

# **Borough of Somerset Council Meeting**

## **August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024 - 5:00 p.m.**

1. **Meeting Called to Order** – President Ream.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

3. **Oath of Office** – Mayor to swear in newly appointed Council Member, Mr. Mario Dirienzo.

Mayor Rosemeyer conducted the swearing in of Mr. Dirienzo to Borough Council.

Mrs. Ream mentioned that Mr. Dirienzo is from the Brierwood section, and added that he can represent that area of Somerset Borough, as well. Mrs. Ream thanked him for applying for the position.

Mr. Dirienzo thanked all of Council, and said that he would give his new position, as a member of Borough Council, his best.

4. **Roll Call:**

a) **Borough Council Members present:** *Pam Ream, Ruby Miller (via telephone), Lee Hoffman, Sue Opp and Steve Shaulis, Ian Mandichak and Mario Dirienzo.*

b) **Junior Council Member present:** *Robert Grega.*

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; Solicitors, James Cascio & Allyson Lonas, and Consulting Engineers, Tom Reilly & Jake Bolby.*

e) **Public Attendance:** *Beth Maul, Sue Sube, and Melanie Heiple.*

5. **Approval of Agenda:** *Consider approving the Agenda with the change of Officer Kasterko's swearing-in by Mayor Rosemeyer as a new part-time police officer, to take place at a later date.*

### **Motion**

Mr. Mandichak moved, Mrs. Opp seconded, to approve Agenda with this change.

Motion Unanimously Carried

**6. Announcements:**

a) *None*

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

a) *July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024 – Borough Council Meeting Minutes.*

**Motion**

Mr. Hoffman moved, Mr. Shaulis seconded, to approve the July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Borough Council Meeting Minutes with the one change to state “Mrs.” Opp not “Mr.” Opp in one of the motions.

Motion Unanimously Carried

**8. Award of Bids:**

a) *2024 Street Paving Project – Ratify the award of the paving contract to Michael Facchiano Contracting, Inc. who was the lowest responsive bidder.*

Ms. Enos said that certain Borough streets were bid out to be paved this year. Streets selected were ones that will not be in the mix for the Sewer Project.

Three bids were received for our Paving Project this year which covers North & South Center Avenue, Columbia Avenue, Union Street, Race Street and Church Street.

The Contractor was asked to complete the project on Columbia, Race & Church Streets because they are significant bus routes for the school district.

The lowest responsive bidder was Michael Facchiano Contracting.

The base-bid price for Center Avenue was \$114,790.00. The additive alternate was \$30,000. Columbia Avenue base-bid was \$57,383.60. Race Street was \$52,642.50. Union Street will be \$37,940.00. Church Street will cost \$53,100.00. Collectively, this is Borough funds.

Ms. Enos said that the paving will occur in areas where Columbia Gas disturbed the roadways, as well as, in areas where the Water Project also disturbed the roadways.

Mr. Bailey added that on the additive alternate of \$30,000.00, which is for the pavement markings, it will be done by Public Works. He noted that he ordered the materials, and the price will be around \$8,000.00.

Ms. Enos said that this was compared to \$30,000.00 that was the bid openings at the time. She said that we have shaved off the \$30,000.00 price by doing the work ourselves for the pavement markings.

Mrs. Ream added that regardless of where the bids are coming from, we always would like to go local, but the State guidelines state that you have to go with the lowest bid.

Ms. Enos said that the three companies that put in a bid were HRI Inc., Quaker Sales and Michael Facchiano Contracting.

## **Motion**

Mrs. Opp moved, Mr. Hoffman seconded, to the award the 2024 Street Paving Project to Michael Facchiano Contracting, Inc., the lowest responsive bidder.

Motion Unanimously Carried

## **9. General Public Comments:**

a) Melanie Heiple – *Union Street Playground Committee to discuss their request to apply for a grant in 2025.*

Ms. Heiple said the playground activities are finished for the year. She mentioned that everything went really well, and the children really enjoyed it. She also thanked Council for their cooperation with everything.

Ms. Heiple mentioned brochures they are handing out to showcase the projects the Playground Committee would like to have done by raising money. She also mentioned that a Contractor came in and gave estimates on what future planned projects at the playground would cost.

Ms. Maul noted that she spoke to Mr. John Morocco and he said that he and several friends are enthusiastic about the idea of installing a splash pad at the playground. He offered to help with excavation in removing the old wading pool there to help save the Borough some costs.

Mrs. Ream asked Ms. Heiple what the plans were for the splash pad, *“Was it for a Grant Project or funds raised for it?”*

Ms. Heiple answered, *“Both.”*

Mrs. Ream said that, as discussed before with the Playground Committee, any Grant Application has to be done by the Borough, and the Borough or Playground Committee has to have available matching funds. She said that Council previously had \$12,000.00 budgeted for the playground. She said that the Borough does not have \$100,000.00 to match a grant.

Ms. Heiple mentioned that the Playground Committee, has to date, raised approximately \$40,000.00 and is hoping to raise what they need.

Ms. Heiple said that the Playground Committee recently met with Ms. Enos, representatives for DCNR, and a grant writer regarding funding.

Ms. Enos said a Grant Application is being offered in January 2025 that is a “50/50”. This means that whenever you apply for grant funding for a specific project, either the Borough or the Union Street Playground Committee has to match half of the overall costs. She added that this is why Council needs to know the Playground Committee’s plans. Also, when you make application for whatever grant you are seeking, they will want to see a Commitment Letter from the Borough, along with the Grant Application, stating that we have half of the overall costs set aside to put toward the planned project.

Ms. Heiple noted that the Playground Committee wanted Council to know what they would like to plan for the playground’s future, and the Committee is hoping that they can get the funds it takes to make their plans possible.

**10. Administrative Business:**

a) Communications – (none)

b) Payment of Bills – Month of August 2024.

**Motion:**

Mrs. Opp moved, Mr. Mandichak seconded, to approve the payment of bills for the month of August 2024 numbered 42024 – 42176 totaling \$688,204.88.

Motion Unanimously Carried

c) Department Reports – Consider approving the Departmental Reports for the month of July 2024.

**Motion**

Mr. Shaulis moved, Mrs. Opp seconded, to approve the Departmental Reports for the month of July 2024.

Motion Unanimously Carried

**11. Policy Agenda:**

**Old Business:**

a) None

**New Business:**

a) Swearing-In – Mayor Rosemeyer to swear-in Officer Kasterko as a new part-time Police Officer and add him to the roster of part-time police officers.

*To be done at a later date.*

b) Certificate of Appreciation – Mayor Rosemeyer to present the certificate to Jody Gearhart and Kristin Grasser for the coordination of this year's Somerset "Night Out" Block Party.

Mayor Rosemeyer presented the Certificates of Appreciation to Jody Gearhart and Kristin Grasser for the great job they did in planning this year's Somerset "Night Out" Block Party.

Mrs. Ream mentioned that it was well attended and represented on social media.

Mayor Rosemeyer, Chief Appel and all of Borough Council thanked them for a job well done.

c) Subdivision Request from Robin Knepper – Consider the recommendation of our Planning Commission to approve the minor subdivision request subject to the owners providing clarification of the new lot line on the final plan.

Ms. Enos said that the Planning Commission reviewed this request, and it is their recommendation to approve a minor subdivision request where there are 2 homes on 1 parcel. The owner wants to divide those homes into separate parcels. They want to sale in the future, and this will make it easier for the homeowners to do that, plus they do meet all the setbacks, as well.

Ms. Enos added that it is the Planning Commission’s recommendation for Council to approve the minor subdivision request.

**Motion**

Mrs. Opp moved, Mrs. Miller seconded, to approve the minor subdivision request subject to the owners providing clarification of the new lot line on the final plan, with the Borough Manager’s final approval following receipt of the pending clarification.

Motion Unanimously Carried

d) Resolution No. 2024-05 – Authorizing the submission of our 2024 Community Development Block Grant application.

Ms. Enos said that this is done annually. It is an authorizing resolution for submission of our 2024 CDBG Grant Application that is administered through the Redevelopment Authority.

Ms. Enos recommended authorizing the submission of our 2024 Community Development Block Grant Application.

**Motion**

Mr. Shaulis moved, Mr. Hoffman seconded, to authorize the submission of our 2024 Community Development Block Grant application.

Motion Unanimously Carried

e) General Application Certification for 2024 – Authorize the execution of our 2024 General Application Certification for Community Development Block Grant funds.

Ms. Enos recommended authorizing execution of the General Application Certification for out 2024 CDBG Grant Application.

**Motion**

Mr. Mandichak moved, Mrs. Opp seconded, to authorize the execution of our 2024 General Application for Community Development Block Grant funds.

Motion Unanimously Carried

f) *Cooperation Agreement* – *Authorize the execution of the agreement between the Borough of Somerset, County of Somerset, and the Redevelopment Authority of Somerset County authorizing the Redevelopment Authority to apply for funding and administering funds associated with those projects.*

Ms. Enos stated that the Cooperation Agreement is between the Borough, the County and the Redevelopment Authority. The Redevelopment Authority is the one who administers the funds on behalf of the Borough. This is the arrangement that the Borough has authorized for many years.

Ms. Enos added that this is the Cooperation Agreement that the Borough enters into with the County and the Redevelopment Authority for those grant administration services. The cost of the administration is coming out of the grant funding, as well.

**Motion**

Mrs. Ream moved, Mr. Hoffman seconded, to authorize the execution of the agreement between the Borough of Somerset, County of Somerset, and the Redevelopment Authority of Somerset County authorizing the Redevelopment Authority to apply for funding and administering funds associated with those projects.

Motion Unanimously Carried

g) *Donation Request* – *Somerset Volunteer Fire Department requesting the Borough to sponsor a “hole” for their annual golf fundraiser in the amount of \$100.00.*

Ms. Enos noted that Borough Council has sponsored this golf fundraiser in the past.

**Motion**

Mrs. Opp moved, Mr. Mandichak seconded, to authorize the donation request of Somerset Volunteer Fire Department in the amount of \$100.00 to sponsor a “hole” for their annual golf fundraiser.

Motion Unanimously Carried

*h) Handi-cap Parking Request – Consider authorizing a request to install a handi-cap parking space along the 400 block of West Union Street.*

Ms. Enos said that the Borough received a request for a handi-cap space to be placed on the 400 block of West Union Street. She noted that there is parking on one side of the street there.

Ms. Enos said she explained to the person requesting this that it did not mean that the space would be reserved for them specifically. She told them that anyone handi-capped would be entitled to use that space. She added that if Council would like to authorize it, the Borough would make the necessary signs and markings.

*This request was discussed among Borough Council.*

***Request failed due to lack of motion.***

**Committee Business/Reports:**

*i) Borough Manager’s Report – Given by Michele Enos.*

Ms. Enos mentioned that the Capital Projects Request from our Supervisors will start to be received in mid-September. She said that the requests will be looked at Administratively, from a Staff perspective, and with the Borough’s Engineer present.

A Workshop will be scheduled to discuss the budget so that Operations & Capital Projects can be reviewed that Council may potentially fund or eliminate. A special meeting will then be scheduled sometime in October.

*j) Finance Report – Given by Brett Peters.*

Mr. Peters provided Council with the Financial Report through July 2024 earlier in the month. He mentioned that we are 58.33% of the way through the year.

**General Fund:**

*Revenues – 84.88%*

*Expenses – 62.31%*

**Water Fund:**

*Revenues – 62.27%*

*Expenses – 63.17%*

**Sewer Fund:**

*Revenues – 62.30%*

*Expenses – 60.24%*

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

*Mrs. Sizemore was not present at the meeting, but sent a Report to Council.*

*l) President’s Report – Given by Pam Ream.*

Mrs. Ream reiterated that Somerset “Night Out” was really well done this year as it has been in the past.

She also welcomed Mr. Mario Dirienzo as a new member of Borough Council, and expressed that it was appreciated that he was here.

Mrs. Ream also expressed that she appreciated that some of the Borough streets have been paved. She thanked Mr. Bolby, Ms. Enos, Mr. Bailey, Mr. Peters and the group, for managing a lot of complaints and a lot of angry people.

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

Mr. Hoffman said that the “Chalk the Block” Festival was considered a success across the board. Overall, closing the roads went well. He expressed that the Fire trucks looked great in the middle of the road, with lots of pictures being taken with it. He added that it was a good time all around.

Mr. Hoffman also noted that the work at the Brinker Building continues. A Contractor was secured to do the next phase of construction, which will include some of the brick work on the side by AmeriServ. A large portion will be the replacing the rear stairwell which will service all 3 of the units on the main floor. Hopefully, it will be completed this fall.

Plans for “Light Up Night” and “Fire & Ice” have already begun. The theme for “Fire & Ice” this year will be outer space.

It was mentioned that the “Brewed Awakening” Coffee Shop will be moving into the Borough across from Stahl’s Jewelry. Also, “Chubby Chipmunk” Restaurant, which is a spin-off of the “Fat Squirrel” in Jennerstown, PA, will be moving into the former popcorn store.

*n) PSAB Report – Given by Fred Rosemeyer.*

Mayor Rosemeyer mentioned that the PSAB Conference will be held on October 11-13, 2024.

September is the month for Emergency Preparedness, and PSAB is reminding people to review their Emergency Plan with Council. Mayor Rosemeyer said this is something the Borough should really take a look at because it was never done.

Also, the County Borough’s Association will be meeting October 17, 2024 at Rizzo’s in Windber, PA at 6:00 p.m. Mayor Rosemeyer added that here will be no charge for Council Member’s meals.

*o) Somerset Volunteer Fire Dept. Report – Mr. Shaulis.*

*Mr. Shaulis was not provided a Fire Report for review.*

*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 said that we are coming closer to the end of all active projects. Columbia Gas will be the next big effort on street paving, which will be on Main & Patriot Streets. It hasn't been scheduled yet, but is expected to happen very soon. They are waiting on a Permit from PennDOT to be able to do it.

Mr. Bolby mentioned that monies are still being held on the Waterline Contractor that was in town. There are still 2 other Contracts on that project that have some things that need to be tied up before they can even be considered closed. He said that they are going to press the Contractor to get any of the open-ended items taken care of. The funds will be held until they feel satisfied the items have been addressed.

## **GENERAL:**

### **1) Center Ave. Sidewalk:**

Mr. Bolby said that Center Avenue is very close to complete. There is some electrical work that still needs to be done, then it should be energized. Public Works is planning to do above ground planter boxes instead of tree wells so future damage to sidewalks from tree roots will be avoided.

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

Mayor Rosemeyer thanked Council for their cooperation for "Night Out". He said that over 500 people attended.

He mentioned that Chief Appel, he, and Ms. Enos will be interviewing 2 candidates for Police Officer positions.

Mayor Rosemeyer noted that 2 Officers are going to the state of Indiana to pick up a prisoner for an upcoming trial in Somerset. All the expenses incurred by the Department for this are being recorded, and will be part of restitution in the court case.

He also mentioned another court case involving animal cruelty which is going to court. He said all the monies being spent for this court case is also being tabulated for restitution.

Mayor Rosemeyer said that he attended the Gold Star Memorial for the County held September 11, 2024. He added that it was a beautiful ceremony and worthwhile to be there.

Mayor Rosemeyer noted that there was a Local Emergency Planning Committee Meeting. They also mentioned to look at our Emergency Plan. This is being encouraged state wide.

He also thanked Ms. Enos for the part she played in "Night Out".

Mayor Rosemeyer said that there will be an in-house presentation for Officer Joseph Clement. He is being recognized for his part in arresting 2 drug dealers by himself.

**12. Executive Session – *Personnel Matters and Contract Negotiations.***

**Motion**

Mrs. Opp moved, seconded by Mr. Hoffman, to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters and contract negotiations.

Motion Unanimously Carried  
5:59 p.m.

**Back in Session**

6:12 p.m.

**Motion**

Mr. Dirienzo moved, seconded by Mrs. Opp, to request an actuarial study on Act PL536 No. 49, entitled “Pension Service Credit for Prior Service with the Police Departments”, dated July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion**

Mr. Shaulis moved to adjourn, motion seconded by Mr. Dirienzo.

Motion Unanimously Carried  
6:15 p.m.

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Michele A. Enos, Borough Manager/ Secretary