

# **The Borough of Somerset Council Meeting**

## **November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025 - 5:00 p.m.**

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

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

3. **Roll Call:**

a) **Borough Council Members present:** *Pam Ream, Lori Barnhart, 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; Municipal Authority Manager, Jessica Sizemore; Administrative Assistant, Roger Bailey; Director of Finance, Brett Peters; Assistant Director of Finance, Matthew Franciscus; Chief of Police, Rich Appel; Solicitor Lois Caton and Consulting Engineers, Tom Reilly & Jake Bolby.*

d) **Public Attendance:** *Alec Bittner and Steve Peck.*

4. **Approval of Agenda:** *Consider approving the agenda with the addition of adding the Adoption of the Tentative 2026 Budgets.*

### **Motion**

Mr. Dirienzo moved, Mrs. Opp seconded, to approve the agenda with the addition of adding the Adoption of the Tentative 2026 Budgets.

Motion Unanimously Carried

5. **Announcements:**

a) *None*

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

a) *October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025 – Borough Council Meeting Minutes.*

### **Motion**

Mr. Mandichak moved, Mrs. Opp seconded, to approve the October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Borough Council Meeting Minutes as presented.

Motion Unanimously Carried

b) *November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025 – Special Budget Meeting Minutes.*

**Motion**

Mr. Dirienzo moved, Mr. Shaulis seconded, to approve the November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Special Budget Meeting Minutes as presented.

Motion Unanimously Carried

**7. Award of Bids:**

a) *None*

**8. General Public Comments:**

a) *None requested*

**9. Administrative Business:**

a) *Communications – (none)*

b) *Payment of Bills – Month of November 2025.*

**Motion:**

Mrs. Opp moved, Mr. Dirienzo seconded, to approve the payment of bills for the month of November 2025 numbered 44103 – 44219 totaling \$2,932,878.23.

Motion Unanimously Carried

c) *Department Reports – Consider approving the Departmental Reports for the month of October 2025.*

**Motion**

Mr. Mandichak moved, Mrs. Ream seconded, to approve the Departmental Reports for the month of October 2025.

Motion Unanimously Carried

**10. Policy Agenda:**

**Old Business:**

a) *Request of Mayor Rosemeyer – Discussion concerning the PA Act 131 which allows increasing the compensation for Mayor and Council Members.*

Mayor Rosemeyer explained that this bill was signed last year by the Governor, and went into effect October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024. He said that this was the first time in 35 years that they allowed

an increase in pay for Council Members and Mayors. He requested for Council's approval for this increase in pay.

Mayor Rosemeyer explained that with a population of 5,000, a Mayors increase would go from \$5,000.00 to \$8,385.00.

Ms. Enos added that for Borough's with a population of 5,000 or more, but less than 10,000, the compensation is currently capped at a maximum of \$2,500.00 per/year for members of Borough Councils. Act 131 sets the new maximum at \$4,190.00 per/year. This increase would be for all newly elected Council Members, not for those who are currently sitting in their positions as Council Members. The same increase would also apply to newly elected Mayor's, not current sitting Mayor's.

*Mayor Rosemeyer's request for an increase in salary for newly elected Mayor's failed due to a lack of motion.*

*Mayor Rosemeyer's request for an increase in salary for newly elected Council Members failed due to a lack of motion.*

#### **New Business:**

- a) Swearing In – Officer Firestone as a part-time Part Time officer.

Mayor Rosemeyer led the swearing-in of Officer Firestone.

- b) Part-time Police Roster – Consider adding Officer Firestone to the roster of part-time police officers.

#### **Motion**

Mr. Shaulis moved, Mr. Dirienzo seconded, to add Officer Firestone to the roster of part-time police officers.

Motion Unanimously Carried

- c) Resignation of Full-time Police Officer – Consider accepting the resignation of Christina Sechler as a full-time police officer.

#### **Motion**

Mrs. Opp moved, Mrs. Barnhart seconded, to approve the resignation of Christina Sechler as a full-time police officer.

Motion Unanimously Carried

- d) Part-time Police Roster– Consider adding Christina Sechler to the roster of part-time police officers.

**Motion**

Mr. Dirienzo moved, Mr. Shaulis seconded, to approve adding Christina Sechler to the roster of part-time police officers.

Motion Unanimously Carried

e) *Mary S. Biesecker Public Library– Requesting to submit a Keystone Grant through the Borough for library programs.*

Ms. Enos explained that the Borough received a request from the library to apply for a Keystone Grant in the amount of \$21,515.00 for ADA ramp replacements and interior renovations at the library.

She said that the Borough is a “pass-thru” organization for the library, so it takes the action of Borough Council to authorize the submission, and the necessary resolutions, to submit the application on the library’s behalf. There is no local funding or match required on the Borough’s part.

The library prepares the administrative work, the Borough reviews it, and then the Borough files the paperwork with the State.

**Motion**

Mr. Dirienzo moved, Mr. Hoffman seconded, to provide the Mary S. Biesecker Public Library with the ability to submit a Keystone Grant through the Borough for library programs.

Motion Unanimously Carried

f) *Resolution 2025-11 – Adopting the Somerset County Hazard Mitigation Plan as the official plan of the Borough of Somerset.*

Ms. Enos said that this is done on an annual basis. She explained that the County gets together with other governments within the county to develop a county-wide Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Ms. Enos requested that Council adopt the Somerset County-wide Hazard Mitigation Plan.

**Motion**

Mr. Hoffman moved, Mr. Mandichak seconded, to adopt the Somerset County Hazard Mitigation Plan as the official plan of the Borough of Somerset.

Motion Unanimously Carried

**Borough of Somerset**  
**2025 Hazard Mitigation Plan**  
**Municipal Adoption Resolution**

Resolution No. 2025-11

**WHEREAS**, the *Borough of Somerset*, Somerset County, Pennsylvania, is most vulnerable to natural and human-made hazards which may result in loss of life and property, economic hardship, and threats to public health and safety, and

**WHEREAS**, Section 322 of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000) requires state and local governments to develop and submit for approval to the President a mitigation plan that outlines processes for identifying their respective natural hazards, risks, and vulnerabilities, and

**WHEREAS**, the *Borough of Somerset* acknowledges the requirements of Section 322 of DMA 2000 to have an approved Hazard Mitigation Plan as a prerequisite to receiving post-disaster Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds, and

**WHEREAS**, the Somerset County 2025 Hazard Mitigation Plan has been developed by the Emergency Management Agency in cooperation with other county departments, officials, and citizens of the Borough *of Somerset*, and

**WHEREAS**, a public involvement process consistent with the requirements of DMA 2000 was conducted to develop the Somerset County 2025 Hazard Mitigation Plan, and

**WHEREAS**, the Somerset County 2025 Hazard Mitigation Plan recommends mitigation activities that will reduce losses to life and property affected by both natural and human-made hazards that face the County and its municipal governments,

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of the *Borough of Somerset*:

- The Somerset County 2025 Hazard Mitigation Plan is hereby adopted as the official Hazard Mitigation Plan of the *Borough of Somerset*, and
- The respective officials and agencies identified in the implementation strategy of the Somerset 2025 Hazard Mitigation Plan are hereby directed to implement the recommended activities assigned to them.

g) Resolution 2025-12 – Consider approving the submission of a LSA Grant for Public Works Equipment.

Mrs. Sizemore said that the LSA Grant is being submitted for a vactor truck for Public Works. There will be no match for this grant. She noted that it needs to be submitted by the end of this month.

### **Motion**

Mrs. Opp moved, Ms. Barnhart seconded, to approve the submission of a LSA Grant for Public Works Equipment.

Motion Unanimously Carried

### **Appendix I – Authorized Official Resolution 2025-12**

Be it RESOLVED, that the Borough of Somerset (Name of Applicant) of Somerset (Name of County) hereby request a Statewide Local Share Assessment grant of \$674,400 from the Commonwealth Financing Authority to be used for purchasing equipment.

Be it FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Applicant does hereby designate Pamela Ream, Council President (Name and Title) and Michele Enos, Secretary (Name and Title) as the official(s) to execute all documents and agreements between the Borough of Somerset (Name of Applicant) and the Commonwealth Financing Authority to facilitate and assist in obtaining the requested grant.

I, Michele Enos, duly qualified Secretary of the Borough of Somerset (Name of Applicant), Somerset (Name of County) Somerset, PA, hereby certify that the forgoing is a true and correct copy of a Resolution duly adopted by a majority vote of the Borough of Somerset Council (Governing Body) at a regular meeting held 11-24-2025 (Date) and said Resolution has been recorded in the Minutes of the Borough of Somerset (Applicant) and remains in effect as of this date.

IN WITNESS THEREOF, I affix my hand and attach the seal of the Borough of Somerset (Applicant), this 24<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2025.

h) Mary Boland Letter of Request – Discussion concerning a request to “change the parking hours” on the first block of South Center Avenue.

Mr. Dirienzo explained that this letter of request was from a physically challenged couple who requested parking hours to change where they park their vehicle. It was disclosed that this request is on a State street not a Borough street.

*Discussion ensued among Council Members regarding this request.*

After discussion, it was the desire of Borough Council not to change the parking hours.

i) 2026 Tentative Budget – Consider approving the adoption and 2026 Tentative Budgets for all funds.

**Motion**

Mr. Mandichak moved, Mrs. Opp seconded, to approve the Tentative Budget for all of the funds for 2026.

Motion Unanimously Carried

**Committee Business/Reports:**

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

Ms. Enos thanked everyone for all the work that went into the budget for next year.

k) Finance Report – Given by Brett Peters.

Mr. Peters provided Borough Council with the year-to-date Financial Report through October 2025. We are 10/12<sup>th</sup>s of the way through the year or 83.33%.

<b><u>General Fund:</u></b>	<b><u>Water Fund:</u></b>	<b><u>Sewer Fund:</u></b>	<b><u>Storm Sewer Fund:</u></b>
Revenues – 97.53%	Revenues – 82.17%	Revenues – 89.78%	Revenues – 52.54%
Expenses – 83.01%	Expenses – 79.97%	Expenses – 154.52%	Expenses – 0.09%

l) Municipal Authority Manager's Report – Given by Jess Sizemore.

Mrs. Sizemore mentioned that a meeting for residents was held for Phase 1B of the Sewer Project that the Authority required easements from. She said that approximately 20 residents came to the meeting, and it went well. Mr. Bolby explained the project and why the Authority was requesting an easement.

Letters will be sent to residents in January 2026, and a meeting will be held for any resident within the project area who would like to get an update on the project.

Mrs. Sizemore also mentioned that the Authority's request for 20 EDU's of sewer taps was approved for next year.

The DEP required annual Water Service Line Inventory information will be sent to DEP. Letters will continue to be sent out to residents until the Authority can identify what their service line is made of on the system side, and from the curb stop to the customer side. Through this program, the Authority has until 2027 to get full identification of all the customer service lines.

*m) President's Report – Given by Pam Ream.*

Mrs. Ream thanked those involved in putting the tree up in Uptown.

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

Mr. Hoffman said that "Light-Up Night" was being held on November 29<sup>th</sup>. He thanked Public Works for getting all the décor up. "Small Business Saturday" will also take place that day. He also mentioned that the "Cocoa and Cookie Tour" will be taking place in Uptown the following weekend at a number of businesses.

Lastly, Mr. Hoffman mentioned that Scamps Toffee had their grand opening this morning.

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

*There was nothing to report for PSAB.*

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

Mr. Shaulis noted that, between the two Departments, they are up to 724 calls for the year.

He mentioned that there is a 25/250<sup>th</sup> Committee Meeting December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025 out at Flight 93.

Mr. Shaulis mentioned that details are in the works for the Firemen's Event parade. He thanked Chief Appel for all his help.

There was a Glow Bingo on Halloween, which was a great fundraiser for the Fire Department.

Lastly, Mr. Shaulis mentioned that there was a serious accident last Thursday evening on Geiger Road that involved a Friedens fireman. He was seriously injured, but may be released from the hospital this week.

*q) 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 mentioned that the Water Project is coming to a close. They are waiting on PENNVEST and DEP to complete it.

The Waterline Replacement Project is active on N. Pleasant Avenue. There are a few more items to complete before it's finished. It should be complete in the next week or two.



## **SEWER:**

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

Mr. Bolby said that the contractor is moving along with the Phase 1A portion of the project, which is West & Brierwood, and is on schedule. A Progress Meeting will be held with the contractors tomorrow to get an update.

The Firemen's Event has been included in the next project phase, **Phase 1B**, in the Central Business District. The contractor will be required to prepare the Borough for the parade during that weekend, and be off the streets. There will be advertising this weekend for **Phase 1B**, and then there will be opening of bids January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026 for this project. **Phase 1C** will follow approximately 6 months from that timeline.

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

Mayor Rosemeyer voiced his concern about the shortage of Police Officers at the Police Department. He asked Ms. Enos if anything could be done with Civil Service to get the process moving faster for new Officers to be hired more quickly.

Ms. Enos explained that it is not the Borough's Civil Service Committee that is the hold up, but it is the professional services to perform the things that are necessary and required under Civil Service. She said that the Borough has a large group of perspective Officers who are qualified to go through all the testing, so that is what is taking so much time. She added that she thinks things are being "wrapped up" and the Borough should have something for new patrol officers in 2026.

Chief Appel noted that it took 1½ years to be hired as a full-time Officer after his testing. He reassured that the shortage of Police Officers in the Borough has not affected the protection service for our Community. Police Officers are currently covering the shortage of Officers by working extra shifts.

*Discussion continued among Council Members regarding the Police Department, its current staffing and operations.*

## **11. Executive Session: Personnel Matters.**

### **Motion**

Mrs. Opp moved, seconded by Mr. Dirienzo to go into Executive Session to discuss Personnel Matters.

Motion Unanimously Carried  
6:04 p.m.

### **Back in Session**

6:25 p.m.

## 12. ADJOURNMENT

### Motion

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

Motion Unanimously Carried  
6:30 p.m.

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Michele A. Enos, Borough Manager/ Secretary