HARMONY BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING August 4, 2026

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Greg Such

Phyllis Metz

Dave Szakelyhidi

Joe Dippold

Don Sims

Mayor Cathy Rape

OTHERS PRESENT:

Susie Altemus

Sandy Ferrainola

Stephen Gross

Bob Leonberg

Chief Jim Miller, ZPD

Robert Patinski

Solicitor Matt Racunas - virtual

John Ziegler

CALL TO ORDER:

Council President, Greg Such called the August 4, 2026, Council Meeting to order at 7:15PM. This meeting was held in-person and remotely through Teams virtual meeting.

PLEDGE OF ALLIGANCE:

MINUTES:

In a motion made by Don Sims and seconded by Dave Szakelyhidi, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the July 7, 2026 Council meeting minutes.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

Solicitor Matt Racunas reported that he did not have any action items and apologized for joining our meeting remote, he had an emergency personnel meeting earlier in the day that ran late.

BOARD REPORTS/APPOINTMENTS:

Appointments:

Greg Such reported that the appointment for a council member will be deferred until later in the meeting.

Southwest Butler County Council of Governments (SWBC CoG):

Greg Such reported that the EMS Cooperative Agreement, which is similar to the oversight agreement that we have with the fire department, is ready to sign. In a motion made by Dave Szakelyhidi and seconded by Joe Dippold, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved Greg Such signing the EMS Cooperative Agreement.

HARB:

Dave Szakelyhidi had nothing to report.

Harmony Water Authority:

Dave Szakelyhidi reported that the Chlorine Loop Project has been completed and the fire hydrant has been replaced at Mercer and Spring Street. Dave also reported that he talked to Frank Grannon (former Director of Operations for the Borough) regarding the paving on the Edmond Street water repair. Some residents believed it was temporarily patched but Frank stated it has the binder and top coat on the repair. The Water Authority received a quote of $2,500 to level the lateral crossings and the valves on Spring Street. Dave also commented that John Rice, a Water Authority Board Member, walked Edmond with a resident and the patches are better than the street, the street has cracks in it. Joe Dippold commented that the Water Authority has not voted to do the repairs (to level the lateral crossing and to feather the valves on Spring Street) and will vote on it at their August meeting. Don Sims commented that paving Edmond Street isn't a priority for the Borough at this time; and inquired if the Water Authority would try to do the repairs this year. Dave Szakelyhidi responded that they could if the Water Authority Boards votes to do the repairs. Rob Patinski commented that he heard the gas company is going up Second Street onto Edmond. Council has not heard that the gas company would be going onto Second and Edmond Streets. Rob Patinski commented that there is no use repairing the road if the gas company is going to dig it up. Don Sims asked Bob Leonberg (Street Manager) to check with the gas company.

Parks Board:
Susie Altemus reported that the last concert is this Thursday with the Lenny Smith Project. The Color Run will be on Saturday, August 17th. Susie thanked everyone who helped paint the lines on the basketball court, including a couple of people walking past. Susie also reported that the ADA work is to begin on the playground and that John Ziegler will replace the post on the Wood Street Park sign. Susie also reported that Mase worked with her for half a day filling the bottles for the Color Run.

Library Board:
John Ziegler reported that there is a budget deficit for the three-season facility and are working with Zelienople Borough to possibly get funding. The Wine Walk has been rescheduled for September 19th.

Planning Commission/Zoning Hearing Board:
Greg Such reported that the Planning Commission held a meeting last week that Jeff Byko presided over. One of the key areas of interest was a short-term rental ordinance. There was info in council's packet short term rentals. Solicitor Matt sent Greg an ordinance from another community, which Greg made changes to and sent it off. Greg also reported that the Borough may have a candidate for the Planning Commission.

WBCA:
Greg Such reported that the planning continues on the WBCA plant expansion, work should have started on the Harmony Pump Station, and they continue to dig on Spring Street in Zelienople, which has turned into taking much longer than anybody thought, because it is solid rock..

Storm Water Authority:
Greg Such reported that he received Harmony's Capital Improvements Project from the Storm Water Authority earlier today but hasn't had time to review it, Council will need to approve that at next month's meeting. The new administrator, Jane Menchyk, started on Monday, the stormwater bills have gone out and a rebill will go out in August, if needed.

Shared Services:
Bob Leonberg reported that limb pick-up will be Thursday, August 6th.

Parking and Signage:
Greg Such reported that this will be discussed under Bob's report.

Historic Harmony:
Greg Such reported that Denise Rodgers was unable to attend and submitted a report. Denise's report stated that the windows in the museum are in the process of being repainted by Clair Boring, due to extensive peeling. They are reaching out to local stonemasons for the repair work on the Harmonist cemetery. If anyone has a suggestion for someone who might have the skills to do this project, let Katina at the museum know. The Historical Society is sponsoring a Vintage Wine Walk on August 14th that will involve curated wine tasting with German food and Harmony History, more information can be found on the bulletin boards at Stewart Hall and Washington's 1753 Cabin. Planning continues for the Christmas Market, which will be on November 14th and 15th.

Harmony Merchants:
Greg Such had nothing to report.

Other Meetings:
Greg Such reported that the Southwest Community Group Meeting will be on August 12th at 1:30PM. Brian Allen, the District Manager from PennDOT District 10 will be at that meeting to discuss the I79 expansion. Greg had sent the information regarding the Main Street Railroad Bridge to Jerry Andree and Jerry sent it on to Brian. The CoG Meeting will be on August 12th at 3:00PM and the Stormwater Authority Meeting will be on August 12th at 4:00PM. The Commissioners Communications Meeting will be August 13th at 10:00AM. Phyllis Metz reported that the Butler County Boroughs Association Networking Event will be Saturday, August 22nd from 9:00AM – 12:00PM at the Zelienople Park.

PUBLIC COMMENT:
No public comment.

BOROUGH STAFF REPORTS:
Police Report:
Report submitted via email.
Joe Dippold commented that he received a request for more of the $20 parking tickets to be written; apparently some of the residents' garages are being blocked.

Office:
Amy Brown had nothing new to report.

Borough Director of Operations:
Bob Leonberg reported that they filled in the berm on Division Street with 2A gravel near New Castle Street. Cory Shaffer, our PennDOT Rep, recommended changing some of the Truck Route signs that were previously installed and adding more signs for the weight limit for the Main Street Bridge. There was an online vote to order the recommended signage, the total amount is $744.61 that needs to be ratified. In a motion made by Dave Szakelyhidi and seconded by Don Sims, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved to ratify the signage order in the amount of $744.61. Bob also reported the pick-up truck is scheduled for inspection at Sapienza's Service on Thursday 8/6. Bob inquired if Council wanted the double yellow line repainted on Mercer Street. Cath Rape commented that she wants the stop bars and crosswalks painted in June for tourism. Don Sims commented that we do it for school and it is a better dollar amount if all the line painting is done at the same time. Cath Rape commented that people are not stopping at the stop signs and the stop bar helps draw their attention. Don Sims suggested that Bob get a price on the line painting and send it out for a vote. Bob reported that Charles Street has a sinkhole where the sewer line was repaired; three different companies came in to repair the sewer line. The first repair was in 2024 but the repair did not go into the street; the second repair was in 2025 where the sewer line was under the water line, this repair may have been filled in correctly but in 2026 it was dug up again and it is sinking. Bob inquired if he should have Barbish come in to repair the road. The Sewer Authority's position on this is that they sent a bill for half of the original repair, which the Water Authority has not paid yet. Don Sims inquired why the Borough is talking about this if it is between the Water Authority and Sewer Authority. Solicitor Matt will get the all the facts before going to the WBCA Board.

Borough Director of Operations Cont.:
Bob Leonberg reported that the whole side of the road is sinking on First Street. Dave Szakelyhidi commented that there should be a sign there. Don Sims inquired if there was any Stormwater Authority money available for emergency repairs. Greg Such responded that there is O & M money from the Stormwater Authority but not enough to cover this project; the lowest bid was for $27,000. Greg also commented that Tom (Thompson) had two concerns with that bid, the first concern was the size of the pipe, which would cause constriction and the second concern was not having enough cover for the pipe. Don Sims commented that the street needs repaired before it collapses. Greg Such inquired if Council wanted to use Liquid Fuel money to do the repair. Don Sims would like Tom Thompson to get a price for the pipe with the highest capacity that will fit. Bob Leonberg reported that he cleaned out the catch basin on Second Street. Greg Such inquired about the drain pipe on Rte. 68 that was draining water onto Robinson. Greg will follow up with Tom Thompson. Cath Rape commented about the gravel on Spring and Mercer Street and inquired if it would be paved. Bob Leonberg responded that Voelker is to come in.
Solicitor Matt requested to go back to the discussion about Charles Street. Matt reviewed his emails while Bob was giving his report and WBCA did go back three times, twice for a repair on the Main and once for a repair on the lateral. WBCA's request is for half the charges related to one of those repairs. The position of WBCA was there was no separation between the pipes. Dave Szakelyhidi commented that the repair was made with the separation, there are regulations that there should be space between them. Bob has pictures of the repair. Dave also commented that the Water Authority Board may be willing to pay half of the bill, if WBCA fixes the repair correctly with the separation. Bob is to send Matt the pictures and Matt will get more information from WBCA.

Zoning and Codes:
Report submitted. (attached)
Greg Such reported that there is suspicion that one of the houses in the Historic District is going to transfer hands and may become an Airbnb, which basically means we need to rush our ordinance along. There is a resident in Swampoodle that commenced to build a shed without a building permit and does not have the proper distance from the street. Melanie sent a letter today to that resident. Mayor Cath Rape reported that Mantia promised to put a screen in the open window and remove the lift by July of last year. Melanie is to send a letter to Mantia and Solicitor Matt will also reach out to Mantia's attorney.

Engineer:
Tom Thompson was unable to attend the meeting. Greg Such reported that the stormwater grate that Bob Ziegler was interested in has been made and Barbish should have installed it today. In a motion made by Dave Szakelyhidi and seconded by Don Sims, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved to ratify the vote for the stormwater grate in the amount of $2500 and to have Barbish install the grate. Greg reported that the Multimodal Grant application has been submitted. Cath Rape commented that she is disappointed that the Engineer isn't here to discuss the Square Project. We had an estimate in November 2019, and another in June 2020 and another in October 2020. Those prices keep going up and we're paying an engineer to keep giving us the same stuff estimate and nothing still hasn't been done six years later.

Public Safety:

Phyllis Metz reported that she received an updated Event Form for the Wine Walk, it will be on September 19th. In a motion made by Phyllis Metz and seconded by Joe Dippold, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the September 19th Wine Walk.
Phyllis also reported that she received an Event Form for the German Christmas Market, it will be on November 14th and 15th; the time for Sunday has changed to 12:00 – 4:00 so it won't interfere with church. There are street problems but those can be discussed later. In a motion made by Phyllis Metz and seconded by Joe Dippold, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the German Christmas Market on November 14th and 15th.

Business Development:
Cath Rape requested a newsletter to finish off the year, she would like to post the rules for electric scooters, motorized pedal cycles, motor scooters, segways, e-bikes, and bikes in the newsletter because kids and adults do not know the rules.

Personnel:
Greg Such had nothing new to report.

Finance:
Greg Such reported that the fund balances are moving around, we moved money out of one account and put it into the General fund to pay the contractor.

Streets:
Greg Such reported that the borough must put signs up, notify the EMS, the school, the PUC, send the pictures of the signs, etc. for the Main Street bridge weight limit due to the deficiencies with the bridge. Greg talked to Jerry Andree at our community meeting and he sent information off to PennDOT District 10. They are to be at the August 12th meeting and hopefully will have some guidance for us. Greg talked to the PA PUC safety engineer for railroad bridges, and basically he said they can't give us any leverage for working with the Railroad.
Dave Szakelyhidi inquired if Matt was going to notify the Railroad, Greg responded that the Railroad had already been notified, but not by Matt or the Borough. The advice from the PUC Engineer was to not file a formal complaint because that will just make the RR dig their heels in and we'll exhaust our legal budget and not get anywhere.

Facilities:
Dave Szakelyhidi reported that the paint is peeling on the borough building windows, some are bare wood and inquired if we should have a company come in and paint them. Don Sims commented that our personnel could scrap, prime and paint them, the ground level ones. The question was asked if it was just the sills or if the whole frame needs painted. Council will ask Frank Luek to look at the windows to determine what needs done.
Dave Szakelyhidi mentioned the cattails are grown up on both sides of the under drain at First and Spring Street; it is completely grown full of vegetation and suggested to have the excavator clean it out while replacing the whistle pipe. Bill Cinci cleaned it out a couple of years ago. Cath Rape reported that Rome Monument moved the monument from the Square to the Borough Building, John from Rome recommended not cleaning the plaque, but Tom Murray said that he would pay for it if the Borough wants the plaque cleaned.

Grants:
Greg Such had nothing new to report.
Cath Rape inquired if Council saw Senator Vogel's email with a grant opportunity, Main Street Matters, the deadline is August 31st. Cath will send it to Greg.

Training & Conferences:
Greg Such reported that training and conferences are listed on the correspondence list

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 **$27,832.15**
Payroll in the amount of **$11,613.00**
General Bills Already Paid in the amount of **$2,384.83**
EMS Tax Bills Payable in the amount of **$113.85**
Fire Tax Bills Payable in the amount of **$682.92**
Parks Board Fund Bills Payable in the amount of **$1,189.24**
Parks Board Already Paid in the amount of **$5,250.00**

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.

Greg Such called for an executive session at 8:24PM. Council came out of executive session at 8:30PM.
In a motion made by Don Sims and seconded by Dave Szakelyhidi, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the appointment of Sylvia Wack to Council. Greg Such abstained to be impartial to ask Michele Papkie to join the Planning Commission.

Adjourned: 8:33pm
As there was no further business to discuss, the Harmony Borough Council adjourned the July 7, 2026, In-person and Teams virtual meeting at 8:33pm. Motion to adjourn by Don Sims and seconded by Dave Szakelyhidi.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amy Brown

Amy Brown, Recording Secretary

Zoning Report - July 2026

- A window/roofing company inquired if they need a permit to replace a roof at 844 Edmund St. They also wanted to place a dumpster in the street. I informed them that due to the location of the house being on the corner and the narrow width of the road, that any dumpster would need to be placed in the yard, not on the street due to safety concerns.

- A vegetation violation was sent to 132 Old Little Creek Rd. Their garden was blocking the line of sight for cars approaching from the direction of Gregg Dr. There was also a fire hydrant that was overgrown and not visible. Vegetation was cut back and the hydrant is now accessible. There were also some complaints in regards to the old camper parked in the backyard. The police department was made aware of it being an "uninspected vehicle" and I'm awaiting action on that.

- Someone from DQE Communications contacted me inquiring about the location of a utility pole on Nickle Rd. They wanted to know if they would need a street opening permit to bore but the primary boring would be happening in the Penndot right of way. It sits at the township lines of Harmony Borough, Jackson Township, and the private Meadowbrook Ln. I believe the pole is in Jackson but my understanding is that they are not disturbing or crossing the road beyond the pole so there would be no need for a permit anyhow. This project is a month or more away so I suspect I will hear more from them in the future.

- A gentleman contacted me about potentially purchasing a home towards the end of Main St. He would like to use the home as a part time residence for his mother-in-law and as an Air BnB for a few weekends out of the month. He noted that there is currently no ordinance in regards to STRs but I did inform him that there will likely be one in the future.

- Melanie Fessides