

Borough Council Work Session

April 18, 2022

The monthly Work Session meeting of Souderton Borough Council, held in the rear Conference Room of the Souderton Municipal Building on the above date, was called to order by President Tracy Burke at 7:00 p.m. The Borough Council Work Session was attended by the following members and staff:

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| President Tracy W. Burke | Mayor Daniel L. Yocum |
| Vice-President Edward Huber | |
| Councillor Matthew J. DiNenna | |
| Councillor Julie A. Munden | |
| Councillor Richard M. Walczak | Borough Manager P. Michael Coll |
| Councillor Courtnee L. Wampole | Police Chief Brian A. Newhall |

Prior to beginning the scheduled meeting Agenda, President Tracy Burke inquired if anyone in the audience has any specific concerns or public comment. Rachel Mackey, 127 S. Front Street, Souderton expressed growing concern with parking on S. Front Street. The Souderton Charter School has an impact on available parking and the proposed microbrewery in the Freight Building will add to the parking issues. President Tracy Burke noted that there is some opportunity to add additional parking on S. Front Street in front of the Freight Building. There is an option to add additional parking behind the Train Station towards the Indian Valley Boys and Girls Club. While not immediate to Front Street, employees of the various businesses could potentially utilize the remote parking to free spaces along S. Front Street for business patrons.

Council President Tracy Burke next recognized Main Streets Manager Christina DiVergigelis and committee member Alison Giles to review the draft of a new Business Welcome Packet for Souderton Connects. Borough Council members expressed support of the packet.

POLICE ITEMS

Police Chief Brian Newhall reported that he is developing an updated Police Personnel Manual with the assistance of Mayor Yocum. The manual has not been updated in a long time. The completed manual will be made available to members of the Public Safety Committee.

Police Chief Newhall noted that he has been reviewing alternatives to help alleviate parking concerns on S. Front Street, commenting that timed parking restrictions are very difficult to enforce.

HIGHWAY ITEMS

Borough Manager Michael Coll reviewed public works department activities. Crews are making good progress in the Community Park with the installation of storm drainage. Crews will need to move to the Souderton Community Pool to prepare for opening day on May 28, 2022. Given the work load, a subcontractor will be utilized to help grade and stone some of the alleys throughout the Borough.

The Borough was successful in obtaining necessary variances from the Franconia Township Zoning Hearing Board on April 7, 2022 to maintain the existing garage structure as an accessory use building and to construct a new salt storage bin within the front yard. This action will now permit the Borough to submit final subdivision and land development plans for the Public Works Facility project to the Franconia Board of Supervisors for final approval. Borough Council discussed interest in marketing the front parcel as soon as possible when the plans are formally approved and recorded.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Councillors Julie Munden, Donna Rogers and Daryl Littlefield are registered to attend the Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs Conference in Hershey on May 22 through May 25, 2022. Borough Council agreed with the recommendation to designate Councillor Julie Munden as the Souderton Borough Voting Delegate and Councillor Donna Rogers as the Alternate Voting Delegate.

Mayor Daniel Yocum reported on discussions that he has had with the Souderton Ambulance Association concerning their recent agreement with the Volunteer Medical Corp, ambulance operations in general, and challenges with funding. Funding is a significant challenge for the Association to retain paid employees. Mayor Yocum noted that the volunteer fire companies have developed a strong outreach into the community, ambulance associations not as much. An initial thought is to help and encourage them to develop stronger outreach into the community.

DEVELOPMENT ITEMS

Borough Manager Michael Coll reported that Brass Collar Brewing Company has signed the Letter of Intent and provided the deposit. The Borough Solicitor will be asked to draft the formal lease agreement for SEPTA review and execution. Borough Council discussed some concern over the hours of operation, loud music and outside music events. Perhaps some language to address these concerns can be incorporated in the lease agreement.

Following this discussion, Borough Council noted that the Borough should consider a “Noise Ordinance” to address a number of issues throughout the Borough. Chief Newhall welcomed the suggestion and will provide some information to form a basic template to create a noise ordinance.

The Borough Solicitor is assisting with District Court action against the owners of 236 E. Broad Street for a series of Property Maintenance Code violations. The parties attended a court hearing earlier in the day on April 18th. The District Magistrate provided an extension of 30 days for the property owner to come into compliance. Apparently the goats have been removed from the property and some work towards compliance was completed.

SANITATION ITEMS

No items were discussed.

RECREATION ITEMS

Borough Manager Michael Coll reported on a quotation received to plaster the competition pool. The quote has a basic cost of \$73,523 for the plaster work and outlines additional costs to install new tile for the lane markings and to replace the joints, which could raise the entire project cost to \$124,000. A total of \$42,500 was budgeted for this work. Time is also a major concern if we were to undertake the project prior to opening day. Borough Council suggested that we seek more quotes and do more research into the need to replace the existing tile work. A follow up report will be provided at the May Borough Council meeting, should formal action be required.

Councillor Matthew DiNenna reported that he met with representative of Celebration Fireworks and the Chief of the Souderton Fire Company. The event will be planned with smaller shells and more ground displays. The contract with Celebration Fireworks was executed and a deposit was provided. Some fundraising is underway to offset the event expenses. This will probably be the last event in the Community Park.

PROPERTY ITEMS

Borough Councillor Julie Munden reported on progress with the plans for the Municipal Building renovations. The Borough Manager circulated the latest revised floor plan. In particular the revised plans provide a larger Conference Room for Borough Council Work Session meetings with direct public accessibility to the Conference Room from the main lobby, which will require the relocation of the existing restrooms to the rear addition. Chief Newhall suggested consideration for additional locker space in the women locker room. The Borough Manager noted that this project will take priority over the Public Works facility. The architect was instructed to proceed with a formal cost estimate for the project based on the latest revised floor plan.

Borough Manager Michael Coll suggested consideration to enclose the patio area of the Northbound restaurant at the Train Station with a series of operable glass garage doors and fixed glass panels. The tenants have been enclosing the space with canvas panels

which perform poorly in heavy winds and extreme cold weather. There is a definite cost to complete the improvements, but performance and longevity is a significant benefit. This design can also be considered for the Freight Building improvements that eventually can provide more seating space for the microbrewery. The patio area is very important to the operation of Northbound. A meeting will be setup to discuss potential of cost sharing with Northbound.

President Tracy Burke discussed repairs to the Hillside Cemetery wall along Second Street. He has met with a number of masonry contractors for opinions to professionally address the wall. Many suggest that the wall should be salvaged but costs range widely and well over \$100,000. President Burke will continue to discuss options with masonry contractors in an attempt to restore the wall within a reasonable budget.

FINANCE ITEMS

Borough Manager Michael Coll reported that the Finance Committee has met to review the Borrowing Base and Debt Statements for the Borough. The statements have been revised to reflect the revised \$500,000 loan for the Community Park project. The Borough has a little more than \$6,000,000 in capacity to consider additional non-electoral debt for capital improvement projects.

The Borough Manager confirmed that he completed the federal report to utilize the federal ARPA funds for the renovation of the Souderton Police Department offices. This report was due by April 30, 2022.

The Borough Manager provided Borough Council with the Budget Comparison Report and Balance Sheets for the first quarter ending March 31, 2022.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:38 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

P. Michael Coll, Secretary