

**JOINT MEETING – Somerset Borough Council & The Municipal
Authority of the Borough of Somerset
December 27th, 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; Lee Hoffman; Pam Ream; Sue Opp and Gary Thomas.
Council Members absent: Fred Rosemeyer and Steve Shaulis.
- b) Mayor: Scott Walker also present.
- c) 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.

Roll Call:

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

Public Attendance:

- a) John Morocco and Mickey Morocco.

4. New Business – Joint Discussions

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

Ms. Enos brought out that Mr. Bolby prepared the *Sanitary Sewer Lateral Replacement vs. Public Infrastructure* handout, for discussion, which compares the estimated construction costs between the two, to take care of the 7 million gallons of inflow & infiltration per/day.

Mr. Bolby mentioned that more detailed information was presented, at prior meetings, describing how they arrived at the estimated costs for replacing the sewer laterals verses public infrastructure.

Mr. Bolby explained that the estimated construction cost to replace the private sewer laterals is almost \$21 million dollars, which is a blend of residential and commercial. He said that there are many different varieties and pathways to pay for either sewer laterals or public infrastructure replacement. He said that it highlights the difference, or the effectiveness, of replacing the component of the sewer system that has the problem within it, which is a broken sanitary sewer lateral verses providing an equivalent amount of public structure to manage the amount of inflow & infiltration that you would be removing. So it is a more pointed and direct solution. As discussed in the past, replacing private laterals comes with its own challenges because there is a lot more public involvement, but it does go after the direct source of inflow & infiltration.

Mr. Bolby said that if the sewer laterals are not replaced, you would have to combat the inflow & infiltration on the public side, so the infrastructure would be made a little bigger. The nature of the public infrastructure, in itself, would be costlier. But it would be cheaper to replace the pipe then to build multi-million-gallon equalization, upgrade the Wastewater Treatment Plant or make bigger Pump Stations and things of that nature. He added that it is costlier, over the long haul, to operate those things.

Mr. Bolby said that both the sewer lateral replacement and public infrastructure replacement is looking at removing 7 million gallons per/day of inflow & infiltration. Both are equal in their effectiveness. He said that along with the 7 million gallons this would handle, we are still looking at **a total of 14 million gallons** of inflow & infiltration that needs to be combated. So there is still another 7 million gallons we need to handle. He brought out that the sewer lateral replacement is the typical thing that would pair with sewer line replacement that would get rid of the other 7 million gallons. He said that if the decision is to replace the public infrastructure, there is a variety of methods to choose from. Mr. Bolby brought out that this is the critical decision that would lead down any of those paths to arrive at that decision in February.

Ms. Enos reiterated that the Borough has **14 million gallons** of inflow & infiltration to get rid of. The *Sanitary Sewer Lateral Replacement vs. Public Infrastructure* handout is comparing the removal of 7 million gallons of inflow & infiltration only. She said that if we are to do **the sanitary lateral replacement**, in some form or fashion, the construction cost for the 7 million gallons is **\$20 million dollars**. She added that we are still going to be doing work on the public side pipes.

Replacement of just **the public infrastructure** would be **\$45 million dollars** to accommodate 7 million gallons. This cost would include making the Treatment Plant bigger, providing equalization, making pipes bigger and making Pump Stations bigger. She said that based on the current customer base, the difference in the estimated average monthly debt service would be passed onto the customer.

Mrs. Miller asked Mr. Bolby if in the next 15-20 years, if our Plant, even with sewer line replacement, would be able to compensate for growth of the town? Mr. Bolby answered by saying that growth has to be accounted for in whatever design is chosen. He added that it would be based on typical projections, and presently, it is unfortunately on the decline.

Mrs. Ream asked for verification that the public infrastructure does not address the root cause of the Borough's issues. Ms. Enos said that this is correct.

Mr. Bolby stated "yes" at least relating to the lateral. He added that there is also inflow & infiltration in the public pipes.

Ms. Enos mentioned that we are still pumping from the Borough's collection system, which are our lines, where the inflow & infiltration is getting into. She said that there was just an overflow at the Plant, which is one thing, but we are pumping from the collection system because there is too much water in the sanitary sewer system.

Mr. Bolby said that the problem is "twofold". He said that it was found that there is too much water getting into the pipes that can't get to the Sewage Treatment Plant, and the amount that is actually getting there, surpasses the capacity of the Plant, so it is occurring everywhere.

Mr. Thomas asked, "On the infrastructure of the streets that will be dug up to put in the new lines, is it taking into consideration this amount to put the streets back in good condition?" Mr. Bolby answered by saying that in all of the construction estimates that they have, they are conservative, and they account for some level of those costs. He added that the Borough passed an Ordinance that will require the Authority, whenever they do a project, to restore it to those conditions. So down the road, those types of things will be accounted for. He said that the public infrastructure is even more of a conservative estimate, because they wouldn't know what or where it would be.

Mr. Thomas asked if it would be charged as part of the road improvement. Mr. Bolby answered by saying that if it would impact the roads, "yes".

Mr. Hoffman asked, "Whatever option they choose for February, which is the initial step, will there still be an additional step to get to the full 14 million gallons needed?" Ms. Enos answered by saying "yes". She said that the reason for it, is because the lateral decision will "trigger the next domino that falls" in the design. Our Engineers will be guided based on the decision made for the lateral side. She added that we cannot get to that second step, until we complete the first.

Mr. Hoffman added, "Does one of these make more sense to help with the next step, or not necessarily?"

Ms. Enos answered by saying that the decision will help to give us guidance. She said that the choice will be up to the Authority and Council, and we all will need to band together and support that decision. She added that the decision will guide us into step two.

Mr. Bolby added that if the decision was made to replace all the private laterals, that would guide us into replacing all of the public infrastructure piping as well. If we were only to replace a portion of the private lateral, then we have more options available to us. He added that until we pass the decision on the lateral, we can wait to look at the options, because it will need to be looked at in more detail. He added that there are a lot of details to get through, but it all starts at the upstream point, which is the laterals.

It was asked if all of the laterals will need replacement. Mr. Bolby answered by saying “no”, but all of the estimated costs assumes that.

Solicitor Cascio said, “In either way, the customers are paying 100% of the costs.” Ms. Enos answered by saying, “Absolutely.” She said that we are going to be applying for PennVEST Funding with the same goal in mind that was just accomplished with the Water Project. So we are anticipating that there will be grant funding. She added that we cannot promise that to you, but we can certainly apply for it, see where we fair into the programs that are being offered at that time, and see what is available to us.

Mr. Reilly explained that the way PennVEST structures their funding, in part, is by calculating an affordable rate for the service customer. Depending on the project chosen, you may or may not end up with a different user rate in the end. He stressed that grant funding is not guaranteed, or they cannot predict what will happen a few years from now. He said that it is important to understand that whether the \$20-million-dollar project is chosen, or the \$40-million-dollar project is chosen, that may ultimately not be what you are paying in debt service.

Solicitor Cascio asked “Doesn’t one of them eliminate the major problem, which is the inflow & infiltration?” Mr. Reilly answered by saying that one of them eliminates the major problem and more directly addresses the problem. He brought out that the real question is not the decision. The real questions, and what matters is, “Can you stick with your decision?” “Can you make a decision that you can live with, and that you can get through 15 years of a project with?”

Solicitor Cascio asked if there was a different level of efficiency, depending on the choice that is made with the laterals. Mr. Reilly answered by saying that doing the laterals is the most direct way to get to where you need to go. But, if the decision is made that you are going to require customers to test all the laterals, then that decision is changed 1, 2 or 5 years down the road, that is the worst situation, because you have a project that is half way designed, or partially built, that doesn’t meet your design criteria. Then you ask, “How do we make this work?” The decision that needs to be made is, “Can we make a decision that we can live with throughout this entire project?”

Ms. Enos expressed that she thinks it is about understanding the project, as well too. She added that when faced with the challenges, you want to have all the information and be able to “hang your hat” on the decision that you are making. Ms. Enos asked, “Do you market this project by what the customer will pay in increases each month for the project, which will

continue to increase with the cost of living or with future projects that go up?” “Or do you market it based upon putting in all this infrastructure where we are building larger pipes than we have to, and building bigger Plants than we have to because we are carrying water along with our sewer and treating that?” “Or are you more comfortable with saying the public infrastructure was chosen because we didn’t want to interfere with customer’s properties.” She said that it is more about what the Authority and Council feel comfortable marketing.

Mr. Hoffman expressed that if they were to announce a \$45-million-dollar project, would we still potentially have to announce a \$20-million-dollar project 5 years from now, and say that we are going to dig up customers’ yards too, and we are going to spend another \$45 million dollars to dig up the street in front of customers’ homes? Now 10 years later, we are going to need another \$20 million to dig up directly to customer’s homes? It seems like the \$20-million-dollar project is more intrusive, but it may lead to a greater understanding of the \$45-million-dollar project down the road. The \$20-million-dollar project seems like it is better for the environment. The \$45-million-dollar project would allow laundry water, for example, to be collected in quite a bit of pipe, and not actually be removed directly from the ground outside customers’ homes. He expressed that it would be good to pursue the \$20-million-dollar project in favor of the \$45-million-dollar project.

Solicitor Cascio asked what the average cost is to replace a defective lateral? Mr. Bolby answered by saying that the estimated cost is about \$5,000.00 for a single family, residential home, from the property line the whole way through.

Solicitor Cascio stated that the resident presently receiving water and sewer service would be looking at \$5,000.00 out of pocket costs, upfront, and what they would get in exchange for that is more than half lower water and sewer bill.

Ms. Enos stated that this was correct.

Mrs. Opp asked if the residents are going to have to pay to get their lines checked to see whether they actually need replaced before they are going to come in and dig everything up? She said if someone doesn’t need their lines replaced, then they are out \$5,000.00 - \$6,000.00. Mr. Bolby stated that this would be the next decision that has to be made by the Authority and Council. He stated that a pressure test is the best test to have to ensure you are keeping inflow & infiltration out. He said the next level down would be a water column test. There is also a visual test. He added that this test works, but is not a good guarantee as the water or the pressure test. He said that if you are going to replace the lateral, it makes the most sense to do the pressure test.

Mr. Reilly said that if you are going to count on removing the inflow & infiltration from the lateral, you have to do an air pressure test or a water column test. A visual inspection, smoke testing, or anything like that, is not going to tell you whether your under slab piping is water tight or not. In replacing the laterals, we are going to remove 50% of the inflow & infiltration

that is in the laterals. The only way to achieve that is some type of pressure testing or water column test.

Mrs. Miller asked who is going to pay for that. Mr. Reilly answered by saying that the customer will. He explained that there are complications behind this, and modifications that will have to be made on the customers' end, to allow access for the pressure testing to be done.

Mrs. Opp commented, "When they dig up my basement, I pay to have it put back together." She added that the \$5,000.00 cost to the customers, does not include what it is going to take to replace basements that have to be ripped up.

Mr. Bolby said that the \$5,000.00 was developed based on actual service line replacements occurring in Johnstown, PA. Their average was around \$3,500.00. It was increased to \$5,000.00 to be conservative, but it did have your cheap lateral replacements. Higher costs were put in for commercial businesses, because they tend to have one more lateral, but thicker concrete slabs. He said that there is a lot of variability between now and then.

Mr. Hoffman asked if there was any idea on a timeline for when they would all be complete. Mr. Bolby answered by saying that it would be phased, and it would occur after the main line would be replaced. There would have to be a viewport in front of the house to be able to get into the sewer line to be able to do the test.

Mayor Walker asked if the bulk of the inflow & infiltration comes from the laterals. Mr. Reilly answered by saying that 50% comes from the private side and 50% comes from the public side.

Mayor Walker asked that if Council decided to choose the public infrastructure project only, what is the chance that in 5, 6 or 10 years down the road that DEP will come back and make us dig up the laterals because they said that it is an environmental issue? Mr. Reilly answered by saying that the chances are "slim to none". He said that DEP's position all along for the private lateral is very clear and very specific, that it is a local issue. He said DEP is telling us what we have to achieve, and however the Borough achieves it, is up to the Borough. DEP very consistently has said that it is a local issue and a local decision.

Mrs. Ream asked how it will be handled if people refuse to participate and refuse to pay? And another issue is how difficult it is to find a plumber, or any general contractor, to come in and do the work. Mr. Bolby said that a lot of companies were created when Johnstown, PA had the private side replacement. He explained the program administered by their Authority that was offered to the customers.

Mrs. Ream brought out that she recalls that there was also an option that the lines could be replaced from the street to the house, and it did not go into the house. She said that if she

remembers correctly, it wasn't going to get rid of the 7 million gallons, but she still thought that it was an acceptable amount.

Ms. Enos replied that it is absolutely an acceptable option.

Mrs. Ream said that she is also thinking of why some other Municipalities have backed down from their decision. She said that by jack hammering someone's basement, it is really going to really upset a lot of people.

Mr. Bolby said that he has experience with another client that chose to replace up to the foundation, but also chose not to improve some of the Sewage Treatment Plant side. They completed the entire project, and still have never not been hydraulically overloaded. They have never been out from under their issue. They are still under a tap ban and everything is still there. He said that he doesn't think that the Borough would run into this particular situation, but in that town, everyone thought that they had new sewer laterals, but everyone forgot about the portion that was underneath the basement.

Mrs. Ream commented that it is still a lot to consider, along with reactions from the people.

Solicitor Cascio asked, "If everyone had to do laterals up to the outside wall, but had the option to replace underneath the basement, could you satisfy that with fees or give them a discount or something like that?" Mr. Reilly answered by saying that we don't know what the design is yet. There is a flow associated with each one of the alternatives, so you don't know what the rest of the project looks like until the selection is made.

Mrs. Opp asked Solicitor Cascio, "What about the residents who just won't do it, can't afford to do it or who will not participate in this?" Solicitor Cascio answered by saying that they wouldn't be water and sewer customers, so they couldn't occupy their homes.

Mr. Thomas commented that, "If you take the lateral from the street clear up to the foundation, the only way the other water could come in would be through floor drains." Mr. Bolby said that there are floor drains, but as those floor drains go down through the floor, they are underground. In every home that has a basement, the water is getting into any cracks that are in those pipes. There could also be sewer backups in some homes. Other homes have roof leaders, found through Smoke & Dye testing, that are illegally connected to the sewer system.

Mr. Bailey brought out that a lot of houses in the Borough have cast iron pipes under the basement floors that are rusted out. The water from these rusted pipes is running out into the foundation wall, through the foundation and out into the main.

Mr. Reilly explained that the piping underneath the floor slab, below the basement, is a definite problem. It lets in a ton of inflow & infiltration whether it is cast iron, terracotta or asbestos cement. Even joints in plastic piping can leak if the joints were not glued correctly. Brand new piping even fails testing because it was never tested before being covered over.

He added that he would be shocked if there is more than 5% who pass testing based on the age of the homes and structures in the Borough.

Solicitor Cascio brought out that the average water and sewer customer, whatever choice is made, would basically pay through rates. So the question becomes, "If the public infrastructure project is chosen, would DEP accept that?" If that choice is made, the customer would be paying twice as much on their water and sewer bill.

Mrs. Sizemore added that the sewer rate does not take into account any kind of grants the Borough may receive.

Ms. Enos brought out that there are programs for those who qualify under low to moderate income. There is also grant funding for those who qualify that will take care of them. There are also different grant / loan opportunities with the SBA for low to moderate income.

Ms. Enos brought out that if the choice is to build larger infrastructure for the 7 million gallons, that debt service will be \$77.00. And that is not accounting for removing another 7 million on the public side which the customer will still pay for. So it will be higher than the \$77.00.

Mr. Bolby brought out that the best thing that the *Sanitary Sewer Lateral Replacement Verse Public Infrastructure* handout demonstrates is the efficiency of the method, that fixing the problem directly is more effective than fixing it after it has already occurred, which is the public option. He said that the costs could come out to be exactly the same monthly rate because of how the funding agencies look at it.

Mr. Reilly added that if we can get public funding for the private side, then that statement is true. He added that we can implement programs like Johnstown did, and we can implement low interest loans through PennVEST, but at the end of the day, the customer is still going to be making some arrangements to have work done in their house. Mr. Reilly said that there seems to be more of a direct impact to the customer, and they will be paying for it in the end, but on the public side, you have the potential of getting grant funding that results in no cost to the customer. He added that we can't really know if it will be enough to offset that. He added that the project, at the end, will have some total cost, and an affordable rate will be calculated. They will then structure the financing package based on what that affordable rate will be.

Mrs. Sizemore asked, "Do we have an idea for sale transfers in the Borough? What is it per/year?" Mr. Hoffman answered by saying that the statistics say that it is less than 1% turnover per/year.

Mr. Flower asked, "What kind of condition is everything going to be in 20 years after construction is done? Mr. Bolby said that there were other people who have done this and have never not been in violation?" Mr. Reilly answered by saying that there is an important distinction there. They did not do some of the public side that they needed to do, and were recommended they do, because they didn't want to spend the money.

Mr. Flower asked, "If you do everything on the public side, and not anything on the private side, how long is that going to be good enough before it is no longer good enough? The inflow & infiltration is still there." Mr. Flower expressed that when you put all new infrastructure in, and people do not want to replace their under slab piping, they should have to pass a test. He said that at the bare minimum, everyone is going to be replacing the outside pipe no matter what. To pass the test under slab is the least invasive that anyone can hope for. He said that you still want to hook up brand new pipe to a brand new collection system. Abandoning those facilities in the basement is also an option so the basement floors do not have to be jack hammered.

Mr. Bolby recounted that the Borough went through the Smoke Testing, Dye Testing and the Cleaning & Televising. He said that through this effort, they found 81,000 feet of terracotta pipe that is in very bad condition. This is 81,000 out of 212,000 linear feet of public sewer line. A lot of that is in the older sections of the neighborhoods. Those all classify under the umbrella of the NASCO 4 & 5, which is the terminology we used to establish what needs to be corrected. There are 1,500 of those in the system. DEP is asking the Municipal Authority to fix all the 4's & 5's because they are so numerous, and so close to other defects. He said that the Engineer's recommendation, regardless, would most likely be to replace the 81,000 feet of terracotta line because it meets the criteria of 4's & 5's, and the terracotta pipe is bad. We were actively seeing the inflow & infiltration getting in there, so that is direct replacement.

Mr. Reilly added that whatever the sewer lateral decision is, it does not directly impact the 81,000 feet of public line. That pipe is bad, and needs replaced, no matter what the lateral decision is.

Mr. Bolby stated that replacing the 81,000 feet of terracotta pipe does not say "yes", that we are going to replace the private sewer lateral line. It would just be a good logical project to do because that line is in such bad condition. Figuring out the lateral decision first, would help in figuring other things out. If we are not going to replace the lateral, that opens up the Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrades, the Pump Station upgrades and Equalization. He asked "Would it be the best decision, in this case, knowing that those lines are in pretty bad shape, and we have had collapses, and found broken pipes and a lot of structural issues?" It would probably not be the best decision to go in the direction of just providing equalization tanks or big Treatment Plants or anything like that. We still have a couple avenues to go even if we were to recommend, and move forward, with replacing that section of line. We know it is bad pipe, and all those efforts confirmed it. It is not restricting us in the decision regarding the private laterals, but it would be a good project to get taken care of.

Mr. Jacob asked if it was known how many gallons we were adding to our problem by fixing that 81,000.

Mr. Bolby answered by saying that we are taking 50% of the private and 50% of the public, so that gives us approximately 3 million gallons per/day, by rationing through the numbers.

Mr. Bolby explained that through the course of investigations, we didn't find the "holy grail" of inflow & infiltration. Only one little leak was found along Coxes Creek. He said that there are broken pipes everywhere in the public system, the worst being in the clay pipe. He added that it is reaching the end of its useful life.

Mr. Hoffman said that this will be helpful, because the Borough is trying to help bring homes into compliance and make it better for the environment as opposed to "Fix this in 90 days or your water will be shut off."

Ms. Enos brought out that there is time. She added that Marketing was previously discussed along with Public Outreach.

MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY MEETING AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting:

a) November 22nd, 2021 – Joint Municipal Authority/Borough Council Meeting Minutes.

Motion

Mr. Jacob moved, Mrs. Miller seconded, to approve the November 22nd, 2021 Joint Municipal Authority/Borough Council Meeting Minutes.

Motion Unanimously Carried

2. New Business:

a) Resolution No. 2021-02 – Consider the adoption of the Resolution to increase water rates by \$0.05 per 100 gallons effective January 1, 2022.

Motion

Mrs. Sizemore moved, Mr. Jacob seconded, to adopt Resolution No. 2021-02 to increase water rates by \$0.05 per 100 gallons effective January 1, 2022.

Motion Unanimously Carried

*Municipal Authority
Of The
Borough of Somerset
Resolution No. 2021 - 02*

A RESOLUTION OF THE MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY OF THE BOROUGH OF SOMERSET
ESTABLISHING THE RATES TO BE COLLECTED FROM CUSTOMERS OF THE SOMERSET
BOROUGH WATER SYSTEM

BE IT, AND THE SAME IS HEREBY RESOLVED AND ENACTED as follows:

1. From and after the effective date of this Resolution, the rate to be charged to all customers of the Somerset Borough Water System shall be SEVENTY-TWO CENTS (\$0.72) per ONE HUNDRED (100) GALLONS.
2. All existing ordinances or parts thereof that are inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed.
3. This Resolution shall take effect January 1, 2022.

ENACTED AND RESOLVED this 27th day of December 2021 by the Municipal Authority of the Borough of Somerset.

Municipal Authority of the Borough of Somerset

Adopted this 27th day of December 2021

3. Payment of Bills/Requisitions:

a) None

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

WATER:

1) Water System Capital Improvement Projects:

Mr. Bolby disclosed that we are currently in the Easement Acquisition stage. We have held two Public Meetings here in the Borough Building. It was successful, and we had several Easements signed by various property owners. There are still a number of them hanging out there, and Mr. Bailey is following up with the individual property owners now to see where they are at. We have 20 out of 127 received so far. That number seems underwhelming so far, but there are multiple single entities that have several parcels.

GENERAL:

1) Center Avenue Sidewalk Project:

Mr. Bolby recapped that this is part of the DCED Multi-Modal Grant that the Borough received. Because of the reduced grant amount, only the South 100 block of Center Avenue will be replaced. This includes sidewalk replacement and electrical improvements. Because of all the other projects that have been going on, and trying to avoid disturbing those sidewalks at a later date, it was discussed about including placement of the sewer, water and storm in that area before the sidewalk project would occur. We are making sure that all participants and stakeholders are involved.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Motion

Mr. Jacob moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Flower.

Motion Unanimously Carried
6:20 p.m.

BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings:

a) November 8th, 2021 –Borough Council Budget Meeting Minutes

Motion

Mrs. Ream moved, Mrs. Opp seconded, to approve the November 8th, 2021 Borough Council Budget Meeting Minutes.

Motion Unanimously Carried

b) November 22nd, 2021 –Joint Municipal Authority/Borough Council Meeting Minutes.

Motion

Mr. Thomas moved, Mrs. Ream seconded, to approve the Joint Municipal Authority/Borough Council Meeting Minutes.

Motion Unanimously Carried

2. Opening of Bids

a) None

3. General Public Comments:

a) Community Improvement Award – Presentation by President Miller.

President Miller read, and presented, Mr. John Morocco with the *Community Improvement Award* from Borough Council, and Mayor, for his generous donation of time, equipment, and personnel in placing the Christmas tree at the Courthouse each year. He was also thanked for all his support in the Community throughout the years.

Mayor Walker also thanked Mr. Morocco, on behalf of himself and the Borough, for what he has given back to the Community.

Mr. Morocco mentioned that it was a nice community, and that he was glad that everyone pitches in and helps. He added that he wanted to be a part of it.

Mr. Enos also thanked Mr. Morocco on behalf of Borough Council, and the Borough's Crew, for his involvement and assistance in the Borough's street work throughout the years. She added that support from John's son, Mickey was also very much appreciated.

4. Administrative Business:

a) Communications (None)

b) Payment of Bills for the month of December 2021.

Motion

Mr. Hoffman moved, Mrs. Ream seconded, to approve the payment of bills for the month of December 2021 numbered 37532 - 37694 totaling \$590,412.95.

Motion Unanimously Carried

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

Motion

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

Motion Unanimously Carried

5. Policy Agenda:

Old Business:

- a) None

New Business:

- a) Keystone Collection Group – Consider appointing the Keystone Collection Group to collect the Borough's Current Local Services Tax.

Mr. Peters disclosed that Capital Tax was the local earned income tax collector, and is actually a County appointed collector. They collect all the taxes for every Municipality and School District in Somerset County. They put that out to bid, and now it is Keystone Collection Group. Capital Tax is no longer the collector.

Mr. Peters said that, in the past, Keystone collected Occupational Privilege Tax for the School District, and he did not have any issues with them. Keystone Collection Group was the recommendation for the collector of earned income tax for the Tax Collection Committee. He brought out that Capital Tax does not want to do it anymore. Mr. Peters expressed that he would recommend Keystone Collection.

Motion

Mrs. Ream moved, Mrs. Opp seconded, to appoint the Keystone Collection Group to collect the Borough's Current Local Services Tax.

Motion Unanimously Carried

- b) Resolution No. 2021-08 – Establishing the Real Estate Tax Rate at 17.4 mills for the year 2022. (No tax increase)

Motion

Mr. Thomas moved, Mrs. Opp seconded, to set the Real Estate Tax Rate at 17.4 mills for the year 2022. (No tax increase)

Motion Unanimously Carried

RESOLUTION No. 2021-08

***A RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF SOMERSET, COUNTY OF SOMERSET,
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, FIXING THE TAX RATE FOR THE YEAR 2022***

***NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Borough of Somerset,
Somerset County, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:***

THAT a tax be and the same is hereby levied on all real property within the Borough of Somerset, subject to taxation for the fiscal year 2022 as follows:

SECTION 1. Tax Rate for General Purposes, the sum of 16.29 on each one thousand dollars of assessed valuation, or the sum of \$ 1.629 on each one hundred dollars of assessed valuation.

SECTION 2. For Mary S. Biesecker Public Library purposes, the sum of .666 mills on each one thousand dollars of assessed valuation, or the sum of \$.0666 on each one hundred dollars of assessed valuation.

SECTION 3. For Somerset Volunteer Fire Department purposes, the sum of .444 mills on each one thousand dollars of assessed valuation, or the sum of \$.0444 on each one hundred dollars of assessed valuation.

SECTION 4. All other municipal tax rates are to remain unchanged.

SECTION 5. That any Resolution, or part of Resolution, conflicting with this Resolution, be and the same is hereby repealed insofar as the same affects this Resolution.

MILLS ON EACH DOLLAR OF ASSESSED VALUATION

<i>Tax Rate for General Purposes</i>	<i>16.29 Mills</i>
<i>Tax Rate for Mary S. Biesecker Public Library purposes</i>	<i>.666 Mills</i>
<i>Tax Rate for Somerset Volunteer Fire Department Purposes</i>	<i>.444 Mills</i>

ADOPTED this 27th day of December 2021.

- c) **Final Budgets for 2022** – Consider adoption of the final Budgets for year 2022 which includes General Fund; Water Fund; Sewer Fund and Special Revenue Funds.

Motion

Mr. Hoffman moved, Mr. Thomas seconded, to adopt the final Budgets for year 2022 which includes General Fund; Water Fund; Sewer Fund and Special Revenue Funds.

Motion Unanimously Carried

- d) Engineering Service Agreement – Consider executing the engineering agreement for the S. Center Avenue Sidewalk Replacement Project in the amount of \$45,000.00.

Ms. Enos brought out that we are using grant funding for this, but the engineering portion for the sidewalk replacement is \$45,000.00, which represents design, engineering and inspection.

Motion

Mrs. Ream moved, Mr. Hoffman seconded, to execute the Engineering Agreement for the South Center Avenue Sidewalk Replacement Project in the amount of \$45,000.00.

Motion Unanimously Carried

- e) Sale of Surplus Property – Authorization to accept the certification for the sale of surplus property. Four (4) used Goodyear Wrangler Tires for \$100.00.

Motion

Mrs. Ream moved, Mr. Thomas seconded, to accept the certification for the sale of surplus property. Four (4) used Goodyear Wrangler Tires for \$100.00.

Motion Unanimously Carried

- f) Sale of Surplus Property – Authorization to accept the certification for the sale of surplus property. Used Lift gate valued and sold for \$175.00.

Motion

Mr. Thomas moved, Mr. Hoffman seconded, to accept the certification for the sale of surplus property. Used Lift gate valued and sold for \$175.00.

Motion Unanimously Carried

- g) Sale of Surplus Property – Authorization to accept the certification for the sale of surplus property. Used 1970 Rosco Vibrastat II Roller valued and sold for \$500.00.

Motion

Mr. Thomas moved, Mrs. Opp seconded, to accept the certification for the sale of surplus property. Used 1970 Rosco Vibrastat II Roller valued and sold for \$500.00.

Motion Unanimously Carried

h) Pam Ream Agenda Request – To discuss the update on the stop sign request for West Garrett Street and other locations where there are problems with speed and accidents.

Mrs. Ream said that the first request for a stop sign is on West Garrett Street.

Solicitor Cascio brought out that this was discussed at a previous Council Meeting with Chief Cox. At that time, Chief Cox made reference to a section in the Law that authorizes temporary, emergency traffic control. Solicitor Cascio said that he has personally done the research into it, and has spoken to Chief Cox. He concluded that it is not an emergency. He said the alternative would be to authorize the preparation and advertising of an Ordinance to establish traffic control in this area. He added that the Borough could work on doing this with Chief Cox.

Motion

Mrs. Ream moved, Mrs. Opp seconded, to authorize the preparation and advertisement of an Ordinance to establish traffic control on West Garrett Street.

Motion Unanimously Carried

Mrs. Ream mentioned that the other area where there is a problem is on the 100 block of East Church and the 200 block of Center Avenue, which is the corner of UPMC Somerset Hospital. She said that there have been a lot of accidents at this corner. Recently, an employee of the hospital was hit by a car on this crosswalk.

Mrs. Ream explained that drivers on Center Avenue see the green light while approaching the hospital, and come flying down that road to beat the red light. She commented that it is a very dangerous place. She believes that if there was a 4-way stop sign on this corner, people would not be in such a rush to beat the red light. Also drivers coming down Patriot know that nothing is stopping them, because there is not a stop sign or any traffic control in that area either.

Mrs. Ream expressed that she would like a 4-way stop sign to be considered for the safety of the Towers people, safety of employees of the hospital and safety of the patients.

It was brought out that this is a State Highway, so the State would have to authorize traffic control.

Ms. Enos disclosed that the Borough could ask the State to perform a traffic study in this area. She added that they have done this for the Borough in the past.

i) Humane Society of Somerset County – Requesting a donation for the year 2022.

It was brought out that the Borough typically donates \$500.00 to the Humane Society of Somerset County.

Motion

Mrs. Opp moved, Mrs. Ream seconded, to donate \$500.00 to the Humane Society of Somerset County for the year 2022.

Motion Unanimously Carried

Committee, Administration, Special Reports:

a) Manager's Report - (Enos)

Ms. Enos stated that if there were any questions regarding the Departmental Reports, feel free to contact her.

b) President's Report – (R. Miller)

(Mrs. Miller had nothing to report)

c) Finance Report – (Peters)

Mr. Peters provided Borough Council with the Year-to-Date Financial Report through the month of November 2021. He mentioned that we are 91.67% of the way through the year.

General Fund:

Revenues – 112%

Expenses – 92.05%

Water Fund:

Revenues – 81.69%

Expenses – 88.99%

Sewer Fund:

Revenues – 80.48%

Expenses – 69.85%

Mr. Peters added that if Borough Council had any particular questions, he would be glad to address those.

d) Engineer's Report - (Bolby/Reilly)

(The Engineer's Report was discussed during the Municipal Authority Meeting)

e) Somerset Inc. Representative – (Hoffman)

Mr. Hoffman mentioned that "Light-Up Night" went great. "Fire & Ice" is up next. He said that the initial "Clean-Up Day" at Brinker went well.

Mr. Hoffman also brought out that the Borough really teams up a great deal with Somerset Inc. for a lot of different things, such as when they helped move sheds around with their forklifts for the Chris Cringle Market Place. He also mentioned that he and Regina are talking about some things that the Borough and Somerset Inc. might be working on together. He added that we have to continue showcasing those good relationships.

f) Fire Department Representative – (Shaulis)

(A Fire Report was not received prior to this meeting)

Mr. Thomas disclosed that Jim Clark is going to be the new Fire Chief. The 1st Assistant is going to be Sean Ibenson, then Bart Close and Steve Borosky. The President will again be

Henry Cook. The new Secretary will be Kristen Grasser. The two Board Members will be Jarod Rhoads and Frank Frola.

g) PSAB Representative – (Rosemeyer)

(Mr. Rosemeyer was absent, therefore a PSAB Report was not given)

h) Solicitor's Report – (Cascio)

(Solicitor Cascio had nothing further to report)

i) Mayor's Report – (Walker)

Mayor Walker had nothing to report, but stated that he hopes he is leaving the Mayor's position a little better than when he started.

Mayor Walker was thanked for his services.

10. Executive Session – To discuss matters of litigation and collective bargaining.

Motion

Mrs. Opp moved, Mrs. Ream seconded, to go into Executive Session to discuss matters of litigation and collective bargaining.

Motion Unanimously Carried
6:39 p.m.

Back in Public Session

6:49 p.m.

Motion

Mrs. Ream moved, Mrs. Opp seconded, to provide the Police, that are currently employed, with a .95 cents per/hour increase for one year.

Motion Unanimously Carried

Motion

Mrs. Opp moved, Mrs. Ream seconded, to give all nine Staff Members of Management a 3% raise for year 2022.

Motion Unanimously Carried

Motion

Mr. Thomas moved, Mrs. Opp seconded, to add to the Agenda consideration to approve a 1-year contract with the Police Department, as well as a 3% raise for all nine Members of our Management Staff for the year 2022.

Motion Unanimously Carried

On behalf of the Staff & Borough Council, Ms. Enos presented Mayor Walker and Mr. Thomas with Gift Baskets in appreciation for the service they provided to the Borough.

Mrs. Ream asked what will be done to fill Mr. Rosemeyer's vacancy on Borough Council when he steps into the Mayor's position. Ms. Enos answered by saying that Mr. Rosemeyer has not submitted his letter of resignation for his position on Borough Council prior to taking the Oath of Office for Mayor. She said that she hasn't received his letter yet, so we cannot formally act on anything, at this time, because there is not yet a vacancy.

Ms. Enos added, that based on the Borough Code, we have 30 days to fill the vacant position that will be created at the next Borough Council Meeting.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Motion

Mrs. Opp moved to adjourn, seconded by Mrs. Ream.

Motion Unanimously Carried
6:55 p.m.

Michele A. Enos, Borough Manager/ Secretary