

The Borough of Somerset Council Meeting

May 19th, 2025 - 5:00 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, Steve Shaulis, Ian Mandichak and Mario Dirienzo.*

b) **Borough Council Member absent:** *Sue Opp.*

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; Chief of Police, Rich Appel; Solicitor, James Cascio and Consulting Engineers, Tom Reilly & Jake Bolby.*

e) **Public Attendance:** *Steve Peck, Alec Bittner, Barbara Lynch, Jennie Lou Harris-Klim and Melanie Heiple.*

4. **Approval of Agenda:** *Consider approving the agenda as presented with (2) additional items under New Business (d) and (e).*

Motion

Mr. Shaulis moved, Mr. Mandichak seconded, to approve the agenda as presented with (2) additional items under New Business (d) and (e).

Motion Unanimously Carried

5. **Announcements:**

a) None

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

a) *April 28th, 2025 – Borough Council Meeting Minutes.*

Motion

Mr. Mandichak moved, Mr. Shaulis seconded, to approve the April 28th, 2025 Borough Council Meeting Minutes.

Motion Unanimously Carried

7. Award of Bids:

a) None

8. General Public Comments:

a) None Requested

9. Administrative Business:

a) Communications – (none)

b) Payment of Bills – Month of May 2025.

Motion:

Mr. Shaulis moved, Mr. Dirienzo seconded, to approve the payment of bills for the month May 2025 numbered 43285 – 43341 totaling \$191,126.36.

Motion Unanimously Carried

c) Department Reports – Consider approving the Departmental Reports for the month of April 2025.

Motion

Mr. Hoffman moved, Mr. Mandichak seconded, to approve the Departmental Reports for the month of April 2025.

Motion Unanimously Carried

10. Policy Agenda:

Old Business:

a) None

New Business:

a) Escrow Funds Agreement – Authorization to execute an agreement with Somerset Trust Co. to release escrow funds from the sale of Divinity Investment properties.

Ms. Enos explained that Somerset Borough and Somerset Trust are dual partners in our liens and the judgement the Borough put in place on any sells of Divinity properties.

The Agreement is for \$50,000.00 to be released from those escrow funds for the Borough.

Motion

Mr. Dirienzo moved, Mr. Hoffman seconded, to authorize the execution of the Agreement with Somerset Trust Co. to release escrow funds of \$50,000.00.

Motion Unanimously Carried

- b) *Mary S. Biesecker Library – The Board of Directors is requesting Borough Council to re-appoint Leslie DeVries to a 3-year term on the Library Board.*

Motion

Mrs. Ream moved, Mr. Mandichak seconded, to re-appoint Leslie DeVries to a 3-year term on the Library Board.

Motion Unanimously Carried

- c) *Drop Program – Authorization to advertise the Drop Program Ordinance as part of the approved contract through AFSCME Collective Bargaining.*

Ms. Enos said that this was something Council agreed to. To enact the Drop Program, it requires an Ordinance to be adopted as a formal pension ordinance. The first step is to advertise. The official Ordinance will be adopted at the next meeting if Council chooses to do so.

Motion

Mr. Dirienzo moved, Mr. Shaulis seconded, to advertise the Drop Program Ordinance as the approved part of our AFSCME's Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Motion Unanimously Carried

- d) *Disaster Declaration – Approve the Disaster Declaration for the flood event on May 13th, 2025 for those affected by basement flooding or flood damage.*

Ms. Enos said that the Borough received sewer back-up claims during the recent heavy flood event. There were approximately 19 claims, just for sewer back-up, that the Borough filed with its insurance company.

Ms. Enos explained the process. She said that the person files a claim form, the adjuster for the Borough's insurance company will send a letter out to those individuals who filed a claim, and then the adjusters will go and access any damages from the insurance standpoint.

The Borough Council or staff does not determine whether someone will be approved or not approved, but only the insurance adjuster can do this.

This Disaster Declaration is for anyone who sustains stormwater damage, which is not covered under insurance, whether they are businesses or residents.

The Disaster Declaration opens the door for any eligible Municipality to receive funding, who are declaring disaster because of true events, if the county receives grant funding.

Ms. Enos expressed that it is in the best interest of our community affected by this for the Disaster Declaration to be approved as part of the counties submittal to the state.

Motion

Mr. Mandichak moved, Mr. Dirienzo seconded, to authorize the approval of the Disaster Declaration for the flood event on May 13th, 2025.

Motion Unanimously Carried

e) *Union Street Playground Committee – Seeking authorization to apply for a DCED Grant for playground improvements. The total project cost is \$216,110.00. The local share of \$32,416.50 is being committed to by the Playground Committee's Funds.*

Ms. Enos said that this is another grant application through DCED that the Committee would like to submit. An approving Resolution, like any other grant, will go along with this. The application due date is at the end of this month.

Motion

Mr. Dirienzo moved, Mrs. Ream seconded, to authorize the Union Street Playground Committee to apply for a DCED Grant for playground improvements. The total project cost is \$216,110.00. The local share of \$32,416.50 is being committed to by the Committee's Funds.

Motion Unanimously Carried

Committee Business/Reports:

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

j) Finance Report – Given by Brett Peters.

Mr. Peters provided Borough Council with the year-to-date Financial Report through April 2025. We are 4/12ths of the way through the year or 33.33%.

<u>General Fund:</u>	<u>Water Fund:</u>	<u>Sewer Fund:</u>	<u>Storm Sewer Fund:</u>
Revenues – 25.31%	Revenues – 31.45%	Revenues – 33.01%	Revenues – 3.19%
Expenses – 31.24%	Expenses – 29.79%	Expenses – 30.68%	Expenses – 0.09%

k) Municipal Authority Manager's Report – Given by Jess Sizemore.

Mrs. Sizemore had nothing further to report.

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

Mrs. Ream thanked Ms. Enos, Mr. Bailey, Mr. Hummel, Mrs. Sizemore and all staff that assisted with the recent flooding in the Borough.

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

Mr. Hoffman noted that the Uptown work continues at the Diamond Row property.

Also, "Chalk the Block" is right around the corner, and the Farmer's Market starts on June 7th, 2025.

n) PSAB Report – Given by Fred Rosemeyer.

Mayor Rosemeyer said that the PSAB Conference will be held in Hershey, PA June 1st – 4th, 2025 which he will attend.

Also, the County Boroughs Association will hold their meeting June 26th, 2025 in Meyersdale, PA.

o) Somerset Volunteer Fire Dept. Report – Given by Steve Shaulis.

Mr. Shaulis mentioned that with the recent rainfall, there were 47 calls in a single day from flooded basements to fallen trees, power lines and such. Some were warranted, some were not. The official total rainfall from the National Weather Service that Somerset received that day measured 3.82 inches. Mr. Shaulis added that this is the most he has ever measured in a 24-hour time period in 35 years.

Mr. Shaulis noted that on May 3rd, 2025 there was a recruitment event for the Fire Department. As a result, there were 3 applications to join the Fire Department.

On behalf of Council and Management, Ms. Enos thanked Mr. Shaulis and all in the Somerset Borough and Friedens Fire Departments for their support during the recent storm events.

Mr. Shaulis mentioned that the Listie Fire Department also assisted with the rainfall event.

p) 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 noted that there are a few contractor warranty items to resolve.

SEWER:

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

Mr. Bolby said that the bidding for Phase 1A for this project will shortly take place. This is related to the easements. Construction will probably start in September/October 2025.

Mr. Bolby noted that the recent storm event is one good example of why the Sewer Project is being undertaken. There were 19 sewer backups during this most recent event.

GENERAL:

1) Center Ave. Sidewalk Project:

Mr. Bolby said that they are meeting with the contractor on the Center Avenue Project tomorrow to discuss the work that will take place there. More information will be shared with Council at the next meeting.

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

Mayor Rosemeyer thanked Chief Appel and Steve Borosky for lowering the Police Department's overtime hours through their creative scheduling.

He also noted that the five available positions at the Police Department need filled as soon as possible.

Mayor Rosemeyer said that parking is currently being enforced in the Borough, especially where individuals without a handicap are parking in handicap parking areas.

He also mentioned that the Police Department is monitoring a few high speed target areas in the Borough.

Mayor Rosemeyer expressed that there was very good handling of a "super-load" that passed through Somerset Borough last week. He added that the load was a house that was traveling from Texas to New York.

He also thanked the Police & Fire Departments, and all the Borough employees who responded and managed through the recent rain storm.

Chief Appel also acknowledged all those who put great effort in responding to the rain storm.

Mayor Rosemeyer lastly mentioned that patrolling measures from the Police Department will be taking place at the voting polls during the upcoming election days.

11. Executive Session: Personnel and potential litigation.

Motion

Mr. Mandichak moved, seconded by Mr. Hoffman, to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel and potential litigation.

Motion Unanimously Carried
5:30 p.m.

Back in Session

5:45 p.m.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Motion

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

Motion Unanimously Carried
5:46 p.m.

Michele A. Enos, Borough Manager/ Secretary