

HARMONY BOROUGH Council Meeting December 3, 2024

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Greg Such

Joe Dippold

Frank Luek

Jason Sarver

Don Sims

Dave Szakelyhidi

Mayor Cathy Rape

OTHERS PRESENT:

Susie Altemus

Bob Leonberg

Kathy Luek

Chief Jim Miller

Tom Thompson

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CALL TO ORDER:

Council President, Greg Such called the December 3, 2024, Council 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 Frank Luek, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the November 12, 2024, Council meeting minutes.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

Solicitor Matt Racunas reported that he spoke with Mantia's attorney regarding unfinished repairs to their building. She claims that the work is going to be done, and that Mantia is waiting for a part on that machine to get it moved. However, when Matt pressed about what was the order number, when is it expected to be delivered, where it was ordered from, he got no response to that particular email. Solicitor Matt will talk to Jason (Sarver) about the next step in taking this to court because we do not see any work being done. Jason Sarver commented that the court date may be a month or two out. The letters that we sent do not count, a non-traffic citation has to be filed through the court and then the court sends a letter to Mantia. Solicitor Matt commented not to expect a quick resolve, given the amount of information his attorney has claimed was procedurally deficient, I would expect an appeal. Jason Sarver comment that our goal really should be to establish a timeline. Solicitor Matt and Jason will work on it together.

BOARD REPORTS/APPOINTMENTS:

Appointments:

Greg Such reported that no appointments are needed for this month.

Southwest Butler County Council of Governments (SWBC CoG):

Greg Such had nothing new to report, there may be a meeting this month.

HARB:

Dave Szakelyhidi had nothing new to report.

Harmony Water Authority:

Dave Szakelyhidi had nothing new to report.

Parks Board:

Susie Altemus reported that the Silvester is coming along, they are still looking for sponsors. The deadline to have a sponsor's logo on the shirts is Friday. Susie reported that she met with the Museum to discuss options for coordinating where things should go for the Silvester. Susie also sent an email to Mark Rodgers. This Friday, (12/6) Susie was invited to Jackson Township for a meeting as a follow-up to the comprehensive meeting regarding recreation.

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Library Board:

Kathy Luek reported that the Library has hired a new Director, Cyndi Peluso, and she's currently serving on the Board of Directors, and will start as part-time, 25 hours a week, in January. There will be an aide/volunteer to help with all the fundraising and things like that. Tomorrow is the library board meeting for December, John Ziegler is going with Kathy. He might be interested in replacing Kathy on the board, Kathy has been on the library board for six years. Kathy also inquired if the Borough budgeted a donation for the library, Greg Such responded that we did.

Planning Commission:

Greg Such had nothing new to report.

WBCA:

Solicitor Matt reported that the Administration building is progressing. Greg Such commented that there was a Facilities committee meeting on the treatment plant facility, they continue to plan for that. The Authority and Engineers did figure out where to put all the parts for the space that they have and to reuse what can be reused.

Shared Services:

Bob Leonberg reported that he met with Jason from Jackson Township, Zelie, and Lancaster to discuss future CoG paving projects.

Parking and Signage:

Greg Such had nothing new to report.

Historic Harmony:

Kathy Luek reported that the Christmas Market went pretty good and thanked the Borough and the Zelie Police Department for their help in making it a success. One thing that was an asset was the ATM machine. They had a portable ATM machine at the event, Historic Harmony split the cost to rent it with the HBA. Kathy also reported that she heard there were problems on Liberty Street with the parking and the shuttle bus, there are two options, either no parking on the street for those two days during certain hours or make it one way. Frank Luek commented that residents need to park there, you can't really make it no parking. The Council discussed putting signage up during the event to make it one-way. Jason Sarver inquired on what percentage of the amount attended compared to last year. Kathy Luek commented there's no way to keep a gate as they don't charge for under 12, and charge different prices for seniors and members and regular adults; maybe 75%.

HBA:

Cath Rape reported that they are having the holiday shopping strolls, the first one is tomorrow night and then next Wednesday (12/11) from 4:00-8:00 PM, there will be luminaries out. There will be vendors at the Center, and there is free gift wrapping if you bring a donation for the Southwest Food Cupboard or Samaritan's Purse which is to go to the North Carolina hurricane victims. Santa Claus will be at the Harmonie Laden, and the Butler County Symphony will be playing in various locations.

Other Meetings:

Greg Such reported that this afternoon was the Commissioners Communications meeting, there was an update on voting. There were 2,500 more voters this year than 4 years ago. There were

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Other Meetings Cont.:

more in-person voters and less mail-in voters than before, and less provincial ballots as well. The commissioners were pretty pleased about how it all was processed and tallied up. Dr. Rottinghaus said that RSV is up in the community, if you don't have an RSV vaccine, you might want to get one, it is a pulmonary infection. Dr. Rottinghaus advised everybody to get their flu shot. He also said that they are moving along with the integration of the 2 health systems, they are still losing money, but they're losing a lot less. The other big topic was cyber security, and being aware of phishing schemes and smishing schemes. Solicitor Matt reported that two of his clients got hacked and lost \$300,000 in the past couple of months, they were very complex schemes. Hackers got into the system and waited over a month and monitored the manager's emails, watching them. When a vendor submitted a very large invoice on a large project, they mimicked that email and said they know they got the invoice and needed the invoice paid by wire transfer instead of a check. They paid it by wire and the money was lost. Matt reported that another client lost \$185,000 but they had cyber security coverage and got their money back. Greg Such commented that maybe the Borough should check into cyber security coverage. Amy will check with C.W. Howard on cyber security coverage. Don Sims commented that he doesn't want to buy cyber security insurance but would rather make a policy of saying you have to get a hard check. Greg Such commented that the Borough could still get hacked another way, there could be a ransomware attack or another type of attack. Greg inquired if the Borough pays anything by wire, Amy responded no. Greg Such also reported Thursday afternoon at 5:30 PM there is a Jackson Township meeting for a land use study, and on December 11th there will be a stormwater meeting at 1:15pm. Cath Rape inquired what the land use meeting was about, and if it was a community thing asking for opinions on what they want to do. Greg Such responded yes, and suggested looking at Jackson Township's website, it is the first thing that you see. Greg also commented that Jackson wants people to RSVP for public comment.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no public comment.

BOROUGH STAFF REPORTS:

Police Report:

Report submitted via email.

Office:

Amy Brown had nothing new to report.

Borough Director of Operations:

Bob Leonberg reported that they had 30 loads of leaves, and will pick up bagged leaves until December 20th. Bob reported they had an issue by the Mayor's house, someone cut pine trees down and raked everything up, put leaves on top of the pile which jammed up the leaf machine, he and Melanie spent an hour cleaning out the machine to get it unclogged. Bob reported the leaf machine is cleaned and the trucks are ready to go, the salt box is on. Bob reported that he helped with a couple jobs at the water plant. Bob and Dave talked about the street lights and decided to start on the Jackson side of Main Street. There were a couple signs that were run over, one by Dave's and one by the ballfield. Bob offered to help Frank Luek with repairing the bollard in the square. Frank Luek inquired if their insurance company was going to pay for the damage. Amy responded that she was waiting on an estimate to send the invoice. Chief Miller recommended to send the invoice to the trucking company not to the insurance company. Bob Leonberg reported

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Borough Director of Operations:

that he talked to Rob from RB Trees, Rob is working on the ball and is replacing the center piece as it was falling apart. Rob will bring the ball in for New Year's. Rob also mentioned to Bob if the Borough has an emergency with one of the trucks or something, he could come in and salt or plow. Bob reported that he would like to insulate the office in the garage, he would like to put some foamboard up on the walls and on the floor. He estimates it to be around \$300 - \$400. Greg Such commented that it is ok with him, council doesn't want Bob to freeze. Don Sims suggested putting a door on the office, without a door on, you're not getting anywhere with insulating the walls. Bob commented there is an old door at the water plant he can use.

Zoning and Codes:

Report submitted via email.

Jason Sarver commented, in the words of Allen Bayer, nothing in addition to my report.

Engineer Report:

Engineer Tom Thompson reported the contractor for the Stormwater Project was out, there was a PA One Call which aggravated the property owner, but they're proceeding. The contractor ordered their equipment and materials. We don't have a start date, Tom expected them to have already started. Tom reported on the RACP Project, still waiting for PennDOT to issue the permit. The DCNR Park Project they are addressing questions that were raised, and will be moving forward. Greg Such inquired if we know how much we have to raise for the Park Project, assuming the numbers have changed dramatically since we applied for the grant 3 years ago. Greg Such commented there will be an executive session and requested Tom to stay for it. Bob Leonberg inquired if Tom knew where the contractor would start on the Stormwater Project. Tom Thompson responded that he does not know where they will start, they were out marking for the One Call, there are inlet repairs throughout the Borough. Bob Leonberg commented that he didn't see the email for the One Call.

Public Safety:

Phyllis Metz was unable to attend the meeting.

Business Development:

Cath Rape had nothing new to report.

Personnel:

Greg Such reported on reducing the amount of premium the employees have to pay. The Borough increased the amount of family compensation that the borough pays on health care, but did not increase the amounts for individual premiums and 2 employees are getting unfairly hit with a premium payment that is coming out of their paycheck. Would Council want to make the adjustment to get them back to not being penalized so bad? The family amount is \$1440 and the single amount is \$600, we would like to increase the single to half of the family which is \$720. In a motion made by Frank Luek and seconded by Don Sims, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved to increase the Borough's compensation of individual health plans to \$720.

Finance:

Greg Such reported that a motion is needed to adopt the 2025 budget. In a motion made by Don Sims and seconded by Joe Dippold, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the 2025 Budget. Greg reported that there was an adjustment to the 2025 MMO (minimum

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Finances Cont.:

municipal obligation). The MMO is basically what the Borough is expected to pay towards pension related obligations. The number changed when employee #19 left. The new amount is \$42,984.

Streets:

Don Sims reported that we have enough salt, Bob Leonberg reported that he has to order another load of salt before the end of the year. Jason Sarver inquired if parking at Jackson and Liberty have been clear, Bob responded that it has been and he hasn't seen the truck.

Facilities:

Greg Such reported that the website update to be ADA compliant is done.

Grants:

Greg Such reported that there is a new PA app or tool to look for grants. Senator Vogel does a great job on sending out emails about grants.

Training & Conferences & Correspondence:

Greg Such had nothing new to report.

Jason Sarver reported that Waste Management just changed their garbage pick-up day in the Borough from Monday to Thursday, which is the same day as Vogel.

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 **\$7,260.50**

Payroll in the amount of **\$9,645.25**

General Bills Already Paid in the amount of **\$1,067.60**

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

Greg Such called for an executive session at 7:42PM, out of executive session at 7:49PM.

In a motion made by Don Sims and seconded by Joe Dippold, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved to increase employee #38 hourly rate to \$23.00/hr.

Adjourned: 7:50PM

As there was no further business to discuss, the Harmony Borough Council adjourned the December 3, 2024 In-person meeting at 7:50PM. In a motion made by Don Sims and seconded by Joe Dippold, the Harmony Borough Council meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,



Amy Brown, Recording Secretary

NOVEMBER ZONING AND CODE REPORT

1. After assuring the height and proper setbacks were followed, I authorized a prefab 280 sq foot accessory structure for Terry Sunde on Monroe Street.
2. 218 Charles Discussions with architect on Zoning for R-1. Since the current structure is non-conforming to our current setbacks, the exterior set of stairs can be constructed as long as they are behind the present, non-confirming frontage of the structure.
3. Conversation with Tim Eppinger, owner of 763 Spring. Tim is required to submit a Small Project Stormwater Management Application, which will help us better understand his intentions. He explained that Tim and the adjacent residential property are leveling off their lots. This is acceptable. No permit is needed. This is all considered permeable ground. I expressed my concern of encroachment on the paper street. We are going to meet to discuss this in detail.
4. Waiting to hear details of Matt's conversation with Mantia's Legal Counsel. I will not move forward until I know of the details.

Respectfully Submitted by Jason Sarver 12/3/2024