

BOROUGH OF SOUTHMONT
148 WONDER STREET
JOHNSTOWN, PA 15905

MINUTES FOR SEPTEMBER 16, 2024

The pledge of allegiance was conducted and the scheduled September 16, 2024 Council meeting was called to order by President Doug Beri at 4:00 p.m.

Present: Council Members Doug Beri, Richard Burkert, Sheree Speicher, Bob Morgan, Eugene Kupchella, Borough Manager Amanda Layton, Police Chief William (B.J.) Newman; Solicitor Eric Hochfeld; Engineer Todd Banks; Mayor Anthony Keiper; Street Commissioner Sam McAdams; Asst. Sec. Debra Riek.

Absent: Council Members Matthew McVicker, Herb Ewald, Fire Chief Steve Costic.

Visitors: John A. Klanchar (104 Dahlia Street); Lary Koval (336 Orchard Street)

Correspondence Received

Mr. Beri acknowledged correspondence received from Lawrence and Eileen O'Reilly regarding water issues at their property at 511 Edward Street.

Minutes

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve the August 19, 2024 council meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Mr. Morgan. Mr. McVicker and Mr. Ewald absent. All in favor, motion carried (5-0).

Police Chief's Report

The February 2023 Police Chief's Report was received. Police Chief Newman stated that there were 427 calls for the month of August, and 3,427 calls for the year noting 111 were for Southmont Borough and 26 traffic citations were issued.

Fire Company Report

The August 2024 Fire Chief's Report was received.

Engineer's Report

Mr. Banks reported the flow meters are still in but there hasn't been much rain lately and noted he was requested to provide information for a grant application that Cambria Count has agreed to sponsor that would provide funding to stabilize the streambank along Shady Lane.

Zoning Officer's Report

Mrs. Layton reported that Laurel Municipal Inspection Agency was scheduled to recheck two properties that had complied with their violation notice and should be marked as completed in their next report. Mrs. Speicher requested that Mrs. Layton get further clarification from Laurel Municipal Inspection Agency on when a roofing permit is required.

September 16, 2024 Minutes – Page 2 of 4

Solicitor's Report

Solicitor Hochfeld reported an appeal hearing was held regarding the fence at 201 Liela Street noting the property owner filed an amended appeal after the thirty-day deadline and Attorney Barbin objected to the amended appeal due to the late filing and stated he will update the council once a decision has been made by Judge Kiniry.

Solicitor Hochfeld reported he mailed notices to several property owners regarding the intent to file municipal liens for unpaid sewer maintenance fees noting minimal payments have been received so far and he will be filing liens shortly.

Street Commissioner's Report

The August 2024 Street Commissioner's Report was received and is on file.

Borough Manager Report

Mrs. Layton reported there will be a training session for the Public Works Department for CPR-AED-and First Aid on October 2, 2024.

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve the 2025 Minimum Municipal Obligation for the Pension Plan. Motion seconded by Mr. Morgan. Mr. McVicker and Mr. Ewald absent. All in favor motion carried. (5-0).

Mayor's Report

Mayor Keiper reported that he spoke with James Pfeil at 46 Shady Lane regarding concerns of speeding along Cos Street and Shady Lane notion Mr. Pfeil requested more police presence and the addition of speed bumps when Cox Street is repaved. Mr. Beri noted that the borough is currently planning to purchase a portable speed sign that alerts drivers to their speed and collects traffic data noting we would add that area to the list of streets to place the sign. Mrs. Speicher stated the Police Department is very busy patrolling four municipalities and cannot be everywhere. Chief Newman stated now that he is aware of the problem the police will patrol the area more frequently.

Committees:

Administrative/Borough Services: Nothing to report.

Community Planning & Improvement: Mr. Burkert reported the draft Active Transportation Plan is expected to be finished By September 30th and the application for the grant funding application to develop a Munti-Municipal Comprehensive Plan will be submitted this month with grants to be awarded in January 2025.

Emergency Management: Nothing to report.

Finance: Mrs. Speicher stated that there will be an MS4 Meeting on October 8 at 3:00 p.m. and a budget meeting to follow at 3:30 p.m. Mrs. Speicher reported there are four upcoming tax appeal hearings noting taxes on property appeal requests have been cut in half in the past.

September 16, 2024 Minutes – Page 3 of 4

GJWA: Mr. Kupchella reported the authority has approved a \$3.00 per month increase in residents water bills effective January 1, 2025 to assist with paying debt, rising costs of utilities and expenses, and state and federal requirements such as replacing lead pipes throughout the system. Mr. Kupchella noted that without an increase the authority would default on their bond by 2026.

Mr. Kupchella reported that the Department of Environmental Protection is requiring the authority to send letters to residents by October 16th if there are del pipes noting they do not know the makeup of lines on the private end of approximately 16,000 homes and approximately 7,500 homes on the public end. Mr. Kupchella stated the water authority has been replacing approximately 200 lines per year but will be unable to replace all of the necessary lines within a reasonable time at that rate.

MS4/Stormwater: Mrs. Speicher reported that she had inquired if Westmont Borough is doing anything with their MS4 program and was informed that they just reinstated their MS4 program.

Personnel: A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve hiring Austin Kaelin for part-time seasonal work at a skilled labor rate on an as needed basis. Motion seconded by Mr. Morgan. Mr. McVicker and Mr. Ewald absent. All in favor. Motion carried (5-0).

Police: Nothing to report. There was a formality letter signed by Mr. Beri in regard to the union negotiations.

Property Maintenance and Streets: Mr. Beri stated there will be another quarterly meeting in October.

Shade Trees: Mr. Burkert stated that grants will be available in January for the Forestry Program with DCNR that would help the borough complete a tree inventory and create a policy and procedures manual.

New Business

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve council attendance of the Cambria County Borough's Association 2024 Fall Dinner October 1, 2024. Motion seconded by Mr. Morgan. Mr. McVicker and Mr. Ewald absent. All in favor. Motion carried (5-0).

Business Items

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve ratification of payroll from August 20, 2024 through September 16, 2024 in the amount of \$12,931.13. Motion seconded by Mr. Kupchella. Roll call: Mr. Beri, Mr. Burkert, Mr. Kupchella, Mrs. Speicher and Mr. Morgan. Mr. McVicker and Mr. Ewald absent. All in favor. Motion carried (5-0).

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve payment of bills from August 20, 2024 through September 16, 2024 in the amount of \$ 119,534.43. Motion seconded by Mr. Morgan. Roll call: Mr. Beri, Mr. Burkert, Mr. Kupchella, Mrs. Speicher, Mr. Morgan, in favor. Mr. McVicker and Mr. Ewald absent. All in favor. Motion carried (5-0).

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve transfers from August 20, 2024 through September 1, 2024 in the amount of \$71,656.00. A motion seconded by Mr. Morgan. Roll call: Mr. Beri, Mr. Burkert,

September 16 2024 Minutes – Page 4 of 4

Mr. Kupchella, Mrs. Speicher, Mr. Morgan. Mr. McVicker and Mr. Ewald absent. All in favor. Motion carried (5-0).

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve the August 2024 treasurer's report. Motion seconded by Mr. Morgan. Roll call: Mr. Beri, Mr. Burkert, Mr. Kupchella, Mrs. Speicher, Mr. Morgan. Mr. McVicker and Mr. Ewald absent. All in favor. Motion carried (5-0).

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to accept the Tax Collector's Report for August 2024. Motion seconded by Mr. Kupchella. Mr. McVicker and Mr. Ewald absent. All in favor. Motion carried (5-0).

There being no further business, a motion was made by Mrs. Speicher for adjournment of the August 16, 2024 meeting at 4:35 p.m. Motion seconded by Mr. Morgan. Mr. McVicker and Mr. Ewald absent. All I favor, motion carried (5-0).

Respectfully submitted,

Debra E. Riek
Assistant Secretary