

Borough of Somerset Council Meeting

December 16th, 2019 7:00 p.m.

1. Meeting Called to Order - President Ruby Miller

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call:

Council Members present: Ruby Miller; Judy Pyle; Pam Ream; Steve Shaulis and Gary Thomas.

Also present: Mayor Scott Walker.

Council Members absent: Fred Rosemeyer and Sue Opp.

Also present: Junior Council Member Patrick Kuhn.

Also present were the following: Borough Manager, Michele Enos; Director of Finance, Brett Peters; Chief of Police, Randy Cox; Solicitor, James Cascio; Consulting Engineers, Tom Reilly and Jake Bolby.

4. Announcements

(a) *None*

5. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings:

(a) ***November 12th, 2019 – Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes.***

Motion

Mr. Thomas moved, Mr. Shaulis seconded to approve the November 12th, 2019 Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes.

Motion Unanimously Carried

(b) ***November 25th, 2019 – Borough Council Meeting Minutes.***

Motion

Mrs. Ream moved, Mr. Thomas seconded to approve November 25th, 2019 Borough Council Meeting Minutes.

Motion Unanimously Carried

(c) ***Departmental Reports - Approval of Departmental Reports for November 2019***

Motion

Mr. Shaulis moved, Mrs. Ream seconded to approve the Departmental Reports for November 2019.

Motion Unanimously Carried

6. Award of Bids:

(a) None

7. General Public Comments:

(a) Attorney Vitek regarding Cherry Lane Estates.

A resident from Cherry Lane Estates spoke on behalf of the Cherry Lane residents.

After thanking Council for paying attention to the Cherry Lane Estates, he stated that the residents would like someone to buy the Estates as fast as possible, because the water situation there continues to deteriorate. He added that they want someone to come in and do the much needed upgrades, so they can continue to reside there.

He continued that the residents would appreciate it if a deal could be made with a potential buyer and Borough Council, so the residents could get back to living a normal life again.

Attorney Vitek stated that the residents are thankful that the Borough Council and Municipality has kept an eye out for the residents of Cherry Lane Estates.

He expressed that with winter coming, there is an urgency to get a deal done with a new buyer.

Attorney Vitek mentioned that the Residents Association has secured an agreement with a new buyer that would ensure 3 years of steady rent, with no rent increases over that time. He said that needed repairs were also promised by this new buyer. He added that they are ready to move forward with an agreement with this new buyer.

Solicitor Cascio stated that he and Attorney Vitek have consulted, and are working towards the same objectives and goals for Cherry Lane Estates.

Solicitor Cascio stated that he explained to Attorney Vitek that there have been fruitful discussions with Borough Council, and they look forward to verifying the buyer's ability to execute a plan. He added that the issues are being looked at very carefully, and there is expectation to have something to report to Council in the very near future.

8. Administrative Business:

(a) Communications (None)

(b) Payment of bills:

Motion

Mr. Shaulis moved, Mrs. Ream seconded, to approve the payment of bills numbered 34160 - 34263 totaling \$321,692.63.

Motion Unanimously Carried

9. Policy Agenda:

Old Business:

(a) *None*

New Business:

(a) Ordinance #1380 – *Consider adopting the Sewer Rate Ordinance at the rate of \$1.08 per/hundred gallons effective January 1, 2020. (This is a 10 cent increase per/hundred gallons)*

Ms. Enos asked if Borough Council had any further questions regarding Ordinance #1380. No questions were asked, therefore Mrs. Miller proceeded with the motions.

ORDINANCE NO. 1380

AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF SOMERSET AMENDING THE ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING THE RATES TO BE COLLECTED FROM CUSTOMERS OF THE SOMERSET BOROUGH SEWER SYSTEM

BE IT, AND THE SAME IS HEREBY ORDAINED AND ENACTED as follows:

1. From and after the effective date of this Ordinance, the rate to be charged to all customers of the Somerset Borough sanitary sewer system shall be ONE DOLLAR AND EIGHT CENTS (\$01.08) per ONE HUNDRED (100) GALLONS.
2. All existing ordinances or parts thereof that are inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed.
3. This ordinance shall take effect January 1, 2020.

ENACTED AND ORDAINED this 16th day of December 2019 by the Borough Council of the Borough of Somerset.

Motion

Mr. Thomas moved, Mr. Shaulis seconded, to adopt the Sewer Rate Ordinance at the rate of \$1.08 per/hundred gallons effective January 1, 2020. (This is a 10 cent increase per/hundred gallons)

Motion Unanimously Carried

(b) Resolution No. 2019-14 – *Consider setting the Real Estate Tax Rate for 2020 at its current millage of 16.40 mills.*

Ms. Enos stated that because the Real Estate Tax Millage Rate will remain the same, with no change purposed, we can adopt it by Resolution.

She brought out that the Real Estate Tax Rate is set at:

...**15.29 Mills** for General Purpose

....**666 Mills** for the Mary S. Biesecker Public Library

....**444 Mills** for the Somerset Volunteer Fire Department

TOTAL MILLS = 16.40 Mills

RESOLUTION NO. 2019-14

**AN RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF SOMERSET, COUNTY OF SOMERSET, COMMONWEALTH OF PA,
FIXING THE TAX RATE FOR THE YEAR 2020**

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the Borough of Somerset, Somerset County, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:

THAT a tax be and the same is hereby levied on all real property within the Borough of Somerset, subject to taxation for the fiscal year 2020 as follows:

SECTION 1. Tax Rate for General Purposes, the sum of 15.29 on each dollar of assessed valuation, or the sum of \$.1529 on each on hundred dollars of assessed valuation.

SECTION 2. For Mary S. Biesecker Public Library purposes, the sum of .666 mills on each dollar of assessed valuation, or the sum of \$.00666 on each on hundred dollars of assessed valuation.

SECTION 3. For Somerset Volunteer Fire Department purposes, the sum of .444 mills on each dollar of assessed valuation, or the sum of \$.00444 on each on hundred dollars of assessed valuation.

SECTION 4. All other municipal tax rates are to remain unchanged.

SECTION 5. That any Resolution, or part of Resolution, conflicting with this Resolution, be and the same is hereby repealed insofar as the same affects this Resolution.

**MILLS ON EACH DOLLAR OF
ASSESSED VALUATION**

Tax Rate for General Purposes	15.29 Mills
Tax Rate for Mary S. Biesecker Public Library purposes	.666 Mills
Tax Rate for Somerset Volunteer Fire Department Purposes	<u>.444 Mills</u>
<u>TOTAL:</u>	16.40 Mills

Adopted this 16th day of December, 2019

Motion

Mr. Thomas moved, Mrs. Pyle seconded, to set the Real Estate Tax Rate for 2020 at its current millage of 16.40 mills.

Motion Unanimously Carried

(c) *2020 Budgets – Consider adopting the General, Water, Sewer, and Special Revenue Fund budgets for the year 2020.*

Mrs. Miller proceeded with the motions without further discussion.

Motion

Mrs. Ream moved, Mr. Thomas seconded, to adopt the General, Water, Sewer, and Special Revenue Fund budgets for the year 2020.

Motion Unanimously Carried

(d) *Mary S. Biesecker Library Grant Project – The Library is seeking authorization to approve Change Order No. 1 in the amount of \$1,050.00 for a future interconnection to the main panelboard. (Electrical Contract)*

Ms. Enos explained that since we are the grant applicant of this project, the Borough Council has to approve this so the Library can move forward with the Change Order.

Ms. Enos added that the Change Order is for their Electrical Contract, which has already been pre-approved by the Granting Agency, as well, so it is within their contract.

Motion

Mr. Shaulis moved, Mr. Thomas seconded, to approve Change Order No. 1 in the amount of \$1,050.00 for a future interconnection to the main panelboard (*Electrical Contract*) for the Mary S. Biesecker Library Grant Project.

Motion Unanimously Carried

(e) *Mary S. Biesecker Library Grant Project – The Library is seeking authorization from Council to execute an amended contract that will extend the term of the agreement with the Commonwealth of PA until June 30, 2020.*

Ms. Enos explained that part of the Library Grant was to seek a Roof Replacement. There were no bidders at the time. As a result, the Library sought to extend the term of the agreement through the Commonwealth of PA to June 30, 2020.

Ms. Enos brought out that it has been approved by the Commonwealth of PA, and authorization from Council is needed to execute the amended contract.

Motion

Mrs. Ream moved, Mr. Thomas seconded, to execute an amended contract that will extend the term of the agreement with the Commonwealth of PA until June 30, 2020.

Motion Unanimously Carried

(f) Somerset Area Ambulance Association – Requesting a donation for 2020.

Ms. Enos brought out that in 2019, Borough Council approved a donation of \$4,000.00 for the year to Somerset Area Ambulance Association, to be distributed in increments of \$1,000.00 each quarter.

Motion

Mr. Thomas moved, Mrs. Ream seconded, to approve a donation of \$4,000.00 for the year 2020, to be distributed in increments of \$1,000.00 each quarter, to the Somerset Area Ambulance Association.

Motion Unanimously Carried

(g) Humane Society of Somerset County – Requesting a donation for 2020.

Ms. Enos brought out that in 2019 Council authorized \$500.00 to be given to the Humane Society of Somerset County for the year.

Motion

Mr. Shaulis moved, Mrs. Ream seconded, to donate \$500.00 to the Humane Society of Somerset County.

Motion Unanimously Carried

(h) Somerset Inc. – Requesting the Borough to sponsor 1 block of ice and ¼ page advertisement for the Fire & Ice Festival.

Ms. Enos brought out that Borough Council has sponsored this event yearly. She mentioned that this year would mark the 25th Anniversary of the Fire & Ice Festival.

Ms. Enos disclosed that if Borough Council so chooses to approve a 1 block ice sculpture and ¼ page advertisement, the sculpture would cost \$290.00 and the ¼ page advertisement is \$158.00 totaling \$448.00.

Motion

Mrs. Ream moved, Mr. Shaulis seconded, to authorize the Borough to sponsor 1 block of ice and ¼ page advertisement for the Fire & Ice Festival totaling \$448.00.

Motion Unanimously Carried

(i) Bakersville Vol. Fire Dept. – Requesting a donation for 2020.

Ms. Enos stated that the Borough has facilities located within Bakersville Volunteer Fire Departments area. The records show that in the last 3 years, no donations were made to the Fire Department.

Mr. Thomas stated that he feels that a donation of at least \$50.00 should be given to Bakersville Fire Department because the Borough has property within their jurisdiction.

Motion

Mr. Thomas moved, Mrs. Ream seconded, to authorize a \$50.00 donation to Bakersville Volunteer Fire Department.

Motion Unanimously Carried

Mrs. Pyle disclosed that at Somerset Inc.'s recent meeting, discussion was held regarding \$300,000.00 that needs to be spent before July 2020. She disclosed that the majority of those funds will be spent on three major projects. One, helping the "Next Step" Center to acquire and renovate a building. Second, to establish a revolving renovation fund by acquiring a dilapidated building that Somerset Inc. will flip. Lastly, engineering for the most difficult section of the Lake Trail. Any remaining amount will be spent on a study to decide what the best use is for the commercial Borough properties.

Mrs. Pyle mentioned that the completion of Trinity Park will be done in the spring of 2020. The bid to finish the park is \$111,000.00.

The Somerset Inc.'s Office Renovation Permit was approved, and presently they are waiting for the work to be done.

Mrs. Pyle also mentioned that the electrical box on West Main Street is being aesthetically improved.

Mrs. Miller mentioned that the group picture that was taken at the County Borough's Association Banquet is in the issue of the Pennsylvania's Sheriffs Winter Publication.

Mrs. Miller also read a letter of appreciation to Mrs. Pyle from Borough Council thanking her for her 8 years of service on the Borough Council, and for all the improvements she has been involved in with Somerset Inc. over the years.

Borough Council mentioned that she was a fine business woman of Somerset, and she was wished a healthy and bright future.

10. Executive Session – None requested

11. ADJOURNMENT

Motion

Mrs. Pyle moved to adjourn, motion seconded by Mr. Shaulis.

Motion Unanimously Carried

7:17 p.m.

Michele A. Enos, Borough Manager/ Secretary