HARMONY BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING May 5, 2026

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Greg Such
Phyllis Metz
Frank Luek
Dave Szakelyhidi
Joe Dippold
Don Sims
Beth Bruker-Walos
Mayor Cathy Rape

OTHERS PRESENT:

Susie Altemus
Sandy Ferrainola
Stephen Gross
Jim John
Bob Leonberg
Chief Jim Miller, ZPD
Solicitor Matt Racunas-virtually
Denise Rodgers
Tom Thompson
John Ziegler

CALL TO ORDER:

Council President, Greg Such called the May 5, 2026, Council Meeting to order at 7:00PM. This meeting was held in-person and remotely through Teams virtual meeting.

PLEDGE OF ALLIGANCE:

MINUTES:

Susie Altemus inquired on the Street Opening Ordinance. Greg Such explained that it is for utility companies when they need to cut into the street to install or repair pipes.
In a motion made by Don Sims and seconded by Frank Luek, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the April 7, 2026 Council meeting minutes.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

Solicitor Matt Racunas reported that he did not have a formal report, although Council can expect an email regarding a pending litigation matter prior to the June meeting.

BOARD REPORTS/APPOINTMENTS:

Appointments:

Greg Such reported that no appointments are needed.

Southwest Butler County Council of Governments (SWBC CoG):

Greg Such reported that the Executive Director, Camryn Ziegler resigned. Jason Daily temporarily took over the operations of the Stormwater Authority, and a temp was hired to do the fire department bookkeeping. They will interview and hire a new Executive Director, two interviews are scheduled for Friday morning. Stephen Gross commented that there hasn't been a response to the Stormwater Authority phone number. Greg Such will let the Stormwater Authority know. Greg also reported that the paving project with COG is mostly going to be chip seal, really minimal paving this year, as Zelienople is not doing black top.

HARB:

Dave Szakelyhidi reported that there are two Certificates of Appropriateness that HARB approved and recommends to Council.
Brian Tempest – 634 Wood Street – A Brown Metal Roof. Existing brown shingle roof replaced with brown metal roofing. The metal roof has been completed. Second item is to add trim boards to second floor corners (brown), add shutters to front window (brown) stucco patch to match. In a motion made by Dave Szakelyhidi and seconded by Frank Luek, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the Certificate of Appropriateness for 634 Wood Street.

Harmony Borough Office – 217 Mercer Street – Veterans monument relocation. In a motion made by Dave Szakelyhidi and seconded by Frank Luek, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the Certificate of Appropriateness for 217 Mercer Street.

Harmony Water Authority:

Dave Szakelyhidi reported that the water plant has multiple new pumps and a new electric service. The chlorine loop project will begin on May 11th.

Parks Board:
Susie Altemus reported that the Parks Board was awarded the Butler County Renovation Grant for $10,000 to replace limestone on the lower part of the trail, a new picnic table for the school house playground, and a two-person swing for adults (porch swing). Susie also reported that we are third in line for the concrete work to make the playground ADA compliant, it should start soon. Seneca students are coming on Wednesday, May 13th to spread mulch, Bob is to get mulch before then. Frank Luek reported that Bob cleaned the canoe launch.

Library Board:
John Ziegler reported that the Library received their grant for a new building, groundbreaking should be by the middle of July. The Wine Walk is June 6th, the Library is selling more tickets this year.

Planning Commission/Zoning Hearing Board:
Greg Such reported that there will be a Zoning Hearing on May 14th at 6:00pm, it is for three different variances. Marks for the Grinder property, Meeder for a garage, and Nicoletti for a shed.

WBCA:
Solicitor Matt Racunas reported that they are moving forward with the design of the plant and upgrades to the old admin building for a lab.

Storm Water Authority:
Greg Such reported that the Commissioners visit went well, they visited our stormwater project site, and that Leslie (Osche) and Mark (Gordon) stayed for some appetizers afterwards. Cath Rape commented that someone asked her about the 3ft pipe that the borough is leaving open and inquired if a grate should be put over it. Solicitor Matt commented that the borough should take reasonable precautions. Engineer Tom Thompson will look into it.

Shared Services:
Bob Leonberg reported that limb pick-up will be Thursday, May 7th. Bob also reported that Jackson Township brought their machine over and cleaned out the canoe launch, our skid steer has a hard time getting back up the ramp once it gets slick.

Parking and Signage:
Greg Such had nothing new to report.

Historic Harmony:
Denise Rodgers reported that the display sign at Porters Cove is close to being done. The sign has been under production for a couple of years and is a result of a grant that was written by Andrew Orient, and Kathy Luek was very instrumental as well. The sign will be installed by Jackson Township. History Day is June 30th, a flyer of the day's activities is available. Historic Harmony Museum has hired someone to work on social media for them, you can like and follow Historic Harmony Museum on Facebook to see all the work they are doing. There will be a flea market at the Barn on May 23rd from 9:00AM-2:00PM, donations can be dropped off during the week of the flea market. Historic Harmony is starting to form a committee to work on preservation of buildings, We are looking for people who are

Historic Harmony Cont.:
interested and/or skilled in talking about historic preservation and develop the best way to focus some grant funding to save properties, if interested please call the Museum. Cath Rape gave a reminder that there will be a reenactment on History Day at Wood Street Park with shooting.

Other Meetings:
Greg Such reported that the CoG Meeting will be May 13th at 3:00PM. The Stormwater Authority Meeting will be on May 13th at 4:00PM. The Commissioners Communications Meeting will be on May 20th at 1:00PM and the Butler County UCC Meeting will be June 11th at 10:00AM.

PUBLIC COMMENT:
Jim John-334 Second Street – Jim commented that the Water Authority did a waterline repair two or three years ago on Edmund Street and Second Street and the street repair was a temporary patch as it was late October or early November and said they would come back in the spring. It is pretty bad and needs to be fixed. Bob Leonberg will look at it.

Stephen Gross – 268 S Liberty Street- Mr. Gross inquired if there is a no dumping ordinance in Harmony Borough, or can someone just dump whatever that they want, such as old insulation, shingles, parts of an old trailer and then back fill it. Mr. Gross stated that he brought it to the borough before and nobody did anything about it and it is still happening to this day. Cath Rape commented that the Zoning Officer did talk to them years ago and the Borough hasn't seen any dumping in a long time. Solicitor Matt Racunas commented that you cannot dump scrap material on your property or anywhere. If there is a specific property location that the borough should be investigating, filing a complaint would be the best course of action. Depending on what is being dumped, it could not only be a violation of borough ordinances, it could be a violation of county ordinances and there could be DEP implications. Dave Szakelyhidi commented that the borough has complaint forms that can be completed and we can investigate it. Greg Such commented that once the complaint form is filled out the codes officer will look at it and we'll decide if we need to get Jackson Township involved or where we go from there.

BOROUGH STAFF REPORTS:
Police Report:
Report submitted via email.

Office:
Amy Brown had nothing new to report.

Borough Director of Operations:
Bob Leonberg reported that the four new street lights have been installed, as well as the street crossing signs on Pittsburgh Street; and the banners are up in the Square and the Triangle. Bob reported that he contacted the Railroad about the hole on the bridge, the Track Master said it was just like an expansion and it wasn't a real concern. Greg Such asked Matt if this was something he should be involved with. Solicitor Matt will look into it. Greg also commented that Bob Leonberg has pictures that he can send to Matt as well as contact information for the Track Master. Bob reported that the bollard was knocked over again, he cut it off. Voelker was in and patched potholes. The winter equipment was maintained and a

Borough Director of Operations:
cart was made for the salt spreader. The two new flags are in and will be up before Memorial Day. Cath Rape thanked Solicitor Matt for the donation of a flag and also commented that the Memorial Day service will be at 9:30am on May 25th. Bob reported that the tractor deck mount was repaired. Bob reported that the catch basin by Grace Church has a sinkhole. Greg Such commented that the Borough has O&M money in the Stormwater Authority budget. Dave Szakelyhidi commented that they previously discussed installing a new box in front of the one that is there now and getting the work done vs patching it and tearing it back out. Bob Leonberg is to get a price from Barbish. Joe Dippold asked if the catch basin repair could wait until school is out because of the bus stop by the church. Bob Leonberg also reported that Penn Sweeping will be in to sweep the streets before Memorial Day. Bob reported that he unloaded the sand for the Water Authority filters, the new material for the filters is being stored in the garage. Bob also reported that he has a class for his water license on May 21st.

Zoning and Codes:
Report submitted. (attached)

Engineer:
Tom Thompson reported that SET is due to come back to finish the project. They have the end of Greg Drive and Little Creek Road, catch basins to repair, and punch list items to close out the project. There was a change order for the extra drains at Dambach's and the culvert across the street. Greg Such commented that we need to have conversation with Ann Brown and Mark Gordon as it looks like the project is coming out under budget. Tom Thompson commented that there is a section of pipe that was included in the project but when the direction of pipe was changed, we dropped that section, and can now potentially do that street where the catch basin is sinking, Tom will get prices from SET. Tom also reported on the RACP Project stating that they have what they need with Armstrong and Verizon and that he does not expect much of a pushback from Penn Power. Tom reported that he is working with Cory Shaffer on the Multimodal Grant for Sprint Street. Dave Szakelyhidi commented that the oval whistle pipe is starting to collapse. Tom Thompson commented that it will be part of the project.

Public Safety:
Phyllis Metz reported on the Event Form for the Division Street Block Party on July 25th from 2:00pm until dusk, 40-50 people and they are requesting barriers. In a motion made by Joe Dippold and seconded by Frank Luek, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the Division Street Block Party contingent on Zelienople Borough's approval.

Business Development:
Cath Rape reported that flowers will be in at the end of the month, the cost will be between $300 and $400 and asked if there was money in the budget, there was a line item for fireworks and flowers. Solicitor Matt commented that he would pay for it, send an invoice to Matt.

Personnel:
Greg Such reported that one of the employees asked to be able to borrow money from their 457 plan, which is the equivalent to a 401k, it is their own money that they are borrowing.

Personnel Cont.:
We've approved those loans and need to vote on that change. In a motion made by Dave Szakelyhidi and seconded by Phyllis Metz, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved pension loans on the 457 plan.

Finance:
Joe Dippold had nothing new to report.

Streets:
Don Sims presented four concepts with drawings of the Square. Option A is basically is to make the center islands bigger; option B is to widen the sidewalks and possibly make the islands longer, or they could remain the same size. Option C1 is to expand the sidewalks with no island, C2 has no parking in the Square, and bump outs the corners. It was stated that parking is needed in the Square. Don Sims commented that any conceptual design can be modified and that it will be up to our Engineer to add it up and make sure that the turning radiuses and the sizes are there. Cath Rape commented that she had ideas to extend the sidewalks out on the southside only, have the directional signs that Sign Innovation made placed in front of the Museum, eliminate the parking in front of the Museum, place bell bollards or bridge stone at the corners to protect the buildings of the museum and church, and the islands would remain the same size. Cath also commented that we need to control the trucks first and suggested double speed humps by the Washington Cabin on Main Street and the Weaver Cabin on Mercer Street. Don Sims commented that an 18-wheeler will just drive over the speed humps. The Truck Route Ordinance needs to be removed going north. Solicitor Matt is working on the Truck Route Ordinance; he needs to make one change and will send it to Don (Sims) and Cath (Rape) to review. Cath Rape commented that the signs were never changed that Chris from LTAP recommended, adding that signs are needed in Jackson Township that say "Local Delivery Only to Evergreen Mill Road; signs at the bridge at Evergreen that say "All Trucks Turn Right Only" and "No Left Turn." Trucks cannot come into town after they go to Evergreen Mill Road. The "Truck Route" signs need changed to say "TransTech Trucks Only." We don't want to encourage any trucks to come through town. Cathy also mentioned asking TransTech to ask their companies to deliver in 45-foot trailers and stop using 53-ft trailers. Trucks won't be going on sidewalks and yards to make the turns. Cath reported there was another suggestion to make Main Street southbound only. No coming into town, everyone would have to go around either on Liberty Street or Spring Street. There was discussion on which concept council members liked the best. Don suggested the concept of widening the sidewalk on the southside, keep the flag pole, and add to the corners. Dave Szakelyhidi suggested widening the sidewalk on the southside and to keep the parking on the Northside with bump outs on the northside. Greg Such inquired who would vet the design and if the community would get a say. Cath Rape commented that she had asked for suggestions/ideas a few months ago from the Rodgers Brothers, Grace Church, HARB and the Museum and nobody had any comment. Don Sims commented that the design is drawing B with sidewalk bump outs at the end. Engineer Tom Thompson will get prices as original design and with this concept. Don Sims made a motion on the conceptual drawing given to the Engineer to work it in for additional pricing, second made by Frank Luek. Greg Such asked Bob to move the signs for the truck route that were suggested by LTAP. Don Sims commented on street paving, will save money for the Square.

Facilities:
Dave Szakelyhidi commented about the hole in the bridge, Solicitor Matt will look into it. Cath Rape commented that the bridge stones are free, Dave commented that the concern is that a truck will push the stone into a building.

Grants:
Greg Such reported that the guy from Stevenson contacted him about a Recycle Grant that the Borough may be able to use to replace the truck. Greg will reach out to them regarding the Recycle Grant.

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 **$202,758.42 with SET's revised invoice.**
Payroll in the amount of **$11,039.26**
Parks Board Fund Bills Payable in the amount of **$205.00**
General Bills Already Paid in the amount of **$5,749.40**
Fire Tax Bills Payable in the amount of **$4,818.07**
EMS Tax Bills Payable in the amount of **$793.00**

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

Adjourned: 8:18pm
As there was no further business to discuss, the Harmony Borough Council adjourned the May 5, 2026, In-person and Teams virtual meeting at 8:18pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amy Brown

Amy Brown, Recording Secretary

Zoning Report - April 2026

- Calvin Presbyterian Church inquired about replacing their sign that was damaged from a fallen tree. I provided them with the sign regulations for their zoning area. No permit has been applied for yet.
- A resident on Old Little Creek Rd. reached out about improvements they would like to make to their property. I informed them that they are on the Jackson Township side of the road and provided their contact information.
- An offer was submitted on the property at 247 Mercer St. contingent on variance approval to build on the lot. The interested purchaser has submitted the required information and applied for said variance.
- Several neighbors complained about debris build up and trash being stored in the shed behind 1123 Seneca Dr. A violation notice was sent. I'm awaiting action on the homeowner's part.
- The railroad inquired if a permit was required to replace electrical lines near their crossing on Liberty St. and perform work on one of their electrical boxes. A tree took out a pole along the line and a wire needed to be replaced. I informed them that no permit was required.
- A potential resident inquired about setback requirements and permitting if they were to build a garage behind a house they were interested in purchasing in the borough. I emailed them setback and building information.
- I received several calls for inquiries in Jackson Township and referred them to the correct contact.
- A permit was issued for th H-Z Global Methodist Church to install a gazebo in their outdoor childcare area.
- A sign permit was issued for a new business at 528 Main St.

- Melanie Fessides