

**BOROUGH OF SUGARCREEK  
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

December 7, 2022

**I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Council President James Speth 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)**

Council President Speth 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 Larry Baughman, Alan Heller, Bogan Goughler, Matthew Carlson and James Speth. Mayor Charles McDaniel was excused. Also, present was Maintenance Foreman Doug Freer and Attorney Brian Spaid.

**V. DISTRIBUTION OF AGENDA**

**VI. COUNCIL CHANGES TO AGENDA**

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

- A. John McClelland wanted to wish everyone a Merry Christmas.
- B. Kevin Rhodes, Venango Water Co., wanted to bring a water line concern to Council's attention. The water line is located under a foot bridge, on Transit Street, in Reno. The Borough installed the foot bridge in 1996, following a flood. When the work was done, it exposed the water line and the culvert was not replaced. Mr. Rhodes' concern is that the foot bridge has been settling and sinking, which may result in damaging and/or rupturing the water line, therefore disrupting water service and fire protection to the water customers in Reno. Mr. Baughman asked if the residential water service would be disrupted. Mr. Rhodes said there is a smaller water line also running to Reno, which could supply some water to residential water customers, but would not be sufficient for fire protection. Mr. Rhodes also said if the water line is damaged, he estimates the repair time to be 2 – 3 days. Mr. Spaid asked Mr. Rhodes for clarification on what he is asking of the Council. Mr. Rhodes said he is asking the Borough to repair the work they did when the foot bridge was installed. Mr. Spaid also asked Mr. Rhodes if he has an estimate of time before a failure happens. Mr. Rhodes said it keeps him up at night. Mr. Spaid said the Council needs a more specific answer. Mr. Rhodes said he is surprised it hasn't happened yet. Mr. Spaid asked him how long it has been in the current condition. Mr. Rhodes said since around April 2021, possibly 2020. Mr. Baughman asked him what his remedy to the problem would be. Mr. Rhodes said he does not have a plan and it may take an engineer to solve it. Mr. Carlson asked how the water is running under the foot bridge. Mr. Rhodes said about 3 foot deep with heavy rains. Mr. Speth asked for the location of the foot bridge since he is not familiar with where Transit Street is located. Mr. Goughler said it is behind Kulinsky Dental. Mr. Baughman asked if people use the foot bridge. Mr. Goughler said a few people use it.
- C. Jodi Freni presented Council with a complaint about the Police Department. He said his wife was pulled over the week of Thanksgiving, with his 9 – year old daughter in the car. He said the issue is not with the fact she was pulled over, but what was said by the officer. Mr. Freni said his wife has a concealed weapons permit and had a gun in her purse, which was located in the vehicle. When his wife informed the officer of this, his wife told Mr. Freni the officer said "What are you going to do? Shoot me?" This statement upset Mr. Freni's wife and daughter. Mr. Freni said he has been in contact with the Borough Manager, Council President, Mayor, Chief Wenner and Sheriff Foy in regards to this issue. Mr. Freni said he does not feel the Mayor and Chief responded appropriately to his concern. The Mayor told Mr. Freni he may file a citizen complaint, but he will take care of the issue. Mr. Spaid said he was aware of the complaint and was planning on addressing the issue with Council in Executive Session, due to the fact that it is a personnel issue. Mr. Spaid asked Mr. Freni if he would like to add anymore to the complaint, since it will be discussed later on. Mr. Freni said he has not seen officers in his neighborhood prior to this incident/complaint and now they have driven by 11 times in one afternoon. Mr. Freni

also asked Council to put themselves in his shoes. And to consider if the roles were reversed in regards to the comment that was made to his wife by the officer.

**VIII. STAFF REPORTS**

- A. Maintenance Foreman:
  - 1. Mr. Freer updated Council on the new employee for the Maintenance Dept and that things have been going well. He also wanted Council to start thinking about and discussing ordering a new truck. Currently, the wait time for new trucks is approximately two years. But he wanted to be proactive and begin the discussion now. Mr. Carlson asked if it will be in the budget. Mr. Sporer said it will be for 2024.
- B. Police Chief:
  - 1. No report.
- C. Administrator/Special Projects:
  - 1. Mr. Sporer presented Council with copies of the Reno V.F.D.'s audit. Mr. Sporer also updated on the status of the house that was located at 103 Second Street, Reno. The house was purchased thru the Venango County Land Bank, for the Borough in May 2022. The house has since been demolished and the lot is now ready for sale.
  - 2. Motion by Bogan Goughler, being duly seconded by James Speth to approve Resolution No. 4 of 2022, which implements Act 57 of 2022, Property Tax Penalty Waiver Provisions. Motion carried unanimously.
  - 3. Motion by Bogan Goughler, being duly seconded by Matt Carlson to adopt Ordinance No. 299 of 2022, which fixes expenditures for Fiscal Year 2023 at \$3,538,401.00 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.
- D. Zoning Officer:
  - 1. No report.
- E. Solicitor:
  - 1. Mr. Spaid gave Council copies of a proposed fireworks ordinance. He asked Council to read it over, ask any questions and that it can be adopted at a later meeting. He asked Council to note that the restrictions are not limited to just the Villages of Rocky Grove, Reno and Sugarcreek. And the time/holiday restrictions are based on state law. Mr. Spaid said he does not have an update on the speed restriction on Shaffer Run Road.

**IX. COUNCIL REPORT**

- A. Alan Heller asked if the Borough has or puts up Christmas decorations on light poles. Mr. Sporer said the Borough does not and those type of decorations are very expensive, as well as the expense of placing them up. Mr. Heller thought it would be nice to look into and see the cost of it. Mr. Sporer will follow up with it.

**X. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- A. Motion by Larry Baughman, being duly seconded by Matt Carlson to approve the minutes of the Nov. 2, 2022 Council Meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

**XI. FINANCIAL REPORTS**

- A. Motion by Larry Baughman, 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**

- A. Mr. Baughman asked if the Borough looked into the price of a guardrail along Rocky Grove Avenue, between Village Auto and the corner. Mr. Freer said Dick Shingledecker did not get the Borough a price. Mr. Sporer said they will follow up with it.

**XIII. NEW BUSINESS**

**XIV. CORRESPONDENCE**

**XV. BOARD OF APPEALS**

**XVI. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Council recessed at 7:27 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 8:18 pm.

**XVII. NEW BUSINESS CON'T.**

A. Mr. Sporer said the Borough will put 103 Second Street, Reno, PA, up for sale, through a competitive bidding process, for 30 days. The high bid will then be considered by Council for award at the regular February 2023 Council meeting.

**XVIII. ADJOURNMENT**

A. Motion by Alan Heller, being duly seconded by Bogan Goughler to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 PM. Motion carried unanimously.

Joseph M. Sporer, Borough Manager

James Speth, Council President