

April 1, 2025

# HARMONY BOROUGH Council Meeting April 1, 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  
Sandy Ferrainola  
Kent Jackson  
Bob Leonberg  
Kathy Luek  
Chief Jim Miller, ZPD  
Matt Racunas, Solicitor - virtually  
Larry Reynolds  
Jack Skelly  
Tom Thompson  
John Ziegler

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**CALL TO ORDER:**

Council President, Greg Such called the April 1, 2025, Council Meeting to order at 7:00PM. This meeting was held in-person and remotely through Zoom virtual meeting.

**PLEDGE OF ALLIGANCE:**

**VISITOR:**

Kent Jackson – Location Manager for a movie about Milton Hershey. It is a turn of the century period piece, it is a movie about love and chocolate, and it is supposed to be a very family friendly affair. Kent and Michelle have been in Harmony a couple of times with their Director looking at the main part of town and some of the buildings that are in town, and they think that there is potential for it to play as very stages of Hershey. There are more specifics that will be coming as far as schedule, plan, and execution. Kent knows they want to be here. The production starts on May 12th and will shoot through the 1st of July, this will be a to-be-determined date or time, it will be somewhere in that 6-week window. Greg Such commented that the Square will have some renovation work. Jason Sarver suggested providing an event schedule to Kent. Kent reported that filming operation is Monday through Friday and could last anywhere from 2 to 3 days of actual filming, but there will be some preparatory work in front of that. Solicitor Matt inquired if they could give recognition at the end of the film to Harmony Borough. Kent Jackson commented that he would be happy to discuss it with the people he works for, it is hard to get, but he will discuss it.

**MINUTES:**

In a motion made by Don Sims and seconded by Dave Szakelyhidi, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the March 4, 2024 Council meeting minutes.

**SOLICITOR’S REPORT:**

Solicitor Matt Racunas reported that the easement for the Small Parts Machine property is moving forward, he has been in communications with Jackson Township and believes Tom (Thompson) has supplied them with the necessary drawing. We are waiting for Anthony Cosgrove to draft the easement document for review and approval.

**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 Butler County CoG (the larger CoG) had a meeting on Thursday, March 20th at 10am with Penn Dot Rep. Cory Shaffer to discuss and answer Liquid Fuels questions.

Greg also reported that there isn’t a Southwest Butler County CoG meeting for a couple of months, although there is a Stormwater Authority meeting on April 14<sup>th</sup> and they have been trying to double up the CoG with the Stormwater Authority meeting so it is possible that there will be one. Greg reported that after the participating municipalities signed the Intergovernmental Agreements, an offer was made for the Administrator position, Greg does not know if the offer was accepted.

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**HARB:**

Dave Szakelyhidi reported that there were no HARB requests at the meeting.

**Harmony Water Authority:**

Dave Szakelyhidi reported that there will be a Filter Plant Performance Evaluation by the DEP on April 15<sup>th</sup> thru April 17<sup>th</sup>. Dave also reported that a safety railing has been installed down by the creek to keep fishermen out of the intake area.

**Parks Board:**

Susie Altemus reported that the concerts are lined up for this summer and sponsors' letters have gone out. The port-a-john has been ordered for the Canoe Launch and should be delivered today and will be there through October. There will be a port-a-john in the borough parking lot for the summer concerts. Susie also reported that Butler County called and said they were ready to go installing the new playground equipment. They gave a quote of \$1,600 to remove the old playground equipment and haul it away. The Parks Board thought that was reasonable and would like approval to sign off on the quote and can start tomorrow. In a motion made by Joe Dippold and seconded by Frank Luek, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the \$1,600 quote to remove and haul away the playground equipment and fall chips at the borough building park. Greg Such reported that we were awarded the Reno Grant for Swampoodle Park for fall chips and a new liner.

**Library Board:**

John Ziegler reported that the Library approved the architect and contractor for the three-season building. The Library will apply for a grant and hope to break ground next Spring. There are still tickets available for the Mystery Dinner, \$75 per seat, it is 80's attire. If anyone would like to sponsor a table the cost is \$1200 or \$1500.

**Planning Commission:**

Larry Reynolds had nothing new to report.

**WBCA:**

Greg Such reported that the Administrative building is coming together nicely, the Board Members toured it before last month's meeting. Jason Sarver commented that he called Autumn because he was getting complaints in Zelic about the smell from the plant. It had to do with the bacteria changing over and the way the weather hit, it hit hard and fast, hence the smell.

**Storm Water Authority:**

Greg Such reported that files were turned in to Berkheimer, they will be the billing administrator for that the stormwater fee, the first billing will be in July. The next Stormwater Authority meeting will be April 14<sup>th</sup> at 4PM.

**Shared Services:**

Bob Leonberg reported that limb pick-up will start in May. Jason Sarver inquired if there were any plans to get the Canoe Launch cleaned out. Greg Such responded that we will clean it out with the skid steer.

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**Parking and Signage:**

Joe Dippold reported that he did not hear anything from the Slippery Rock College students when they were here on March 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Historic Harmony:**

Kathy Luek reported that the Museum is back open. There will be a flea market at the Barn on May 24<sup>th</sup>, and on June 22<sup>nd</sup> there will be an open house to celebrate the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of the Mennonite Meeting House, and there will be a gun show in August.

**Harmony Business Association:**

Cath Rape reported that the HBA did not have a meeting tonight, the next meeting will be June 12<sup>th</sup>. Cath also reported that the new HBA brochures are out.

**Other Meetings:**

Greg Such reported that on April 10<sup>th</sup> there will be a meeting in Cranberry from 1-4PM for contractor interviews for the multimodal planning grant. This is the S4-SA Grant (Ped/Bike Grant) with Cranberry Township, Zelenople Borough, Jackson Township, and Harmony Borough that we won 2 years ago. Greg also reported that the Stormwater Group meeting is April 14<sup>th</sup> at 1:15PM and the Stormwater Authority Meeting is April 9<sup>th</sup> at 4PM.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Jack Skelly – Jackson Street – Jack commented that he is here representing the Harmony-Evans City VFW. The VFW is having a Family Freedom Festival on May 31<sup>st</sup> and June 1<sup>st</sup> starting at noon. This is the third year for it, last year through their activities they were able to donate \$10,000 to Butler veterans, all through the VA, Homeless Veterans, Guitars for Veterans, and a home for schizophrenic veterans near the Butler Airport. Last year we had the grand opening of the canteen, and are now remodeling the back room which used to be the canteen. The kitchen has already been inspected, the next stage will be to get that open. They are trying to keep the VFW more family friendly focused, they do not allow smoking inside anymore. The VFW struggles to get new members, there are a couple of different options to join. To be a regular member, you have to be a veteran. A Social member is sponsored by a member, and an Auxiliary member is a parent, grandparent, spouse, sibling, child or grandchild of a qualifying veteran. Jack offered if anyone wants to go check it out, let him know and he will meet you there and sign you in as a guest. Jack commented that it is a nice place and they have entertainment every other weekend, it is low key and not real loud.

**BOROUGH STAFF REPORTS:**

**Police Report:**

Report submitted via email.

**Office:**

Amy Brown reported that the audit is over.

**Borough Street Manager:**

Bob Leonberg reported that he received a quote for street sweeping from Penn Sweeping at \$142/hr. Last year was \$136/hr. for 9 hours. Greg Such inquired if that included Rt. 68, Bob responded that he thinks it does. Joe Dippold inquired if the Stormwater Authority would take over street sweeping moving forward. Greg Such commented that he doesn't know if the Stormwater Authority thought about it. If we needed to have the MS-4 permit, street sweeping is

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**Borough Street Manager Cont.:**

required four times a year. Don Sims commented that we might need to buy the attachment for the bobcat. In a motion made by Don Sims and seconded by Phyllis Metz, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved street sweeping at \$142/hr. with Penn Sweeping. Bob Leonberg will call to schedule street sweeping before May. Bob also reported that he met with Cory Shaffer (PennDOT Rep), Jackson, Zelig, and Lancaster to get an estimate on paving Mercer Street. Chris Rearick will handle the bid packet. Greg Such commented that Chris Rearick is the Director of CoG (Southwestern Butler CoG). The estimate is \$41,000 to mill and pave Mercer Street from the bridge to the Square, there is money in the budget. Don Sims commented that he's hoping the price of asphalt drops this summer, we should get a better price through the CoG with a group rate. Don commented that with milling we may find soft posts and there could be additional costs; we will also need to talk about line painting Mercer. Bob reported that he ordered street lights, they are about 10 weeks out. Bob reported that he needs to talk to Rob at RB Trees, there is a tree at the entrance of the Canoe Launch that is near a house and wires. There were two trees on the Trail that he and Melanie took down. Bob also reported that two catch basins, one on New Castle Street and the other on Pittsburgh Street need to be repaired. They fixed a couple of signs (stop signs and no parking signs) finished the lights, patched a large hole on Mercer Street, took stuff out of the Canoe Launch, and got the mowers ready. Phyllis Metz commented about a tree on Spring Street that is in bad shape, the homeowner said it is on Borough property, Cath Rape commented that it is in the right-of-way. Solicitor Matt commented that it is the property owner's responsibility if it is in the right-of-way but the Borough has the right to trim it if it is interfering with public safety. Cath Rape commented that a rotted limb is over the street and when it falls it could hit a car. Jason Sarver commented that it has become a public hazard. Larry Reynolds (Zoning and Codes Officer) will look at the tree tomorrow. Solicitor Matt commented that the Borough has the right to force the property owner to trim it and if they don't we have the right to trim it if it is a public hazard.

**Zoning and Codes:**

Report submitted via email.

Larry Reynolds reported there is a piece of property that has about 200 loads of fill on it, it is a nice flat plane until you get to the neighbors and then it is an embankment. There isn't an ordinance that covers filling in the land, or anything that prohibits it. Larry is going to request that the property owner put in gabions, which are basically stone walls with stainless steel wire to help hold the embankments back. Cath Rape commented that is Fourth Street. Larry commented that it is also along the back of the property, Cath Rape commented that is Oak Alley. Solicitor Matt commented that he would be interested to see if there is something in the Stormwater Management Ordinance that prohibits that. Usually, you cannot alter your property in a way that impacts another property owner's property; you cannot divert water from your property onto your neighbor's property. Solicitor Matt said there may be something in either the Floodplain Ordinance or the Stormwater Ordinance. Jason Sarver commented while Larry was out, he had given the property owners a Small Project form, it is a standard County form. The form was never returned. Larry commented that unfortunately there is an attitude of 'this is my property and who are you to tell me what I can or cannot do'. Don Sims inquired if the property owner installed any silt fencing, Larry responded there is a small section. Jason Sarver commented that he was concerned that property owner was encroaching on 4<sup>th</sup> Street and gave the property owner the Small Project form, that is where Jason left it as Larry had returned at that point. Solicitor Matt commented that moving a lot of dirt could require a DEP permit. Jason Sarver commented that he measured the area and it was much lower than the threshold of any permits being required and that is why he opted for the small project form.

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**Zoning and Codes Cont.:**

Larry Reynolds also reported he submitted three things on the Mantia building, Solicitor Matt commented that they are with him, he does have a question on one of those items and is also in contact with opposing counsel. The interior of the building was mentioned, Solicitor Matt commented that the interior issues can be addressed when occupancy is applied for.

**Engineer Report:**

Engineer Tom Thompson reported that we are waiting on the last right-of-way for the Stormwater Project, the contractor can go through all the changes and get that moving forward. Tom anticipates the Penn Dot permit to be issued April 10th and hopes to have the RACP Project out to bid for May. The bid period is generally 30 days, the award would be in June and the project would start in July or late June. It should not interfere with the movie, or the movie interfere with the project.

**Public Safety:**

Phyllis Metz reminded everyone of the CVE Race on April 26th that will be on the upper part of town by CVE school and Zelig Park. Phyllis also reported that she received the Event Form and the Certificate of Insurance for the Wine Walk on June 7<sup>th</sup> from 1:30 – 9PM. There was confusion on the start time, typically it is from 4-9PM. Phyllis reported it is 4-9PM on the Police Request Form. Phyllis will check on the 1:30 start time, it may be for set-up; Phyllis will also check if the Square needs to be closed, typically it is closed for this event but is not listed on the Event Form. In a motion made by Frank Luek and seconded by Joe Dippold, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the Wine Walk on June 7<sup>th</sup>.

**Business Development:**

Cath Rape reported that there are a couple webinars that she or Frank Luek would like to do. Frank will do the Trucks on Local Roads webinar on April 9<sup>th</sup> and Cath would like to do the Traffic Calming webinar on May 7<sup>th</sup>, there is a \$30 cost for the Traffic Calming webinar. Cath will let Amy know if she is available and Amy will sign her up. Cath Rape also reported that the students are coming on Thursday, May 22<sup>nd</sup> she needs jobs for the students. Parks Board is going to take 45 kids, Cath is looking to take 30-40 more students. The HBA did not respond, Bottlebrush will take some students and she is hoping the Museum will take some students but Cath still needs work for the students.

**Personnel:**

Greg Such reported that Council needs to ratify the Water Authority hiring Gary Cummings, he has a Class D water license. Gary will start April 21<sup>st</sup>. In a motion made by Dave Szakelyhidi and seconded by Don Sims, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the hiring of Gary Cummings. Jason Sarver reported that they looked at the review process for the employees, it is his intentions to simplify it. Jason will schedule a meeting with the Personnel Committee this month to discuss and evaluate the plan. Jason and Cathy put together a dashboard which reflects each employee's education process to show how they are progressing in obtaining a water license.

**Finance:**

Greg Such had nothing new to report.

**Streets:**

Don Sims had nothing new to report.

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**Facilities:**

Phyllis Metz reported that she and Amy went through all the drawers in the office and cleaned them out, and has 3 more boxes to file upstairs. Things are pretty well organized in the office now, and almost done upstairs, except for yearly turnover of things.

**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 **\$14,043.11**

**Fire Tax Bills Payable** in the amount of **\$36.13**

**Payroll** in the amount of **\$8,151.28**

**General Bills Already Paid** in the amount of **\$3,173.63**

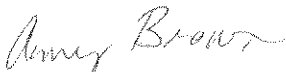
In a motion made by Don Sims and seconded by Dave Szakelyhidi, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved all bills for payment as presented on the lists.

Greg Such called for an executive session, in executive session at 8:04pm, out of executive session at 8:25pm.

**Adjourned: 8:26PM**

As there was no further business to discuss, the Harmony Borough Council adjourned the April 1, 2025 in-person meeting at 8:26PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



Amy Brown, Recording Secretary

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

**March 2025**

Prepared February Zoning Officer Report and Time Sheet. Forwarded to Amy.  
Attended HARB Meeting. Received two complaints concerning Carl Marburger's property at 266 S. Liberty St. Visited the property and spoke with Mr. Marburger. He is not building an outhouse on his property. He had a hunting camp that they lost the lease so they are temporarily storing equipment on trailers on his property until the new site is ready at which time they will move all the equipment to the new site. He is going to clean up some items that were placed around his garage as soon as possible.

Attended Council Meeting

Received two complaints about 211 S Pittsburgh Street burning garbage and garbage bags piled up all over the property. Met with Mr. Shaffer who was cleaning out the house and waiting for a tow truck to remove the Mercedes G Wagon blocking the driveway that had died. He promised to stop burning garbage and have everything cleaned up within 14 days. I explained that after 15 days, I would have to take things from warning to citing the property owner.

Photographed the property as a baseline.

Received an email from Kip Huffman of 440 Center Street inquiring if he could run his gutter drains out to the street. I explained that Harmony Borough requires all stormwater to be maintained on the property. I discussed drywells and how to install them. Sent him pictures of available dry wells from Tractor Supply, etc.

I received a call from Harmony Inn inquiring about necessary permits to repair an existing sidewalk.

Prepared a listing of the three violations of the Mantia Building and sent copies to Matt and Jason. I received a call from Rick Shields whose property abuts Tim Eppinger's property about his fill encroaching upon his property. I will have to visit Tim to see what is happening. I finally got ahold of someone from WBCA in reference to an unpaid Permit Application. Mr. Mack promised to take care of it as soon as possible. Spoke with Kip Hoffman in reference to his dry well design problems.

Visited Heidi Shaffer at 211 S Pittsburgh Street in reference to multiple complaints about the property having stacks of garbage. They are working to remove the garbage bags, and her husband made a trip to the dump while I was there. The Mercedes G Wagon has been removed. They promised to have the entire property cleaned up within 10 days. Visited

I received a call from Janelle Fox regarding regulations on political signs.

Spoke with Doug Burkhart concerning a dumpster permit. He will pick up from Amy.

Checked on Pittsburgh Street junk property to make sure the garbage is being removed. Checked on the Spring Street property to determine if the root cellar is being constructed.

Spoke at length with Rick Shields concerning the fill overflow on Spring Street from Tim Eppinger. We agreed to meet and walk the site 10:00 AM Wednesday 4/02. Left message for Debra Morrow regarding a permit.

Spoke with Michelle Colton whose Florida registered car has been sitting in her driveway. She purchased a car cover and has cleaned up the property. She also stated that the Mustang will be back on the road by eth end of June.

Mike Cinco inquired about a property along Route 19. I referred him to Jackson Township. Prepared time sheet and Zoning Officer' s Report. Attended Council Meeting

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Respectfully submitted,

Larry A. Reynolds  
Code Enforcement/Zoning Officer