

Borough of Somerset Council Meeting

June 24th, 2024 - 5:30 p.m.

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

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

3. **Roll Call:**

a) **Borough Council Members present:** Pam Ream, Ruby Miller (via telephone), Lee Hoffman, Sue Opp, Steve Shaulis and Ian Mandichak.

b) **Junior Council Member absent:** Robert Grega.

c) **Also present:** Mayor Fred Rosemeyer.

d) **Also present were the following:** Borough Manager, Michele Enos; Director of Finance, Brett Peters; Administrative Assistant, Roger Bailey; Municipal Authority Manager, Jessica Sizemore; Solicitor, James Cascio; Consulting Engineers, Tom Reilly & Jake Bolby.

e) **Public Attendance:** Beth Maul, Melanie Heiple and Paul Morocco.

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

Ms. Enos mentioned that a letter was received from Jim Clark resigning from Borough Council.

She said that a motion of approval was needed from Council to add this to the Agenda.

Motion

Mrs. Opp moved, Mr. Mandichak seconded, to add the resignation request from Jim Clark to the Agenda.

5. **Announcements:**

a) **Community Fireworks** – The fireworks will be held on July 3, 2024 at 9:30 p.m. with Community events at 7:00 p.m. at the Somerset High School Football Field.

6. **Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)**

a) **May 8th, 2024** – Borough Council Meeting Minutes.

Motion

Mrs. Opp moved, Mr. Shaulis seconded, to approve the May 8th, 2024 Borough Council Meeting Minutes.

Motion Unanimously Carried

b) May 28th, 2024 – *Joint Meeting Minutes*.

Motion

Mrs. Opp moved, Mr. Hoffman seconded, to approve the May 28th, 2024 Borough Council Meeting Minutes.

Motion Unanimously Carried

7. Award of Bids:

a) None

8. General Public Comments:

a) Melanie Heiple – *Requested Paul Morocco to explain his security system.*

Ms. Heiple thanked Borough Council for their support as regards the playground, and added that it has been very successful there.

She mentioned the names and background of the employees hired by Career Link. She also thanked the playground crew for all their hard work in cleaning up the playground.

Mrs. Ream explained to Mr. Morocco that Council had questions about their security system before placing one at the playground. They had security concerns that needed answered before a decision could be made to add cameras there.

Some of Council’s questions were tied to legalities for a camera’s use at the playground which Solicitor Cascio and Chief Appel helped answer. One question was “Who would be the chain-of-command who would have access to review the cameras if needed?” Council wanted to verify who this would be, where the videos are housed, if it was a 24-hour reel or a continual video, and how it could be reviewed. Typical privacy questions also needed addressed and answered.

Mr. Morocco explained how his continuous recording security system and camera worked, and how the camera can patrol an area of interest for 24 hours a day. It is an infrared system so the camera can see at night, as well.

He said that the camera looks at issues on demand, and if an incident occurs, the video can be reviewed to see if it was captured. If someone is appointed by Council to look at the video in real-time, or control it in real-time, permission is needed from Morocco’s. Morocco’s will just make sure that the security system is still working properly.

Mr. Morocco noted that copies of portions of a video can be downloaded and provided to whomever Council gives access for review. He noted that this is confidential and not open to the public. It would be open just to Morocco's staff and probably 2 people for review.

Discussion continued regarding details of different types of security systems, how videos can be obtained in case of incidence, signage posted to indicate that a security system is being used, and where the cameras would be located at the playground.

Mrs. Ream asked if a Mutual Agreement could be set up for a security system at the playground by May 28th, 2024.

Solicitor Cascio noted that it could be done.

Ms. Heiple mentioned reopening the candy store in the concession stand at the Lion's Club building. She said she would discuss this with them since they own the building.

Ms. Heiple noted that water was donated to the playground, and the Playground Staff also bought water from Culligan.

Ms. Enos mentioned that, in the past, the Borough had supplied large igloo containers to the playground. She said that the Fire Department has an ice machine that they always let the playground use. The large igloo containers could be used to put ice water in so it could be available at the playground. She added that the Playground Staff was welcome to use these resources so they would have no cost for drinking water.

Ms. Heiple also noted that the playground has a pickle-ball court, tether ball, 3 corn holes, a Gaga pit, 4-square, hop scotch, and other games. Also mentioned was how the Borough Crew painted the pavilion and its ceiling, lines that were faded and the basketball hoop. Ms. Heiple also talked about various future activities that were being planned for the playground.

Mayor Rosemeyer also mentioned that at the Board of Directors meeting for Tableland, he thanked Tableland on behalf of the President of Council, and Ms. Heiple and the Playground Committee, for their assistance in providing the 4 playground staff members.

Ms. Heiple and Beth Maul thanked Borough Council for all their help and support with the playground.

Ms. Heiple also noted that they planned on seeking grant funding to help with future playground plans.

9. Administrative Business:

a) Communications – (none)

b) Payment of Bills – Month of June 2024.

Motion:

Mr. Mandichak moved, Mrs. Opp seconded, to approve the payment of bills for the month of June 2024 numbered 41776 - 41898 totaling \$667,911.56.

Motion Unanimously Carried

- c) Department Reports – Consider approving the Departmental Reports for the month of May 2024.

Motion

Mr. Shaulis moved, Mr. Mandichak seconded, to approve the Departmental Reports for the month of May 2024.

Motion Unanimously Carried

10. Policy Agenda:

Old Business:

- a) None

New Business:

- a) Municipal Authority Board – It is recommending to create an entry-level GIS Position that will be in charge of mapping and other related duties. (Update from Jess)

Mrs. Sizemore said that the Municipal Authority has recommended for Borough Council to consider this position. It will be an entry-level position that will support the Borough and MABS.

Mrs. Sizemore explained to Council what this position is, the requirements for the position, the tasks this position would perform, and how this position would help the Borough and MABS, as far as, water, wastewater & stormwater.

Mrs. Sizemore noted that this would be a multi-funded position. The request to Council would be to immediately fill this new position. After discussing this position with Mr. Peters, Mrs. Sizemore said that it was possible for the budget to support this position.

Mr. Peters added that this position would not be a “big hit” to the budget if it was multi-funded among all 3 funds, so it could be absorbed into the budget if Council so desired to do so.

Borough Council discussed how this position could benefit the Borough and MABS, and if it could be done financially.

It was decided amongst Council to “table” this request until a later date when more information can be received and more questions can be answered.

b) Proclamation – Mayor Rosemeyer to declare a proclamation for the Soroptimist International of Somerset County to celebrate their 75th Anniversary.

Mayor Rosemeyer noted that he and Ms. Enos put together the Proclamation for the 75th Anniversary International of Somerset County.

Mayor Rosemeyer briefly read the Proclamation out loud to Council.

On behalf of the Somerset Borough Council, Mayor Rosemeyer mentioned that he and Chief Appel met with the Somerset Ambulance Association. He said that they thanked them at their meeting for all that they do for the County and for the Borough. Mayor Rosemeyer & Chief Appel also presented a plaque to them in appreciation for their services.

Motion

Mr. Shaulis moved, Mr. Hoffman seconded, to declare proclamation for the Soroptimist International of Somerset County in celebration of their 75th Anniversary.

Motion Unanimously Carried

c) PennDOT Winter Services Agreement – Authorize the agreement for winter maintenance for the 2024-2025 season for North and South Franklin Avenue.

Mrs. Ream said this is something that is done on an annual basis.

Motion

Mr. Mandichak moved, Mrs. Opp seconded, to authorize the agreement for winter maintenance for the 2024-2025 season for North and South Franklin Avenue.

Motion Unanimously Carried

d) Police Study – Discussion concerning financial assistance available to conduct a police study through the Governor’s Center for Local Government Services. (Requested by Mr. Clark)

Ms. Enos explained that Mr. Clark attended the PSAB Convention, and he sent her information he received there that he believed was about financial assistance available to conduct a Police Study.

After Ms. Enos reviewed this information, she said that the information was more for a Regionalization Study verses “How many Police Officers we need” Study. She said that she believes his interpretation was that they would come in and do a Police Study to determine how many Police Officers we would need for what obligations we have.

She said that the information was more of a Regionalization Study that would incorporate regionalizing our Police Department, so discussion regarding this subject discontinued.

e) Planning Commission Vacancy – Consider appointing Dwight Lloyd to fill the vacancy on our Planning Commission.

Motion

Mr. Shaulis moved, Mrs. Ream seconded, to appoint Dwight Lloyd to fill the vacancy on our Planning Commission.

Motion Unanimously Carried

f) Sale of Surplus Equipment - Discussion concerning the sale of police surplus equipment. (Request by Mayor Rosemeyer)

Mayor Rosemeyer noted that the Police Department did an inventory of all their weapons and found three that were not accounted for. One Retired Officer, and two other Officers that resigned, did not turn in their weapons upon departure. Two of the Officers expressed to Mayor Rosemeyer that they would like to purchase their weapons.

He noted that the Police Department disclosed that they would like to surplus these three weapons. Mayor Rosemeyer asked Council that if the two Officers would like the choice to buy their weapons, would they approve the Police Department to surplus them and sale them at fair market price?

Motion

Mrs. Miller moved, Mr. Shaulis seconded, to approve the sale of the three located weapons as police surplus equipment at a fair market price.

Motion Unanimously Carried

g) Police Department Positions - Discussion concerning the administrative positions of our Police Department.

Mrs. Ream noted that this is a discussion for Executive Session.

11. Executive Session – Personnel Matters and Contract Negotiations – President Ream.

Motion

Mrs. Opp moved, seconded by Mrs. Ream to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters and contract negotiations.

Motion Unanimously Carried
6:28 p.m.

Back in Session

7:00 p.m.

Motion

Unanimously moved, Mr. Shaulis seconded, to offer the full-time regular position of Police Chief of the Somerset Borough Police Department to Richard Appel.

Motion Unanimously Carried

All of Borough Council welcomed Richard Appel to his new position as Chief of Police for Somerset Borough Police Department.

Motion

Mrs. Ream moved, Mrs. Opp seconded, to approve a position as the Assistant to the Chief of Police on terms and conditions to be negotiated by our Borough Manager prior to execution of that Agreement and further approval of Borough Council.

Motion Unanimously Carried

Committee Business/Reports:

*h) Borough Manager’s Report – Given by Michele Enos.
Ms. Enos had nothing further to report.*

i) Finance Report – Given by Brett Peters.

Mr. Peters provided Council with the Financial Report through May 2024. We are 5/12ths or 41.67% of the way through the year. He added that the Financial Report is also on the portal for review.

General Fund:

Revenues – 74.60%

Expenses – 43.17%

Water Fund:

Revenues – 46.55%

Expenses – 49.99%

Sewer Fund:

Revenues – 39.67%

Expenses – 42.92%

j) Municipal Authority Manager’s Report – Given by Jess Sizemore.

Mrs. Sizemore mentioned that the Lead Service Line Inventory Public Meeting will be held on Monday, July 15, 2024 at 4:30 p.m. It will also be advertised in the paper.

She also noted that the Borough was contacted by the Lieutenant Governor’s Office in regards to the PennVEST Waterline Replacement Project. Mrs. Sizemore, Ms. Enos and Mr. Bolby were all in attendance at an initial meeting with him. This meeting was to review the

project, and determine whether the Borough would be a candidate for the Lieutenant Governor to spotlight the PennVEST funding and our project. Based on what was discussed, it sounded very promising that he will be coming to Somerset Borough to spotlight our community and our project.

Restoration for the Waterline Project is in full swing. Paving is to begin July 8th for the State routes, weather dependent. She mentioned that any complaints, regarding the restoration efforts, should be directed to Management.

Mrs. Sizemore disclosed that the Municipal Authority Board decided to move their future monthly meetings to the 4th Monday following the Borough Council Meetings, starting at 6:30 p.m. or directly after adjournment of the Borough Council.

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

Mrs. Ream had nothing further to report.

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

Mr. Hoffman noted that “Chalk the Block” was right around the corner at the end of July.

Mr. Hoffman also mentioned that Somerset Inc. was going into their final year of the NPP, the Neighborhood Partnership Program Grant. He said a lot of that will be including the estimates for some of the finish work at the Brinker Building. He added that, hopefully, this will leverage into more grants in the future.

m) PSAB Report – Given by Fred Rosemeyer.

Mayor Rosemeyer mentioned that the County Borough's Association met last week in Meyersdale, PA with 44 in attendance. There were 13 separate Borough's that attended.

The next meeting of the County Borough's Association is October 17th, 2024 at Rizzo's in Windber. EADS will be hosting this for members of Council.

Mayor Rosemeyer expressed the need for Borough Council to have a Disaster Training Program. He added that Borough Council has to be ready to set up to be a Command Station in case of an emergency.

n) Somerset Volunteer Fire Dept. Report –

The Fire Department Report had not been provided for review.

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

Mr. Bolby presented the Updates to the Engineer's Report.

WATER:

1) Water System Capital Improvement Projects:

Mr. Bolby said that restoration is underway on the Water Project.

Some “odds & ends” at the Treatment Plant are being taken care of, but should be finished over the next couple months.

SEWER:

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

Mr. Bolby said that they have submitted a number of permits and received a number of approvals. The Construction Permits are going in for the 1st Phase of the collection system. The second one will be submitted this week. The third one will be submitted in approximately 3 months. Once these are approved, we can submit for PennVEST funding.

GENERAL:

1) Center Ave. Sidewalk:

Mr. Bolby said that the contractors are coming back tomorrow. They have been scheduling their work in conjunction with Columbia Gas, so they took a few days off to do this. They are projected to be done at the end of July. They will be coming back the middle, or towards the end, of August to do the 2 water main connections to finish the entirety of that project.

The Design Report has been periodically provided with some of the designs that have progressed, along with the direction that has been received, which is then reflected into the Construction Permits.

Conversation was recently held, at length, with the Municipal Authority regarding the testing limits whenever the Collection Sewer Project is done. Verification of construction was also received from the Authority, which is to provide an air pressure testable public-side system from the property line out into the middle of the street where the sewer main would be. So that portion would be air-tested. There are also specific construction techniques to be able to achieve this goal. There will be required excavation at the sewer main, and at the property line, to provide this testable connection.

Mr. Bolby also noted that there has been discussion for approximately 4 or 5 years on the topic of different construction technologies, what all that means, and how that translates to the different aspects of the sanitary sewer system. This is what was recently reviewed with the Authority, along with the direction of the project and construction method. This is all reflected in the Design Report.

p) Mayor's Report – Given by Mayor Rosemeyer.
Mayor Rosemeyer had nothing further to report.

Mrs. Ream noted that Jim Clark, effective immediately, resigned from Borough Council.

Motion

Mrs. Ream moved, Mr. Hoffman seconded, to approve the resignation of James Clark as member of Borough Council.

Motion Unanimously Carried

It was noted that "Letters of Interest" will be accepted for the vacancy on Borough Council.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Motion

Mr. Hoffman moved to adjourn, motion seconded by Mr. Shaulis.

Motion Unanimously Carried

7:22 p.m.

Michele A. Enos, Borough Manager/ Secretary