

BOROUGH OF SOUTHMONT
148 WONDER STREET
JOHNSTOWN, PA 15905

MINUTES FOR FEBRUARY 20, 2024

The pledge of allegiance was conducted, and the scheduled February 20, 2024, council meeting was called to order by President Beri at 4:00 p.m.

Present: Council Members Doug Beri Sheree Speicher, Robert Morgan, Richard Burkert, Eugene Kupchella, Matthew McVicker, Borough Manager Amanda Layton; Street Commissioner Sam McAdams; Sgt. William "B.J." Newman, Fire Chief Steve Costic, and Asst. Sec Debra Riek.

Absent: Herb Ewald and Engineer Todd Banks.

Visitors: John G. Klanchar (Addison PA), John A. Klanchar (104 Dahlia Street), Terry Vilkofsky (135 Wonder Street), Bob Walker (312 State Street).

Public Comments: Mr. Klanchar stated he was recently escorted from an Upper Yoder Township meeting due to his body camera and thanked the council for allowing him to speak at meetings even though they may not appreciate the language he uses. Mr. Klanchar stated he has attempted to file reports regarding thefts and harassment with the West Hills Regional Police and feels he is not being taken seriously.

Mr. Walker asked for further clarification on a recent article in the Tribune Democrat regarding discussions of a comprehensive plan between Southmont and surrounding municipalities and asked if this was pertaining to the recreation commission. Mr. Beri informed Mr. Walker council approved having the Cambria County Planning Commission approach surrounding municipalities to discuss a potential comprehensive plan that would provide better opportunities for grants in the future and the comprehensive plan does not pertain to the recreation commission.

Correspondence

Mr. Beri acknowledged email correspondence received from Mr. John A. Klanchar on February 14, 2024 and February 16, 2024.

Minutes

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve the council meeting minutes of January 16, 2024. Motion seconded by Mr. Morgan. Mr. Ewald absent. All in favor, motion carried (6-0).

Police Report

Chief Newman stated there were 458 calls in the month of January noting 76 of the calls were for Southmont Borough with 3 arrests.

Fire Company Report

The January 2024 Fire Chief's Report was received. Chief Costic stated they saw construction activity at 942 Pine Grove Lane and asked if a building permit had been obtained noting it is very important for the

fire company to be given a copy of any building layout changes in case of a fire since the building is so large. Mrs. Layton will check with Laurel Municipal Inspection Agency to see if any permits were issued.

Engineer's Report

Mr. Banks absent. Mrs. Layton reported there was a sewer backup at 100 Susan Drive and Stiffler McGraw was asked to run a camera to find any issues noting a crack was found near the edge of the parking lot that did not contribute to the backup but still needs to be repaired. Mr. Banks suspected that the crack was caused during work to the ICare parking lot. Mrs. Layton reported the issue will be followed up on.

Zoning Officer's Report: Nothing to Report

Solicitor's Report

Solicitor Hochfeld reported that he is working with the Westmont Borough Solicitor regarding the guard crossing status.

Street Commissioner's Report

The Street Commissioner's Report was received and is on file.

Borough Manager Report

The Borough Manager's Report was received and is on file. Mrs. Speicher asked if Laurel Municipal Inspection Agency could send a monthly report for property maintenance violations to the borough so the council would know the status of work that is being completed. Mrs. Layton stated she would request that be done for future meetings.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Keiper read a text message from Mr. Ewald concerning a few items he felt needed to be addressed regarding public works such as weekly work schedules, logbooks, and checking for recalls on the brakes of the 2021 plow truck. Mayor Keiper reported that he has agreed to officiate a wedding and will not be compensated.

Committees:

Administration/Borough Services: Nothing to report.

Community Planning & Improvements: Mr. Burkert reported there was a meeting with the Cambria County Planning Commission in December. Mrs. Speicher stated that the article in the Tribune Democrat seemed that council had taken action, and she was not aware of any action taken. Mr. Burkert stated council had approved at the December meeting to have the Planning Commission take charge and approach surrounding municipalities to discuss the possibility of developing a multi-municipal comprehensive plan, but no other actions are being taken at this time.

Emergency Management: Nothing to report.

Finance: Mrs. Speicher stating that she will be meeting with Mrs. Layton to review the budget. Mr. Beri reported that a Local Share Grant application was submitted at the end of November for the municipal building roof repairs and building upgrades noting the grant is a no match grant and he will keep council updated on the status of the application, but the decision of awards more than likely won't happen until the upcoming fall.

February 20, 2024 Minutes – Page 3 of 4

Greater Johnstown Water Authority: Mrs. Speicher stated the water authority is being proactive and replacing lines especially where lead and copper lines meet and the new water tank is waiting to be painted.

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to accept Kevin Pile's resignation from the Greater Johnstown Water Authority. Motion seconded by Mr. Burkert. Mr. Ewald absent. All in favor, motion carried (6-0).

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to name Eugene Kupchella to the Greater Johnstown Water Authority Board. Motion seconded by Mr. Burkert. Mr. Ewald absent. All in favor, motion carried (6-0).

MS4/Stormwater: Nothing to report.

Personnel: Nothing to report.

Police: Nothing to report.

Property Maintenance, Streets and Sidewalks: Nothing to report.

Shade Tree: Mr. Burkert reported the Bare Root Tree grant application was submitted and the borough is anticipating 20 red maples to be approved. Mr. Burkert informed council of a grant through the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources noting the grant is targeted toward disadvantaged neighborhoods, but he would be looking into it further.

New Business:

Business Items:

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve advertising Ordinance No. 550, updating stormwater ordinance. Motion seconded by Mr. Morgan. Mr. Ewald absent. All in favor, motion carried (6-0).

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve opening a new bank account at Somerset Trust Company for the WalkWorks/DCNR Grant. Motion seconded by Mr. Kupchella. Mr. Ewald absent. All in favor, motion carried (6-0).

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve the purchase of 9 ft. Western Pro Plus Plow from Stephenson Equipment Inc. in the amount of \$8,500.00. Motion seconded by Mr. Morgan. Mr. Ewald absent. All in favor, motion carried (6-0).

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve reimbursement request for emergency trap removal in the amount of \$6,765.48 for 117 Dahlia Street. Motion seconded by Mr. Morgan. Mr. Ewald absent. All in favor, motion carried (6-0).

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve ratification of payroll from January 17, 2024 to February 20, 2024 in the amount of \$ 13,544.37. Motion seconded by Mr. Kupchella. Roll call: Mr. Beri, Mr. Burkert, Mr. Morgan, Mrs. Speicher, Mr. Kupchella and Mr. Mc Vicker in favor. Mr. Ewald absent. Motion carried (6-0).

A motion was made by Mr. Burkert to approve payment of bills from January 17, 2024 through February 20, 2024 in the amount of \$ 130,633.65. Motion seconded by Mr. Morgan. Roll call: Mr. Beri, Mr. Burkert, Mr. Morgan, Mrs. Speicher, Mr. Kupchella and Mr. McVicker in favor. Mr. Ewald absent. Motion carried (6-0).

February 20, 2024 Minutes – Page 4 of 4

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve transfers from January 17, 2024 through February 20, 2024 in the amount of \$139,713.00. Motion seconded by Mr. Burkert Roll call: Mr. Beri, Mr. Burkert, Mr. Morgan, Mrs. Speicher, Mr. Kupchella, and Mr. McVicker in favor. Mr. Ewald absent. Motion carried (6-0).

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve the January 2024 Treasurer's Report. Motion seconded by Mr. Burkert. Mr. Ewald absent. All in favor, motion carried (6-0).

There being no further business, a motion was made by Mrs. Speicher for adjournment of the February 20, 2024, meeting at 4:30 p.m. Motion seconded by Mr. Burkert. Mr. Ewald absent. All in favor, motion carried (6-0).

Respectfully Submitted,

Debra Riek
Assistant Secretary