

May 6, 2025

# HARMONY BOROUGH Council Meeting May 6, 2025

## **COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Greg Such  
Joe Dippold - virtually  
Frank Luek  
Phyllis Metz  
Jason Sarver  
Don Sims  
Dave Szakelyhidi  
Mayor Cathy Rape

## **OTHERS PRESENT:**

Susie Altemus	Eric Nevosat
Michelle & John Angiolillo	Matt Racunas, Solicitor
Rhonda & Tim Eppinger	Larry Reynolds- virtually
Sandy Ferrainola	John Rice
Melanie Fessides	Mark Sapienza
Dan Fritch	Rick Shields
Michelle Gibbs, Hershey Production	Jake Silver, Hershey Production
Terri Halbleib	Dave VonHofen
Kent Jackson, Hershey Production	Dale Warner
Bob McCafferty	John Ziegler
Chief Jim Miller, ZPD	
Seth Murphy	
Pat Murray	

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**CALL TO ORDER:**

Council President, Greg Such called the May 6, 2025 Council Meeting to order at 7:00PM. This meeting was held in-person and remotely through Zoom virtual meeting.

**PLEDGE OF ALLIGANCE:**

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Dan Fritch reported that on behalf of the organizers for the Independence Day parade, they are asking that Beaver and Pittsburgh Streets be made one-way during the parade between the hours of 10:45AM and 1:30PM. The parade has gotten so big that things get backed up and making it one-way would help to keep traffic moving. Don Sims inquired about traffic control. Dan Fritch commented that they have volunteers and the Police. Chief Miller commented that there is no parking on one side and he has no issues with making it one way. Joe Dippold inquired if Bluff Street will be closed as it was last year, Dan responded that Bluff Street will be closed. In a motion made by Don Sims and seconded by Dave Szakelyhidi, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved making Beaver and Pittsburgh Street one-way on July 4<sup>th</sup> between the hours of 10:45AM and 1:30PM.

Greg Such reported that he asked people from the Hershey Production to come so that we could get any issues out on the table, and figure out where we are and what can be done now. The filming or the moving of mulch is stated to start on Saturday, so whatever we do, we have to do somewhat quickly. Kent Jackson, Location Manager on the film; Michelle Gibbs, Assistant Location Manager; and Jake Silver are here from Hershey Production. Kent Jackson commented that he thinks the biggest concern is the streets and putting the wood chips down to try to bring the town back to the period that they are trying to portray. The location managers job is kind of two-fold, one is to deliver the best possible sets to their filmmakers to make the best possible movie, and two is to take care of the communities that are generous enough to allow us to come film. Greg Such reported there is a meeting tomorrow with the school district to negotiate school buses and organize that. Greg hopes to leave here tonight with a Council vote to go forward or not go forward with the movie; our going in position is that the businesses and residents and organizations have to be satisfied, as he realizes not everybody will be 100% satisfied. The movie people have been very good working with us and are very active in hearing everybody's concerns and doing what they can.

Mayor Cath Rape commented that her biggest concern is truck traffic and how the trucks will be rerouted and there better be someone there 24 hours a day so there isn't any damage. Michelle stated that she spoke to US Liner and Robinson Fans and Jackson Township Police Department to find the best route possible for the trucks. They proposed Evans City Road to Robinson Drive to Liberty Street and on to Mercer Street to go to US Liner. To make that work, at 215 Mercer Street, and she will work with the church on this, they will put track mats down to protect the property and the sidewalk. If council is not comfortable with the reroute, then the other option is intermittent traffic control where trucks are held on the outside of the set, and production is held and the truck sent through. Kent Jackson commented they are open to whatever concessions and compromises that they need to make in order to make the filming happen. Michelle Gibbs commented that their biggest concern with the truck reroute was Liberty and Mercer, not Liberty and Robinson and recommended no parking on Liberty Street from Mercer Street to Robinson Drive. Kent commented if Liberty and Robinson is a concern, they will inspect that corner. Greg

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Such commented that the Borough may need to close Liberty Street for the Silvester and the Christmas Market and making this a pilot may be a good idea.

Mark Sapienza commented about taking the parking off Liberty Street and suggested asking to use Robinson's lot by Liberty and German Streets for the residents to park there. You will need to tell the truck drivers they will need to move the trailer axles to make that turn. Mark also commented that he wished Council would have informed residents and businesses earlier, Council wants to take it to a vote tonight but the movie people already have money invested, that is backwards. Mark also commented about traffic getting through on Mother's Day to the three restaurants that are open. Mayor Rape commented the first time the movie people came to council; street closures were not part of it. Kent Jackson commented that they did not have plan when he first address council. Kent also commented they will maintain traffic flow while working on Saturday and Sunday and they have started to put some potential impact money for loss of business into all of those already, with the understanding that if there is further impact to their business, not just for Mother's Day, through entirety of our time in town. They're more or less contracts; we want them to be able to maintain the business. But there's an understanding that it's going to be difficult with foreclosures and everything else.

Bob McCafferty commented that he is a fan of Milton Hershey, and everything Hershey has done in his lifetime and community. When he met 2 weeks ago with the movie people, they did a great job understanding it was definitely the 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, and our agreement was a handshake and it was 3 days but apparently it has changed and we have 200 reservations for Mother's Day and prom. Terri, Harmony Inn Manager commented that they were told that the streets would be open with no issues. My concern now is when you restrict lanes, it's going to back people up into the Square and the roundabout, and as soon as people get to that and they can't get in they are not going to come to Harmony; as soon as people have that little inconvenience, they are not going to come. One of our biggest sales for this month, coming off of the horrible first and second quarter is going to be Prom and Mother's Day. Greg Such commented that one other route that could be used to get into the Inn is to come across Liberty Street and around and across Wood Street. Terri commented that most of their patrons coming through the Square aren't going to know that way and as soon as you make things inconvenient for our customers, they are not going to want to come because we are a business of convenience. Sam Hopkins commented that Neff House is expecting 2500 people on Mother's Day, 50% of his business is new people discovering Neff House, and those people are going to come up here with the streets closed and not be able to get in and not figure out what to do, they will turn around so it impacts future business not just that day. Mother's Day is their biggest day, and they get a ton of people for prom, people coming to Harmony for pictures. Sam also commented about the mulch on the streets in the Historic District, Greg Such commented that he doesn't think that will impact the buildings.

Pat Murray commented that his main concern is for his residents and the disruption to them, which no real progress was made within until like yesterday. They have made good points, this is kind of been a short timeline, not blaming council but it is stuff that should have been being talked about for the last couple of months and worked out, it shouldn't be here's the map we're coming next week. It's not a block for 6 hours, it is 7 days. Pat also commented to do the math on the mulch, it is 40-45 triaxles, that is Mercer, that's not talking the Square. Then they will donate the mulch for the parks, that will be a mountain of junk, the mulch will be mixed in with dirt and asphalt. Pat also commented that his biggest concern is if it rains, there are two storm drains down there that already back up. The creek is high now, it almost came over the banks, we get a backflow from that. If we get more rain, they are going to be in the middle of the pond behind 244 and 246 and Tod's old house, it can come across Mercer Street and can be a serious mess. Wunder Bar, Two Fraus and Pat's property at 244 and 246 are at street level, they will take

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water if we get an event. Greg Such commented that Pat's concerns are flooding and inconvenience to his residents. Pat inquired where the reward was for the risk. It is a lot of risk for businesses, the movie people said they have worked out some deals with these people, just because they signed something doesn't mean they are happy about it. They said they will take care of you if you don't meet those needs. This is a lower budget independent film company. If things go sideways, they will pick up and leave. Greg commented that Pat's third point is they may not be able to identify people. Pat commented that bonding is the way to go, it just makes it a lot easier for you as a borough to recover.

Kent Jackson commented that the mulch on Mercer Street has expanded since the original ask. They can shrink the imprint to make it work and keep the mulch in front of the set where they are filming. Terri from the Harmony Inn commented that the employees suffer, they depend on the money and added the contract with the movie company is ambiguous. Marion Davis commented that she is working with the filming company, they are wonderful people and is not worried about them being in town. Seth Murphy commented that his concerns were covered by Mark (Sapienza) and the opportunity to get more films. Marion Davis commented that the movie people will talk our town up. Jason Sarver commented that they are working with town and gives the opportunity to show the town off. Mark Sapienza commented that Union Brothers is not open on Monday and Tuesday, may be able to use their parking lot for the residents. Darcy Hollerman inquired if they would be able to get into Voegtly Lane, they will be able to access Voegtly from Evan Street (the first entrance closest to the bridge). Michelle Angiolillo commented that Astre Lane could be used as a pass-thru and added it could use more gravel. Eric commented that he lives by Wunderbar inquired about parking behind it. Greg Such commented that he could reach out to owner of the garage on Astre Lane, and the Weaver's Cabin. Kent Jackson commented that the map is negotiable. Greg commented to reiterate where the mulch is going to go because it seems like that was adjusted. It will be between Astre Lane and Spring Street. People can get to the Inn from Spring Street and/or Wood Street. The mulch will also be in the Square and will be put down Sunday around 2:00PM after the church service. Don Sims inquired about the clean-up of the mulch. Kent Jackson reported it will be cleaned up with a skid steer and with a power broom/sweeper. Greg Such reported that he would like to take it to a vote. In a motion made by Don Sims and seconded by Jason Sarver, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved filming in town with adequate bus coverage for Seneca Valley School District, and the other Districts; continued negotiations with business owners in an attempt to minimize business disruption; clean up mulch and repair of signs and other things that have been removed; adequate liability insurance which our attorney will determine the definition of adequate and assigned agreement; and traffic control.

**MINUTES:**

In a motion made by Don Sims and seconded by Jason Sarver, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the April 1, 2024 Council meeting minutes.

**SOLICITOR'S REPORT:**

Solicitor Matt Racunas reported that he has one item for the public meeting which is a motion to adopt Ordinance 444 detailing and specifying the tax rate for previous years. In a motion made by Dave Szakelyhidi and seconded by Frank Luek, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved to adopt Ordinance 444. Solicitor Matt also stated an executive session will be needed.

**BOARD REPORTS/APPOINTMENTS:**

**Appointments:**

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Greg Such reported that no appointments were needed.

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

Greg Such reported that there is a meeting on May 14<sup>th</sup>. The new staff member started working and is now on contract, and the street paving bids should be in shortly.

**HARB:**

Dave Szakelyhidi reported that there wasn't a quorum for the HARB meeting. Cathy Gilg was there to present a breezeway between her house and garage.

**Harmony Water Authority:**

Dave Szakelyhidi reported that the Water Authority will be providing water for a rain scene in the (Hershey) movie.

**Parks Board:**

Susie Altemus reported on the DCNR Grant for the playground. To make the playground ADA compliant the two areas need to be connected. It will be connected with a cement pathway covered with a rubber mat. Susie reported that the Canoe Launch is open, Frank Luek reinstalled the sign. Sponsors are needed for the Color Run and the concerts. Susie inquired about getting gloves for the SV Students coming to work in the community, to help keep costs down it was decided that students should bring their own gloves. Greg Such commented that the fireworks contract changed this year and the landowners were mentioned as part of the coverage, Greg will list Jackson Township, Historic Harmony and Grace Church. Susie Altemus commented that the \$1500.00 deposit will need to be sent with the Contract.

**Library Board:**

John Ziegler reported that the Library is redoing the flooring and fundraising is ongoing. John also commented that he heard the film crew might want to donate money to something in the community and suggested the Library.

**Planning Commission:**

Larry Reynolds had nothing new to report.

**WBCA:**

Greg Such reported that there is a facilities meeting tomorrow to discuss construction of the plant. The administration building is making great progress and should be done in September.

**Storm Water Authority:**

Greg Such reported that files were turned over for making up the bills, they have had two branding session, there is still one more to go. The intent is to figure out a logo and a message to go with it. Dave Szakelyhidi commented that the Butler Eagle has a logo for the Stormwater, we could ask if they would like us to use it.

**Shared Services:**

Melanie Feesides reported that limb pick-up is Thursday, May 8<sup>th</sup>, the other dates are posted on the Borough's website.

**Parking and Signage:**

Greg Such had nothing new to report.

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**Historic Harmony:**

Frank Luek reported that the Museum will be closed the next 3 weeks.

**Harmony Business Association:**

Cath Rape reported that HBA is downsizing, there is a Fiber Fest on June 14<sup>th</sup> at the Weavers Cabin and the Museum. Sleepy Hollow will be only one day and they also want to keep Haunted Harmony. The next meeting is June 12<sup>th</sup> at Bottlebrush.

**Other Meetings:**

Greg Such reported that the Commissioners Communications Meeting will be May 12<sup>th</sup> at 10AM, and the Stormwater Authority Meeting will be May 14th at 4PM.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

John Rice – Liberty Street – John reported that the guardrail is falling over the hill again along Rt 68. John also suggested to make a list, like a flow chart of problems that were achieved after filming so the same problems aren't repeated.

**BOROUGH STAFF REPORTS:**

**Police Report:**

Report submitted via email.

Chief Miller reported that the ZPD did a Civil Service dashboard and got some candidates, and are ready to start hiring. Sean is retiring on May 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Office:**

Amy Brown had nothing new to report.

**Borough Street Manager:**

Melanie Feesides reported that the catch basin by Grace Church needs replaced. The canoe launch has been cleaned out, she continues to mow and weed eat, limb pick-up starts this Thursday, and a load of salt was delivered yesterday. There is a catch basin on Charles Street that needs repaired, the salt box has been removed from the dump truck, power washed, and lubricated. Melanie also inquired about the steps by the playground. Dave Szakelyhidi commented that Tom Thompson, our engineer took over the bid because he thought there would be more concrete work for the playground.

**Zoning and Codes:**

Report submitted via email.

Jason Sarver reported that he has been working with Larry on this, Mr. Eppinger has been leveling off his property at 763 Spring Street, Jason and Larry have asked for a report of what he was doing to understand where the storm water was going and the potential use to know if the dirt was compacted enough. Mr. Shields called me with concern about a drainage pipe going directly onto his property from Mr. Eppinger's property. Oak Alley is directly behind Mr. Eppinger's property, if the markings are correct, it seems the soil is passing onto the alley. Mr. Shields commented that the alley (Oak Alley) is 27' wide, his property is the left of the alley and Tim's is to the right, there is a drain pipe 2 feet from his property. Jason Sarver commented that the alley needs to be vacated. Solicitor Matt commented that once the alley is vacated the property owners could get an amendment to their deed. Mr. Shields commented that the dirt is to his property. Mr. Eppinger commented that Oak Alley is 17' wide and he owns the alley because of the Ziegler Plan of lots. Mr. Shields is outside of that plan and cannot use the alley once it is

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**Zoning and Codes Cont.:**

closed. Mr. Eppinger read from a letter from Solicitor Matt that stated, by operation of law a street that is not open within 21 years is automatically vacated. Solicitor Matt commented that is correct, but it does not vacate in favor of any one property owner. When the Borough vacates a street, it gets divided in half, and is split between the property owners on each side. Mr. Eppinger commented if it is a subdivision in Pennsylvania and a road is closed, only people in that subdivision are allowed to use that road even though it is closed. Solicitor Matt commented that he doesn't think that is exactly what happened but can talk to Mr. Eppinger's attorney. Mr. Shields commented that it is not a street it is an alleyway, there is a technical difference between a street and an alleyway. Dale Warner commented that the alley is closed, Mrs. Brenckle owned half. Oak Alley is the boarder for Harmony Borough and Jackson Township. Mr. Eppinger also commented that the pipe is at least 6 ft from Mr. Shield's property and guarantees there will never be a drop of water in that pipe, adding that if you knew how he built things you would understand why the pipe was there. Mr. Eppinger commented that it is a root cellar, he filled it in, he did not dig down into the fresh ground to hit a stream or spring or anything. Solicitor Matt will do some research and someone will be in touch with Mr. Eppinger and Mr. Shields.

**Engineer Report:**

Engineer Tom Thompson was unable to attend.

**Public Safety:**

Phyllis Metz reported that she received the Event Form for the Movie, Amy has a copy of the Certificate of Insurance so everything is good there. Phyllis also reported that she talked to the person in charge of the Wine Walk and let her know they cannot close the streets until 3:00pm to set up, she wanted to close the streets at 1:30pm originally.

**Business Development:**

Cath Rape reported that she will listen to the Traffic Calming webinar tomorrow. The Seneca students are coming on Thursday, May 22<sup>nd</sup> there will be 60 students, 20 will be at Wood Street Park, 15 at Swampoodle Park, 7 at the Canoe Launch, 4 at the Borough building washing windows and cleaning blinds, 2 for a traffic study to count how many cars and tractor trailers and trucks go through the square, and some students drawing a historic building in town. Cath reported that they will need window cleaner, paper towels, a duster for the blinds, and 3 or 4 cases of water. Greg Such commented to take it out of the Parks Board fund. Chief Miller commented that he will donate the cases of water.

Greg Such also announced the Hershey Philanthropic, they are interested in promoting our work with youth and families, the Parks Board, Silvester, Color Run, they are giving us a \$10,000 contribution.

**Personnel:**

Jason Sarver commented that they still need to do the employee reviews.

**Finance:**

Greg Such had nothing new to report, the audit reports are back but nothing critical.

**Streets:**

Don Sims had nothing new to report. Greg Such reported that Chris Rearick suggested ratifying the vote with a Resolution to use Liquid Fuels for the Southwest Butler CoG paving program Greg needs to write the Resolution. In a motion made by Dave Szakelyhidi and seconded by Don

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**Streets Cont.:**

Sims, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved to draft and accept the Resolution to participate in the Southwest Butler CoG annual paving bid program.

**Facilities:**

Dave Szakelyhidi had nothing new to report.

**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 **\$30,214.27**

**Fire Tax Bills Payable** in the amount of **\$4,913.49**

**Parks Board Bills Payable** in the amount of **\$411.50**

**Payroll** in the amount of **\$13,307.01**

**Parks Board Bills Already Paid** in the amount of **\$185.00**

**General Bills Already Paid** in the amount of **\$7,815.62**

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.

Solicitor Matt Racunas reported that an executive session is no longer needed.

**Adjourned: 9:10PM**

As there was no further business to discuss, the Harmony Borough Council adjourned the May 6, 2025 in-person meeting at 9:10PM. Motion to adjourn made by Don Sims and seconded by Phyllis Metz.

Respectfully Submitted,



Amy Brown, Recording Secretary

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

**April 2025**

Prepared March Zoning Officer Report and Time Sheet. Forwarded to Amy. Received a set of interior plans for almost complete interior renovation of 714 Spring Street. Approved the plans and signed the permit and turned over to Tom McCosby to inspect the progress.

Received a call from a representative of Grace Church inquiring as to the necessary permits for a new sign on one of their buildings. I sent him a copy of our sign ordinance and walked him through the HARB requirements. He will fill out the paperwork and set up an appointment with HARB.

Spoke with Cassen Younger as to her request to erect temporary yard signs advertising her Fitness Business. I explained that the only signs possible are those erected on her property.

Worked with Jason Sarver to inspect the application of Dean Marks to erect a new patio and with a shed roof. Jason walked the property and found everything in order so we issued the permit.

Received a call from Molly Vallatoro of Northeastern Security Systems in reference to any requirement for a Fire Alarm System for Robinson Fans. I emailed our Alarm Ordinance and sent a copy of the Permit Application. Received a call from Dennis Bentrin of Main Street Harmony in reference to a new roof in the Historic District. I explained he would need a permit and to pick one up from Amy. I also referred him to HARB and gave him the meeting on 5/5.

Received a message from Karen Dodge with questions on a sign permit. Tried to contact Keren Dodge in reference to requested sign permit.

Received a call from Joe O'Reilly questioning the repaving of Union Brother's parking lot. I explained that they are actually Jackson Township and for him to call Jackson for stormwater runoff. Gave him the name and number of the person to contact in Jackson.

Visited Mr. Tim Eppinger's property with Jason Sarver. Mr. Eppinger has brought in up to 10 feet of fill across the property. He has run the fill up to and in some case apparently over his property lines onto neighbor's property. The back lot line abuts the Borough's paper street. There are no definitive lot markers clearly visible. There is no visible means of on-site stormwater management. The embankments are rather steep with no visible means of support and are dependent strictly upon the slope of the fill. The fill soil does not appear to be compacted. Long term stormwater could cause degradation of the embankments onto Borough and other neighbor's property. Mr. Eppinger stated that he planned to seed the entire area. How he plans to cut any grass on the embankments due to the steepness is a mystery. Prepared a report on the property for the Borough Council and forwarded copy to Jason Sarver for his review.

Received a call from Rick Shields complaining that Tim Eppinger built a storm drain from Mr. Eppinger's property to drain on to his property.

Spoke with Karen Dodge of Municipal Resolutions as to a sign for US Liner at 200 Utah Street. Sent a copy of our Sign Ordinance.

Received a call from Mr. H. McCabe of 112 Peffer Street inquiring about a permit to widen his gravel driveway and remove a dead tree. I indicated that a permit was needed to increase the driveway and he should pick one up from Amy.

Prepared April Zoning Officer Report and Time Sheet. Forwarded to Amy.

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Respectfully submitted,

Larry A. Reynolds  
Code Enforcement/Zoning Officer