

Borough Council Work Session

August 15, 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 Yocum |
| Vice-President Edward Huber | |
| Councillor Matthew J. DiNenna | |
| Councillor Daryl Littlefield | |
| Councillor Donna M. Rogers | Borough Manager P. Michael Coll |
| Councillor Matthew Sholly | Police Chief Brian A. Newhall |
| Councillor Richard M. Walczak | Public Works Director Steven R. Coll |

Absent from the work session meeting were Councillor Julie Munden and Councillor Courtney Wampole.

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION

The work session began with a discussion with Tamara Callahan, Principal of the EMC Elementary School, concerning the one way traffic pattern on S. School Lane ahead of the beginning of the new school year. EMC is the smallest elementary school in the district with approximately 330 students, a majority of which are walkers. Three buses service the school, with nearly 270 students arriving as walkers or as car riders. The buses will utilize the circle in front of the school. Teachers and staff will assist with the curb drop off of students. Most morning traffic is completed by 8:40 am. Sun glare affects the visibility of the crossing guard at Lincoln Avenue. The current one way traffic pattern best protects the crossing guard , students and assisting staff. This year will begin full time kindergarten which will relieve the midafternoon traffic. There is no onsite parking or pickup provisions for the afternoon at EMC, car riders will have to be picked up at the curb. The bus dismissals occur first, then the students are dismissed by age groups. The afternoon dismissal takes up to 25 minutes to complete. Borough Council discussed the installation of a more permanent gate system that can be lowered and raised by school personnel. The Borough can purchase and install the equipment at a cost of approximately \$2,600. Borough Council authorized the purchase of the gates and felt that the one way traffic restriction should remain in effect for this school year.

Greg Ede, CPA, with Styer Associates, reviewed the audit and general purpose financial statements for the year ending December 31, 2021. He noted that the change in assets reflect a drop in pension investments, however, both pension plans remain fully funded. He also noted that that the unassigned fund balance for the general fund represented 9% of he general fund expenditures. They recommend that this value should be

closer to 20%. A recommendation was made to formally accept and approve the audit and general financial statements at the September Borough Council meeting.

Amy Cummings Leight, Souderton Borough Representative to the North Penn Water Authority Board of Directors, presented and discussed the 2021 Annual Report of the North Penn Water Authority. The Authority is well managed and she expects rates to remain fairly stable. There is a growing concern with private utility companies attempting to purchase municipal water and sewer systems. This initial money is appealing, however, over time the public is a risk of significant rate increases and the loss of direct oversight of the operations. The systems will then be regulated by the Public Utility Commission.

John Doughty, 47 W. Summit Street, expressed objection to a proposed walking path from W. Summit Street into the Community Park. While the path is solely on Borough property, he feels that the additional foot traffic will infringe on their privacy. The Borough Manager did explain the proposed project which includes screening buffers and an offer to install a split rail fence to keep people away from their property. Even with these measures, Mr. Doughty continues to feel that the pathway poses an infringement to their privacy. Should Borough Council continue to desire to construct this pathway, Mr. Doughty requested that they be part of the overall planning and review process.

POLICE ITEMS

Police Chief Brian Newhall summarized recent and current police activities. Chief Newhall did evaluate Green Street and reported that signage will be added to the north side of Green Street to address the resident concern expressed at the Borough Council meeting.

Chief Newhall evaluated the traffic and parking concerns expressed in Meadow Street Alley behind Broad Street Italian Restaurant. A recommendation was made to post a one way traffic restriction in Meadow Street Alley from the intersection of the Penn Avenue Alley to Washington Avenue. The restriction will be posted for a 90 day trial period per Mayor's order. This recommendation will be made at the September 12 Borough Council meeting.

Chief Newhall commented that there are areas where parking restrictions are posted without formal enactment by Ordinance. Many of the posted restrictions have been made over time as temporary trials without formal follow-up. A way to remedy these restrictions will be discussed with the Borough Solicitor.

HIGHWAY ITEMS

Public Works Director Steven Coll summarized public works activities for the month. Street sweeping is in progress and will be completed throughout the entire Borough. The dry weather has slowed mowing, so we have been able to complete some

park maintenance projects and are concentrating on the site work for the new playground equipment.

Crews completed painting of crosswalks on the main thoroughfares ahead of the new school year. There are other areas to be painted.

The Borough is addressing two storm drainage issues. The Seventh Day Adventist Church in the 200 block of East Broad Street has a connection into a storm drain line running in the rear alley. The line collapsed, backing ground water into the building. A temporary repair was made to improve flow. We are also preparing to add an additional storm drain line to the rear of Jesse Barbeque.

PennDOT will be milling and paving County Line Road late September or early October. The Borough Manager recommended that the Borough postpone any paving project until the spring of 2023. Material prices are very high and there are many active PennDOT jobs that are competing for blacktop from the quarries. Given the high price and uncertainty that we can receive material, the best option is to defer these projects to 2023.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

President Tracy Burke reported that the committee has narrowed the Borough Engineer search to three firms, which will be interviewed on Wednesday evening August 17. The firms to be interviewed are Gilmore & Associates, CKS Engineers and Cowan Associates. The Committee is anticipating that they will be able to forward a recommendation at the September 12th Borough Council Meeting.

The term of William Yocum as a member of the Civil Service Commission will expire at the end of this year. Given that his son Dan Yocum serves as the Borough Mayor, William Yocum desires to step down from this position. An advertisement will be placed on the web site seeking interested candidates. Borough Council would like to receive responses by October 15th.

DEVELOPMENT ITEMS

Borough Manager reported on a proposed revision to the development plans previously approved for Lynn Builders to construct a five unit townhouse building at the corner of Second Street and Reliance Road. The previous plans utilized a shared access driveway which is no longer an option, and is generally not a preferred option. The Planning Commission conducted a cursory review of the revisions and offered various comments. Revised plans will be submitted to the Planning Commission for further review and recommendation.

Borough Manager Michael Coll reported progress with Brass Collar Brewing

Company to develop construction plans to fit out the interior of the Freight Building. Phillips and Donovan Architects is assisting with the development of construction plans. The Borough confirmed arrangements with James Mohan Construction of Hatfield to assist the Borough with the interior fit out. We would like to begin site work this fall.

Mayor Daniel Yocum discussed a possible renovation project along the railroad bank along N. Front Street. Conceptual plans were prepared by Renew engineers and land planners. Funding for the project is under consideration by the Souderton-Telford Rotary Club.

SANITATION ITEMS

No new items were discussed under sanitation this month.

RECREATION ITEMS

Borough Council discussed operations at the Souderton Community Pool. Quotations were received from Fellman Pool Service and Bennington Pool Services to plaster the completion pool. Fellman Pool Service provided the best price. The Borough Manager will contact Fellman about scheduling the project for this fall. A motion authorizing the project will be recommended at the September 12th Borough Council meeting.

Borough Council further discussed the proposed pathway to the Community Park along the side of the Municipal Building from Summit Street. Borough Council expressed support for the project with further consideration of landscape buffering and the installation of a fence. The project should be coordinated with the renovations to the Municipal Building.

PROPERTY ITEMS

Phillips and Donovan Architects continue to work on the construction plans for the initial phase of the Municipal Building renovations. Considerable discussion was held on the project given concern with the overall cost. The project could be completed in phases focusing on the basement, rear addition and renovation of the Police Department. The Administrative side of the building can remain relatively the same. The initial phase of renovations could be financed through a \$1,500,000 loan and the allocation of \$740,000 in federal ARPA funds. Revised cost estimates and budget estimates will be further reviewed.

FINANCE ITEMS

Borough Manager Michael Coll noted that he is working on documentation and a Resolution to apply for the 2021 Winter Maintenance funds that PennDOT failed to

process. Formal approval of a Resolution will be recommended at the September 12th Borough Council meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

P. Michael Coll, Secretary