

March 4, 2025

# HARMONY BOROUGH Council Meeting March 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  
Sandy Ferrainola  
Bob Leonberg  
Kathy Luek  
Chief Jim Miller, ZPD  
Matt Racunas, Solicitor  
Larry Reynolds  
Tom Thompson  
John Ziegler

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**CALL TO ORDER:**

Council President, Greg Such called the March 4, 2025, Council Meeting to order at 7:00PM. 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 Jason Sarver, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the February 4, 2024 Council meeting minutes.

**SOLICITOR'S REPORT:**

Solicitor Matt Racunas reported that the Tax Ordinance has been advertised and is ready for adoption. Don Sims inquired what the tax rate was, Greg Such stated that he would like an executive session to discuss the tax rate. Don Sims commented that it is public information and asked if the tax rate was a secret, Solicitor Matt commented that he wasn't positive what the tax rate is but it is listed on the Ordinance, Don was given the Tax Rate Ordinance to review. Solicitor Matt also reported on the Intergovernmental Cooperation & Establishment Agreement with the Southwestern Butler County Council of Government (CoG) and the Resolution to appoint a new Director. Matt reviewed the Intergovernmental Agreement and Resolution and did not see anything of any great concern. In a motion made by Dave Szakelyhidi and seconded by Phyllis Metz, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the Intergovernmental Agreement and Resolution. Greg Such commented that it is the Director for the CoG and the Stormwater Authority; 65% for the CoG, which includes administrative duties for the Fire Department and 35% for the Stormwater Authority. Harmony Borough's share is \$2925/year, which is based on our percentage of the population.

**BOARD REPORTS/APPOINTMENTS:**

**Appointments:**

Greg Such reported that no appointments were needed.

**Southwest Butler County Council of Governments (SWBC CoG):**

Greg Such reported that at the CoG meeting the Intergovernmental Agreement was reviewed and discussed, as well as the 3 candidates for the Administrator position, they picked the best one but cannot divulge the name as the offer is not official until all four municipalities have signed the Intergovernmental Cooperation & Establishment Agreement.

**HARB:**

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

**Harmony Water Authority:**

Dave Szakelyhidi reported that the DEP approved the chlorine loop project for the Water Plant, it will be about a \$450,000 project and will return the plant back to full capacity; construction will be this summer.

**Parks Board:**

Susie Altemus reported that the County Reno Grant has been submitted. The Shamrock Shuffle is Saturday, March 15<sup>th</sup> and they will be using Wood Street Park.

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**Parks Board Cont.:**

Susie also reported that the Ruch family would like to donate a memorial bench in memory of John, they will meet with Greg (Such) on March 8<sup>th</sup> to figure out a location for the bench.

**Library Board:**

John Ziegler reported that the Library is having a workshop on shade gardening on March 31<sup>st</sup> at 7:00pm. There is an 80's Murder Mystery Dinner on April 26<sup>th</sup> at 5:30PM, the cost is \$75/person.

**Planning Commission:**

Larry Reynolds reported that the Planning Commission held it's reorg meeting, the officers stayed the same and there weren't any applicants/customers.

**WBCA:**

Greg Such reported that they continue to plan for the new plant. Progress continues on the Administration building; it is under roof and they have been heating the inside in order for the cement to cure.

**Shared Services:**

Bob Leonberg had nothing new to report. Bob inquired if the CoG would be shared service also. Greg Such responded that he doesn't believe so, the Shared Services is between Zelig and Harmony, the CoG (SWBC) has 4 or 5 municipalities.

**Parking and Signage:**

Joe Dippold reported there will a meeting with the Slippery Rock College students on March 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Historic Harmony:**

Kathy Luek reported that the Reopening of the Museum will be March 15<sup>th</sup> from 1-4PM, admission is free. The Harmonie Fest is this Saturday, March 8<sup>th</sup>.

**Harmony Business Association:**

Cath Rape reported that the HBA meeting will be April 1<sup>st</sup> at 5PM.

**Other Meetings:**

Greg Such reported that the Commissioners' Communications meeting is March 11<sup>th</sup> at 2PM; and the Stormwater Authority meeting will be March 12 at 4PM.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Sandy Ferrainola – 319 N. New Castle Street Zelienople. Sandy commented that her comment is regarding business, which can be mentioned to the Business Association. She recalls when she had a business in Harmony, quite a few Canadians would come into Harmony while traveling on 79, she wanted to mention to anyone who might be interested any of the tariffs that are being initiated, or that have been initiated might in any way affect Pennsylvania Commerce or Pennsylvania tourism. Our little corner of Pennsylvania which is a direct shot to Canada, you might want to make it known to your Congressperson. Greg Such commented that hotel reservations are down 30% in Bellingham, Washington; that was in yesterday's Wall Street Journal, it is because of the Canadians protesting.

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**BOROUGH STAFF REPORTS:**

**Police Report:**

Report submitted via email.

**Office:**

Greg Such reported that the audit is underway.

**Borough Street Manager:**

Bob Leonberg reported that they cleaned out the run/grate by Tod's place, helped with two water leaks, plowed snow and ordered salt. Bob also reported that there are 12 or 13 street lights left to replace, 9 with eyes and 3 without. In a motion made by Dave Szakelyhidi and seconded by Don Sims, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved ordering 4 street lights. Bob reported that they patched some potholes on Mercer Street but it came back out and inquired if Council wanted to get a hot box from Voelker to patch potholes. Don Sims commented that he is waiting to hear Tom's report because Don would like to pave Mercer. Dave Szakelyhidi inquired if we wanted to participate with the bigger paving with CoG. Don Sims commented that it depends on the timing, we need to get the drainage done first. Mayor Cath Rape commented that Bob Ziegler has been cleaning out the run by the grate and behind Dambach's, Bob lets the debris sit there. Cath inquired if Bob Leonberg (Borough Streets Dept) picks it up. Bob Leonberg commented that he will get it once he can get the machine in there and not get stuck.

**Zoning and Codes:**

Report submitted via email.

Larry Reynolds reported that he received a call from a homeowner that his neighbor allegedly was building an outhouse on his property. It is a port-o-potty sitting on a trailer, the property owner is moving it from an old hunting camp to a new hunting camp. Larry walked around the property and made some suggestions of things that could be cleaned up.

Larry also reported on the Mantia building, it hasn't been touched. Jason Sarver commented to figure out 1 or 2 most serious issues and send it to Solicitor Matt via email, Matt will proceed to court.

**Engineer Report:**

Engineer Tom Thompson reported that an executive session is needed for the Stormwater Project to discuss a legal matter.

The RACP Project there still isn't a permit from Penn Dot, but expecting to be out to bid soon. Tom reported that he received comment from Lance regarding the DCNR Grant.

**Public Safety:**

Phyllis Metz reported that she received the Event Form for the Shamrock Shuffle to be held on March 15th. Neal Jackson submitted the Event Form, the Certificate of Insurance, and the Police Request Form. Part of the race is in Jackson Township and will need to get Jackson Township's approval. In a motion made by Phyllis Metz, and seconded by Don Sims, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the Event Form for the Shamrock Shuffle.

**Business Development:**

Cath reported that she contacted the school regarding the signs, the students are still working on the design and will get the information soon to the Borough. Cath also reported that the students are coming on Thursday, May 22<sup>nd</sup> with a rain date on Friday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>. Cath needs volunteers

**Business Development Cont.:**

to work with the students. If anyone has jobs at their businesses for the students, let Cath know what the job is, if you have a volunteer to work with them and how many students you will need. The Parks Board will have mulch to spread.

**Personnel:**

Jason Sarver reported that an executive session will be needed to discuss an issue with an employee. Greg Such reported that the Water Authority has been using Melanie, but Council took an email vote that needs to be ratified to bring her into the Borough full-time. Greg proposed to let the Water Authority to use Melanie as needed until they hire an operator. Greg also reported that he received some comments that they hope there is enough work to have two full-time Borough employees. Greg would like to propose that Bob (Leonberg) gives Council a list of what he and Melanie are going to accomplish for the next two weeks and then give Council an interim status report of what got done between he and Melanie. Greg Such reported that Melanie has some web experience, and she can do some of the web updates that Amy has been having trouble getting to. Dave Szakelyhidi commented that Melanie has been out on all three water breaks, as has Cathy. Jason Sarver commented that there is room for Borough communications as we discussed for some of her workload. A motion was made by Dave Szakelyhidi and seconded by Frank Luek. Don Sims commented that he doesn't believe there is enough money to pay for another full-time Borough employee. Greg Such commented that he showed Council the math. Don Sims commented that the Borough hasn't really paid, we've had money in the bank, the Borough is not that big. Don agreed that the previous plan, where she was half in the Borough and half at the water plant made sense. Greg Such commented that she's going to continue to be an employee at the water plant for some time, they do not have enough staff. Greg commented that we should try it and watch it and see where we end up. Don Sims commented that we don't want to have to turn around and terminate somebody. Greg agreed and stated that he doesn't want them to quit now. Jason Sarver suggested discussing in executive session. Solicitor Matt stated there is a motion on the floor, Council could vote or table the motion. In a motion made by Dave Szakelyhidi and seconded by Don Sims, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously agreed to table the motion to hire Melanie full-time.

**Finance:**

Greg Such reported that the Liquid Fuels allocation was \$35,748. There are two accounts that don't get used that Amy is proposing that we close. One is the HRA account, and the other is the Fundraiser account. The HRA account has \$50 in it and the Fundraiser account has \$100, those will be moved into the General fund.

**Streets:**

Don Sims reported that we've already discussed the patching and inquired on the status of salt from Bob. Bob Leonberg reported that he got a load of salt, has only taken 20 ton for the 2025 requirement, need to take 60 ton from each place, will probably wait until November to take more. Don inquired if we will be writing letters again. Bob commented that he could probably take 40 if he had to.

Greg Such reported there was an email from PennDOT for local traffic counts, they will put counters this year on Center Street and Robinson Drive. Greg is not sure how they pick which streets to count, there was a whole list of streets in different boroughs and townships.

**Facilities:**

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Dave Szakelyhidi had nothing new to report.

**Grants:**

Greg Such reported that there is a CDBG Grant open, it requires proof of lower-than-average household income which is something we cannot meet. There is also the small water and sewage grant out, which I think we're going to try to do for the quarrying pool.

**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 **\$20,159.00**

**Payroll** in the amount of **\$10,051.69**

**General Bills Already Paid** in the amount of **\$2,178.03**

In a motion made by Dave Szakelyhidi and seconded by Phyllis Metz, 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 7:40pm, out of executive session at 8:26pm.

In a motion made by Dave Szakelyhidi and seconded by Jason Sarver, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved to move Melanie to full-time status with the Borough and to be available to the Water Authority as needed.

In a motion made by Don Sims and seconded by Dave Szakelyhidi, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved to adopt the 2025 Tax Ordinance.

**Adjourned: 8:30PM**

As there was no further business to discuss, the Harmony Borough Council adjourned the March 4, 2025 In-person meeting at 8:30PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



Amy Brown, Recording Secretary

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

**February 2025**

Prepared January Time Sheet and January Code Officer Report and forwarded to Amy.

Attended Council Meeting

Prepared Permit for Tim Eppinger to construct new Root Cellar. Visited the site to make sure the new building would not intrude on the neighbors.

Dropped off complete Eppinger Permit to Amy for pickup.

Spoke with Sign Company wishing to put up lighted signs on the Bi-Lo Plaza. I explained that the Bi-Lo is actually in Jackson Township and gave him the name and number of the of the Jackson person to call.

Attended Planning Commission Meeting

Spoke with Molly of Northeast Security Systems concerning a new alarm system at Robinson Fans. I explained the required permits and the approximate costs.

Spoke at length with the Bergstrom Family at 261 Mercer Street in reference to snow covered sidewalks.

Spoke with Chad Perry of Sentry Mechanical in reference to new AC unit for Dollar Tree. I referred him to Jackson Township.

Spoke with Luke Carpentry requesting permit for Jackson Township. I Referred him to the proper people in Jackson

Spoke with Mary Donnatelli in reference to her garbage cans remaining on the street for several days. She claimed that the Garbage Company failed to pick up at her address. She is calling the company to make sure to promptly pick up her garbage.

Prepared second Violation Notice for Michelle Colton for a junk automobile with expired plates in the driveway. Prepared Zoning Officer Report and Time Sheet for Amy.

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Respectfully submitted,

Larry A. Reynolds  
Code Enforcement/Zoning Officer