

**BOROUGH OF SUGARCREEK
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

September 6, 2023

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 Bogan Goughler, Matthew Carlson, James Speth, Larry Baughman, Alan Heller, and Mayor Charles McDaniel. Also present was Chief Bob Wenner, 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. Bob McClintock, Borough EMA Director, updated Council on the water issue in Reno. Mr. McClintock said Aqua PA and Venango Water have set up a website with any information and updates on it. On Sept. 1, 2023, the water was once again consumable. Mr. McClintock wished to thank Mayor McDaniel, Chief Wenner, Joe Sporer, the Borough, Dan Koehler, County Commissioners and all those others who met, volunteered, and helped throughout this process. Mr. McClintock recommended the Council not extending the Emergency Declaration.
- B. Dan Koehler, Venango County EMA Director, stated he was there in the event anyone had questions or needed clarification on the Reno water issue.
- C. Jessica Struthers, Reno Neighborhood Association, has put in a request for the Borough Council to establish and enact an ordinance allowing the Village of Reno to become a golf cart community. The Reno Neighborhood Association believes it would provide a means of eco – friendly transportation for residents of Reno.
- D. Valerie Zitterbart, Vice – President of the Reno Neighborhood Association, stated they have spoken with residents of Reno who have expressed support of such an ordinance. She said they are also willing to offer trainings and education on operating golf carts and golf cart safety. Chief Wenner said he recommended they bring this request to the Borough Council. He said the law is not very clear in the Senate Bill 785. Mr. Spaid said he will have to research such a request, if the Council would want him to.
- E. Mary Kay Brown questioned why the golf carts would be restricted to electric golf carts and not include gas powered ones as well. Ms. Zitterbart said electric golf carts are limited to only going 20 mph, as opposed to gas powered ones which have the capability to go faster. Mr. Heller expressed concern over other areas of the Borough requesting such ordinances in their area if it is passed for the Village of Reno. Mr. Heller asked if there must be proof of insurance. Chief Wenner said it is up to the Council what restrictions or stipulations are put on the ordinance.
- F. Adam Blount presented Council with a complaint about garbage at 412 Egbert Street. He is the next – door neighbor. He stated he has called the Zoning Officer previously, but has not seen any changes in the property. He also said he has spoken with Chief Wenner about it. He stated he is willing to help in any way to get the property cleaned up.
- G. Pat Burkett said she was there to get updates on the Reno water situation and what is to come next. Mr. Koehler said there will be a Town Hall held with Aqua PA, Venango Water Company, and the residents. There is no date set yet. Mr. Koehler said he was not aware that the residents have not been updated. He said there have been tests done at all water sources. There was one source that was contaminated and that source has been plugged and will not affect incoming water to the residents. He also said there has been approximately 24,000 gallons a week being hauled in from their Emlenton facility to offset the usage in the summer months. They are trying to keep 300,000 gallons in the tank. Once the cooler weather comes, they feel the Shaffer Run Spring, which is not affected by the contamination, will be able to maintain the system. For the long term, there are engineering plans set for an interconnect point

with the City of Franklin, located between Sugarcreek Borough and Reno. There are price points included. Their tests have shown that the system is maintaining its own and the engineering plans are there, if needed.

- H. Chip Abramovich wanted to thank everyone that helped with the Reno water situation.
- I. Lindsay Carter came to express concerns over the condition of neighboring houses. She said there is a next – door neighbor with a hoarding issue and there is a house along Lambertson Street, in her background that is in deplorable condition. She said she has contacted the Zoning Officer about both properties and he came to take pictures, but has not heard any more on either one. Chief Wenner said the owner of the property on Gilfillan Street has been criminally charged due to a recent burning incident. Ms. Carter said she has noticed him cleaning up some. Chief said to notify him if there is any more burning. Mr. Sporer said there will be progress made on the Lambertson Street property. He said the Borough will eventually take ownership of that property and the house will be torn down.
- J. Jim Whitley had questions about the intersection of Cherrytree Road and Keely Road. He said since the Borough tarred and chipped the roads, there has been an issue getting up and down the roads and there's a large lip in the road. He said because of the time of year they tar and chip, the road gets down to just the tar and tires are getting ruined. Mr. Freer said the roads are tarred and chipped each spring to give them time to be settled by winter. He said he cannot control the large equipment that travels the road. Mr. Carlson said the owner of the heavy equipment is protected under the Right to Farm Act. Mr. Whitley asked if limestone could be used instead of what the Borough uses now. Mr. Freer said its three times the cost of the gravel currently used.

VIII. STAFF REPORTS

A. Maintenance Foreman:

- 1. Mr. Freer said seal coating has been completed for the season and will be broomed off within the next couple of weeks. The boom mower is on its second pass. Mr. Freer recommended Council consider replacing the current boom mower. The current boom mower is 20 years old and has needed constant repair. Mr. Freer also said there is a grant available to help with the purchase of a new mower. Mr. Sporer said the equipment manufacturer brought this grant to the Borough's attention. The grant is a Statewide Local Share Assessment grant, through the PA Racehorse Development & Gaming Act, which distributes gaming revenues to the Commonwealth. Mr. Sporer said the application is open from September 1, 2023 to November 30, 2023 and he will complete the application. He will apply for \$200,000, which is the approximate cost of a new boom mower. Mr. Sporer said the boom mower is in constant use during the summer months and is used for Borough and some State roads. The manufacturer anticipates it not being available until 2025. Mr. Carlson asked what the Borough gets in exchange for mowing some State roads. Mr. Sporer said the Borough would receive millings from paving projects and painting the lines along Shaffer Run Road. Mr. Sporer said the Borough is hoping to get signs from PennDOT using County Liquid Fuels Funds, if approved.
- 2. Motion by Larry Baughman, being duly seconded by Matthew Carlson to approve Resolution No. 3 of 2023, which is to request a Statewide Local Share Assessment grant used for the purchase of a new mower. Motion carried unanimously.
- 3. Motion by Larry Baughman, being duly seconded by Matthew Carlson to approve Resolution No. 4 of 2023, which is the five (5) – year agility agreement between the Borough and PennDOT. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Police Chief:

- 1. Chief Wenner said the Department is working on rotating the shifts. The officers have been busy with cases, running traffic and trainings. He also reminded the public that school is back in session and to please slow down.

C. Administrator/Special Projects:

- 1. Motion by Alan Heller, being duly seconded by Bogan Goughler to approve Resolution No. 5 of 2023, Resolution of Approval FFY 2023 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application. Motion carried unanimously.
- 2. Motion by Alan Heller, being duly seconded by Bogan Goughler to approve the Cooperation Agreement between the Borough and the County regarding the administration of the FFY 2023 Community Development Block Grant. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Motion by Larry Baughman, being duly seconded by Alan Heller to set the trick – or – treat hours in Sugarcreek Borough, for Tues., Oct. 31, 2023, from 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM. Motion carried unanimously.

D. Zoning Officer:

1. Mr. Sporer reminded Council of the upcoming Zoning Hearing Board meeting scheduled for September 21, 2023. It is in regards to an appeal for the property located at 2847 US 322.

E. Solicitor:

1. No report.

IX. COUNCIL REPORT

- A. Larry Baughman asked if there were any updates about the Sugarcreek Village siren. Chief said he received a quote back and believes it was around \$25,000. Mayor McDaniel said there has been discussion about an upgraded 911 – system. Commissioner Abramovich said there has been discussion about it, but no decisions have been made about it. Dan Koehler says the County is actively working to upgrade the 911 – system and communication for all residents of Venango County.
- B. Alan Heller asked if anything can be done about the vacant business buildings & spaces along Rt. 8 and getting more businesses in there; i.e., tax breaks. Mr. Sporer said tax breaks are available, but you have to wait on the developers to approach the Borough. And it's difficult with most of the owners of those commercial buildings being out – of – town.
- C. Mayor McDaniel wanted to thank everyone who helped get consumable water back to the residents of Reno.

X. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. Motion by Bogan Goughler, being duly seconded by Larry Baughman to approve the minutes of the August 2, 2023 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

XIII. NEW BUSINESS

XIV. CORRESPONDENCE

XV. BOARD OF APPEALS

XVI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Council recessed at 7:53 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 8:59 pm.

XVIII. NEW BUSINESS CON'T.

- A. Council Member Larry Baughman asked to be excused from the October Council Meeting. Mayor McDaniel asked to be excused from the October, November and possibly the December Council meetings.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

- A. Motion by Larry Baughman, being duly seconded by Alan Heller to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 PM.

Joseph M. Sporer, Borough Manager

James Speth, Council President