HARMONY BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING September 1, 2026

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Greg Such

Phyllis Metz

Frank Luek

Dave Szakelyhidi

Joe Dippold

Don Sims

Sylvia Wack

Mayor Cathy Rape

OTHERS PRESENT:

Bob Leonberg

Chief Jim Miller, ZPD

Robert Patinski

Solicitor Matt Racunas – virtual

Tom Thompson

John Ziegler

CALL TO ORDER:

Council President, Greg Such called the September 1, 2026, Council Meeting to order at 7:00PM. This meeting was held in-person and remotely through Teams virtual meeting.

PLEDGE OF ALLIGANCE:

VISITOR:

Scott Timko, candidate for State Representative, introduced himself to Council. Scott is excited about the opportunity that is coming up on November 3rd. Scott's view on his role as the State Representative is to work with every local borough to help with problems. If you need help from the state and are not getting it, he could help facilitate that; and will work in partnership with all the communities to make everyone's life a little easier and quality of life a little better.

The swearing in of Sylvia Wack to Council by Mayor, Cath Rape.

MINUTES:

In a motion made by Don Sims and seconded by Phyllis Metz, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the August 4, 2026, Council meeting minutes.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

Solicitor Matt Racunas reported that he reviewed the County Cooperation Agreement. The agreement will allow the County to facilitate certain grant funding for the Borough and other municipalities in the Cooperation. Greg Such reported that this is the Urban County CDBG Grant. There previously were five communities and Butler City that had block grants. Now, there's an extra $500,000 in the pool. The whole block grant program for Butler County is now administered by Mark Gordon's office. There is a three-year agreement and a letter to participate. September 9th is the deadline to opt in or opt out. In a motion made by Don Sims and seconded by Dave Szakleyhidi, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved Cooperation Agreement for the Urban County CDBG Grant.

BOARD REPORTS/APPOINTMENTS:

Appointments:

Greg Such reported on the appointment of Michele Papakie to the Planning Commission. In a motion made by Dave Szkakelyhidi and seconded by Don Sims, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved to appoint Michele Papakie to the Planning Commission.

Southwest Butler County Council of Governments (SWBC CoG):

Greg Such reported that Cranberry Township has agreed to pay $75,000 to Quality EMS and Adams Township has agreed to a $35 household fee. Harmony EMS is concerned that they will have trouble keeping employees once there is additional funding in the Cranberry EMS organization because they are not going to be able to match salaries. Some of the other communities are talking about a total of 2.5% tax millage for EMS. We put in our half percent, but they want to take an additional 2% out of their general funds to add. Greg reported that the Fire District received their RACP money, and the loan that they had, that all the communities backstopped is now off our plates. There was some discussion on

Southwest Butler County Council of Governments (SWBC CoG) Cont.:
milling and paving for next year and what we want to do. Nobody black topped this year because of all the construction.

HARB:
Dave Szakelyhidi reported there is one Certificates of Appropriateness that HARB approved and recommends to Council.
John Ziegler-616 Wood Street – Dave Szakelyhidi reported that John previous was approved to redo existing front steps and handrail. John has a second option to replace the steps with treated wood, synthetic treads, and handrail. In a motion made by Dave Szakelyhidi and seconded by Frank Luek, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the Certificate of Appropriateness for 616 Wood Street.

Harmony Water Authority:
Dave Szakelyhidi reported last month that the Chlorine Loop Project has been completed and is going well, some of the grass was washed out and the contractor is going to replant. Dave also commented that the Water Authority had a lengthy discussion about Charles Street and they do not want to get involved with it. Greg Such explained that the Borough has two utility companies that have a disagreement over how to fund repairing the street. Bob Leonberg commented that WBCA dug it up a third time; the second time they dug it up was when they found the water issue, but the third time didn't have anything to do with the water. Greg Such inquired if the Borough should get special counsel and take some legal action as the same solicitor represents all three entities. Solicitor Matt commented that WBCA had asked the Water Authority to pay half of the expenditure and the Water Authority declined to pay half. Matt stated that the amount isn't worth litigation. Solicitor Matt and Greg Such will go back to WBCA. Solicitor Matt stated that it is not a Borough issue. Greg Such commented that the issue is that there is a sinkhole in the Borough's street. Solicitor Matt commented that it is a WBCA issue but the manager is out on leave and will need to wait for her return. Greg commented that the asphalt plants will be closing soon.

Parks Board:
Greg Such reported that the summer concerts are done and they all went well. The Parks Board will move the concerts to Wednesday evenings next year to try to draw more people, Thursday evenings compete with Zelienople's Open-Air Market. This, That & The Other Thing is booked for June 16, 2027. There were 168 runners at the Color Run, and there was a lot of volunteer help, including 7 Seneca Valley Robotic Club students. The Parks Board showed a profit of $4,700 from the Color Run. Greg reported that John Ziegler repaired the Wood Street Park sign and Susie Altemus repainted the sign. Greg Such thanked them for their service. Planning has started for the Silvester; there will be a Diaper Dash for toddlers this year. Council needs to vote on the fireworks for the Silvester, the contract is the same as every year with Peak Pyro for $3500.00 which is typically split between the Parks Board and the Borough. In a motion made by Phyllis Metz and seconded by Don Sims, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the $3,500 fireworks contract for the Silvester. Greg reported that the sidewalk has been poured for the playground, there is a little bit of concern that some of the reinforcement matting didn't go in like it should have, but we'll see what happens with that as we go. The sidewalk needed done to get the DCNR grant settled up. As part of this year's Parks Reno grant there is a pile of limestone by the Red Barn, Jackson Township has agreed

Parks Board Cont.:
to spread it on the walking trail for us. One of the limestone trucks ripped up private property and we may need to put some topsoil in there to smooth it out once they're done spreading the limestone.
Greg Such also reported that Jessica Flamos resigned from the Parks Board, Greg thanked Jessica for her efforts.

Library Board:
John Ziegler reported that the ground breaking for their new building will be at the end of September, Zelienople Borough gave them a loan, which was necessary to move forward. The Wine Walk has been rescheduled for September 19th. John inquired about the Borough budgeting a donation to the Library in 2027, adding that Zelienople levies a specific real estate millage rate designated for the Library.

Planning Commission/Zoning Hearing Board:
Greg Such reported that Jeff Byko is heading up the Planning Commission. The Zoning Hearing Board held a variance for a family named Billinger that has a non-conforming lot on New Castle Street, they wanted to expand the house and build a garage. That request was turned down. The Zoning Hearing Board needs an alternate member.

WBCA:
Greg Such reported that the Sewer Authority issued credits for new houses, as people that were building new homes were watering to start lawns and ending up with huge sewage bills.

Storm Water Authority:
Greg Such reported that council needs to vote on the Capital Improvement Plan for Harmony Borough. The proposed project list is in Council's packet. The Storm Water Authority bylaws state that we will have a five-year plan, which then will get updated every two years. In a motion made by Dave Szakelyhidi and seconded by Don Sims, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the Capital Improvement Project List/Plan. Cath Rape inquired on the Lost Railroad Park Study, Tom Thompson commented that it is in Harmony Junction/Jackson Township, it could be something to study to see how much potential there could be to do some water control. A Resolution for the Capital Improvement Plan/Project List will be needed. In a motion made by Phyllis Metz and seconded by Don Sims, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved Resolution 2026-9-1 for the Storm Water Capital Improvement Project List/Plan. Greg Such reported that before the Southwest Communities meeting, the one that Jerry Andre has been leading with the seven or eight different communities, Brian Allen and Nick from PennDOT District 10 talked about the expansion on 79. You can expect an extra lane on I79 from Wexford up to Rt 528.

Shared Services:
Bob Leonberg reported that the last limb pick-up will be Thursday, September 10th.

Parking and Signage:
Greg Such reported the weight limit and truck route signs have been installed. Greg also reported that during the meeting with the Railroad he made it clear that there are trucks that go off the truck route and go over the bridge and there's a possibility of a failure. Frank

Parking and Signage Cont.:
Luek inquired if a permanent Thru Traffic sign could be installed at German and Main Street. Don Sims has something to discuss under Streets regarding Main Street.

Historic Harmony:
Greg Such reported that Denise Rodgers was unable to attend and submitted a report. Denise's report stated Rapp's seat is closed, Frank Luek commented that it is eroding away in front of the seat. Cath Rape and Laura Riggin are co-chairs for this year's Christmas Market.

Harmony Merchants:
Greg Such had nothing to report.

Other Meetings:
Greg Such reported the CoG Meeting will be on September 14th at 3:00PM and the Stormwater Authority Meeting will be on September 14th at 4:00PM. The Commissioners Communications Meeting will be on September 16th at 1:00PM.

Mayor Cath Rape asked to go back to the Solicitor's Report, she inquired on Mantia's property. Solicitor Matt Racunas replied that he was told Mr. Mantia was in the hospital. Matt will reach out again to Mr. Mantia's attorney.

PUBLIC COMMENT:
Robert Patinski-840 Edmond Street – Mr. Patinski inquired on the 3 minutes time limit for public comment, stating that it is not enough time. Greg Such commented that is a common standard across all council and township supervisor meetings. One of the reasons for that is that if you get 15 people, who all want to take as much time as they like to discuss something, it could turn into a filibuster. If it is a valid, well laid out argument and not being repeated over and over again, then council generally doesn't stop people from talking. Solicitor Matt commented that the 3-minute rule has been established through case law. It is because people argued under the Sunshine Act and the First Amendment, that they had a right to speak. Case law has established that because of the need to conduct orderly meetings 3 minutes was sufficient time per speaker.

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

Office:
Greg Such reported that the copier lease agreement has expired, we now own the copier and are responsible for supplies and maintenance. A new copier similar to the one we have would be $20 more a month than the last agreement. Council agreed to keep the current copier until it breaks.

Borough Director of Operations:
Bob Leonberg reported that the truck route and weight limit signs for the bridge have been put up. Bob looked at the borough building window sills, all of the windows needed to be painted but he primed the sills on the lower windows. He also replaced the stop signs at Jackson Street and at Mercer and Old Little Creek Road. Greg Such commented on the truck

Borough Director of Operations Cont.:
that knocked down the stop sign at Jackson, Greg called 911 and sent pictures over to Chief Miller and inquired if that was pursued. Chief Miller did not know. Greg commented that PennDOT says the driver can be fined $500 for being off the truck-route; adding he should have to pay for damages for the stop sign. Chief Miller inquired what Greg was citing, Greg responded something that was
written in the PennDOT sign manual. Chief Miller said they will research it; it needs to be in the vehicle code. Mayor Rape commented that the truck may have been over the weight limit for the bridge. Chief Miller commented to enforce it, you need to have a weight master and it needs to be 5 miles or less. Greg Such commented that the Borough was ordered by the P.U.C. to put the weight limit signs up, and that was part of the deficiency report on the railroad bridge. Cath Rape commented that Kennedy has a scale, Chief Miller commented that it needs to be certified and have a weight master. Don Sims commented that the truck drivers have a bill of lading. Chief Miller commented that will not work either. Cath Rape made the comment that tickets can be given for being off the truck route and asked for the police to start giving tickets. Bob Leonberg reported that council needs to vote on the leaf disposal at Lake Forrest, the cost is $2000. In a motion made by Dave Szakelyhidi and seconded by Don Sims, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the leaf disposal for $2000 at Lake Forrest. Bob also reported that the dump truck needs inspected, it will be inspected at Sapienza Service after Labor Day. Bob inquired when the LSA Grant is awarded, Tom Thompson responded usually between November to January. Tom Thompson commented that the new LSA Grant opened today, the deadline for applying is November 30th. There is a $100 application fee. In a motion made by Don Sims and seconded by Dave Szakelyhidi, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the $100 LSA Grant application fee to apply for the LSA Grant. Bob reported that he is waiting to hear back from Sureline for crosswalk and line painting. Don Sims commented to let him know and he will send out an email vote on it. Cath Rape commented to wait until next summer. Greg Such commented that isn't the worst idea.

Zoning and Codes:
Report submitted. (attached)
Greg Such reported that Mr. Thomas's shed, is legally placed, that was a concern. There's been a couple of vegetation violations sent; and Greg asked Melanie to relook at 239 Mercer Street.

Engineer:
Tom Thompson reported that he is waiting on a quote from Insight Pipe on the cost to investigate the integrity of the drain pipe on Rt 68 and Robinson's. Dave Szakelyhidi commented that it is a PennDOT drain but the Borough is responsible for. Tom reported on the RACP project, all of council received a drawing of the two options we have. The drawing on the left is an extended sidewalk area that is able to shrink the pavement down. It is more difficult for a truck to get through. There is a bump out so people can drive around and sort of protect some parking areas that can be placed in there. The drawing on the right side would be more of the conventional look now. For the sidewalk with curbing, our goal is to bid it out in multiple different ways, both designs, and have it bid out with Bluestone as the primary and brick, broom finish, and stamped as alternate bids then Council can decide what options they want. Tom Thompson reported that he did a walk through at Union Brothers and it is still pretty rutted, SET needs to restore it back to the previous condition.

Engineer Cont.:
Tom Thompson reported that Jackson Township is mobilizing and getting ready to start on the second fallout. Jackson and Centerline Boring are doing the project themselves.

Public Safety:
Phyllis Metz reported that she needs to send out the notification for the Wine Walk.

Business Development:
Cath Rape had nothing new to report.

Personnel:
Greg Such reported that the 2027 MMO for the Non-Uniformed Pension Plan amount is $22,018 and the 2027 MMO for the Non-Uniformed Money Purchase Pension Plan amount is $34,447 which is 10% of the estimated employee compensation.

Finance:
Joe Dippold had nothing new to report.

Streets:
Don Sims reported that we received a low bid from Barbish for the repair on Spring Street, because of the condition of the road Don would like to authorize the work to be performed. The amount of the bid was $24,000 which is under the bid limit of $24,500. The quote calls for a 2-ft. pipe and does not include new headwalls. In a motion made by Don Sims and seconded by Dave Szakelyhidi, the Harmony Borough Council unanimously approved the Spring Street repair by Barbish in the amount of $24,000. Bob (Leonberg) will schedule with Barbish. Greg Such reported there is a meeting scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 3rd at 8:30am with Cory Shaffer and the Railroad to discuss the Main Street bridge. Greg and Phyllis will attend; anyone is welcome to participate; the Railroad will join remote. Don Sims also reported that at the meeting with PennDOT, he talked to the chief engineer for our district, about a roundabout here. Don's e-mail chain is included in Council's packet. There was discussion about the grade, and then on that curve on a downward slope, plus the cost was estimated around six or seven million. Don doesn't think it would work and would like to table it until someone comes up with a better plan. Don also reported on barriers filled with sand or water to place along the center line on Main Street coming toward the bridge so when a trucker would decide to drive forward into the town square, the barriers would make the road look narrow and the trucker would stop and hopefully notice the Truck Route sign. The cost of two barriers is $1100. Cath Rape inquired if the Borough could ask Evans City if we could borrow them, they use them for their Pumpkin Festival. Bob Leonberg commented that those barriers maybe the County's. Greg Such inquired about HARB and aesthetics of the barriers. Chief Miller commented that HARB doesn't have authority over a traffic control device. Cath Rape is to check with Evans City.

Facilities:
Dave Szakelyhidi had nothing new to report.

Grants:
Greg Such reported that he will re-apply for the LSA Grant, and the Multimodal Grant was submitted, we should get an email back stating everything looked good or if they have any questions. The Multimodal award is in March.

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 **$11,378.09**
Payroll in the amount of **$11,707.13**
General Bills Already Paid in the amount of **$1,870.08**
Fire Tax Bills Payable in the amount of **$92.53**
Parks Board Fund Bills Payable in the amount of **$4,303.89**
Parks Board Already Paid in the amount of **$125.00**

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.

Cath Rape inquired if the Water Authority guys could empty the trash cans in town on the weekends, adding that Frank (Luek) shouldn't be doing it. The comment was made that they get emptied on Monday. The Mayor commented that by Saturday midday they are filling up. Greg commented that it shouldn't be a problem, they're almost done for the season and have already reduced their hours.

Adjourned: 8:35pm
As there was no further business to discuss, the Harmony Borough Council adjourned the September 1, 2026, In-person and Teams virtual meeting at 8:35pm. Motion to adjourn by Sylvia Wack and seconded by Don Sims.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amy Brown

Amy Brown, Recording Secretary

Zoning Report - August 2026

- It was reported to me that a shed was being constructed along the property line at 735 Spring St. I could not find any issuance of a permit in the last few years. I sent a violation notice for a non permitted shed being built along the property line. The resident reached out to me to discuss the shed. I met with him at his house. He explained that he obtained a permit last summer for the roof he built over his deck and some other work which I did see copies of. He asked the zoning officer at the time if he needed a permit to replace the shed he had along his house and was told he did not if the footprint remained the same. The shed he is replacing was a shorter shed with a longer footprint. He provided photos of the old shed showing it in the same location as the new one is being built. You can also see the old shed in overhead photos on Google Maps, it was just not very visible from the street before. He stated that the fence is not directly on the property line and is within the proper setback distance required for a garden shed. The new shed sits on the same footers and is a couple feet shorter, meeting the size requirement to classify the structure as a "garden shed". I believe everything checked out and meets all guidelines and consider the issue resolved.

- There was a complaint about overgrown vegetation at 1109 Seneca Dr in the rear of the home. The front is mowed but the fenced area in the rear is not. The property was recently foreclosed. I sent notices to the bank and former owners but I am not optimistic on achieving any results. It may need to be mowed by the borough if accessible and billed to the property.

- I sent a vegetation violation to 111 Main St. for overgrown grass.

- A resident asked whether the FEMA floodplain map was recently updated as their insurer now requires them to have flood insurance. From what I was able to discern, there have been no changes in the last few years.

- A few residents expressed concern that the garage being built at 756 Spring St. was less than 5 feet away from the property line (the setback distance granted for their approved variance). Survey markers indicate that the neighboring driveway is actually several feet over the property line. I measured from the survey markers and the garage foundation is in fact 5 feet away from the property line.

- Someone made a complaint of weeds/flowers growing over a fence and onto the sidewalk as well as a sink and construction debris laying in the yard of 239 Mercer St. When I drove by the residence the debris was neatly placed in a garbage can on the porch, along with the sink. There were a few dead flowers that had fallen towards the sidewalk but I did not see anything that I felt constituted a violation. They were clearly in the process of doing upgrades on the inside of the house and cleaning as they went. I have not seen any debris laying about the yard since.

- I received an inquiry in regards to electrical inspections and permitting. I referred them to TW McCosby.

    - Melanie Fessides