

November 14, 2023

HARMONY BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING November 14, 2023

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Greg Such

Phyllis Metz

Frank Luek

Dave Szakelyhidi

Joe Dippold

Don Sims

Mayor Cathy Rape

OTHERS PRESENT:

Susie Altemus

Katrina Harmel, Sheffler & Company

Bob Leonberg

Kevin Mikulan, ZPD

Michelle Myrter

Andrew Orient

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CALL TO ORDER:

Council President, Greg Such called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. This meeting was held in-person and remotely through Zoom virtual meeting.

PLEDGE OF ALLIGANCE:

MINUTES:

In a motion made by Don Sims and seconded by Phyllis Metz, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the October 3, 2023, Council meeting minutes.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

Solicitor Matt Racunas was unable to attend. Greg Such reported that the Borough needs a posting from Matt for the SALDO. Greg also reported that the street restoration ordinance from Cory Shaffer, Penn Dot Rep, was sent to Matt for review and waiting for Matt's response.

BOARD REPORTS/APPOINTMENTS:

Appointments:

Greg Such reported that there were no appointments needed.

South West Butler Council of Governments (SWBCOG):

Greg Such had nothing new to report.

HARB:

Dave Szakelyhidi reported that there was one Certificate of Appropriateness that HARB approved and recommends to Council.

Michele Papakie -552 Main Street – Install new garage door. In a motion made by Dave Szakelyhidi and seconded by Frank Luek, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the Certificate of Appropriateness for 552 Main Street.

Harmony Water Authority:

Dave Szakelyhidi reported that the Water Authority hired a new licensed operator and another non-licensed operator. Greg Such credited Jason Sarver, John Rice and Phyllis Metz for keeping the hiring process moving along.

Parks Board:

Susie Altemus reported that sponsors are needed for Silvester. Two signs were ordered to help move traffic out of town after the 5K race. Phyllis Metz and Larry Reynolds reported there were complaints about dogs not being leashed on the Trail, Larry inquired if more signage was needed. Don Sims commented that there are already signs that say dogs must be on a leash and to clean up after them. Bob Leonberg is to get a price and Don will send an email to Council for an on-line vote.

Cath Rape inquired about the basins along the Trail and inquired if it was for drainage and commented that she did not want paving done. Frank Luek commented that Jackson Township said they were going to do some drainage for us.

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Historic Harmony:

Andrew Orient read Rodney Gash's report. There were about 1500 more admissions on Saturday than previous years, over the two days there were about 10,000 guests. Rodney thanked everyone who helped with the Christmas Market this year, it was a tremendous team effort. Special thanks to Phyllis Metz who had her hands full with traffic; and thanks to Joe (Dippold), Greg (Such), and Frank (Luek) who also helped.

Michelle Myrter commented that she joined the Chamber North and wants to drive business from Pittsburgh to Harmony and would like to send the Chamber North events that are in Harmony. Andrew Orient also commented that he is confident that the new manager at the Harmony Inn will address the noise issue. Andrew also inquired on the Stormwater documents and if the project was out to bid. Greg Such responded that we had to regroup a little bit, not sure if it is out yet but it will be going out as the bid openings will be presented at the December council meeting.

Library Board:

Frank Luek reported that the Library received the Gold Star level for literacy program. The Library has a new roof. The Library is selling raffle tickets for a "Night Out on the Town" which include two tickets for the Pens and Montreal game on January 27th, a \$150 gift certificate for Martorano's Prime in The Rivers Casino and a \$100 Uber card. Tickets can be purchased on the Library's website, and the drawing is January 15th.

Planning Commission:

Frank Luek had nothing new to report.

WBCA:

Greg Such reported that WBCA closed on the property for the Administration Building, and they continue to work on getting the rights-of-way for the new lines that are needed for the Harmony Pump Station plan.

Shared Services:

Bob Leonberg reported that Zelig used our skid loader to set up their Christmas box display at the Park.

Parking and Signage:

Frank Luek inquired if more signage was needed at both ends of town because of trucks coming through the Square. Greg Such commented that we discovered that too much signage wasn't working, so we reduced the signage and that seemed to work for a while. Frank commented that he has seen signs placed above Stop signs and inquired if Harmony could do that. Frank will take pictures of signs above Stop signs to show Council.

HBA:

Cath Rape reported the HBA is having Holiday Shopping Strolls, December 5th and 12th from 4-8pm; buy a gift, donate a food item to the Southwest Butler County Food Cupboard and get free gift wrapping at the Bottlebrush and the Harmony Museum. The HBA Christmas party will be in January.

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Other Meetings:

Greg Such reported that Senator Voegel Grant meeting will be at Stewart Hall on November 16th. The Commissioners' Communications meeting will be November 17th and the Stormwater meeting will be November 8th at 1:15pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Michelle Myrter – 253 Mercer Street - Michelle Myrter reported that they submitted building permit applications to put a parking lot in behind the Center. They would like to put in gravel and not permeable pavement because the permeable pavement would be about \$75,000. Don Sims suggested submitting everything to the Borough Engineer and check with FEMA for an alternate material. Dave Szakelyhidi commented that they already talked to Tom. Larry Reynolds commented that permeable asphalt is like the parking lot at Burgher's and it has to be vacuumed. Michelle commented that they have been working on this since they purchased the Center and if they don't start before the ground freezes, they will have to wait another year to start. Greg Such commented on the Stormwater Ordinance that the State imposed upon the municipalities and FEMA imposed upon the State. Katrina Harmel, Sheffler & Company, Engineer for Michelle Myrter commented that she knows Tom Thompson and will reach out to him to brainstorm. Mayor Cath Rape suggested contacting the State Representative for help.

BOROUGH STAFF REPORTS:

Police Report:

Report submitted via email.

Mayor Cath Rape inquired why the patrol at CVE school is down. Sgt. Mikulan responded that there is a full-time officer in the school. Phyllis Metz thanked all the police officers who helped with the Christmas Market as they were invaluable!

Office:

Amy Brown reported that the pension audit revealed TransAmerica needs to provide more detailed reports on the DC Pension Plan. Greg Such reported that the new alarm system has been installed and is working.

Borough Director of Operations:

Bob Leonberg reported the grass mowing is finished, there was a hit and run on the Stop sign at Liberty and German Street, the sign has been replaced. Cath Rape suggested contacting Robinson's to see what trucks were just there. Bob reported that WBCA finished the repairs that caused the sinkhole on Center Street and the street has been repaved. Leaf collection ends Friday (Nov. 17th). Bob thanked Jim (Goehring) and Shane (Eppinger) for helping with leaf pick up. Leaves can be bagged (paper) and picked up until Friday, December 15th, call the office for pick up.

Zoning and Codes:

Larry Reynolds report submitted via email.

Larry Reynolds reported that the Borough's Fire Inspection Ordinance is multi-unit buildings defined as 2 or more families. Larry suggests including single family houses that are rented, he estimates there are about 68 in the Borough. Don Sims suggested to talk to the Borough solicitor to see if there is a downside with including single family rental houses.

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Zoning and Codes Cont.:

Larry also inquired on raising the price of the inspections, the current fee is \$10/unit. Larry reported that his hourly rate is \$20/hr., the inspection will take about 30 minutes plus administration time; looking at probably a couple of hours. In a motion made by Dave Szakelyhidi and seconded by Joe Dippold, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved to increase the fire inspection fee to \$40/unit. Larry inquired on who does the commercial fire inspections, Greg Such responded Tom McCosby. Dave Szakelyhidi inquired if the Mantia building was on the fire inspection list. Greg Such commented that he talked to Ed Mauk from Butler County who works with the land bank, and will reach out to Ed again regarding the Mantia building.

Engineer:

Greg Such reported that Tom Thompson was not in attendance. The Stormwater bid opening is to be presented at the December 5th council meeting, it is unclear if the bid documents are out yet.

Public Safety:

Phyllis Metz reported that she received an Event form Susie (Altemus) for the Silvester. In a motion made by Phyllis Metz and seconded by Dave Szakelyhidi, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the Silvester. Phyllis also reported that she received a letter from the Rotary stating the Shamrock Shuffle will be on March 23, 2024.

Business Development:

Cath Rape reported that the Arborvitae on the North side of the Square is in a 10-gallon bucket and would like permission to permanently plant it in the ground. Council approved permanently planting the Arborvitae on the North side of the Square. Frank Luek commented that Cath is in charge of maintenance.

Personnel:

Greg Such reported that the Borough continues to look for part-time help for Bob. The guy from the temp agency may be interested. Greg will talk to the temp agency for information on their fee to hire their employee. Greg Such reported that Evans City reached out to Jason to help with our leaf pick up and in turn we help Evans City, like a shared service. It was discussed about sharing an employee with Evans City or possibly Zelienople.

Greg Such reported on changing the wait period for employee benefits from 90 days to 30 days. In a motion made by Don Sims and seconded by Joe Dippold, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved changing the wait period for employee benefits to 30 days.

Finance:

Greg Such reported on the preliminary budget for 2024, some insurance prices haven't been finalized, there is a deficit of \$13,000. We need to advertise the preliminary budget; it is a reorganization year and the budget could be opened back up if needed.

In a motion made by Dave Szakelyhidi and seconded by Don Sims, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved advertising the preliminary 2024 budget. Discussion on selling un-used items sitting outside the Borough garage. It was suggested to have John Rice identify what is at the garage and the value.

Streets:

Don Sims had nothing new to report.

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Facilities:

Dave Szakelyhidi commented on the parking lot on Spring and German that the Borough leases from the Railroad, Kent Addams is retiring and will be renting the building; Dave would like to take over more of that lot if the Borough could afford to gravel more of it. Don Sims commented that there's been enough investigation on that lot, the lot is not the way it's laid out, but we figured it's now longitudely going down German and it goes almost up to the beginning of the auto body shop. Greg Such inquired if we know the perimeter of what we're paying rent for. Cath Rape commented that we have a map. Dave Szakelyhidi commented that we can check the Butler County tax map. Greg also inquired if Liquid Fuels money could be used for parking lots. Cath Rape will look for the map and Greg Such will check if Liquid Fuels can be used for parking lots, for review at the December meeting.

Grants:

Greg Such reported that Zelienople, Jackson, Cranberry Township and Harmony were awarded a grant for street safety. The idea that we proposed was trails. This is for a study, not for not for doing it. We have two years to complete the study, and then, hopefully, we can find another Grant to do the implementation. It was the biggest grant and the only one granted in Pennsylvania. Cranberry's grant guy wrote the grant application.

Training & Conferences & Correspondence:

Listed on the Correspondence List.

BILLS PAYABLE:

Greg Such reported that the following lists of bills were presented to Harmony Borough Council for approval:

General Bills Payable in the amount of **\$9,452.31**

Silvester Fund Bills Payable in the amount of **\$36.00**

Payroll in the amount of **\$21,689.78**

General Bills Already Paid in the amount of **\$22,745.22**

Parks Board Bills Already Paid in the amount of **\$110.00**

In a motion made by Don Sims and seconded by Phyllis Metz the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved all bills for payment as presented on the lists.

Adjourned: 8:22PM

As there was no further business to discuss, the Harmony Borough Council adjourned the November 14, 2023, In-person and Zoom virtual meeting at 8:22pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Amy Brown, Recording Secretary

Monthly Activity Report
Harmony Borough Code and Zoning Enforcement and
Residential Multi-Unit Dwellings Fire Inspection

October 2023

1. Spoke with Mr. Steve Berg who has almost complete rehab of a rental Stopped by office to pick up mail. Prepared September time and activity reports. Spoke with homeowner wishing to add a garage. Referred him to Lancaster Zoning Officer. Sent copy of proposed/possible corrections to Mr. Thompson for the Planning Commission. Attended HARB meeting.
2. Stopped by office to sign Notice of Violation Order for 211 1/2 Pittsburgh Street. Reviewed Mr. Thompson's reply to my possible corrections or Ordinance 502. Returned to office to sign Permit Application for 714 Spring Street. Attended Council Meeting.
3. Sent emails to members of Planning Committee and Amy
4. Registered for Pipeline Webinar
5. Spoke with contactor for new foundation 714 Spring Street. He has not received the Construction Permit and is anxious to get started. Stopped by office to get mail and spoke with Amy about the Construction Permit.
6. Spoke with Mr. Richard Hill in reference to blacktop sidewalk at 211 1/2 Pittsburgh Street. Mr. Hill stated that the only addition to the existing blacktop was a sealant applied in 2023 and the original blacktop was laid down in 2004. I asked for invoices to substantiate the dates. Spoke with Mr. Steve Berg in reference to a rental property just completed on Bluff Street.
7. property on Bluff Street. He inquired as to rental unit regulations and inspection.
8. Drove by and around 793 Spring Street to try to determine if deck was ever built without permit. No one was home so was unable to access the property.
9. Picked up mail. Spoke with Amy as to any Fire Inspection Documents she had available. Continued documenting Apartments within the Borough. Mr. Richard Hill provided documentation that the driveway and sidewalk were top coated over existing black top on 7/24/2023. He also provided documentation that the original blacktop was applied on or before April 14,2006. Ordinance 21-301 was enacted on 12/05/2006.
10. Checked 322 and 330 German Street for garbage cans on the sidewalk.
11. Stopped by the office to deliver paperwork for Greg Such and Matt. Received an email concerning concrete dumping at end of Main Street. Drove to the site and met with Mr. Jack Skelly. Mr. Skelly stated the he was under the impression that his property extended to the middle of Connoquessing Creek and was not aware that dumping was strictly prohibited. He promised to remove all of the concrete by next week. Sent an email to the council members with my report. Stopped by the new concrete footings at 714 Spring Street.

12. Stopped by the office to pick up mail. Received call from Jenna Schillinger (724-650-1626) in reference to dogs off leash around the barn path. Spoke with Phyllis to bring the need for additional signs around the path. She will bring it up to the council, Delivered Building Permits to 714 Spring St and 255 Mercer St. Received data from Amy for rental properties and owners.
13. Prepared spreadsheet of rental properties in Borough to send letters to landlords for Fire Inspection in January and February.
14. Stopped by office to pick up mail. Stopped by 320 & 322 German Street to check on garbage cans out on the sidewalk
15. Stopped by office to pick up mail. Stopped by the end of Main St. to insure that all the concrete had been removed from the banks of the creek. Mr. Skelly has done an admiral job cleaning up the creek banks as well as the end of his property. He has seeded the bare patches and covered the seeded patches with a protective netting. Sent a report to the Council outlining my findings. Received a complaint from Mr. Hueling as to the 2nd story addition under construction with no permit visible and no proper street number sign. Visited the site and found the Construction Permit clearly displayed in the from window. Replied to Mr. Hueling's email with a picture of the Permit visibly displayed. I prepared a Violation Notice for the lack of house number.
16. Stopped by office to sign Violation Notice. Visited 107 Parkway St. to determine if trees overhang onto the pedestrian footwalk. Took photos of the pedestrian footwalk and prepared an answer to Mr. Dippold's email question concerning tree branches over hanging the pedestrian footpath along the front of his property.
17. Rode past 322 and 320 German Street to determine if garbage cans are still out on the sidewalk.
18. Prepared a Violation Notice for both 322 and 320 German Street for garbage cans on sidewalk.

Respectfully submitted,

Larry A. Reynolds
Code Enforcement/Zoning Officer