BOROUGH OF SUGARCREEK
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
October 7, 2026

I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS
Council President Alan Heller opened the meeting at 7:00 pm, welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted there will be no hurtful or harmful speech allowed.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE (American Flag)
Mayor Craig Westover led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. MOMENT OF SILENCE
A moment of silence was observed. Mayor Craig Westover concluded the Moment of Silence with a prayer.

IV. ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM
Present at the meeting were Council members Alan Heller, Bogan Goughler, Larry Baughman, Matthew Carlson, John McClelland, and Mayor Craig Westover. Also, present were Maintenance Foreman Doug Freer and Attorney Brian Spaid.

V. DISTRIBUTION OF AGENDA

VI. COUNCIL CHANGES TO AGENDA
A. Motion by Alan Heller, being duly seconded by John McClelland to move Item VIII. Volunteer Fire Department(s) before Item VII. Public Participation. Motion carried unanimously.

VII. VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT(S)
A. Dan Marvin, Reno V.F.D., updated Council that the department has responded to 11 calls since the last Council meeting and 135 calls for the year. Mr. Marvin said they are continuing trainings. On Sunday, October 11, 2026, there will be a public dinner from 11:30 AM –1:00 PM. There will also be a flea market held that day, in the field across from the Social Hall. Mr. Marvin said they will be having a Halloween Party for the children at the Reno V.F.D. Social Hall and will be out and visible on Halloween. There will be updates for it on the department's Facebook page. He also reported the department was able to use fire prevention money to purchase a fire extinguisher demonstrator.

B. Jake Hellem, Rocky Grove V.F.D., reported the department responded to 24 calls in August and 198 calls year – to – date. They currently have one member in the EMT class at Vo – Tech. Bingo is held every Thursday and there will be an auction held on Sunday, Oct. 11, 2026. On Oct. 17, 2026, there will be a class held for all the County Fire Departments. There is also a Coin Show scheduled for Oct. 18, 2026 and Ladies' Night held with Polk V.F.D. will be Oct. 24, 2026. Mr. Hellem also presented Council with a request to close off Fox Street between Shuffstall Street and Front Street on Halloween night, due to foot traffic. He said there will be Fire Police at each end of the closure.

VIII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (*limited to 3 minutes each)*
A. Scott Kennedy requested members of Council to put their phones away while members of the public are speaking. Mr. Kennedy stated the Borough had a police department before Council and Jim Speth decimated it. And all but one member of Council voted in favor of accepting Bob Wenner's resignation as Chief. Mr. Kennedy asked Mr. McClelland why he accepted Mr. Wenner's resignation with regret; was he given no choice or simply voting with the rest of the "good old boys." He commended Mr. Carlson for voting no. Mr. Kennedy said it is a shame to protect one person in a higher position, than speak out against him and hold him accountable. He continued that Mr. Wenner had the respect and trust of the public and the schools and he was replaced with someone who does not know the people or the schools. He also said there are two (2) liabilities on the payroll for the Police Department – Officer McIntyre and Officer Goldsmith. Mr. Kennedy stated Officer McIntyre has a domestic violence allegation on his record and a PFA against him. He expressed concerns over excessive use of force being used and resulting in serious injury or someone being killed, such as George Floyd in Minnesota. Mr. Kennedy said Officer Goldsmith, in his experience, is a cop who takes the law into his own hands. He recalled a personal experience he had with Officer Goldsmith when he lived in the Evergreen Arbors and his apartment was broken into. He felt that Officer Goldsmith did NOT take his concerns seriously and was told by Officer Goldsmith that he lives in a druggie area, what did he expect. He said he expected him to do his damn job. Mr. Kennedy said with

everything going on with this police force, Council now finds themselves facing a lawsuit involving five (5) former police officers, who were good men, who built trust within this community. He said it is all because one man could not handle being held accountable for getting a DUI. He stated this Council needs to stop thinking as one unified block and start doing what is actually right. Mr. Kennedy said the Council needs to fire James Speth as Borough Manager and make it clear that he should no longer serve this Borough. The Council needs to make a motion and think for themselves and not as one, but as individuals who were elected to represent the people of this community. Mr. Kennedy said this bulls**t would not have happened if Mr. Speth had manned up and taken his punishment.

B. Christy Jakubowski asked for an update on the traffic light along Rocky Grove Avenue, in front of the high school. The mayor said he will give an update in the Police report. Ms. Jakubowski said she does not want Officer McIntyre as an officer with the Borough. She stated she saw the video related to an incident in Cochranton or Cooperstown and she saw what happened. She continued that if her or her family has an interaction with him, she will do everything in her power to have his butt put in jail.

C. Bridget Baker asked Mr. Heller what he has done for the past two (2) months, since she was unable to attend last month's meeting. Mr. Heller reminded Ms. Baker this is her time to speak. She said it's a simple question. She then asked his what the color of his shirt is. Ms. Baker asked the mayor, according to the video she saw he stated the Chief was in the station working on a special project for the mayor. She questioned the mayor that during his prayer, he calls for transparency, then what is the special project the Chief is working on and not out patrolling. The mayor said it will be addressed later on in the meeting and he will not release confidential information during a public meeting. She feels this could be something the mayor himself handles. Ms. Baker asked the mayor what he does all day. The mayor says he works here at the building or at the ORA soliciting for growth in the Borough, especially along Rt. 8. And if anyone has questions or concerns, they are more than welcome to make an appointment with himself, the manager, the chief, etc. Ms. Baker said that was enough of that. Ms. Baker then asked him about the data center ordinance and was the Borough getting a data center. The mayor said the planning commission is working on an ordinance relating to data ordinance. Mr. Speth said they have met and there has been discussion, but no further information is available. Mr. Spaid said they are working on putting together restrictions on data centers. Ms. Baker asked when the answers are figured out, will the public know. Mr. Spaid said when the ordinance is done and ready to be presented to the Council, there will be a public meeting and the Council can then decide to vote for or reject the ordinance. Mayor Westover asked Mr. Carlson if he had any knowledge of anyone interested in developing a data center, since he was the one who first brought it to the Council's attention. Mr. Carlson questioned if the mayor was talking about data centers and he said the Borough needs to keep them out.

D. Chrissy Fox stated she was happy with the former police force and is not sure what all is currently going on. She also questioned when Nesbit Street would be paved. Mr. Freer said it will be done, but they are currently addressing the heavier traveled roads and are trying to keep up with them. She also presented concerns about the house at 215 Parker Avenue. Mr. Speth said he would pass it on to the Zoning Officer.

E. Terri Lowry stated she was reviewing the agenda and questioned if she missed a Civil Service Commission meeting since there was a motion to hire Officer Paxton and Officer McIntyre as full – time officers. And the Civil Service Commission would have to recommend that to the Council. She stated it has been done that way for over the 20 years she has served on the commission. Mayor Westover said she should refer her question to Attorney Winkler. She then questioned if they are following the Civil Service Commission Rules & Regulations. She stated she was also not involved in the testing, nor was she offered to help or told anything about it. She also asked if a certified letter was received from the Civil Service to the Council. The mayor referred her to the Civil Service Solicitor, Attorney Winkler. She stated she is going to challenge that and does not feel it is done correctly.

VIX. STAFF REPORTS

A. Maintenance Foreman:

1. Mr. Freer updated Council that the paving on Maple, Park & Prospect Streets has been completed. He said this is the first time the Borough has used Protech and he is very pleased with the work they did. The final round of boom mowing has been completed for the season. He also informed Council that they were awarded the 2025 LSA grant for the F600 dump truck, in the amount of $100,000 and the Borough would be responsible for the approximate $38,000 outstanding balance. Mr. Freer also reported

that he spoke with Mr. Speth and they will be submitting an application for a new water and sewer truck in the next round of LSA grants. He stated he will have more information at the November Council meeting. Mr. Carlson said that truck doesn't have that much wear and tear on it. Mr. Freer said it is a 2014 truck, with a 19 year – old crane on it.

B. Police Chief:

1. Motion by Larry Baughman, being duly seconded by Matthew Carlson to approve taser instructor training through Axon for Officer Wes Paxton, November 5 & 6, 2026, at a cost of $860.00. Motion carried unanimously.
2. Motion by Bogan Goughler, being duly seconded by Matthew Carlson to approve Officers Wes Paxton and Tony McIntyre as regular full – time officers. Motion carried unanimously.
3. Motion by Larry Baughman, being duly seconded by John McClelland to approve the purchase of Bit Defender Security Software for the Police station's computers, at an annual cost of $900.00. Motion carried unanimously.
4. Motion by Larry Baughman, being duly seconded by Alan Heller to approve entering into a Memorandum of Understanding between the Borough of Sugarcreek and the Sugarcreek Borough Police Association which shall modify certain terms of the Contract Agreement between the Borough and the Association dated January 8, 2025. Motion carried unanimously.
5. Mayor Westover presented Council with the department's report. He stated the officers are at the Touch – a – Truck event at the fire department. They will also be present at the homecoming parade and bonfire. He said there will be volunteers at the station to hand out candy on Halloween, during trick – or- treat hours, while the officers are out patrolling. In regards to the crosswalk light at the high school, Mayor Westover said he spoke with the Valley Grove Superintendent and informed her of Ms. Jakubowski's request and she planned to attend an upcoming school board meeting. The mayor said the department has been continuing to monitor speed within the Borough and the school zones. He said the department is at 67% of the budget for the year, as of September. He also stated that himself, the Chief and the Borough Manager are continuing to have budget talks and the mayor believes the department would need a budget of $511,000 to expand coverage. He said Council's priorities are to balance the budget, see how much it will cost and how much are the taxpayers willing to pay for the police department. The mayor said he is inviting the taxpayers' input on this decision as well; he wants to hear from the silent majority. He said they can contact him or their Council member. Ms. Lowry questioned the mayor if the Chief will be a working Chief. Mayor Westover said that is what he is doing now and he is the backup to the officers. Ms. Lowry said he had previously stated the Chief is working 32 hours in the office. The mayor said he is working hard and putting in long hours. Ms. Lowry asked if he would require the Chief to be a working chief like the former police chiefs. The mayor was questioned if there have been any new applicants or have they been actively recruiting lately. He said there is a new class graduating in December from the academy and the department has joined the consortium with Mercyhurst University Police Academy. Mr. Kennedy asked the mayor if the Borough will be hiring officers without violent backgrounds. The mayor corrected Mr. Kennedy by saying anyone working within the State of Pennsylvania has to go through the State Police background check and MOPECT and the criteria has to be clear to get a certification number. Therefore, the mayor said you cannot hire someone without a number or not qualified through that system. A member of the audience said that Officer McIntyre has a PFA against him. The mayor said he cannot comment on personnel, but if there was anything in his background that would disqualify him from being an officer, he would not be able to be certified through the background systems. The audience member said in Sugarcreek Borough, abusers are good.

C. Administrator/Special Projects:

1. Mr. Speth presented Council with the proposed 2027 budget for their review.
2. Motion by John McClelland, being duly seconded by Larry Baughman to approve the purchase of a 6' composite bench from Alluring Timber at a cost not to exceed $700.00. Motion carried unanimously.
   a. Mr. Carlson asked who would be installing the bench. Mr. McCelland said it is being made in Corry and the Maintenance Dept. will install it.

3. Motion by John McClelland, being duly seconded by Matthew Carlson to approve the purchase of a cement pad for the bench from Franklin Concrete, at an approximate cost of $517.00. Motion carried unanimously.
4. Motion by Bogan Goughler, being duly seconded by Larry Baughman to approve contracting with Changing Time Phone Service, with a cost of $1,425.79 down and $308.98/month. Motion carried unanimously.
   a. Mr. Speth wanted to inform the Council the Borough had received notice that Verizon will be discontinuing their phone service. Mr. Baughman asked if he had looked into Verizon's wireless package. Mr. Speth said they did look into Verizon Wireless, but Changing Times was still the better option for the Borough's service.
5. Motion by Alan Heller, being duly seconded by Matthew Carlson to approve Resolution No. 3 of 2026, which renames the Sugarcreek Bridge (Buttermilk Hill Road Bridge) as the "Charlie McDaniel Memorial Bridge". Motion carried unanimously.

D. Zoning Officer:
   1. No report.

E. Solicitor:
   1. No report.

X. COUNCIL REPORT

A. Alan Heller said he and Mr. Carlson has been in discussion with the County in regards to renaming the bridge in honor of Charlie McDaniel and things are moving along, with more work to be done. Mr. Heller hopes to have the ceremony within the next month or so. Mr. Baughman asked for clarification that it is the Buttermilk Hill Road Bridge. Mr. Spaid said he took that from the resolution that the County Commissioners adopted.

XI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Motion by Larry Baughman, being duly seconded by Bogan Goughler to approve the minutes of the September 2, 2026 Council meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

XII. FINANCIAL REPORTS

A. Motion by Bogan Goughler, being duly seconded by John McClelland to approve the payment of bills/issuance of checks as presented by the Treasurer. Motion carried unanimously.

XIII. OLD BUSINESS

XIV. NEW BUSINESS

XV. CORRESPONDENCE

XVI. BOARD OF APPEALS

XVII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Council recessed at 8:01 pm for an executive session to discuss personnel and legal issues which, if conducted in public, would violate a lawful privilege of information or confidentiality protected by the law and any action to follow. The meeting was reconvened at 10:04 pm.

XVIII. NEW BUSINESS CON'T.

A. Mr. Spaid spoke on the newspaper article that was in the paper in regards to voters voting in the wrong district. He said the Borough has not reapportioned their wards in several years. He said that is something that could be done at a later time if they chose to, but it is very time consuming and not an easy task.

XIX. ADJOURNMENT

A. Motion by Bogan Goughler being duly seconded by Alan Heller to adjourn the meeting at 10:08 PM. Motion carried unanimously.

Jim Speth, Borough Manager

Alan Heller, Council President