

February 4, 2025

HARMONY BOROUGH Council Meeting February 4, 2025

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Greg Such

Joe Dippold

Frank Luek

Phyllis Metz

Jason Sarver

Don Sims

Dave Szakelyhidi

Mayor Cathy Rape

OTHERS PRESENT:

Susie Altemus

Bob Leonberg

Kathy Luek

Chief Jim Miller, ZPD

Matt Racunas, Solicitor

Larry Reynolds

Nancy Reynolds

Tom Thompson

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CALL TO ORDER:

Council President, Greg Such called the February 4, 2025, 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 Dave Szakelyhidi and seconded by Don Sims, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the January 7, 2024 Council meeting minutes.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

Solicitor Matt Racunas reported that the budget was adopted as required by the law at the end of December, we do need a tax rate ordinance that coincides with our budgetary amount. Matt asked for a motion to advertise that tax ordinance, and then we will adopt that tax ordinance in March. In a motion made by Don Sims and seconded by Phyllis Metz, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved to advertise the tax rate ordinance.

BOARD REPORTS/APPOINTMENTS:

Appointments:

Greg Such reported that no appointments were needed.

Southwest Butler County Council of Governments (SWBC CoG):

Greg Such reported that the State approved the Southwest Butler Stormwater Authority's application, as of yesterday it is officially an authority. Greg reported that Chris (Rearick) from Jackson Township and Mary (Hess) from Lancaster Township are going through resumes for an administrator that will spend 65% of their time working with the fire department and 35% working with the stormwater authority. Chris and Mary will do interviews, and we are allowed to sit in on the interviews or participate if we would like. Greg also reported that they did not put their paving bid out yet, if we want to get in on it, we could. Joe Dippold inquired if the EMA was discussed. Greg Such thanked Joe for bringing it up, the EMA was discussed and there is thinking that they will try to combine some of the EMA duty into this position. Drew Matthew pointed out that there is a fair amount of work associated with the EMA, we will see how that unfolds.

HARB:

Dave Szakelyhidi reported there are two Certificates of Appropriateness that HARB approved and recommends to Council.

Grace Church of Harmony – 538 Main Street – New broiler intake/exhaust pipes, pipes to be painted to match stamped patio. In a motion made by Dave Szakelyhidi and seconded by Frank Luek, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the Certificate of Appropriateness for Grace Church.

Harmony Museum – 218 Mercer Street – Paint exterior in kind, white with blue trim.

In a motion made by Dave Szakelyhidi and seconded by Phyllis Metz, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the Certificate of Appropriateness for Harmony Museum.

Harmony Water Authority:

Dave Szakelyhidi reported that Bob is the only Class-A operator and he is Borough. Shane is Class-C operator, the others are trainees. Dave would like to see all operators obtain a Class-A license. Jason Sarver inquired if the plant is a C level Authority why would they need a Class-A license. Dave Szakelyhidi commented that it isn't needed but it would mean they are capable and with the chlorine loop project it will require higher withdrawal rate from the creek.

Parks Board:

Susie Altemus reported that Ron Goehring resigned from the Parks Board; he is moving to Passavant. Jason Sarver thanked Ron for his service. Susie also reported that the fireworks for the July 3rd concert is a minimum of \$5,000. The Parks Board may need to move that concert up a week to June 26th to avoid the additional \$2000 charge. The first concert is to be June 19th, we would have concerts two weeks in a row. Susie reported that the Parks Board would like to apply for a grant and would like to reduce the footprint of Swampoodle Park. The equipment is 23 years old and some of it is cracked. Parks Board discussed keeping the swings, getting a slide in the future, and removing the other equipment. Susie reported that a new liner with fall chips on the area with equipment that is 23 years old would be \$6,000. Greg Such commented that according to the survey people like having the playground equipment there. Greg was concerned that if we make it a smaller footprint it will stay that way for quite a while due to the lack of future grant funding. Cath Rape commented that she mostly sees kids on swings and on the basketball, court playing hockey. Joe Dippold inquired what the max shelf-life of the playground equipment would be. Susie Altemus responded probably 20 years. Greg Such commented that the playground equipment is still solid, with a new liner and fall chips the thistles shouldn't be a problem. The grant is \$10,000 with a \$2,500 match. Don Sims made a motion to keep the playground equipment and apply for the grant with the \$2,500 match. Dave Szakelyhidi seconded the motion. Solicitor Matt commented that there is a grant for playground equipment, the name is Kaboom! Matt will get Susie the information. Susie also reported that they have Silvester shirts for sale for \$5.

Library Board:

John Ziegler was unable to attend, no report.

Planning Commission:

Larry Reynolds reported that the Planning Commission meeting was postponed in January because it was too cold. They will hold their reorganization meeting in February.

WBCA:

Greg Such reported that work continues on the admin building, they are doing an engineering study to put the plant in place. There was a 75-cent rate increase.

Shared Services:

Bob Leonberg had nothing new to report.

Parking and Signage:

Greg Such had nothing new to report. Frank Luek commented about the thru-traffic coming in from Mercer Street. Joe Dippold met with Slippery Rock students, they will come back to do some traffic studies and they had some ideas for signage. Don Sims commented that the old

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Parking and Signage Cont.:

truck route restricted traffic down Mercer Street and if you returned to the old truck route that could eliminate a lot of those issues. Cath Rape commented that Jadco has told truck drivers to use Hartmann Road. Joe Dippold will discuss the old truck route with the Slippery Rock Students. Council will discuss again at the March meeting.

Historic Harmony:

Kathy Luek reported that the Harmoniefest Dinner and Program will be March 8th at 6pm. The guest speaker will be Steve Cicero, a retired Butler History teacher. The program is "Fred Rogers and Other Famous Neighbors." Kathy invited everyone to buy a ticket and attend the dinner and program. It is being catered by Ryan Bechtold, Chopped Catering. Kathy reported that they hope to be able to have a preview of the Museum and plan on having a grand reopening on March 15th.

Harmony Business Association:

Cath Rape reported that the results to HBA's survey is to keep the HBA. They are going to join Zelie's HBA, there are some new officers, the dues were raised to \$100 and meetings will be the 1st Tuesday of every other month at 5pm. The President will either be Dennis McCurdy or Zach Waltz from Union Brothers, Laura is staying on as the Secretary and MJ is staying on as the Treasurer.

Other Meetings:

Greg Such reported that he needs to look through his records to see when the Commissioners' Communications meeting is; the Stormwater Meeting will be 2/20 at 1:15pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no public comment.

BOROUGH STAFF REPORTS:

Police Report:

Report submitted via email.

Office:

Amy Brown reported that the audit will be done remotely and has begun uploading information to the auditors. Cathy Rape inquired if Amy received an email from First Energy requesting contact information, Amy will complete the form and email it back to First Energy.

Borough Street Manager:

Bob Leonberg reported that there were 13 days of snow removal, he helped with two water leaks, ordered a pallet of sidewalk salt, put two lights up this week, and repaired a couple street signs; the Stop sign at Jackson and Main, Amy is to invoice the truck driver for the damaged sign. Bob reported that he got a price of \$6,929 for 4 new lights this year. Council discussed possibly ordering 9 more lights to finish them out, Greg Such suggested waiting until after the executive session. Greg also reported that the Swampoodle Park Sign has a vertical crack in it and asked Bob to repair it. Dave Szakelyhidi offered for Bob to use large clamps that he has to hold the sign together after it is glued.

Zoning and Codes:

Report submitted via email.

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Cath Rape inquired if Sam has an issue with his tenant, why is Larry spending time on it. Larry responded that it was put up without a permit, it is a hazard because it is not attached to anything

Zoning and Codes:

and Sam is very upset about it. Jason Sarver commented that it becomes a Property Maintenance Code violation. Dave Szakelyhidi commented about the building does not have gutters. Jason Sarver commented that Harmony Borough requires gutters on structures unless he applies for a variance. Larry reported that Sam said the gutters are inside, Larry is working with Sam on the issue. Larry reported that hang tags are being printed for snow removal, he sent out a lot of letters regarding snow removal, they seemed to have done the job except for one. Cath Rape inquired on Mantia. Larry is to write citations for the violations, he will send a list of violations to Solicitor Matt.

Engineer Report:

Engineer Tom Thompson reported the contractor for the Stormwater Project are working on finalizing all of their materials for the project, they have not given Tom a start date on when that will begin. Greg Such commented that Zach from Union Brothers would like to have an egg hunt in April for Easter. Tom will talk to them to see what would be best. Greg also reported that he set a meeting for Wednesday morning with Craig Gehm, Tom Thompson and himself for appraisal for the one property that we need to get rights to go through.

The RACP Project there still isn't a permit from Penn Dot, Tom is anticipating it and then we can go out to bid. If the permit does not come, they will split it into two pieces and bid out. The Harmony portion is only electric and the streetscape part can be done separately.

Public Safety:

Phyllis Metz reported that she hasn't received anything for the Shamrock Shuffle, she will reach out to Joella Baker.

Business Development:

Cath reported that she asked a couple of questions on the survey from Seneca about having the school signs in our boundaries, but did not hear anything back. Cath also reported that she told them we had a job for the teacher if they choose to come on January 20th and did not hear back on that. The students are coming in May and Cath would like to make a list of jobs for them. Cath also reported that she would like the Borough to purchase a speed bump for Mercer Street. Solicitor Matt said there are speed bumps and speed humps. Don Sims commented not to waste money. Chief Miller commented that speed bumps are not permitted on a highway, it is a liability. Dave Szakelyhidi made a motion to not put speed bumps up, Don Sims seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Phyllis Metz-yes, against; Frank Luek-yes, against; Dave Szakelyhidi-yes, against; Joe Dippold-yes, against; Don Sims-yes, against; and Jason Sarver-yes, against.

Personnel:

Greg Such reported that an executive session will be needed.

Finance:

Joe Dippold reported that the audit is starting.

Streets:

Don Sims reported that they will talk about streets closer to March after winter.

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Facilities:

Phyllis Metz reported that she needs to get back upstairs to work on organizing files.

Grants:

Greg Such had nothing new to report.

Training & Conferences & Correspondence:

Greg Such had nothing new to report.

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 **\$21,484.96**

Payroll in the amount of **\$10,728.76**

General Bills Already Paid in the amount of **\$2,788.77**

Fire Tax Bills Payable in the amount of **\$317.80**

Parks Board Bills Payable in the amount of **\$549.00**

Silvester Fund Bills Payable in the amount of **\$1,760.75**

Silvester Fund Bills Already Paid in the amount of **\$185.00**

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, in executive session at 8:06pm, out of executive session at 8:45pm.

In a motion made by Jason Sarver and seconded by Phyllis Metz, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved to increase employee #22.

Council will adhere to the original agreement with employee #38.

Adjourned: 8:52PM

As there was no further business to discuss, the Harmony Borough Council adjourned the February 4, 2025 In-person meeting at 8:52PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



Amy Brown, Recording Secretary

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

January 2025

Attended HARB Meeting.

Attended Council Meeting.

Prepared the wording and format for the snow removal door hanger. Sent Greg Such and Jason Sarver copies prior to contacting the printer. Spoke at length with Mike owner of Chicken Nitz and Sam Hopkins owner of the building. Mike has constructed a portico out from his front door without permits or permission from Sam Hopkins. The portico is not attached to the building in any way that presents a possible danger in windy conditions. Sam wants the structure to be removed. I am researching ordinances to determine the best course of action.

Met with Jason Sarver to discuss snow removal door hangers and prepare sixteen (16) letters to residents who have failed to properly clear their sidewalks. Forward the letters to Amy to put on letterhead. Stopped by the office to sign the 16 letters. Researched the Pennsylvania Ordinances in reference to Chicken Knitz freestanding Portico.

Prepared the violation letter 1123 Seneca Drive. They are storing garbage bags outside not within proper containers and have a junk automobile in the driveway for many months with an expired Florida license plate. Due to lack of members attending, the Planning Commission Reorganization Meeting was cancelled. Notified all members of the cancellation and set date for February.

Received a call from Molly Villatoro of Northeast Security Systems as to required permits to install new alarm system in the Robinson Fan Buildings. Prepared and emailed a copy of the Harmony Alarm Ordinance. Spoke at length as to the requirements and agreed to meet at Borough Hall at a later date. Received five (5) Zelienople Permit Forms from Jason Sarver to use a possible guideline to upgrade our own forms.

Received a call from Don Bergstrom in reference to the snow removal letter he was sent. I explained it was designed to be a reminder letter and not a summons. He promised to clean the snow from his walkways.

Received a complaint as to garbage cans on the sidewalk at 568 Main Street.
Prepared a Violation Letter for Ms. Mary Donatelli.

Spoke at length with Jason Sarver in reference to the Stormwater Management Form. There are numerous errors and incorrect ordinance references.

Worked on revising the Small Project Stormwater Management Application. Sent copies to Jason Sarver and Greg Such for their review.

Respectfully submitted,

Larry A. Reynolds