

The Borough of Somerset Council Meeting

December 16th, 2024 - 5:00 p.m.

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

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

3. **Executive Session**: To discuss matters of collective bargaining and personnel.

Motion

Mr. Hoffman moved, seconded by Mr. Shaulis, to go into Executive Session to discuss matters of collective bargaining and personnel.

Motion Unanimously Carried
5:07 p.m.

Back in Session

5:20 p.m.

4. **Roll Call**:

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

b) **Also present**: Mayor Fred Rosemeyer.

c) **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; Consulting Engineers, Tom Reilly & Jake Bolby.

d) **Public Attendance**: Evan DiBuono, Carson Sannel, Rowan Holmes, Ben Bowers, Matthew Kalp, Emily Bush, Natalie Riggs and Steve Peck.

5. **Approval of Agenda**: Consider approving the agenda as presented.

Motion

Mrs. Opp moved, Mr. Mandichak seconded, to approve the agenda as presented with moving the Swearing-In of the part-time Police Officers to an earlier time in the meeting.

Motion Unanimously Carried

6. **Announcements**:

a) None

7. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)

a) November 14th, 2024 –*Special Budget Meeting Minutes.*

Motion

Mrs. Opp moved, Mr. Dirienzo seconded, to approve the November 14th, 2024 Special Budget Meeting Minutes.

Motion Unanimously Carried

b) November 25th, 2024 –*Borough Council Meeting Minutes.*

Motion

Mr. Shaulis moved, Mrs. Opp seconded, to approve the November 25th, 2024 Borough Council Meeting Minutes.

Motion Unanimously Carried

8. Award of Bids:

a) Overhead Garage Doors/Public Works Garage – *Consider awarding this to the lowest responsive bidder.*

Ms. Enos noted that there were 3 proposals for the 7 doors at the Public Works Garage. This was approved in the 2024 Capital Budget. The 3 proposals came in from:

1. Raynor Garage Doors of Johnstown: \$30,508.53
2. Overhead Door Company: \$31,025.00
3. Taaz Door, LLC: \$33,909.33

Raynor Garage was the lowest responsive bidder at \$30,508.53.

Motion

Mrs. Opp moved, Mr. Mandichak seconded, to award Raynor Garage, the lowest responsive bidder at \$30,508.53, for the overhead garage door replacement at the Public Works Garage.

Motion Unanimously Carried

9. General Public Comments:

a) None requested

10. Administrative Business:

a) Communications – (none)

b) Payment of Bills – *Month of December 2024.*

Motion:

Mr. Mandichak moved, Mr. Shaulis seconded, to approve the payment of bills for the month of December 2024 numbered 42589 – 42678 totaling \$333,338.51.

Motion Unanimously Carried

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

Motion

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

Motion Unanimously Carried

11. Policy Agenda:

Old Business:

- a) None

New Business:

- a) Swearing-In – Mayor Rosemeyer to swear-in part-time police officers and add them to the roster.

Mayor Rosemeyer performed the Swearing-In of part-time police officer Russ Miller and added him to the roster of part-time police officers of the Somerset Borough Police Department.

The Officer was introduced to Borough Council and welcomed to his position on the police force.

- b) Somerset Regional Fire Department – Request to consider reducing the monthly rent from \$1,000 to \$800 beginning 2025.

This request was discussed extensively with Borough Council at last month's meeting. Discussion continued with Council regarding this request.

Motion

Mrs. Ream moved, Mr. Dirienzo seconded, to reduce the monthly rent from \$1,000 to \$800 beginning 2025 for the Somerset Regional Fire Department.

Motion Carried (6 yes 0 no 1 abstention)
(Mr. Shaulis abstained)

c) *2025 Equipment & Labor Rates* – Consider adopting the equipment rate schedule and labor rate schedule for billing purposes on subcontracted work and code enforcement purposes.

Ms. Enos stated that this has not been updated for quite some time. We are now seeing more code enforcement. Also, more things are done by our Borough crews and subcontractors when we have code violations.

She mentioned that the homeowner is billed, but if they do not pay, their property is liened. She added that they want to upgrade the rates to reflect more of a current rate structure than what is presently being used. She added that if reimbursement were being sought after for FEMA, PEMA or any kind of snow disaster, these would be the rates used at that time too.

Ms. Enos expressed that Council is being requested to adjust what the Borough's rates would be for each equipment, so when we invoice for services, we are giving the fair rate structure.

Motion

Mr. Hoffman moved, Mr. Mandichak seconded, to adopt the equipment rate schedule and labor rate schedule for billing purposes on subcontracted work and code enforcement purposes.

Motion Unanimously Carried

d) *Resolution No. 2024-09* – Designating a Certified Public Accountant to audit the Borough accounts for the year 2024.

Ms. Enos stated that Council is being asked to appoint Friedline & Pison Company to be the designated auditors for the 2024 records for the Municipal Authority and the Borough, as well.

Motion

Mrs. Opp moved, Mr. Hoffman seconded, to designate Friedline & Pison as Certified Public Accountants to audit the Borough accounts for the year 2024.

Motion Unanimously Carried

BOROUGH OF SOMERSET

RESOLUTION No. 2024-09

WHEREAS, The Borough of Somerset has by ordinance established the use of Certified Public Accountants to audit Borough Accounts, and;

NOW THEREFORE, We, the Council and Mayor of the Borough of Somerset designate Friedline, Pison & Company to audit Borough Accounts for the year 2024.

ADOPTED this 16th day of December 2024.

e) Resolution No. 2024-10 – *Adopting the Tax Rate Resolution for 2025 (Same rate as 2024)*

Mrs. Ream mentioned that during budget talks for 2025, Borough Council was able to do the budget without a rate increase.

Motion

Mr. Mandichak moved, Mrs. Opp seconded, to adopt the Tax Rate Resolution for 2025.

Motion Unanimously Carried

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-10

AN RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF SOMERSET, COUNTY OF SOMERSET, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, FIXING THE TAX RATE FOR THE YEAR 2025

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 2025 as follows:

SECTION 1. Tax Rate for General Purposes, the sum of 18.29 on each one thousand dollars of assessed valuation, or the sum of \$ 1.829 on each one hundred dollars of assessed valuation.

SECTION 2. For Mary S. Biesecker Public Library purposes, the sum of .666 mills on each one thousand dollars of assessed valuation, or the sum of \$.0666 on each one hundred dollars of assessed valuation.

SECTION 3. For Somerset Volunteer Fire Department purposes, the sum of .444 mills on each one thousand dollars of assessed valuation, or the sum of \$.0444 on each one 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	18.29 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>	19.40 Mills

Adopted this 16th day of December, 2024

f) *Resolution No. 2024-11 – Authorizing the disposal of Accounts Payable check vouchers for the years 2009-2016. This is done in accordance with the Commonwealth’s Record Retention and Disposition Act.*

Motion

Mrs. Opp moved, Mr. Hoffman seconded, to authorize the disposal of Accounts Payable check vouchers for the years 2009-2016.

Motion Unanimously Carried

RESOLUTION NO. 2024-11

WHEREAS, The Borough of Somerset adopted Resolution No. 87-02 on April 27, 1987 providing for the destruction of certain papers in accordance with the Retention and Disposition Schedule for Records of Pennsylvania Municipalities and;

WHEREAS, The Somerset Borough Administration wishes to dispose of some of its records in accordance with this Resolution;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the following items be authorized for purging:

FINANCE DEPARTMENT:

- ... 2009 Accounts Payable check vouchers.
- ... 2010 Accounts Payable check vouchers.
- ... 2011 Accounts Payable check vouchers.
- ... 2012 Accounts Payable check vouchers.
- ... 2013 Accounts Payable check vouchers.
- ... 2014 Accounts Payable check vouchers.
- ... 2015 Accounts Payable check vouchers.
- ... 2016 Accounts Payable check vouchers.

Adopted this 16th day of December 2024

- g) 2025 Budgets – Consider adoption of the Final Budgets for 2025 for General, Water, Sewer, Stormwater and Special Revenue Funds.

Motion

Mr. Mandichak moved, Mrs. Opp seconded, to adopt the Final Budgets for 2025 for General, Water, Sewer, Stormwater and Special Revenue Funds.

Motion Unanimously Carried

Committee Business/Reports:

- h) Borough Manager's Report – Given by Michele Enos.

Ms. Enos thanked Borough Council for their extra time spent in budget talks and the special meetings, as well.

i) Finance Report – Given by Brett Peters.

Mr. Peters provided Borough Council with the Financial Report through November 2024. He mentioned that we are 11/12th of the way through the year or 91.67%.

General Fund:

Revenues – 110.00%

Expenses – 110.00%

Water Fund:

Revenues – 83.60%

Expenses – 81.91%

Sewer Fund:

Revenues – 97.95%

Expenses – 96.92%

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

Mrs. Sizemore mentioned that the LSA grant application was submitted for the purchase of a GapVax with the help of Aspire.

The adoption of the revised Rules & Regulations will be on the Agenda for the Municipal Authority Meeting. It will be effective January 1, 2025.

Also effective January 1, 2025, will be several Resolutions regarding the rates for water, wastewater and the storm systems once approved by the Municipal Authority Board.

Also discussed at the Municipal Authority Meeting, will be a Resolution approval for PennVEST funding for the 1st Phase of the Sewer Project.

Mrs. Sizemore lastly said that DEP approved the 20 EDU sewer taps for 2025.

k) President’s Report – Given by Pam Ream.

Mrs. Ream thanked Mr. Hoffman and his group for “Light-Up Night”. She also thanked the Borough Crew for their help.

Mrs. Ream also mentioned updating Management’s salary. It was put in the form of a motion:

Motion

Mr. Mandichak moved, Mrs. Opp seconded, to approve a 3.85% increase in salary for all of the Borough Management team in 2025.

Motion Unanimously Carried

l) Somerset Inc. Report – Given by Lee Hoffman.

Mr. Hoffman mentioned that “Light-Up Night” was a success, with many in attendance. He thanked the Borough and the Public Works Department for their help.

He said that “Fire and Ice” is quickly approaching, as well. There are over 50 ice sculptures already accounted for with the theme of “Space” this year. This will be the 30th anniversary of “Fire and Ice.”

Mr. Hoffman noted that work continues at the former Brinker Building.

m) PSAB Report – Given by Fred Rosemeyer.

Mayor Rosemeyer said that the PSAB Conference will be held on June 1st – 4th, 2025 in Hershey, PA.

The County Boroughs Association meeting will be held in March 2025 at the Somerset Country Club.

n) Somerset Volunteer Fire Dept. Report – Given by Steve Shaulis.

Mr. Shaulis expressed that, in behalf of the Fire Department, he thanked Council for the reduction in their monthly rent.

He mentioned that elections will be held this Thursday with both Fire Departments participating. He noted that the actual merger will take place on January 1, 2025.

January 3rd, 2025 will be the Installation of Officers Banquet. He added that the Officers from both Fire Companies will be combined.

Mr. Shaulis mentioned that the Fire Department, to date, is up to 511 fire calls.

o) 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 the Water Project is nearing close-out. Finalizing everything will be in the spring after a few things are resolved.

SEWER:

1) Assessment, Repair, and Abatement Plan (Hydraulic Overload):

Mr. Bolby said that a few permits are still be discussed with DEP.

He expressed the importance in the upcoming year for the approval of EDUs and tap fees. This will allow continued development both in Somerset Borough and in Somerset Township where it is tributary to the Borough's Sewage Treatment Plant.

Mr. Bolby said that a Year-End Status Report will be submitted under the Corrective Action Plan, which is due every 6 months. There have been no recent comments in response to our 6-month reports. He expressed that the best response we can get is approval of the taps for the subsequent years.

GENERAL:

1) Center Ave. Sidewalk:

Mr. Bolby said that this is moving toward the close of the project.

p) Mayor's Report – Given by Mayor Rosemeyer.

Mayor Rosemeyer reported that Officer Kevin Huzsek was given the “Medal of Honor” earlier this year for his bravery during the fire on Clark Street in Somerset Borough in March 2024.

Officer Huzsek is also going to receive the “Carnegie Hero Award” from Pittsburgh’s Hero Fund Commission. This is awarded for outstanding heroism, and is given to individuals throughout the country. 22 individuals nationwide will be receiving this award this year. A tribute will be held here in Somerset, along with a tribute being held in Pittsburgh, with Pittsburgh’s Hero Fund Commission present.

Chief Appel added that the “Carnegie Hero Award” is a very prestigious honor to receive. He said that this award confirms what the Police Department already knew, in that, Officer Huzsek put a heroic effort in that day. They are pleased to see that Officer Huzsek is getting recognized accordingly, both locally and nationally. He is the first recipient of this award in the Somerset Borough Police Department.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Motion

Mrs. Opp moved to adjourn; motion seconded by Mr. Shaulis.

Motion Unanimously Carried
5:58 p.m.

Michele A. Enos, Borough Manager/ Secretary