority or Council would like to see, or any questions they may have during the next upcoming meetings, feel

free to reach out to her. She said that any information can be provided by herself, Mr. Reilly or Mr. Bolby.

Discussion ensued regarding what other Municipalities are doing with their Projects, and the challenges they are facing.

Mr. Reilly pointed out that the State will not make the decision regarding the Project, because their position definitively states that it is a local decision. They just want the hydraulic overload at the Plant corrected. They will not provide any guidance or support.

b) Management Agreement – Discussion concerning the Management Agreement with the Borough Council and its Municipal Authority concerning the recent PennVEST funding requirements and the changes that are necessary to comply.

In the past, Ms. Enos disclosed that the Borough Council always set the Water & Sewer rates by Ordinance. She and Solicitor Cascio said that it should be the responsibility of the Municipal Authority to set its rates for 2022.

Ms. Enos brought out that this will be discussed in December, because we are proposing a .05 cent increase in the Water Rates for the debt service that we are incurring for the \$20-million-dollar Water Project that we have moving forward. It will be a Resolution to increase the rates .05 cents per/100 gallons, which we plan on doing over the next 3-4 years. By that time, that will incorporate the debt service payment on the \$20 million dollars. We can do it incrementally so as to make it a little easier on the rate payers.

She reiterated that it will be the responsibility of the Municipal Authority to set those rates, and PennVEST will want to see that the Municipal Authority is setting their own rates. So the Management Agreement will be changing to incorporate that.

Ms. Enos pointed out that the Management Agreement is set up with *the Borough; the Municipal Authority* sets the rates and owns the infrastructure, and *the Borough* manages the system for the Authority.

MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY MEETING AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting:

a) October 25th, 2021 – Joint Municipal Authority/Borough Council Meeting Minutes.

Motion

Mrs. Sizemore moved, Mr. Jacob seconded, to approve the October 25th, 2021 Joint Municipal Authority/Borough Council Meeting Minutes.

Motion Unanimously Carried

2. New Business:

a) Status of Projects - Engineering Report provided by the EADS Group.

Mr. Bolby discussed the following changes and updates to the Engineer's Report:

WATER:

1) Water System Capital Improvement Projects:

Mr. Bolby disclosed that they are presently working on some of the PennDOT permitting on this Water Project. He said that it typically ties up closer to construction, and afterward, we are awarded funding. So this is moving along on schedule.

He said that Borough staff and EADS have been having Coordination Meetings with the various utilities and PennDOT regarding the timing of the projects and restoration efforts.

Mr. Bolby added that these are some of the "behind the scenes" activities where we are trying to help reduce costs and also use our resources effectively.

Mr. Bolby disclosed that they are about to begin the Easement Acquisition process. He said that various Property Owners who are in, along or near the Water Project will be asked to sign Easements in areas where there will be encroachment upon their property, either temporarily or permanently, with the water and service lines. He noted that EADS prepared an Agreement and sketch that has been passed off to Management.

Mr. Bolby said that there will be two Property Owner Meetings held where Owners will be able to come and ask questions at the meetings. He said that a brief presentation will be presented, and the intent of the Project will be explained. He brought out that a Notary will be available at the time of the meeting so that people can sign their Agreements, if they are in agreement with them. Mr. Bolby noted that we will also be working on "touching things up" that may be a concern to the Property Owner. He added that if we can, within reason, a Revised Agreement may be attainable for them so we can move through the process without having to exercise any Eminent Domain.

Mr. Bolby added that the two Property Owner Meetings will be held December 16th & December 21st, 2021. He said that everyone is welcome to attend.

2) Laurel Hill Reservoir:

Mr. Bolby said that American Rivers is doing some work on their end. He disclosed that they had a surplus of funds this year, so they were doing a little extra work.

Mr. Bolby noted that Laurel Hill Reservoir will be breached and then restored. He said that American Rivers, Somerset County Conservation and the Western PA Conservancy has

been the lead on this and is steering the Project. Somerset Borough and the Municipal Authority is in support of it.

Mr. Bolby brought out that American Rivers has taken care of all the costs so far. He said that they have done a nice Study, but has not said environmentally which way they would like to go, but they have three options. Mr. Bolby added that there are no costs incurred to the Authority for this Project.

When asked by Solicitor Cascio if the dam will be decommissioned or removed, Mr. Bolby answered by saying that this is what is being considered in the Study. He said that they have full removal, partial removal and no removal. Other things in there, such as Fish Habitat Enhancement and Sediment Removal, is also considered. They do a cost analysis and then seek funds based on the best outcome. Sometimes it is environmentally focused, and sometimes it is a balance between environmental and economic. Mr. Bolby added that it depends on what the Grant Agencies want to see done, which sometimes influences the eventual outcome.

SEWER:

1) Assessment, Repair, and Abatement Plan (Hydraulic Overload):

Mr. Bolby disclosed that we have a total of 3 new sewer customers connected this year with new plastic piping.

He noted that if the Authority & Council wishes, they could adopt, as part of the Rules & Regulations that all new sewer customers building new construction have to do pressure testing on their sewer laterals.

Mr. Bolby brought out that the Cleaning & Televising Project has been closed out and is officially “wrapped up.”

Mr. Bolby added that if there were any questions related to the condition of the public sewers, sewer laterals themselves or different aspects of sewer laterals, to let them know and they would be happy to review it with members of the Authority or Council.

GENERAL:

1) Center Avenue Sidewalk Project:

Mr. Bolby recapped that the Borough received the DCED Multi-Modal Grant for this Project to replace the sidewalk on the South 100 block of Center Avenue. Because it would be a substantial investment, it was discussed with Ms. Enos about doing utilities in that area.

Mr. Bolby noted that the Borough has the Water Project already under way, the Sewer Project is coming potentially right behind it, and then there are other various utilities that may

or may not replace things within that area. He pointed out that additional information will be presented about this Project in the future.

3. Payment of Bills/Requisitions:

a) *None*

4. ADJOURNMENT

Motion

Mr. Jacob moved to adjourn; seconded by Mrs. Sizemore.

Motion Unanimously Carried
6:20 p.m.

BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings:

a) October 25th, 2021 – *Joint Municipal Authority/Borough Council Meeting Minutes*

Motion

Mrs. Ream moved, Mrs. Opp seconded, to approve the October 25th, 2021 Joint Municipal Authority/Borough Council Meeting Minutes.

Motion Unanimously Carried

2. Opening of Bids

a) *None*

3. General Public Comments:

a) *None requested*

4. Administrative Business:

a) *Communications (None)*

b) *Payment of Bills for the month of November 2021.*

Motion

Mrs. Ream moved, Mr. Thomas seconded, to approve the payment of bills for November 2021 numbered 37401 - 37531 totaling \$376,518.62.

Motion Unanimously Carried

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

Motion

Mr. Rosemeyer moved, Mr. Hoffman seconded, to approve the Departmental Reports for the month of October 2021.

Motion Unanimously Carried

5. Policy Agenda:

Old Business:

a) None

New Business:

a) Part-time Police Roster – Consider authorizing the removal of Joshua Fleming from the roster of part-time Police Officers.

Motion

Mrs. Ream moved, Mr. Rosemeyer seconded, to authorize the removal of Joshua Fleming from the roster of part-time Police Officers.

Motion Unanimously Carried

b) Part-time Police Officer – Consider authorization to hire a part-time Police Officer. It was noted that this would be to replace Officer Joshua Fleming.

Motion

Mrs. Opp moved, Mrs. Ream seconded, to authorize the hiring of a part-time Police Officer to replace Joshua Fleming.

Motion Unanimously Carried

c) 2022 Tentative Budgets – Consider the adoption of the Tentative Budgets for year 2022. (All Funds)

Mr. Peters stated that Borough Council should have received the “Updated Budgets” in the packets sent to them last week along with the things discussed at the Budget Workshop Meeting.

To recap: **General Fund** - will not include a tax increase for the year 2022.

Water Fund - has a proposed .05 cent rate increase for the year 2022.

Sewer Fund - has no rate increase proposed for the year 2022.

Mr. Peters brought out that also included in the document packet was a “Special Revenue Fund”, which is the Borough’s Liquid Fuels Money that is received from the State every year.
Discussion was held regarding the Tentative Budgets before voting took place.

Motion

Mr. Thomas moved, Mrs. Miller seconded, to adopt the Tentative Budgets, as written, with no tax increase for the year 2022. (All Funds)

Motion Carried (6 yes – 1 no)
(Mrs. Opp voting “No”)

d) Resolution No. 2021-07 – Consider the appointment of Friedline, Pison & Co. to audit the Borough’s Accounts for the year 2021.

Ms. Enos noted that we do this every year by Resolution to appoint an Auditor as required.

Motion

Mrs. Ream moved, Mr. Rosemeyer seconded, to appoint Friedline, Pison & Co. to audit the Borough’s Accounts for the year 2021.

Motion Unanimously Carried

RESOLUTION No. 2021-07

WHEREAS, The Borough of Somerset has by ordinance established the use of Certified Public Accountants to audit Borough Accounts, and;

NOW THEREFORE, We, the Council and Mayor of the Borough of Somerset designate Friedline, Pison & Company to audit Borough Accounts for the year 2021.

ADOPTED this 22nd day of November 2021.

Committee, Administration, Special Reports:

a) Manager’s Report - (Enos)

Regarding the Departmental Reports, Ms. Enos said that if there were any questions after Council had an opportunity to look over it, feel free to contact them.

b) President's Report – (R. Miller)

Mrs. Miller brought out that she wanted to thank John Morocco, owner of Morocco Welding, for putting the tree up for Christmas. She suggested that he should be recognized publically at the December Meeting to thank him for all the years that he has donated the crane, tractor trailer and his men to erect the tree.

c) Finance Report – (Peters)

Mr. Peters provided Borough Council with the Year-to-Date Financial Report through the month of October 2021. He mentioned that we are 83.33% through the year.

General Fund:

Revenues – 107.36%

Expenses – 86.78%

Water Fund:

Revenues – 75.49%

Expenses – 81.40%

Sewer Fund:

Revenues – 75.66%

Expenses – 65.19%

Mr. Peters added that if Borough Council had any questions, feel free to contact him and he would do his best to address them.

d) Engineer's Report - (Bolby)

(Report was discussed during Municipal Authority Meeting Agenda)

e) Somerset Inc. Representative – (Hoffman)

Mr. Hoffman mentioned that “Small Business Saturday” is this weekend, November 27th, followed by “Light-Up Night”. He said that they have some new vendors, and will be showcasing a number of businesses and specials throughout the day. Decorations are on the Diamond, and the “Holiday Sign Project” is also going on this weekend.

Mr. Hoffman encouraged all to come and support Local.

Chief Cox stated, “Traditionally, Council suspends parking meters through “Fire & Ice”.” He asked if we should do that later or now. Ms. Enos answered by saying that Solicitor Cascio prepared the Resolution to give the Chief the authority to do that.

f) Fire Department Representative – (R. Miller)

Mrs. Miller brought out that so far this year the Fire Department has responded to 367 alarms. 130 have been in Somerset Borough, 195 were in Somerset Township, 21 on the Pennsylvania Turnpike and 21 to assist neighboring Departments in other Municipalities.

The Fire Department recently replaced the lights in the downstairs area of the Fire Hall with LED lights. This has made our area brighter, and should save money in electric costs.

The Fire Department is working with Randy Cox and the Police Department to improve internet connection within the Public Safety Building. The joint project will be beneficial to all.

An election of Officers will be held during December's Annual Banquet. The installation of Officers will be held January 7th, 2022.

The annual Cash Calendar Fundraiser is underway. Sales have been going very well. The activity brings in \$15,000.00 in profit.

g) PSAB Representative – (Rosemeyer)

Mr. Rosemeyer mentioned that he attended the "Eggs & Issues" Meeting with the County Commissioners. He said that one of the things that was discussed in detail was volunteers in the Fire Department. He noted that there are very, very few.

Mr. Rosemeyer said that he and Gerald Walker were at the Meeting. Discussed at the Meeting was what can be done for the volunteers, and how to get more people involved.

Mr. Rosemeyer mentioned that he will be attending another PSAB Meeting in Harrisburg.

He also noted that the next County Boroughs Association Meeting will probably be held in March 2022.

h) Solicitor's Report – (Cascio)

Mrs. Ream asked Solicitor Cascio what we can do about getting the STOP sign going down on Garrett Street. Chief Cox answered by saying that Council will be presented with the Experimental Regulations Ordinance at which point it will be authorized to temporarily place STOP Signs. Afterwards, it will be revisited within 90 days.

Solicitor Cascio said to give him the authority to advertise the Ordinance, and then he would do it.

i) Mayor's Report – (Walker)

Mayor Walker thanked Borough Council for allowing them to hire an additional part-time Officer.

10. Executive Session – to discuss matters of Collective Bargaining.

Motion

Mr. Rosemeyer moved, Mrs. Opp seconded, to go into Executive Session to discuss matters of Collective Bargaining.

Motion Unanimously Carried
6:35 p.m.

Back in Public Session

6:45 p.m.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Motion

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

Motion Unanimously Carried
6:46 p.m.

Michele A. Enos, Borough Manager/ Secretary