

**BOROUGH OF SUGARCREEK
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

March 4, 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, John McClelland, Bogan Goughler, Larry Baughman, Matthew Carlson, and Mayor Craig Westover. Also, present were Maintenance Foreman Doug Freer, Attorneys Brian Spaid and Alex Spaid.

V. DISTRIBUTION OF AGENDA

VI. COUNCIL CHANGES TO AGENDA

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

- A. Scott Kennedy presented Council with a possible idea to help the property around 158 Nesbit Street. He proposed a green haven area or community garden once the house was torn down. He thought flowers could be donated by local greenhouses. He said the Borough would not be responsible for anything. The public could help with weeding the flower beds. Mr. Kennedy said he would like to see a flat stone sidewalk and possibly even a gazebo and benches in the future. He has spoken to other residents and they were in favor of this idea as well. Mr. Kennedy asked if the Borough could look at a grant for this and he does not know how the laws are with properties that go in to default on the property taxes. He also asked if there would have to be liability insurance for such an area. Mr. Heller said the Council will discuss it and look into what options are available.
- B. Dan Marvin, Reno VFD, gave Council an update on the calls for the fire department. Mr. Marvin said they have responded to 32 calls year – to – date and 16 calls since the last Council meeting. The next dinner will be on Sunday, March 8, 2026, 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM and there will also be sugar cookies for sale. He also said there will be an indoor flea market on Saturday, March 14, 2026 from 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM.
- C. Terri Lowry stated she wanted to use her time to give clarity to the taxpayers, homeowners and citizens of the Borough on a motion that Council voted on at the November 2025 Council meeting. Ms. Lowry stated at that time, the Borough Manager, Joe Sporer was retiring at the end of the year. And a consulting agreement with the Borough was arranged and Mr. Sporer would be paid \$100 per hour consulting fee; maximum of \$4,000 which would equal 40 hours. However, Ms. Lowry said, they were not aware of the excellent medical benefits allowed with this agreement, which includes eye and dental, at a cost of approximately \$1,828.00 for 18 months. She said if she does the math, the health benefits total \$32,904 and adding the consulting fee of \$4,000, it equals about \$36,900. She said if 40 hours of work are allotted, the former Borough Manager is not making the \$100 per hour, but it is \$922.60 per hour. Ms. Lowry said if anything else comes up, she'll be applying. She also said if you add in the 6 months of training for the current Borough Manager, that was a cost of \$50,000 and you can see why the Police budget was cut about \$80,000. Ms. Lowry urged the public to speak with their Council members and ask them why this occurred. She wants everything to be transparent and it's not. She said for everyone to do their homework and hold their Council responsible. It is their tax dollars.
- D. Pat Servey, Rocky Grove VFD Chief, said he wants to be more transparent and available to the Council. He presented the Council with their February report. For the month, the department responded to 5 fire related calls/alarms, 5 motor vehicle accidents; 2 of which were fatalities, 1 EMS/medical assist call, 2 public service calls, 1 all other call and no search & rescue calls. Mr. Servey said they have a new reporting software to track incidents and events. He also said they are continuing with Firefighter Essentials Training through May. They have also updated laptops

for the fire chiefs. Mr. Servey said the department will continue to look for ways to improve and be more efficient and make adjustments. He also updated that there have been new members added who come with training already. The department also holds Bingo every Thursday, the Gun Show will be March 21 & 22, 2026, a Demo Derby and Swap Meet will be March 28, 2026. Mr. Servey also said the Annual RGVFD Fireman's Fair is scheduled for Tues., June 23 – Sat., June 27, 2026. Mr. Baughman asked if they were still holding the auctions. Mr. Servey said they are held once a month. Mr. Baughman said one was scheduled for Friday, March 6, 2026, beginning at 5:00 PM.

- E. Bridget Baker stated she had a couple questions. Mr. Baughman asked if she could speak up. Ms. Baker replied no and you should listen better. Ms. Baker asked how many applications they have received for officers and the Chief positions and if interviews were conducted. Mr. Spaid said answering questions is not the purpose of public participation and she may express what she wants. Ms. Baker said Mr. Spaid is in her three (3) minutes. Mr. Spaid said he stopped the clock, as he always does if someone on Council speaks. Ms. Baker asked if the applications were reviewed and interviews were done. She said she feels as taxpayers, they have the right to know, because they live in this community. And she said Mr. Spaid can stop his clock.

VIII. STAFF REPORTS

A. Maintenance Foreman:

1. Mr. Freer said the excavator that was ordered last year, has arrived. Mr. Freer said the Spring Clean – Up Day will be held on Sat., April 25, 2026, from 7:00 AM – 3:00 PM. He said it will be the same as previous years; no appliances, no paints, no shingles, no fiberglass, etc. Mr. Baughman asked if the clean – up day is specifically for Borough residents. Mr. Freer confirmed it is. Mayor Westover asked if the dumpsters will be at the Borough Building. Mr. Freer said they will be at the salt shed and there will be guys there to help unload. Mr. Heller thanked the Maintenance Department for the job they do on maintaining the roads.
2. Motion by Bogan Goughler, being duly seconded by John McClelland, to advertise for bids on road maintenance materials, including but not limited to antiskid, aggregates and asphalts. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Police Chief:

1. Officer Corbett updated Council that the new cruiser has arrived and the computer and printer has been installed. Mayor Westover wanted to thank the other local departments; Franklin PD, Sherriff's Department, PSP, both RGVFD and Reno VFD for assisting during the fatalities on Rt. 8.

C. Administrator/Special Projects:

1. Motion by Bogan Goughler, being duly seconded by Alan Heller to approve the 2025 Reno V.F.D. roster list for those volunteers eligible for the tax credit under Act 172. Motion carried unanimously.
2. Motion by Bogan Goughler, being duly seconded by Larry Baughman, to appoint Borough Manager, Jim Speth, as the Agency Open Records Officer retroactive to January 1, 2026. Motion carried unanimously.

D. Zoning Officer:

1. No report.

E. Solicitor:

1. Mr. Spaid had matters for Executive Session relative to potential litigation and personnel matters.

IX. COUNCIL REPORT

- A. Alan Heller wanted to thank the fire departments and a special thanks to the Rocky Grove VFD of the year 2025, Jake Hellem, RJ Christy and Scott Sanderson. Mr. Heller asked if the fire departments could be added as a "Staff Report on the agenda. Mr. Spaid said the Council can arrange the agenda however they choose. He suggested adding a line item either before or after "Staff Reports" on the agenda.
- B. Mayor Craig Westover updated Council on a red light at the intersection of Front Street and Rocky Grove Avenue. Mayor Westover said he spoke with PennDOT and the current cost of a new 4 – way traffic light is \$500,000. He stated there are grants available, but they typically only cover 20%. The Borough's share would be \$150,000, plus the cost of the light. He said that PennDOT did not believe that the numbers justified installing a light. But, if the Borough requested a traffic and accident study be conducted and the numbers came back saying a light is suggested, the Borough would then be required to have the light installed within two (2) years. Mayor Westover suggested tabling the issue. The Mayor then spoke on a suggestion he

received from a resident about having a sidewalk installed between Rt. 8 and at least to Wiley Avenue. He said he spoke with the Oil Region Alliance and the Regional Planning and there are grants available. But, to begin the process, the Borough would have to have an Engineering feasibility study done and the current cost of that would be \$7,000 - \$15,000. He would like Council to consider it.

X. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. Motion by Bogan Goughler, being duly seconded by Alan Heller to approve the minutes of the February 4, 2026 Council meeting and the February 19, 2026 Special 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 7:27 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 8:13 pm.

XVII. NEW BUSINESS CON'T.

- A. Motion by Alan Heller, being duly seconded by Larry Baughman to approve the hire of Michael Goss as the Chief of Police effective March 5, 2026, at a salary of \$70,000 and the additional terms set forth in Executive Session. Motion carried unanimously.
- B. Motion by Bogan Goughler, being duly seconded by John McClelland to approve the settlement of the VennPenn Enterprises tax appeal litigation as presented in Executive Session. Motion carried unanimously.
- C. Motion by Larry Baughman, being duly seconded by Bogan Goughler to authorize the solicitor to file a sewer lien as presented in Executive Session. Motion carried unanimously.
- D. Mr. Spaid suggested a motion for Council's vote regarding naming Larry Moyer as the part-time police clerk, on a temporary basis. Motion died for lack of a motion.
- E. Motion by John McClelland, being duly seconded by Bogan Goughler to approve the hire of Tony McIntyre as a part-time police officer per the terms of the current contract. Motion carried unanimously.
- F. Mr. Spaid said Mr. McClelland, along with the rest of the Council wanted Mr. Spaid to address some of the concerns that were made during the public participation. In regards to Mr. Sporer's retention agreement, it was approved after it was discussed and presented on two (2) occasions and Council approved to do it. Mr. Spaid said it is correct that it is for the \$100/per hour, for a total of 40 hours for the year 2026. He said to his knowledge, there have been no amounts charged at this point in time to the Borough. The Council had the authority to enter into an agreement with Mr. Sporer to provide for his COBRA insurance coverage for him and his wife. He said he believes Ms. Lowry is correct in the amount she stated. He said at the same time, Mr. Sporer donated land to the Borough and it was a separate transaction. The Borough Council would only accept the land if an appraisal was done. Mr. Spaid said an appraisal was done and it came in at \$25,000. The land was donated to the Borough and is used for dumping materials. Mr. Spaid said at the time the Council discussed and approved the agreement, the cost of the land and the insurance were similar. He said since the agreement, the price of the insurance increased. Mr. Spaid wanted to clarify that the Borough Council has the authority to approve any kind of an arrangement like that with a prior employee.
- G. As for the Chief's position, Mr. Spaid said there was no one else solicited for the Chief's position. He said he can not speak on how Mr. Goss was found. He believes Mr. Goss and the Mayor may have previously worked together. Mr. Spaid presented Mr. Goss's experience to the public. Mr. Goss served in the Pennsylvania State Police as a Trooper on patrol unit from May

1998 – January 2002. He then served with the Criminal Investigation Unit with the Meadville State Police from January 2002 – May 2008. From February 2004 to May 2008, he served as the Alternate Deputy Fire Marshall. From May 2008 – December 2013, Mr. Goss served as a trooper with the Tactical Intelligence Unit with Franklin, serving in the Bureau of Criminal Investigation Intelligence Division and Tactical Intelligence Section. From December 2013 – May 2016, he served as Trooper Corporal for the Northwest Computer Crime Unit, Bureau of Criminal Investigation Special Investigation Division. From May 2016 – October 2016, he served as Sargeant Patrol Section Supervisor for Troop B in Meadville. From October 2016 – September 2022, he served as Sargeant for the Western Section Commander with the Pennsylvania State Police, until his retirement in September 2022. From March 2023 to December 2025, Mr. Goss served as the Crawford County Regional Airport Authority Manager, for the Port Meadville Airport. From October 2024 to the present, he owns and operates a Private Investigation Firm. Mr. Spaid said even though Mr. Goss and Mayor Westover may have known each other through professional work, Council did interview Mr. Goss after they received his resume. And the last six (6) – ten (10) years of his career with the Pennsylvania State Police, he served in a supervisory position. Mr. Spaid said he was a compelling and viable candidate and he said it was quickly decided he was the best candidate. Mr. Spaid said he brings an extensive resume of success and ability.

- H. Mr. Spaid also wanted to address the Police budget which was also brought up during the public participation section. The Police budget in 2025 was \$454,000 and the 2026 Police budget is \$471,500; an increase of almost \$20,000. He also addressed Mr. Speth's salary for 2025. Mr. Spaid clarified that Mr. Speth was not paid the full \$55,000 for six (6) months, but rather closer to \$25,000 - \$27,500 for that period. Mr. Spaid said they have received applications for the officers and the Council did advertise for the Chief of Police position. He said the Council received limited response on that. Mr. Spaid also said he understands there can be frustrations during public participation with the Council not being able to answer questions, but that is how the rules are set. He said he will try to answer what can be answered during the Staff Reports section.

XVIII. ADJOURNMENT

- A. Motion by Larry Baughman being duly seconded by Bogan Goughler to adjourn the meeting at 8:24 PM. Motion carried unanimously.

Jim Speth, Borough Manager

Alan Heller, Council President