

BOROUGH OF SUGARCREEK COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

December 3, 2025

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. Mr. Heller noted the meeting would be recorded by the newspaper reporter in attendance.

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. Mr. Spaid said a motion will need to be placed on the agenda, after Executive Session, to approve or deny the Schiffer Excavating Conditional Use application. Mr. Spaid said there will be discussion in Executive Session on it.

VII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (limited to 3 minutes each)

- A. Dan Marvin, Reno V.F.D., updated Council on the year – to – date fire calls for the department. Reno V.F.D. has had 179 calls year – to – date and 13 calls since the last Council meeting. Mr. Marvin also wanted to inform Council and the public that Reno V.F.D.'s next dinner will be Sunday, Dec. 7, 2025, from 11:30 am – 1:00 pm. Also, on Dec. 13, 2025, at 1:30 pm, the department will have their Annual Santa Run with Santa on a firetruck going throughout Reno and ending at the Social Hall. Mr. Marvin also presented Council with a letter requesting their annual funding for next year. Mr. Marvin said the funds will be used for updating equipment.
- B. Terri Lowry questioned why there was a motion on the agenda to vacate the seats of each member of the Civil Service Commission. Mr. Spaid said he was informed by Mr. Sporer that members of both the Zoning Hearing Board and the Civil Service Commission had not been reappointed in a timely manner. He said all of the terms of the members of the Civil Service Commission had expired, as well as the members of the Zoning Hearing Board and the Planning Commission. Mr. Spaid said he advised Council to declare the seats of the Civil Service Commission vacant, as of December 31, 2025 and the same for the Zoning Hearing Board. At the Reorganization Meeting scheduled for January 5, 2026, three (3) members, new or current, could be appointed to the seats. But the terms will be staggered; one for six (6) years, one for four (4) years and one for two (2) years. As far as the Zoning Hearing Board seats, those are three (3) year appointments. Mr. Spaid recommended appointing those members to a three (3) year term, a two (2) year term and a one (1) year term. Mr. Spaid said the Planning Commission seats are four (4) year terms or until a successor is appointed. He did not feel it was appropriate to vacate all of the seats on the Planning Commission. But that commission does need to get back on a cycle as well. Ms. Lowry said she is not concerned with the Planning Commission and that the Civil Service Commission is separate from the Borough. She questioned how the Borough Council can vacate the seats. Mr. Spaid said the Borough Council has always appointed the Civil Service Commission. And vacating the seats was the best way to set the new terms. Ms. Lowry stated she does not believe the Borough has the authority to do that. She questioned Mr. Spaid if he is acting as the Borough Council or the Civil Service Commission. She stated she believes the Council does not have the authority over the Civil Service Commission and that they are two (2) different entities. Mr. Spaid said he does not understand what Ms. Lowry is trying to say. Ms. Lowry asked who will be responsible for appointing the seats. Mr. Spaid said it is Council's responsibility.
- C. Laura Snow wanted to wish everyone a "Happy Holidays" and thank them for their service. Ms. Snow also stated she wished more houses were cleaned up in the neighborhood. She stated she has a neighbor who uses their front porch as a storage shed. And when she asked her

neighbors why they were not reporting the concerns or issues, they told her they felt it was not their duty. Ms. Snow said she was aware of programs available to those low-income households to help with homes in disrepair. Ms. Snow also said they received concerns about drug problems and speeding in their neighborhood. She also asked about looking into a sidewalk along Front Street so she and her neighbors could bike between Rocky Grove and the Bike Trail.

VIII. STAFF REPORTS

A. Maintenance Foreman:

1. Mr. Freer said the Maintenance Department has completed getting everything ready for winter weather. Mr. Freer requested a motion to purchase the 2026 Ford F600 4 x 4 Truck that is being applied for through the LSA grant, in the event that the grant is not awarded to the Borough. Mr. Freer said the truck will not be available for two (2) years. The total purchase price for the truck is \$137,688.00. The cab and chassis cost is \$65,788.00 and the upfitting of the bed, plow, hydraulics and spreader through Stephenson Equipment is \$71,900.00. Mr. Heller said he spoke with Mr. Freer about any other options and he agrees with Mr. Freer's recommendation. Mr. McClelland asked if anything off of the truck being replaced can be salvaged. Mr. Freer said this new truck will replace one of the 2009 trucks, whichever is in worse shape at the time the Borough receives the new truck. And the equipment off of the 2009 truck is not in usable condition. Mr. Baughman asked for clarification on the motion and the grant; he asked if the truck will be purchased by the Borough if the grant is not awarded. Mr. Freer and Mr. Sporer confirmed that it will be purchased even if the grant is not awarded. The Borough applied for the grant and they will not know anything on the grant until next year. And the truck was included in the 2026 budget. Mr. Baughman also asked if the Borough is awarded the grant, will the funds set aside for the truck remain in the budget. Mr. Sporer confirmed it will remain in the budget.
2. Motion by Bogan Goughler, being duly seconded by Alan Heller to approve the purchase of a 2026 Ford F600 4 x 4 Truck, at a cost of \$137,688.00. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Police Chief:

1. Chief Wenner updated Council on the status of the vest grant reimbursement. Chief said with the federal government shut down in Oct. – Nov., that froze the reimbursement. He stated with the government back open; the reimbursement is now pending. Chief said he will update Council once it is approved. He also updated Council on the status of the new cruiser. He said it has been ordered, is currently being upfitted and should be ready by January. Mr. Heller asked if the new cruiser will be marked. Chief said it would be marked. Mr. McClelland asked what was able to be used and removed from Car #3. Chief said they were able to use the radio, computers, among other pieces of equipment. He said the gun rack will not be able to be used because the new cage is one piece which includes the gun rack. He said the rest of what was in the car, the insurance company wanted left in the vehicle. And the cage that is in Car #3 will not fit the new cruiser. Chief also reported that the department averaged 900 patrol miles weekly, with 160 hours. Chief said they have been meeting the 160 hours between the full – time officers and part – time officers stepping up. Chief also stated he has items for Executive Session. The department has also been busy with a lot of investigations, assaults, thefts, forgeries, and child abuse cases, as well as other everyday stuff they deal with, with the drugs.

C. Administrator/Special Projects:

1. Mr. Sporer reminded Council about the Reorganization Meeting scheduled for Mon., Jan. 5, 2026, at 6:00 PM. Mr. Sporer also explained the new water and sewer rates. He said all the residential sewer rates will be adjusted to \$55.00/month. The new base rate for the Rt. 417 water system will increase from \$72.00 to \$75.00/month. The Rt.8 water and sewer systems are metered and have been adjusted accordingly. Mr. Sporer said he has not received any calls yet on the new rates. He said he anticipates more calls once the bills go out in February 2026, for January's usages. Mr. Heller asked if the City of Franklin raised the rates to the Borough. Mr. Sporer said they did in fact raise rates to the Borough and the City of Franklin is raising both their water and sewer rates as well.
2. Motion by Larry Baughman, being duly seconded by Alan Heller to declare the seats of each member of the Civil Service Commission vacant effective December 31, 2025. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Motion by Larry Baughman, being duly seconded by Bogan Goughler to declare the seats of each member of the Zoning Hearing Board vacant effective December 31, 2025. Motion carried unanimously.
 4. Mr. Spaid said the Council will need to decide how they want to go about filling the seats. He said the Council could solicit letters of interest for the Civil Service Commission and the Zoning Hearing Board. As far as the Planning Commission, Mr. Spaid said those members could be reappointed at once and stagger their terms, if they wished to be reappointed. Mr. McClelland wanted to offer the incumbents first chance at being reappointed. Mayor Carlson agreed. Mr. Heller said he would like to see letters of interest. Mr. Goughler and Mr. Baughman agreed with Mr. Heller. Mr. Spaid said the incumbents could also submit letters of interest, along with anyone else in the Borough. He said the Borough could set the deadline for accepting letter until 4:00 pm, Mon., Dec. 29, 2025. He said that way the Council would have time to review the letters and he would like to see the seats, including the Planning Commission, reappointed at the Reorganization Meeting. Mr. Baughman suggested notifying the current members of the vacancies. Mr. Spaid said the Borough could vote to advertise soliciting for letters. The newspaper reporter said he will include this in his story from the Council meeting. Mr. Spaid said it could be placed on the Borough's website as well.
 5. Motion by Bogan Goughler, being duly seconded by John McClelland to adopt Ordinance No. 305 of 2025, which fixes the 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. Motion carried unanimously.
 6. Motion by Bogan Goughler, being duly seconded by Larry Baughman to adopt Ordinance No. 306 of 2025, which modifies the schedule of subscription rates charged for the furnishing of water services to the subscribers of the Route 417 and Route 8 Water Systems. Motion carried unanimously.
 7. Motion by Larry Baughman, being duly seconded by John McClelland to adopt Ordinance No. 307 of 2025, which modifies the schedule of subscription rates charged for the furnishing of sewer services to the subscribers of the Route 417 Sanitary Sewer System. Motion carried unanimously.
 8. Motion by Bogan Goughler, being duly seconded by Larry Baughman to adopt Ordinance No. 308 of 2025, which modifies the schedule of subscription rates charged for the furnishing of sewer services to the subscribers of the Rocky Grove Sanitary Sewer System. Motion carried unanimously.
 9. Motion by Larry Baughman, being duly seconded by Bogan Goughler to adopt Ordinance No. 309 of 2025, which modifies the schedule of subscription rates charged for the furnishing of sewer services to the subscribers of the Sugarcreek Sanitary Sewer System. A roll call was taken. Mr. Barger, Mr. Goughler, Mr. Heller and Mr. Baughman voted in favor of the motion. Mr. McClelland opposed the motion. Motion carried.
 10. Motion by Alan Heller, being duly seconded by Bogan Goughler to solicit letters of interest for the Civil Service Commission, Zoning Hearing Board and Planning Commission, no later than 4:00 pm, Mon., Dec. 29, 2025. Motion carried unanimously.
 11. Mr. Sporer wanted to take the time to thank Mr. Barger, Mr. Goughler, Mr. Heller, Mr. McClelland, and Mr. Baughman for working with him and having the faith in him over his 15 – year tenure as Borough Manager. He also thanked Mr. Speth for taking the reigns as the next manager. Mr. Sporer also thanked Mr. Freer and said he has been the best Maintenance Foreman he has worked with. Lastly, he thanked Mr. Spaid for his support over the years. He said he looks forward to coming back to the meetings as part of the public. Mr. Baughman thanked Mr. Sporer for digging the Borough out of the hole they were in when he was first elected to Council. Mr. Sporer thanked Council for allowing him to do that.
- D. Zoning Officer:
1. No report.
- E. Solicitor:
1. Mr. Spaid said over the years and with the previous Borough Administrators, they had needed a lot of help with the law and other things, he said it has been refreshing working with Mr. Sporer. He thanked Mr. Sporer for the job he has done.

IX. COUNCIL REPORT

- A. Alan Heller thanked Mr. Sporer once again. He also thanked Mr. Barger for stepping in once again on Council. Mr. Heller also wanted to let the public know that when Santa Claus leaves Reno, he will be heading to Rocky Grove, at 4:00pm on the same day. He said there will be a couple of stops, including at Miller – Sibley and then ending at the elementary school for cookies. Mr. Heller wished everyone a Merry Christmas and thanked the Council and Borough employees for a great year.

X. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. Motion by Larry Baughman, being duly seconded by Alan Heller to approve the minutes of the November 5, 2025 Public Hearing and the November 5, 2025 Council meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

XI. FINANCIAL REPORTS

- A. Motion by Bogan Goughler, being duly seconded by Alan Heller 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 7:44 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 9:02 pm.

XVII. NEW BUSINESS CON'T.

- A. Motion by Bogan Goughler, being duly seconded by John McClelland to appoint James Speth Borough Manager, effective Jan. 1, 2026, at a salary of \$56,500. Motion carried unanimously.
- B. Motion by Larry Baughman, being duly seconded by Bogan Goughler to approve the Conditional Use application decision for Schiffer Excavating, with the amendment to be made. Motion carried unanimously.

XVIII. ADJOURNMENT

- A. Motion by Howard Beger being duly seconded by Alan Heller to adjourn the meeting at 9:03 PM. Motion carried unanimously.

Joseph M. Sporer, Borough Manager

Alan Heller, Council President