

BOROUGH OF SUGARCREEK COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

November 5, 2025

NOTE: A public hearing was held prior to the regular Council meeting. The purpose of the hearing was to consider an application from Arrowhead Holdings, LLC who were seeking an extension for the Conditional Use approved on Nov. 4, 2020, in the form of Mineral Excavating for the property located at US 322, Franklin, PA, Map #: 28 – 003 – 021A.

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.

A. Council Member Larry Baughman requested to have this evening's Council Meeting dedicated to former Council Member Robert Resinger, who recently passed away.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE (American Flag)

Council President Heller led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. MOMENT OF SILENCE

A moment of silence was observed.

IV. ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM

Present at the meeting were Council members Alan Heller, John McClelland, Bogan Goughler, Larry Baughman, Howard Barger, and Mayor Matthew Carlson. Also, present were Maintenance Foreman Doug Freer, Chief Robert Wenner, James Speth, Attorneys Brian Spaid and Alex Spaid.

V. DISTRIBUTION OF AGENDA

VI. COUNCIL CHANGES TO AGENDA

A. Mayor Matthew Carlson presented Valley Grove School District Crossing Guard, Lori McCool, with a resolution from the Borough Council recognizing her for her twenty – six (26) years of services to the local students.

VII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (*limited to 3 minutes each*)

A. Dan Marvin, Reno V.F.D., updated Council that the department has responded to 156 calls year – to – date and 16 calls since the last meeting. Mr. Marvin also said the department had applied for two (2) State grants for both the EMS and Fire sides. The public dinner will be Sunday, Nov. 9, 2025. He also said he is working on getting a list together for Council, for next year's contribution from the Borough.

B. Jeremy Rankin, Rocky Grove V.F.D., wanted to inform Council that the Buttermilk Hill Tower has been deemed unfixable, due to a lack of maintenance over the years, according to the EMA Coordinator. Mr. Rankin said he is not aware of what the County Commissioners are planning to do. Mayor Carlson said 911 was to be installing a new tower on 15th Street Hill. Mr. Marvin said the Buttermilk Hill Tower is still owned by the 98.5 radio station and leased by the County. And the Commissioners are currently looking into options to repair it. Also, there has been no discussion about placing another tower on 15th Street Hill.

VIII. STAFF REPORTS

A. Maintenance Foreman:

1. Motion by Bogan Goughler, being duly seconded by John McClelland to approve entering into a Memorandum of Understanding between the Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry & Tourism and the Borough of Sugarcreek for Grantsmanship and for the purchase of a 2026 Ford F600 4x4 Truck. Motion carried unanimously.
2. Motion by Larry Baughman, being duly seconded by Alan Heller to approve the purchase of a 22KW Generac Generator, as budgeted, at a cost of \$12,800. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Police Chief:

1. Chief Wenner informed Council that when he contacted the dealership about purchasing the new cruiser, the salesman told Chief he forgot to include the 7% holding fee that would be applied because the Borough will not be taking possession of the vehicle right away. It amounted to an additional \$750.00. Chief said he also went with a different cage for inside the vehicle, which was approximately \$200.00 less than the original cage he had chosen. Mr. Heller asked if the dealership was willing to waive that fee. Chief said the salesman was, but the finance department would not. Mr. Heller

asked if there would be a fee if Chief waited to order the car. Chief said the process would have to start over and the vehicle may be sold by then.

2. Motion by John McClelland, being duly seconded by Larry Baughman to approve the purchase of a 2025 Ford Police Explorer from Jim Shorkey Auto Group, at a cost of \$61,454.00, to replace Car #3, out of the 2026 budget. Motion carried unanimously.
3. Chief also updated Council that he has been working on gathering letters of support and speaking with Deb Sobina, from the ORA, for the grant he has been working on for another cruiser.

C. Administrator/Special Projects:

1. Motion by Bogan Goughler, being duly seconded by Alan Heller to approve Resolution No. 5 of 2025, which states the Sugar creek Borough Police Department will contribute zero percent (0%) to their pension fund, beginning January 1, 2026. Motion carried unanimously.
2. Motion by Larry Baughman, being duly seconded by Bogan Goughler to approve and advertise the 2026 Council meetings to be held at 7:00 PM on the 1st Wednesday of each month and Planning Commission meetings to be held at 6:00 PM on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month. The Reorganization Meeting will be held on Monday, January 5, 2026 at 6:00 PM. Motion carried unanimously.
3. Motion by Larry Baughman, being duly seconded by Bogan Goughler to approve and advertise the proposed 2026 Budget and that it is available for public inspection and to advertise Ordinance No. 305 of 2025, which fixes expenditures for Fiscal Year 2026 at \$3,472,019.00 with a tax rate of 6.0 mills and a tax rate of 0.55 cents on each front foot assessment for street lights in Rocky Grove and Reno. The 2026 Budget reflects the 9th year with no tax increase. Motion carried unanimously.
4. Mr. Sporer informed Council that he will be presenting Council with water and sewer rate increases, at the December meeting. He said he has tried to hold off as long as he could without raising the rates. All of the sewer systems, which include Rocky Grove, Rt. 417 and Sugar creek Village will have their rates raised to \$55.00/month. Mr. Sporer said Rt. 417 sewer has not had an increase since the system was installed. He also said that system is not out of debt yet; there is still approximately \$2.5 million still owed on it. The Rt. 417 water rates will increase from \$72.00/month base rate to \$75.00/month base rate. Mr. Sporer said the General Authority has increased their rates and the Borough has to increase their rates as well. Mr. Sporer said he will advertise and present the ordinances at the next Council meeting. The new rates will go into effect in January 2026, but will not be reflected until the bills are received in February 2026. Mr. McClelland asked what the current rates are for the Sugar creek Village sewer customers. Mr. Sporer said it is currently \$42.00. Mr. McClelland asked if it can be reconsidered due to the fact that the water system is in a current state of limbo with the switch from BP Rhodes to Aqua. Mr. Sporer said he respects Mr. McClelland's concerns, but himself and Mr. Speth have repeatedly reviewed the numbers and the increases. He also stated the Borough's rates are still lower than the City of Franklin's rates. Mr. Sporer also said when the sewer system was installed in Sugar creek Village, there was no agreement made to allow the Borough to shut off water services for non – payment on the sewer services. Mr. Sporer said there are residents with sewer bills that are several thousand dollars in arrears. And there is currently a total of over \$20,000 - \$25,000 owed for non – payment and this system is currently operating in the negative. Aqua will not establish an agreement with the Borough to allow the Borough to shut off water services for non – payment either. Mr. Sporer said it will likely take two (2) years to see the full effect of the rate increases. He said he knows prices of everything continue to increase, but he reminded Council that there has not been rate increase on the Sugar creek Village Sewer System for 7 – 8 years and no increase on the Rt. 417 sewer system.

D. Zoning Officer:

1. No report.

E. Solicitor:

1. No report.

IX. COUNCIL REPORT

- A. Larry Baughman wanted to congratulate those Council Members that were re – elected to Sugar creek Borough Council.

X. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. Motion by Bogan Goughler, being duly seconded by Larry Baughman to approve the minutes of the October 1, 2025 Council meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

XI. FINANCIAL REPORTS

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

XII. OLD BUSINESS

XIII. NEW BUSINESS

XIV. CORRESPONDENCE

XV. BOARD OF APPEALS

XVI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Council recessed at 7:30 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 7:47 pm.

XVII. NEW BUSINESS CON'T.

- A. Motion by Bogan Goughler, being duly seconded by Larry Baughman to approve the retention agreement for Joseph M. Sporer. Motion carried unanimously.
- B. Motion by Larry Baughman, being duly seconded by Alan Heller to approve the real estate transfer from Joseph M. Sporer to Sugarcreek Borough. Motion carried unanimously.

XVIII. ADJOURNMENT

- A. Motion by Bogan Goughler being duly seconded by Howard Barger to adjourn the meeting at 7:49 PM. Motion carried unanimously.

Joseph M. Sporer, Borough Manager

Alan Heller, Council President