

BOROUGH OF SOUTHMONT
148 WONDER STREET
JOHNSTOWN, PA 15905

MINUTES FOR NOVEMBER 18, 2024

The pledge of allegiance was conducted, and the scheduled November 18, 2024, meeting was called to order by President Doug Beri at 4:00 p.m.

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

Absent: Council Member Richard Burkert and Herb Ewald, Fire Chief Steve Costic

Visitors: John A. Klanchar (104 Dahlia Street), Bob Walker (210 State Street)

Public Comment

Mr. Walker asked if the water pressure has been tested on the fire hydrants since the new water tank was installed in Westmont.

Mr. Klanchar commended the poll workers for doing a great job during the recent elections.

Correspondence

Mr. Beri reviewed a letter from the City of Johnstown concerning animal control issues asking surrounding municipalities if they would be interested in discussing government collaboration to resolve the issue.

Minutes

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve the October 21, 2024 council meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Mr. Morgan. Mr. Burkert and Mr. Ewald absent. All in favor, motion carried (5-0).

Police Chief's Report

The October 2024 Police Chief's report was received. Chief Newman stated that there were 408 calls for the month of October and 76 were for Southmont making it 844 for the year for Southmont.

Mr. Beri asked Chief Newman if he was aware of gas-powered bicycles being used in the borough. Chief Newman stated he is aware of the situation and they have issued a citation to one in Southmont.

Fire Company Report

Chief Costic absent. The October 2024 Fire Chief's Report was received.

Engineer's Report

Mr. Banks reported the flow meters are still in place and will be removed after the Thanksgiving holiday.

Zoning Officer’s Report

The October 2024 Zoning and Property Maintenance Reports were received. Mrs. Speicher stated that there are some properties in the report from 2023 and is concerned about what is being done with these properties at this time. Solicitor Hochfeld stated that the inspection agency is now able to file their own citations instead of having to go through West Hills Regional Police and he will reach out and get the status on all of the outstanding properties.

Solicitor’s Report

Nothing to report

Street Commissioner Report

The October 2024 Street Commissioner’s Report was received and is on file. Mr. McAdams stated the leaf machine is repaired and working and the solar radar sign has been delivered and will be installed on Southmont Blvd. for a test run as soon as they have time to install it.

Executive Secretary Report

The Executive Secretary’s report was received and is on file. Mrs. Layton reported that the grant the borough applied for through the Natural Resources Conservation Service to stabilize the streambank along Shady Lane has been approved noting NRCS will cover 75% of the cost and the county has agreed to sponsor the grant and will provide the remaining 25% through DEP funding. Mrs. Layton noted the borough will be responsible for operation and maintenance after the project is completed and will need to reimburse the county approximately \$900 to cover fees and advertising costs.

Mayor’s Report

Nothing to report.

Committees:

Administration:

Nothing to report.

Community Planning & Improvement:

Mr. Beri reported a draft Active Transportation Plan has been received and there will be a meeting on Tuesday, December 17th at 4:00 p.m. to review the draft.

Emergency Management

Nothing to report

Finance:

Mrs. Speicher stated that the tentative budget is on the agenda for approval and the final budget will be reviewed and approved at the next meeting.

November 18, 2024 Minutes – Page 3 of 4

GJWA:

Mr. Kupchella stated letters from the Greater Johnstown Water Authority regarding the lead pipes that will need to be replaced by the property owner within the next 10 years are being sent on in stages noting the office has received a lot of calls with questions and residents are being directed to the authority website for further information.

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve the appointment of James McDonald to the Greater Johnstown Water Authority Board. Motion seconded by Mr. Kupchella. Mr. Burkert and Mr. Ewald absent. All in favor, motion carried (5-0).

MS4/Stormwater

Mrs. Speicher stated that Stiffler McGraw & Associates is working on the stormwater mapping.

Personnel:

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve hiring Seth Spanko as Part-Time Seasonal Public Works skilled labor at \$12.00 per hour. Motion seconded by Mr. Morgan. Mr. Burkert and Mr. Ewald absent. All in favor, motion carried (5-0).

Police:

Nothing to report.

Property Maintenance, Streets & Sidewalks:

Mr. McVicker reported his committee and the personnel committee will be holding a quarterly review meeting on Tuesday, November 26th at 4:00 p.m.

Shade Tree:

Nothing to report.

Business Items

Mrs. Layton reported two estimates were received for the trap removal request at 300 Diamond Blvd. noting the estimate from Joe Kanuch Excavating was \$1,100.00 and the estimate from Easton Excavating was \$890.00. A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve the trap removal estimate for 300 Diamond Blvd. from Easton Excavating in the amount of \$890.00. Motion seconded by Mr. Morgan. Mr. Burkert and Mr. Ewald absent. All in favor, motion carried (5-0).

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve the 2025 Tentative Budget. Motion seconded by Mr. Morgan. Mr. Burkert and Mr. Ewald absent. All in favor, motion carried (5-0).

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve advertising the 2025 Tentative Budget. Motion seconded by Mr. Morgan. Mr. Burkert and Mr. Ewald absent. All in favor, motion carried (5-0).

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve advertising Ordinance No. 552, setting the 2025 tax rate. Motion seconded by Morgan. Mr. Burkert and Mr. Ewald absent. All in favor, motion carried (5-0).

November 18, 2024 Minutes – Page 4 of 4

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve the advertising Ordinance No. 553, setting the 2025 garbage fee. Motion seconded by Mr. Morgan. Mr. Burkert and Mr. Ewald absent. All in favor, motion carried (5-0).

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve the receipt of Local Share Assessment Grant in the amount of \$324,315.00 for Infrastructure Upgrades to the Municipal Building. Motion seconded by Mr. Kupchella. Mr. Burkert and Mr. Ewald absent. All in favor, motion carried (5-0).

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve Resolution 2024-03, authorization to execute documents and agreements for a Local share Assessment Grant. Motion seconded by Mr. Kupchella. Mr. Burkert and Mr. Ewald absent. All in favor, motion carried (5-0).

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve ratification of payroll from October 22, 2024 through November 18, 2024 in the amount of \$14,040.34. Motion seconded by Mr. Kupchella. Mr. Burkert and Mr. Ewald absent. Roll call: Mr. Beri, Mrs. Speicher, Mr. Morgan, Mr. Kupchella, Mr. McVicker in favor. All in favor, motion carried (5-0).

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve payment of bills from October 22, 2024 through November 18, 2024 in the amount of \$111,042.99. Motion seconded by Mr. Kupchella. Mr. Burkert and Mr. Ewald absent: Roll call: Mr. Beri, Mrs. Speicher, Mr. Morgan, Mr. Kupchella, Mr. McVicker in favor. All in favor, motion carried (5-0).

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to approve transfers from October 22, 2024 through November 18, 2024 in the amount of \$61,097.00. Motion seconded by Kupchella. Mr. Burkert and Mr. Ewald were absent. Roll call: Mr. Beri, Mrs. Speicher, Mr. Morgan, Mr. Kupchella, and Mr. McVicker. All in favor, motion carried (5-0).

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

A motion was made by Mrs. Speicher to note the receipt of the October 2024 tax collectors' report. Motion seconded by Mr. Kupchella. Mr. Burkert 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 November 2024 meeting at 4:30 p.m. Motion seconded by Mr. Kupchella. Mr. Burkert and Mr. Ewald absent. All in favor, motion carried (5-0).

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Riek
Assistant Secretary