

Borough of Somerset Council Meeting

March 28th, 2022 - 5:00 p.m. *(In-Person Meeting)*

1. **Meeting Called to Order** - President Ream

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

3. **Roll Call:**

Borough Council Members present: *Pam Ream; Ruby Miller; Lee Hoffman; Sue Opp; Steve Shaulis; and Jim Clark.*

Also present: *Mayor Fred Rosemeyer.*

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

Public Attendance:

a) Ian Mandichak and Fred Young II.

4. **Approval of Agenda:** *Consider approving the Agenda.*

Motion

Mr. Hoffman moved, Mrs. Opp seconded, to approve the March 28th, 2022, Agenda.

Motion Unanimously Carried

5. **Announcements**

a) Oath of Honor – Administer the Oath of Honor for Officer Kate Frey.

The Oath of Honor was administered to Officer Kate Frey by Mayor Fred Rosemeyer.

Chief Cox also thanked Officer Kate Frey's family for their support in providing their assistance in helping her reach this milestone. He added that the sacrifice the family will have to make in Officer Frey's role as a Police Officer of the Somerset Borough Police Department is also acknowledged and recognized.

Officer Frey introduced herself and her family to Borough Council and mentioned a little about her background. She said that she was also grateful for the opportunity to be a part of Somerset Borough.

Borough Council welcomed Officer Frey to the Somerset Borough Police Force.

6. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)

a) February 28th, 2022 – *Joint Municipal Authority/Borough Council Meeting Minutes.*

Motion

Mr. Shaulis moved, Mrs. Opp seconded, to approve the February 28th, 2022, Joint Municipal Authority/Borough Council Meeting Minutes.

Motion Unanimously Carried

7. Award of Bids:

a) None

8. General Public Comments:

a) Attorney Dan Vitek – *Representing Cherry Lane Mobile Home Association.*

Attorney Dan Vitek disclosed that he represents the Cherry Lane Mobile Home Association and is there to speak, on their behalf, about the park's future. He said the park is being put up for judicial sale next month, and the residents have appreciated the Borough's efforts to move and divest that property from the current ownership which has caused all the problems there by not engaging with the residents or their properties, nor has committed to their responsibilities as the landlord.

Attorney Dan Vitek stated that he wants to speak about the park's future which, most likely, involves the Borough taking control of the property in some fashion and having the ability to determine who will be the next long-term owner of the property.

He brought out that the residents would like to ask Borough Council to consider, when they take on that responsibility, ensuring that the property is turned over to a responsible owner that is willing to commit to certain goals as it goes forward as the new owner.

Attorney Vitek mentioned that the property needs a lot of improvements. He said that they would like to specifically see that the Borough ensure that the next owner is committed to **#1 - fixing the water system**. He brought out that this not only affects the residents of the park, but also affects the bottom-line of the Borough. The water provided from the Borough to the park is leaking out the back end of the park at a very rapid rate. So committing to repairing that system is their #1 objective. He added that they strongly encourage the Borough to require a complete renovation of the water system. They would also like individual shutoffs to control the water usage, not only so there is not a constant stream going out of the park, but

also so that the water pressure remains good. They insist this is a must. They would also like to ensure that the next owner makes the commitment to do this in a reasonable timeframe.

Attorney Vitek said that the **2nd request is dealing with the abandoned homes**. The arsons that took place at Cherry Lane a few years ago have never been addressed and most of those homes still sit in the park burned-out. There are also many other vacant homes which cause many problems. He stated that they wanted to ask the Borough to make sure that the new owner is committed to moving the abandoned properties or restoring them to useful occupancy.

Attorney Vitek brought out that the **3rd request is to ensure that the new owner is committed to being a responsible owner in managing the park**. The current residents would like to see the new owner take-on and commit to two specifics. *One*, would be to have an on-site manager for dealing with direct complaints. *The second*, is that all residents be screened properly before coming into the park.

Attorney Vitek disclosed that **the last request is that the park remain affordable housing**. The best way to ensure this, is to ensure that it remains a mobile home park for at least a significant amount of time in the future. The residents are asking Borough Council to make the new owner commit to keeping the park as a mobile home park. They also want to ensure that the current residents are not “footing the bill” for the past owner’s negligence. They would also like the Borough to require that the new owner keep the rent at the current amount, set by the Court, for at least three years for existing tenants.

Attorney Vitek expressed that this is a lot to ask of someone taking ownership of a park in this condition. He added that it is necessary, though, because it is in the interest of the residents who survived through everything that they have gone through over the last few years, and it is also in the interest of the Community to make sure that this place doesn’t remain a “blight” on the Borough of Somerset, but actually becomes of productive use in that area.

Attorney Vitek brought out that to make sure a new owner is committed to those things; the Borough is going to have to incentivize that. He added that he would encourage the Borough to consider coming to some sort of agreement where the sale price is connected to direct investment in the property, lowering the cost of the liens and the purchase price. So, the more that the new owner is willing to invest in the Community, perhaps the less they would have to pay out what is owed on the property.

A 14-year resident of the park, Michelle Sarver, spoke out on behalf of the residents stating that they would like the property sold to a responsible buyer and have it remain a mobile home park. She also expressed that the current residents would like the water issue fixed and stated that the current residents were in favor of Mr. Fred Young purchasing the property.

Solicitor Cascio asked Attorney Vitek how he saw the Borough implementing the sale. Attorney Vitek stated that the Borough had within its authority to condition a sale through the bid process as long as it was made public, and people are able to bid with those conditions already in mind. He expressed that it was totally appropriate, and within the bounds of the Borough's authority, to handle the property in this way.

In anticipation of the upcoming judicial sale, Attorney Vitek strongly encouraged the Borough to consider this now and see that a plan is in place.

The Executive Director of Tableland, Mr. Dave **Roselsky**, next spoke on behalf of the Community. He explained that Tableland is a Community Action agency, and one of the biggest areas they work with is the area of housing and homelessness assistance. He disclosed that the bulk of the people that use their services are looking for affordable housing, and in this County, it is growing by "leaps and bounds".

Mr. **Roselsky** said that when Tableland looks at the trailer park, they see an area that already exists for affordable housing. He expressed that they know that it needs a lot of work to make sure it is safe and habitable, not just affordable. He brought out that Tableland is in support of the new owners keeping it as a trailer park, and an area for affordable housing.

Mr. **Roselsky** said that Tableland recently did a Community Needs assessment. He explained that this involved soliciting input from members of the Community, Tableland's Board of Directors and partnering Agencies. The results revealed that the need for safe and affordable housing in Somerset County is always the number one concern of people.

Mr. **Roselsky** also disclosed that a lot of studies have been done which link the success and safety of children to the home environment, along with having safe and affordable housing.

He expressed that the new owners need to make improvements in the park, and that Tableland would like to be able to refer people that are looking for affordable housing to the park, but are reluctant to do so because of some of the conditions that exist there.

Solicitor Cascio brought out the Borough will be consulting with Attorney Vitek as we get closer to the time this must develop. He reiterated that there is going to be a judicial sale where people could come and bid on it. At some point, there will be some type of negotiated or evaluated settlement of the matter.

Solicitor Cascio said that future Borough Council meetings will discuss where parameters need established to allow this to happen, to work on the sale, and how to proceed. He added that the Borough has an obligation to the rate payers and taxpayers to minimize the loss and the best way to accomplish that. Solicitor Cascio added that we can see what is available and see what could possibly be done to address this issue.

Next, Mr. Fred Young (the court appointed receiver) spoke and said that his company was interested in purchasing the property. They have been operating as the receiver of the property, on behalf of the Court of Common Pleas, for approximately 14-15 months.

Mr. Young thanked Chief Cox, Ms. Enos and Borough Council for their cooperation and support to improve the property during the receivership phase.

He disclosed that the culture is starting to change in the park. He said that Mr. Sarver has been helping him manage the park in removing the “problematic element.” of it. In the short-term, while working through the receivership phase without ownership, he expressed that he is very limited to what he can invest into it. What they can do is try to clean things up and identify who is living there, which has been done. They have conducted background checks and evicted several people. Mr. Young mentioned that the Police Department has been very helpful in this effort.

Mr. Young expressed that he is hoping to move towards a more permanent solution and is enthused this can happen. He brought out that in the last 15 months, the Borough of Somerset, the residents of the park, as well as the Borough’s administration, partnered in showing their interest by means of their assistance. He expressed that he feels it can get back to a nice property. He added that it will take some time, but it can get back to that with significant investment and hard work.

Solicitor Cascio explained why the Borough is going through the whole process of foreclosure and acting on a lien. He said that by operation of law of municipal liens, you must jump forward before any other claims. He said that there were private mortgage holders on this property. You must go through a judicial sale to divest any liens that could not be paid. He said that they are not officially divested until this process occurs.

Solicitor Cascio stated that the Borough does not want to be in the property ownership business, so the effect of the sale would be to “close out”. Then when the Borough wants to dispose of something that it has control over, there are special requirements, as well, which require complying with the law in terms of bidding and sales. He added that Borough Council must accept the logic of having this type of housing in the Borough, and what needs to be done to make it happen, so it is a process.

Mr. Young brought out that this mobile home park has rightfully earned a negative reputation, however, there are a lot of taxpayers, people who work in the Community and several retirees that have lived there since the 80’s. He expressed that a lot of very good people live in Cherry Lane and added that if we continue down the path of really working to invest in the park, and revitalize it, it could be a very vital asset for the Community.

Chief Cox brought out that one of the things that makes Somerset such a unique Community is the amount of transient population that we get. While our permanent population “is what it is”, our daily peak population is conservatively set at 51,000 a day. So, there is a lot of people coming into the Community and consuming a lot of its services.

Chief Cox stated that the other thing that isn’t so noticeable is the homelessness issue that Somerset faces. He said that it is not that urban type of homelessness, with burn barrels on the streets or anything like that, but it is definitely there, and the instability to people’s lives that is attached to it shows up in our statistics.

Mrs. Ream commented that at UPMC Somerset, they see an increasing struggle to place people after discharge.

Chief Cox brought out that there have been improvements and significant changes with what Mr. Young has been able to accomplish so far. Chief Cox added that he feels that the presence of Cherry Lane is addressing one of the acute needs that we in the Borough experience on a daily basis whether it is right in front of your face or not.

It was disclosed that the judicial sale will take place on April 22, 2022.

9. Administrative Business:

a) Communications (None)

b) Payment of Bills – Month of March 2022.

Motion

Mrs. Opp moved, Mr. Shaulis seconded, to approve the payment of bills for March 2022 numbered 37979 – 38119, totaling \$679,355.48.

Motion Unanimously Carried

c) Department Reports for February 2022 – Consider approving the Departmental Reports for the month of February 2022.

Motion

Mr. Shaulis moved, Mr. Hoffman seconded, to approve the Departmental Reports for the month of February 2022.

Motion Unanimously Carried

10. Policy Agenda:

Old Business:

a) None

New Business:

a) Council Vacancy – Discussion and consideration to appoint an applicant to serve the unexpired term of Fred Rosemeyer. The term ends on December 31, 2023.

Ms. Enos stated that the Borough received three applications for consideration. The three applicants were: Mark Marteeny of 167 East Garrett Street, Ian Mandichak from 347 West Catherine Street and Bradley Lavan from 1602 Maplehurst Drive.

Mrs. Ream brought out that she had a conversation with Ian Mandichak and Mark Marteeny. She said that, in the past, there was recommendation for a replacement by the Council Member leaving their position. She noted that Council received the Letters of Interest and has known who applied. She expressed that she would like to have Council's decision at

this meeting because the Council has gone a few months without this person, and as the Borough moves forward with some of its projects, she would like that person be a part of the decision-making process.

Solicitor Cascio suggested having a brief Executive Session to discuss applicant recommendations amongst Borough Council.

Motion

Mr. Hoffman moved, seconded by Mrs. Opp, to go into Executive Session to discuss applicant recommendations to fill the unexpired term of Fred Rosemeyer.

Motion Unanimously Carried
5:45 p.m.

Back in Session

5:49 p.m.

Motion

Mrs. Opp moved, Mr. Shaulis seconded to recommend Ian Mandichak to replace the Borough's empty Council seat.

Motion Unanimously Carried

With Ian Mandichak in attendance, he was welcomed to Borough Council by its Members.

Ms. Enos noted that at the next Council Meeting, Mr. Mandichak will be sworn in by Mayor Rosemeyer by taking the Oath for that position.

b) 2022 CDBG Cooperation Agreement – Consider authorizing the execution of an agreement between the Borough of Somerset, County of Somerset and the Redevelopment Authority of Somerset County to administer the Borough's CDBG Funding.

Ms. Enos stated this is done on an annual basis. She said that the Borough is one of the entitlement Communities in Somerset County, based on our population. This is grant funding. It is a cooperation agreement between the County, the Borough, and the Redevelopment Authority to apply for the funding, receive it, and thereafter, the Redevelopment Authority administers that funding on behalf of the Borough. Ms. Enos added that this is an annual process we enter into by executing these agreements.

Motion

Mr. Clark moved, Mr. Shaulis seconded to authorize the execution of an agreement between the Borough of Somerset, County of Somerset, and the Redevelopment Authority of Somerset County to administer the Borough's CDBG Funding.

Motion Unanimously Carried

c) Act 172 List of Eligible's – Consider authorizing the list of eligible firefighters to receive the tax credit for year 2021 based on the certification from the Somerset Vol. Fire Department Chief and President.

Ms. Enos disclosed that the certification is brought before Council after the Fire Chief and the Fire Department President look over the list. There are criteria that the Firefighter must achieve in order to be eligible to receive a Real Estate and Earned Income Tax Credit.

Ms. Enos mentioned that since Mr. Clark & Mr. Shaulis are eligible Firefighters, they would have to abstain from being included in the Council vote.

Ms. Enos read over the list of Firefighters eligible to receive the Tax Credit. They include Jim Clark, Greg Urban, Steve Shaulis, Clay Morocco, Kyle Landis, William Grasser, Pete Barnhart, Jessie Clark, Sean Ibinson and Bob Whipkey.

Ms. Enos stated that the last part of the process, before issuing the credits, is for Borough Council, the President and Mayor to sign the approval, which will take a vote of Borough Council.

Mrs. Ream expressed that before the vote was taken, she personally wanted to thank Mr. Clark and Mr. Shaulis for making the list. She said that at the beginning of the eligibility process, there were not a lot of Firefighters that made the list, so she personally wanted to thank them for their service and added that it is really important to the Borough. Mrs. Ream stated that she was happy Council had the ability to be a part of this process.

Motion

Mr. Hoffman moved, Mrs. Opp seconded to authorize the list of eligible firefighters to receive the tax credit for year 2021 based on the certification from the Somerset Vol. Fire Department Chief and President.

Motion Carried

(4 –Yes; Mr. Clark & Mr. Shaulis abstaining)

d) Act 172 Eligible Criteria – Discussion concerning a letter from the Somerset Vol. Fire Department asking Council to consider changing the eligibility criteria.

Ms. Enos disclosed that the Borough received a letter from the Somerset Vol. Fire Department. She briefly read it to Council. *(It disclosed the difference between Somerset Township's eligibility requirements and Somerset Borough's eligibility requirements for Tax Credits)*. In closing, the Somerset Vol. Fire Department asked Borough Council to consider adopting the same requirements as Somerset Township, which is 100 hours annually by fire alarms, work details and fund raising *combined*. It added that they feel that it would help more members to obtain a credit and help with the recruitment and retention of members.

Mrs. Ream expressed that she felt this makes sense because there are people who excel in different areas, but all of them together is what the Borough needs to have a Fire Department that is functioning.

Mr. Clark disclosed that under the old criteria, a lot of people were unable to meet all the requirements to receive the tax credit. He mentioned that different groups of people enjoy the different variety of work within the Fire Department in their service to the Community.

Mr. Clark stated that they would like to be able to offer this tax break to their volunteers knowing that Legislation has gotten it passed and the Governor signed off on it. He said that he cannot see how this would negatively impact the Fire Department.

The Fire Department is hoping, with help from the Borough, to continue to keep volunteers coming through their doors by being able to offer them an Earned Income Tax break on their properties. He added that the tax credit is not a lot, but it is something that could be offered to individuals who volunteer their time in some form of Community service at the Fire Department.

Mr. Shaulis asked Solicitor Cascio if anyone who is retired on a Pension or Social Security could count their volunteer time for the Earned Income Tax Credit. Mr. Peters answered by saying that the Borough is not getting any tax money from that. He explained that it is not taxed on the Local taxes, so the Borough cannot refund something it never received. He brought out that these are refunds of taxes *paid*, and tax is not being paid on Pension monies, so there is nothing for the Borough to give them credit for. Someone on a Pension should not be paying Earned Income Tax to the Local tax collector.

Solicitor Cascio added that all you are doing is getting credit against the taxes the Borough collects.

Mr. Peters clarified the Borough's share. He explained that when you pay 1% on Earned Income Tax on Earned Income, half of that goes to the school. The Borough only gets half of that 1%, so the Borough only gives credit for the ½ % that is coming to the Borough if you are paying tax on that.

Solicitor Cascio added that the school District is bound by the Statute.

Motion

Mrs. Miller moved, Mrs. Opp seconded to adopt the change in the eligibility criteria, effective year 2022, to mirror the criteria that Somerset Township already has in place. Also included, is authorization to execute a Resolution to change the criteria for 2022.

Motion Carried

(4 –Yes; Mr. Clark & Mr. Shaulis abstaining)

- e) *Intergovernmental Agreement for Police Services – Consider authorizing the advertisement of an Ordinance to adopt the Intergovernmental Agreement for Police Services for Maple Ridge School and Eagle View School.*

Chief Cox clarified that this Agreement would just be for Maple Ridge School because Eagle View School is already in the Borough.

Chief Cox explained that ever since the Borough start providing Police services, via contract through the School District, we have relied on Title 42 Notice. In the Judicial Code, there is a part of Title 42 that is the Police Jurisdiction Act. Everything that we have done, for the most part, regarding our authority and Jurisdiction has been covered by that Act.

Chief Cox said that relying on the Act has been satisfactory. There are a few minor things that we cannot do under the authority of the Act. The Intermunicipal Agreement just ties up all “loose ends” and better protects the Borough’s liability.

Solicitor Cascio brought out that it gives the Somerset Borough Police jurisdiction to enforce Laws in areas of the Township covered by this. One change would be including the pavement on Route 281.

Motion

Mr. Clark moved; Mr. Hoffman seconded to authorize the advertisement of an Ordinance to adopt the Intergovernmental Agreement for Police Services for Maple Ridge School.

Motion Unanimously Carried

f) Wastewater Treatment Plant Capital Project – Consider authorizing the appropriation of funds to purchase a Muffin Monster Grinder through JWC Environmental under the Co-Stars Cooperative Purchasing Program in the amount of \$14,711.00. This item was authorized through the 2022 Capital Budget Process.

Ms. Enos brought out that this was part of our Capital Budget that we went over and approved. She said that Council is being asking to appropriate the funds in the amount of \$14,711.00 under Co-Stars through JWC Environmental for our Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Motion

Mr. Shaulis moved, Mrs. Opp seconded to authorize the appropriation of funds to purchase a Muffin Monster Grinder through JWC Environmental under the Co-Stars Cooperative Purchasing Program in the amount of \$14,711.00, which was authorized through the 2022 Capital Budget Process.

Motion Unanimously Carried

g) Manager’s Report – Given by Michele Enos.

Ms. Enos mentioned that the Manager’s Report, along with all the Departmental Reports, were on the web portal for the on-line users, and hard copies are being distributed to those wanting them. She added that if there were any questions feel free to let her know.

h) Finance Report – Given by Brett Peters.

Mr. Peters provided Borough Council with the Year-to-Date Financial Report through the month of February 2022. He mentioned that we are 2 1/12ths of the way through the year, or 16.67%.

General Fund:

Revenues – 7.73%
Expenses – 14.51%

Water Fund:

Revenues – 13.55%
Expenses – 15.31%

Sewer Fund:

Revenues – 14.77%
Expenses – 10.94%

Mr. Peters added that if Borough Council had any questions, he would be glad to try to answer any question they may have.

Mr. Clark asked Mr. Peters if the probable excess of overtime in snow removal was going to impact the Borough, as far as finances go. Mr. Peters answered by saying “not at this time.” He said that the Borough had some time to react since it is a “Calendar-Year” budget. We are early in the year, so we have time to react accordingly. Mr. Peters noted that we are always conservative when we budget in case of any worse-case scenarios, so he feels that the Borough will be OK with the budget.

Mr. Bailey disclosed that they have not seen a lot of overtime over this past winter, just on some weekends. He said it has been manageable. We had snow, but it has been a pretty mild winter. We had a couple real cold snowfalls where we had to use more salt, because once it gets below 23 degrees, the salt quits working so you must use double. Mr. Bailey added that we are below our allotment that we said we would buy, so we are good.

i) President's Report – Given by Pam Ream.

Mrs. Ream brought out that we are waiting on a date for “Spring Clean-Up”.

Ms. Enos added that it will be advertised when the date is set.

Mrs. Opp asked Ms. Enos whatever happened to Waste Management or somebody giving the Borough the recycling bins. Ms. Enos answered by saying that it was not through Waste Management but through a DEP Recycling Grant, which had been extended.

Ms. Enos disclosed that at the end of 2023, the Borough’s contract will end for the truck and recycling bins. It was delayed due to covid, and delays with DEP. She added that the Borough will be moving forward with placing those orders and getting the paperwork into DEP now that they are more active in this.

Mrs. Ream asked Mr. Peters if the Borough received any funding, through the State, for covid. She added that she heard that the Federal Government had extended a lot of the waivers. Mr. Peters answered by saying that the Borough received Federal money last year for covid, and part of that was a commitment for a second allotment. He said we received it in

June or July of last year and are to expect a second allotment in the same time frame. Mr. Peters added that they have been “tweaking” the requirements ever since covid started, and it appears that it is going to be very simply to qualify.

j) Somerset Inc. Report – Given by Lee Hoffman.

Mr. Hoffman said that he continues to be impressed with what Somerset Inc. has become in the last 5-6 years since his involvement with the organization. He said that Somerset Inc. presently needs to hire Attorneys and Accountants, and that their Financial Balance Sheet says something. Somerset Inc. has had architectural consultations and many things that they never thought they would be taking on in the past.

Mr. Hoffman mentioned that they are getting a lot of support on-line, and that people are showing up to volunteer at different times.

He said that the Brinker Building continues to improve. The carpeting has been removed, along with other things, and the demolition has been completed.

Mr. Hoffman disclosed that the “Earth day Trail” is coming up April 23rd, 2022 and added that it is looking to be more robust than ever.

Somerset Inc. will be having the town “Clean-Up Day” and will be looking to the Borough for push brooms and other items.

Mr. Hoffman also mentioned that the Proprietors seem to be keeping their sidewalks clean more so than in the past and stated that the small things are positive.

The last thing he mentioned was that the Jacobs Building conversations continue to head in a positive direction too.

k) PSAB Report – Given by Fred Rosemeyer.

Mayor Rosemeyer stated that the PSAB Conference is on May 22nd – 25th, 2022 in Hershey, PA. He disclosed that Somerset is eligible for one free enrollment, through the Somerset County Borough’s Association, to this Conference. He added that if any Council Member would like to go, it is a good Conference.

Mayor Rosemeyer also recommended, for the newest Council Person, the PSAB “Boot Camp” Program that they have for new Council people. He said that it is unique, and good for everyone who is on Council.

He also noted that on April 21st, 2022, at 6:00 p.m., at “Flying’ Lion” in Jennerstown, PA, the Somerset County Borough’s Association Meeting will be held. He said that anyone attending can meet other Council people that face the same issues we have in Somerset Borough. He said that the Somerset County Borough’s Association will pay for any Council Member that comes.

l) Somerset Volunteer Fire Dept. Report – Given by Jim Clark.

Mr. Clark reviewed the Fire Department Report for the month of March with Borough Council.

The Fire Department has completed its annual Hazmat Operations.

The Fire Department also performed a Joint Vehicle Rescue Training course with Krings Vol. Fire Department, with approximately 40 in attendance.

A rescue demonstration will be taking place at the Station on March 29th, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. Mr. Clark encouraged all Council Members to come and observe it. He disclosed that the Fire Department would like to upgrade all its rescue tools. He brought out that their battery tools are approximately 20 years old, and there is “new and improved” equipment out there that they would like to stay up on. The new rescue tools will be brought and used for demonstration on an on-site car at the Station.

Mr. Clark disclosed that for the month of March, the Fire Department had 2 alarms in the Borough. They had a building fire. They assisted New Centerville, 2 on the PA Turnpike and 14 in Somerset Township.

Mr. Clark mentioned that the Fire Department has a lot of “nuisance calls” in the Township. He asked Ms. Enos, Solicitor Cascio, or Mrs. Ream to support the Department by offering to talk to Somerset Township, and the State Police, regarding why the Fire Department is being asked to “run all over the place” on the highways, and assist in traffic control. Mr. Clark said that as a Department, they have tried to discuss this with them, and have gotten nowhere.

Chief Cox said that now in the Borough, we are supplementing the Fire Departments responses, but in the Township, the Fire Department is supplementing the Pennsylvania State Police staffing.

Mr. Clark disclosed that the Fire Department responded to a significant call in Coleman Towers on Race Street. He said that all entities involved did a great job with Police, Fire, EMS and the Hospital.

He mentioned to Mrs. Ream that he would reach out to Andy, but also wanted to thank her for bringing blankets to the scene. He also thanked the Police Officers for the part they played.

Mr. Clark stated that it turned out to be an overheated motor in the elevator. He said that, unfortunately, in that building, sometimes people have a problem being mobile, so it took a lot of resources from all the Departments to help. He added that everyone did a great job.

m) Engineer's Report – Given by Jake Bolby.

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

WATER:

1) Water System Capital Improvement Projects:

a) Project Schedule (Estimated)

i. Easement Acquisition:

Mr. Bolby disclosed that the Borough is still seeking easements for a few remaining properties. We have approximately 90% – 95% in hand. The Project will probably be advertised in late May, so things will be moving on that project shortly.

SEWER:

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

Mr. Bolby disclosed that the price of the Muffin Monster was quoted in 2015 or 2016 at \$14,711.00. At current rates, the price tag went up between \$8,000.00 - \$9,000.00. He brought out that the Borough chose to do a bearing replacement in the \$1,200.00 range which bought more time on the current unit. He stated that everyone can see what current prices are doing, so this is not a standard inflation rate. He added that this will be reflected throughout all construction. Mr. Bolby said that he has spoken with a lot of material suppliers and contractors over the past nine months, and things have gone up between 20% - 30%.

Mr. Bolby said that is unsure whether a commitment was made on a delivery date for the Muffin Monster, but he expressed that he won't be surprised if it is 6-9 months. He added that it is steel, and right now, that is hard to come by.

a) Abatement Plan:

Mr. Bolby mentioned that the private sewer lateral was discussed, and decided upon, at the last Joint Meeting. The decision was to go and replace only up to the property line. He said that they have taken that decision and rolled it into the Abatement Plan, which will be submitted to DEP. He added that it should come within the next 4 months or so.

GENERAL:

1) Union Street Playground:

Mr. Bolby disclosed that the application was submitted to DCED on March 4th, 2022, for the Local Share Account. It is for accessibility and security. He added that it will be a few months before they look at those applications.

n) Mayor's Report – Given by Mayor Rosemeyer.

Mayor Rosemeyer disclosed that he received a phone call this past weekend to perform a wedding. The call was from the State Correctional Institution in Somerset. He noted that as

the Superintendent, he would not allow weddings. He expressed that he would never perform a wedding in the County Jail or either State Prison.

Mayor Rosemeyer will send a Memo to Council, based on the Borough Code, that he would give his notice on his intentions to perform marriage ceremonies.

Chief Cox recounted that when approaching budget time last year, he expressed an interest in acquiring a Ford Explorer Hybrid Cruiser. He said that it would be advantageous to us, because not only would it greatly cut down on the fuel usage, but it would also cut down on the engine idling time. He added that this is one of the worst things for a Police cruiser since they idle so much.

Chief Cox said that he wasn't able to follow through on this because our budget time is too late to place an order. He plans to place an order for this vehicle in May, because if he doesn't place it by May, it will again be too late.

Chief Cox expressed that he wanted to mention this to Council because he didn't want to appear presumptuous with what Council is going to do with the 2023 budget. He added that if the budget process doesn't allow for this vehicle, it can be cancelled. When he mentioned to Tri-Star his concerns about the vehicle coming in too early after ordering, and not being able to pay for it at that time, Tri-Star said they we could either cancel the order without having to pay for anything, or if it was going to be approved for purchase, they would hold the vehicle for us.

10. Executive Session – To discuss matters of potential litigation.

Motion

Mrs. Opp moved, seconded by Mr. Shaulis to go into Executive Session to discuss matters of potential litigation.

Motion Unanimously Carried
6:32 p.m.

Back in Session

6:45 p.m.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Motion

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

Motion Unanimously Carried
6:46 p.m.

Michele A. Enos, Borough Manager/ Secretary