

August 5, 2025

HARMONY BOROUGH Council Meeting August 5, 2025

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Greg Such

Joe Dippold

Frank Luek

Phyllis Metz

Don Sims

Dave Szakelyhidi

Mayor Cathy Rape

OTHERS PRESENT:

Tim & Rhonda Eppinger

Jean VonHofen

Bob Leonberg

Kathy Luek

Jim Miller, ZPD

Solicitor Matt Racunas- virtually

Mark Sapienza

Tom Thompson, Engineer

August 5, 2025

CALL TO ORDER:

Council President, Greg Such called the August 5, 2025 Council Meeting to order at 7:00PM. This meeting was held in-person and remotely through Zoom virtual meeting.

PLEDGE OF ALLIGANCE:

MOMENT OF SILENCE:

A moment of silence was observed in memory of Larry Reynolds, Harmony Borough's Code Enforcement Officer and Chairman for the Planning Commission who passed away on July 24th. Greg Such thanked everyone for the moment of silence and stated that there will be an open house on September 13th as a Celebration of Life for Larry, please let Nancy, Larry's wife know if you would like to attend.

MINUTES:

In a motion made by Don Sims and seconded by Phyllis Metz, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the July 1, 2025 Council meeting minutes.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

Solicitor Matt Racunas reported that he and Tom Thompson, the Borough Engineer, have had preliminary discussions regarding Eppinger and Shields and are looking at ordinances as far as compliance, and other issues in terms of making sure that things are being done correctly; but does not have any determination at this point.

BOARD REPORTS/APPOINTMENTS:

Appointments:

Greg Such reported that no appointments are needed but we do need a Zoning Officer and chair for the Planning Commission.

Southwest Butler County Council of Governments (SWBC CoG):

Greg Such reported that he spoke to Chris Rearick and Mercer Street will be paved before the start of school, school starts August 21st.

HARB:

Dave Szakelyhidi reported that there wasn't a quorum so they couldn't officially make any recommendations. Grace Church front iron railing, the existing railing was sandblasted and repaired and painted black, that was approved via email. Kathy Luek reported that they approved 520 Main Street, to change the paint color of their door to classic yellow. The Whites had painted steps and the Webb's had painted the façade prior to HARB approval. Bonnie Nolan at 538 Wood Street would like to get a new roof. In a motion made by Dave Szakelyhidi and seconded by Frank Luek, Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the door to be painted classic yellow at 520 Main Street. HARB will send a Certificate of Appropriateness to the Borough. In a motion made by Dave Szakelyhidi and seconded by Frank Luek, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the railing to be painted black at Grace Church. HARB will send a Certificate of Appropriateness to the Borough.

August 5, 2025

Harmony Water Authority:

Dave Szakelyhidi reported that major upgrades were completed at the plant. A new low service pump was installed but the contractor's work did not meet the specs and now they are in discussion to bring the new pump up to spec and the potential to get another pump at a reduced rate. The Water Authority also replaced the caustic line between the filters and the clear well. The line was clogged with caustic soda, everything went smoothly and the plant was back up and running in less than 24 hours.

Parks Board:

The DCNR Grant requires the playground to be ADA compliant, Tom Thompson reported that he is waiting on an answer if putting up handrails would be adequate to make access be ADA compliant. Greg Such inquired on the steps below the playground needing repaired. Tom Thompson commented that there will be concrete work at the playground and the Borough could combine them. Greg reported that the concerts went well, no rain outs. The Color Run is on August 16th at Sipple Park.

Library Board:

John Ziegler was unable to attend, nothing to report.

Planning Commission:

Greg Such had nothing new to report for Planning. He reported that there is a Zoning Hearing Board meeting on August 7th for two variances, one for Phyllis (Metz) and the other one for Tim Eppinger. Greg Such questioned if the hearing could take place being short staffed with the passing away of Larry Reynolds (Zoning Officer) and not knowing if Jason Sarver (interim Zoning Officer) was up to speed on things. The Zoning Hearing Board has 3 board members plus an alternate. Solicitor Matt commented that Council has the right to participate in the zoning hearings, if nothing else, just to understand what's happening; the Zoning Hearing Board operates as a separate board with a separate solicitor. Greg commented that there are enough people to move forward with the variance hearing. Mayor Cath Rape inquired if what Solicitor Matt and Engineer Tom Thompson were working on would affect anything that would be talked about at the Eppinger variance hearing. The variance request is to build a garage first, without a house and to build the garage 2' from the property line on the side of the lot which is a paper street (4th Street). Solicitor Matt commented that it would not impact the other issue, the other issue is a discharge storm water type issue out the back of the lot. It was suggested to move forward with the variance hearing.

WBCA:

Greg Such reported that the administration building is coming along nicely, the move in date is October. There is ongoing discussion about the Water Authority doing their own meter readings. Currently WBCA reads the water meters and is spending a large amount of time getting those readings; typically, water companies do the readings and supply the readings to the sewer authority as opposed to the other way around. Cathy, Autumn and Jen are working on a solution.

Storm Water Authority:

Greg Such reported that the bills were mailed out in July.

August 5, 2025

Shared Services:

Bob Leonberg reported that the next limb pick-up is Thursday, August 7th. Bob reported to purchase our own chipper it would be around \$48,000. The comment was made that would not be a good use of funds, the Borough would be better off to hire RB Trees if Shared Services were not available

Parking and Signage:

Greg Such had nothing new to report.

Historic Harmony:

Kathy Luek reported that the exterior of the building is almost completely painted. The planning for the Christmas Market is on-going, they will have the shuttles again. Christmas Market will be November 8th and 9th. Kathy inquired if the Borough would close Liberty Street for the Market; she will submit an Event Form.

Harmony Business Association:

Cath Rape reported that the next HBA meeting is Thursday, August 14th at 5:30PM at the Bottlebrush.

Other Meetings:

Greg Such reported that the Commissioners Communications Meeting will be August 11th at 2PM, and the Stormwater Authority Meeting will be August 16th at 4PM with the Southwest COG meeting on August 16th at 2:30PM, the meeting was moved up because Quality EMS will be giving a presentation. These meetings have been moved back to Jackson Township as there were too many cars at the Fire Station.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jean VonHofen – Jean questioned if Tim Eppinger could vote on his variance. Greg Such responded that Tim would need to abstain.

Mark Sapienza – Mark inquired why the Borough can't ticket cars that are parked illegally. Mark requested Chief Miller to stop to talk to him and stated that he did not show. Three times in eight days he's been blocked in or out of his property. Mark waited 35 minutes to get back into his property. Cars are parked beyond the 'no parking from here to the corner' up to the stop sign and it is every week and asked why they are not getting tickets. Mark spoke to 3 policemen, a State Trooper, Jackson Township, and another office all said they could be tagged. Chief Miller commented that Mark is the only one who complains. Mark commented that he will start blocking cars in that are on his property. Chief Miller told him that he could not block people in. Mayor Rape agrees cars should be ticketed that park illegally. Chief Miller commented the ticket is \$25 and if someone appeals the ticket, there is a \$150 court cost. Greg Such agreed that Mark should not be inconvenienced. Chief Miller stated to call 911 and someone will show up. Don Sims inquired if the police could enforce encroaching an intersection, Chief Miller responded that they could enforce that.

BOROUGH STAFF REPORTS:

Police Report:

Report submitted via email.

Office:

Amy Brown had nothing new to report.

Borough Street Manager:

Bob Leonberg reported the pet waste signs are up at the Canoe Launch, Wood Street Park, Swampoodle Park and the park at the borough building. Bob reported that the drain on Rt 68 was cleaned out, Penn Dot cleaned it out. Greg sent a letter to Julie Desantes, Representative Scialabba's Chief of Staff, with some videos. Dave Szakelyhidi commented that Penn Dot doesn't know where the fall-out is. Bob reported that Melanie continues to mow and has painted the block of the borough garage. Mercer Street is ready to pave; they replaced a valve box and the catch basin tops. The Gas Company fixed their test area and Bob talked to Autumn at the Sewer Authority about a manhole cover that was covered with asphalt, they may need to put a riser on it. Bob talked to Jason from Jackson Township about water at CVE School, they need to control water from their catch basin, it is causing ice at the intersection in the winter. Bob reported that the election bureau inspected the borough building and the handicap parking spot was not to code, Bob and Melanie repainted it and repaired the ramp as it had a 2" lip. Greg Such reported that they sent a new contract, part of that contract stated that the handicap spot needed repainted and the ramp needed repaired.

Bob reported that the 'School' signs were painted on the street. He has a quote for line painting, the double yellow line is \$650.00, the crosswalk on Rt. 68 is \$450.00 and the stop lines and crosswalks on Mercer Street/Spring Street area is \$4,880. Don Sims and Greg Such suggested waiting to do an email vote on the line striping until after the paving is done. Dave Szakelyhidi inquired if council needed to authorize the curb that needs replaced at The Center of Harmony, the curb had to be cut to get the catch basin in. Don Sims inquired if they could get a hood for it? Bob would like Walsh Equipment/SEI to inspect the salt spreader. Greg suggested to get a price. Bob also reported on pricing for a new dump truck; one was \$94,000 another was \$110,000. Greg Such inquired if they were COG prices, Bob responded it was from SEI and A&H. Bob reported the price for just a bed is between \$25,000-\$27,000. Greg asked Mark Sapienza if it was worth it for the Borough to put a new bed on and keep the truck. Mark commented the truck should have been rust proofed, but the truck isn't bad you could get a couple more years out of it. Bob Leonberg commented the Borough could get more out of the truck if sold now. Greg inquired if we knew what we could get out of it, Bob commented that he could get an estimate. Greg recommended Bob send it out in an email.

Zoning and Codes:

Greg Such reported that Jason was ill and not able to attend. Solicitor Matt reported that there was a conference call regarding Bill Thomas's sidewalk, Jason is taking the next steps. Jason knows there is a process under the ordinance and he was taking the steps to enforce that process.

Engineer Report:

Engineer Tom Thompson reported on the Stormwater Project, there isn't a schedule yet from SET, but we do have all the other items and they should be ordering the other inlets. Tom does not have the revised cost, but there will be quite a bit of change from concrete pipe to plastic pipe, which will help offset any increases. SET should be able to get started within the next two weeks. Don requested that Tom obtain a schedule from the contractor. On the RACP Project, Tom is happy to say that they do have the Penn Dot permit for that project. The specs are pretty much finalized, there are a couple of details from the electrician, it is moving forward.

August 5, 2025

Public Safety:

Phyllis Metz reported on the Event Form for Sleepy Hollow, October 4th from 9AM-5PM, with a request to close Wood Street by the park between 9AM-10AM and 4PM-5PM to unload and load trucks; and the Event Form for Haunted Harmony on November 1st from 3PM-9PM. This is a sidewalk affair, no street closures needed. The Certificate of Insurance has been submitted with the Event Forms. In a motion made by Phyllis Metz and seconded by Frank Luek, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved Sleepy Hollow and Haunted Harmony.

Business Development:

Cath Rape reported that if 911 isn't working the Butler County emergency number is 724-287-7769. Regarding the Seneca Valley sign project, the last Cath had heard they will get back to her after school starts; the girl she spoke to thought that it was great that we would put a sign up in the Borough Building, it was unclear if we have to pay for it or not. Cath reported that Butler County sent out a flyer about America's 250 years, there is a website they gave that can help publicize how we're celebrating, she believes the Borough is only putting up banners on Rt. 68 sign.

Business Development Cont.:

Cath also reported that she has someone who needs community service, he works for a landscaper and is willing to trim the trees in the Square and in the Triangle. Council was ok with this but suggested he sign a volunteer waiver as he wouldn't have insurance.

Cath reported that the Museum closed their Neighborhood Post Office, and suggested the blue mail box be moved over next to the cluster boxes at the borough building, Cath commented there is more room for parking at the borough building. Amy commented that it used to be at the borough building next to the steps prior to moving it to the Museum. Council was ok with the move; Cath will talk to the Post Office about moving the blue mail box over to the borough building. Cath requested the borough staff empty the garbage cans in the Square twice a week, there is a volunteer who empties them once a week but when he goes away, they do not get emptied. Cath would also like a garbage can in the parking lot behind the Visitors' Cabin and would like it maintained by the Neff Haus, she is getting complaints from the neighbors about litter from the ice cream shop. Cath will talk to Sam (Hopkins). Cath reported that the Asservo Project will be on September 25th from 7PM-8:30PM at Stewart Hall. Cath also reported that she would like to have discussion on getting real bathrooms in town as we are an event town. She would like to look into the cost of putting a bathroom either behind the Visitors' Cabin on Main Street or at the Borough Building lot. Council members thought that would be tough financially, considering all of the permitting, the sewer and water bills, cleaning, and potential vandalism. It's a nice idea, but it was recommended to continue trying to find a good deal on a port-o-johns. Cath commented that it wouldn't just be borough money, she would ask the businesses to contribute monthly.

Lastly, Cath would like a newsletter to go out possibly for September through January.

Personnel:

Greg Such had nothing new to report.

Finance:

Greg Such had nothing new to report.

August 5, 2025

Streets:

Don Sims had nothing new to report.

Facilities:

Frank Luek will work on getting a quote to replace the gutters with ½ round galvanized gutters for the borough building.

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 **\$20,242.14**

Fire Tax Bills Payable in the amount of **\$1,097.37**

Parks Board Bills Payable in the amount of **\$2,290.74**

Payroll in the amount of **\$8,804.22**

BILLS PAYABLE CONT.:

Parks Board Bills Already Paid in the amount of **\$1,325.00**

General Bills Already Paid in the amount of **\$10,355.05**

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

Mark Sapienza commented that the dump truck bed could be fixed with new 4" c-channel to get a few more years (maybe 3), as mechanically that truck is fine and the body isn't bad. He recommended taking the truck to Dean Wack to get a price to repair it.

Don Sims suggested getting COG prices.

Greg Such called for an executive session at 8:17PM Out of executive session at 8:45PM.

Adjourned: 8:45PM

As there was no further business to discuss, the Harmony Borough Council adjourned the August 5, 2025 in-person meeting at 8:45PM. Motion to adjourn made by Don Sims and seconded by Frank Luek.

Respectfully Submitted,



Amy Brown, Recording Secretary