

BOROUGH OF SOUTHMONT
148 WONDER STREET
JOHNSTOWN, PA 15905

MINUTES FOR MARCH 17, 2025

The pledge of allegiance was conducted, and the scheduled March 17, 2025 Council meeting was called to order by President Doug Beri at 4:00 p.m.

Present: Council Members Doug Beri, Sheree Speicher, Bob Morgan, Richard Burkert, Eugene Kupchella, Herb Ewald and Matt McVicker, Borough Manager Amanda Layton; Police Chief William B.J. Newman; Solicitor Eric Hochfeld; Mayor Anthony Keiper

Absent: Council Member Doug Beri, Fire Chief Steve Costic, Engineer Todd Banks, Asst. Sec. Debra Riek

Visitors: Mark Lazzari, (104 Milton St.); John A. Klanchar (104 Dahlia St.); John G. Klanchar (Flagstaff, AZ); Jen Fisher (444 Southmont Blvd)

Public Comment:

Mr. John A. Klanchar stated he was in attendance to live stream the meeting and agreed with an item on the agenda regarding a decision on withdrawing from the agreement with Laurel Municipal Inspection Agency regarding property maintenance services.

Minutes

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve the February 18, 2025 council meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Mr. Kupchella. All in favor, motion carried (7-0).

A motion was made by Mr. Burkert to approve the February 25, 2025 administrative and borough services committee meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Mr. McVicker. All in favor, motion carried (7-0).

A motion was made by Mr. Kupchella to approve the March 3, 2025 special meeting minutes. Mr. Ewald stated he believes the minutes should be revised to reflect specifically what was said during the meeting. Council discussed that minutes have always been summarized and they like the concise version. Motion seconded by Mrs. Speicher. Mr. Ewald opposed. Motion carried (6-1).

A motion was made by Mr. McVicker to approve the March 11, 2025 property maintenance and streets committee meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Mr. Kupchella. All in favor, motion carried (7-0).

Police Chief's Report

The March Police Chief's report was received. Chief Newman stated the department received a total of 298 calls in the month of February, 60 calls for Southmont Borough with 12 traffic violations and 5 warnings.

Fire Company Report

The February 2025 Fire Chief's Report was received. A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve the request from Southmont Volunteer Fire Company to host the annual firemen's convention in 2027. Motion seconded by Mr. Ewald. All in favor, motion carried (7-0).

Engineer's Report

Mr. Banks absent. A discussion was held regarding the installation of flow meters noting the Redevelopment Authority is no longer monitoring flows so council did not see a need for the borough to expend funds to monitor flows unless the engineer suggests otherwise at the next meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Ewald to postpone the installation of flow meters. Motion seconded by Mr. Morgan. All in favor, motion carried (7-0).

Mrs. Layton reported the bid specifications for the roof replacement and interior renovations project are ready to be advertised so a special meeting would be scheduled to approve advertising.

Zoning Officer's Report

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve withdrawing from the Intergovernmental Agreement with Laurel Municipal Inspection Agency for property maintenance services effective February 20, 2026. Motion seconded by Mr. Ewald. All in favor, motion carried (7-0).

Solicitor's Report

Solicitor Hochfeld reported there was a list of four properties owned by LLC's that Laurel Municipal Inspection Agency removed from their list to pursue due to not having the capability to file charges for non-compliance of property maintenance violations. Solicitor Hochfeld requested the item be added to the agenda for the upcoming special meeting to be scheduled to approve for him to file a complaint against the four properties at the Court of Common Pleas noting this would only assess fines and costs and would not necessarily lead to remediation.

Street Commissioner Report

The March 2025 Street Commissioner's Report was received and is on file. Nothing further to report.

Borough Manager Report

A motion was made by Mr. Morgan to approve the purchase of a new Canon printer from Doing Better Business in the amount of \$824.90 with a service agreement of \$0.01 per page. Motion seconded by Mr. Ewald. All in favor, motion carried (7-0).

Mayor's Report

Nothing to report.

Committees:

Administration: A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve the updates to the Personnel Policy & Procedures including the addition of a section on usage of borough-owned vehicles and equipment, the use of pocketknives, and combining the current cell phone policy. Mr. Ewald stated the use of headphones was not addressed and council felt it was mentioned in the cell phone policy under the cell phones and similar devices section. Motion seconded by Mr. Morgan. Mr. Ewald opposed. Motion carried (6-1).

Community Planning & Improvement: Mr. Burkert reported council previously approved committed to financially contributing up to \$7,500.00 for an application for grant funding to develop a multi-municipal comprehensive plan along with Westmont Borough, Upper Yoder Township and Lower Yoder Borough noting the Cambria County Planning Commission has requested a letter of financial commitment with the exact amount of \$5,026.05 that has been determined as the borough's portion. A motion was made by Mr. Morgan to approve a letter of financial commitment in the amount of \$5,026.05 to develop a multi-municipal comprehensive plan. Motion seconded by Mr. Burkert. All in favor, motion carried (7-0).

Emergency Management: Nothing to report.

Finance: Nothing to report.

GJWA: Nothing to report.

MS4/Stormwater: Nothing to report.

Personnel: Nothing to report.

Police: Nothing to report.

Property Maintenance and Streets:

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve advertising the 2025 paving bids. Motion seconded by Mr. Morgan. All in favor, motion carried (7-0).

Mr. Beri handed the gavel to Vice-President Speicher. A motion was made by Mr. Beri to purchase a 2014 Ford F-550 with dump body and plow from Suppes Ford in the amount of \$43,000 along with an extended service warranty in the amount of \$3,370.00. Motion seconded by Mr. Morgan. Mr. Ewald opposed. Motion carried (6-1). Mr. Beri resumed possession of the gavel.

A motion was made by Mr. Morgan to purchase a zero-turn mower from Pristow's. Motion seconded by Mr. McVicker. All in favor, motion carried (7-0).

Shade Trees:

A motion was made by Mr. Morgan to approve Resolution 2025-03, authorizing officials to sign documents and agreements for a Department of Conservation and Natural Resources grant to compile a tree inventory. Motion seconded by Mr. Burkert. All in favor, motion carried (7-0).

Business Items

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve the updated delinquent sewer maintenance policy. Motion seconded by Mr. Morgan. All in favor, motion carried (7-0).

A motion was made by Mr. Burkert to approve Resolution 2025-02, closing out the Active Transportation Plan grant. Motion seconded by Mr. Morgan. All in favor, motion carried (7-0).

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A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve opening a fire escrow account at Somerset Trust Company for 92 Thoburn Street. Motion seconded by Mr. Burkert. All in favor, motion carried (7-0).

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve attendance at the Cambria County Borough's Association 2025 Spring Dinner. Motion seconded by Mr. Morgan. All in favor, motion carried (7-0).

Mr. Beri informed council there is a crowdsourcing opportunity through the Community Foundation for the Alleghenies and their Small Town Challenge noting CFA will be approving two municipal applications from Cambria County and Indiana County and will match up to \$25,000.00 of crowdsourced funding to create an endowment fund. A motion was made by Mr. Burkert to approve submitting an application for the Community Foundation for the Alleghenies Small Town Challenge. Motion seconded by Mr. McVicker. All in favor, motion carried (7-0).

A motion was made by Mr. McVicker to begin moving toward participating in the Hometown Heroes Program. Motion seconded by Mrs. Speicher. All in favor, motion carried (7-0).

A motion was made by Mr. McVicker to approve the Operation & Maintenance Agreement for the Shady Lane Stabilization Project. Motion seconded by Mr. Morgan. All in favor, motion carried (7-0).

A motion was made by Mr. Morgan to approve ratification of payroll from February 19, 2025 through March 17, 2025 in the amount of \$17,358.57. Motion seconded by Mr. Burkert. Roll call: Mr. Burkert, Mr. Kupchella, Mr. Ewald, Mr. McVicker, Mr. Beri, Mr. Morgan and Mrs. Speicher in favor. All in favor. Motion carried (7-0).

A motion was made by Mr. Kupchella to approve payment of bills from February 19, 2025 through March 17, 2025 in the amount of \$111,125.47. Motion seconded by Mrs. Speicher. Roll call: Mr. Burkert, Mr. Kupchella, Mr. Ewald, Mr. McVicker, Mr. Beri, Mr. Morgan and Mrs. Speicher in favor. All in favor. Motion carried (7-0).

A motion was made by Mr. Burkert to approve transfers from February 19, 2025 through March 17, 2025 in the amount of \$69,327.00. Motion seconded by Mr. Kupchella. Mr. Beri, Mr. Morgan and Mr. McVicker absent. Roll call: Mr. Burkert, Mrs. Speicher, Mr. Ewald, and Mr. Kupchella. All in favor. Motion carried (4-0).

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve the February 2025 treasurer's report. Motion seconded by Mr. Kupchella. All in favor, motion carried (7-0).

There being no further business, a motion was made by Mrs. Speicher for the adjournment of the March 17, 2025 meeting at 5:00 p.m. Motion seconded by Mr. Morgan. Mr. Ewald opposed. Motion carried (6-1).

Respectfully submitted,
Amanda Layton
Borough Manager