

**Borough Council Work Session**

**November 21, 2022**

The monthly Work Session meeting of Souderton Borough Council, held in the rear Conference Room of the Souderton Municipal Building on the above date, was called to order by President Tracy Burke at 7:00 p.m. The Borough Council Work Session was attended by the following members and staff:

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|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| President Tracy W. Burke     | Mayor Daniel Yocum                    |
| Vice-President Edward Huber  |                                       |
| Councillor Matthew DiNenna   | Junior Councillor Elijah S. Steglik   |
| Councillor Daryl Littlefield | Junior Councillor Estrela T. Sadiboko |
| Councillor Julie Munden      |                                       |
| Councillor Donna M. Rogers   |                                       |
| Councillor Matthew Sholly    | Borough Manager P. Michael Coll       |
| Councillor Richard Walczak   | Police Chief Brian A. Newhall         |
| Councillor Courtnee Wampole  | Public Works Director Steven Coll     |

President Tracy Burke, along with Mayor Daniel Yocum, first recognized Shane Wheeler who serves as Chief and CEO of VMSC Emergency Medical Services. Also representing VMSC was Bryson Schroeder. Shane Wheeler provided a history of their current operational relationship with the Souderton Community Ambulance. Souderton Borough, Telford Borough and portions of Franconia Township have been provided EMS services by Souderton Community Ambulance. Souderton Community Ambulance is operating on a provisional license from the PA Department of Health due to inadequate staffing. VMSC has been staffing the Souderton Ambulance station since March, 2022. This stop gap measure has been effective, but a long term solution is required to provide reliable EMS services. VMSC is prepared to mobilize services upon a resolution by each of the three municipalities. VMSC is currently staffing an ambulance in the Indian Valley and is immediately available to respond to EMS incidents. VMSC proposes to operate as “Indian Valley EMS” and will not require any municipal contributions for service. The initial proposal is one year from date of 911 integration. Following a question and answer session, Borough Council provided consensus to formally consider the proposed resolution at the December 5 Borough Council meeting.

President Tracy Burke and Councillor Julie Munden introduced Richard W. Gruss, 290 W. Broad Street, Souderton who expressed interest in serving as a member of the Souderton Civil Service Commission. Mr. Gruss has been a resident of the Borough since 1995 and is a retired Postmaster from the Lansdale Post Office. Borough Council provided consensus to formally consider this appointment at the December 5 Borough Council meeting.

## POLICE ITEMS

Police Chief Brian Newhall summarized police activities for the month. A letter of appreciation was received from a resident concerning services provided by Officer Jeffrey Lukens.

Chief Newhall has extended offers of employment to two part time officers. Our current part time officers do not have availability to meet the department's needs. Mayor Daniel Yocum will administer the Oath of Office to part time officers Coleen Breslin and Brian Lehman at the December 5 Borough Council meeting.

Borough Council reviewed the proposed intergovernmental agreement between the Souderton Area School District, district municipalities and Bus Patrol America, LLC. The agreement will provide reports of bus related incidents to the police departments for review and possible investigation. The system will be installed on all Transportation Services buses over the holiday break. A recommendation to formally approve the agreement is scheduled for formal consideration at the December 5 Borough Council meeting.

President Tracy Burke outlined progress on a tentative collective bargaining agreement with the Souderton Police Officers. There are a few issues remaining to be resolved. Formal ratification of the collective bargaining agreement may be considered at the December 5 Borough Council meeting.

The Public Safety Committee discussed improved signage at crosswalks, particularly along Main Street and E. Broad Street. The Committee suggested the need for more visible signage to alert motorists to observe and yield to pedestrians within the crosswalk. A notable crosswalk is Second Street and E. Broad Street. Another crosswalk was Fifth Street and E. Broad Street. The Committee suggested that improved signage and aggressive driving enforcement should be an immediate step to improve safety. A recommendation was made to have our Borough Engineer review and provide longer term options for consideration and potential grant programs for more comprehensive improvements and initiatives.

The Public Safety Committee and Chief Newhall continue to evaluate measures to curb vandalism in our park system. The posting of signage will be helpful in addressing the issue. Borough Manager Michael Coll provided Borough Council with the current Ordinance regulating the parks. Borough Council suggested that park hours should be revised to a consistent dusk to dawn closure of all parks. The Committee will continue to review the Ordinance for further discussion at the January work session.

## HIGHWAY ITEMS

Public Works Director Steven Coll summarized public works activities for the

month. A significant amount of time was devoted to the annual leaf collection program. Steve Coll reported that some of our prior disposal sites have been closing down, forcing more loads to go to the disposal sites that charge. The expense for disposal of leaf waste has been running around \$40.00 per ton. Obviously wet leaves contribute to the overall tonnage. The Budget will be reflecting more leaf disposal expenses than in previous years.

Crews will be installing the holiday decorations and making preparations for the Holiday Tree lighting on Friday, December 2 and the Holiday Parade on Saturday, December 3.

Paving of County Line Road from Broad Street north into Telford Borough has been postponed due to weather conditions. Borough crews did complete the installation of new sewer manhole frames and lids in preparation for the paving project, which most likely will be delayed until spring 2023.

Borough Manager Michael Coll explained a requirement from PennDOT to formally execute a Traffic Signal Maintenance Agreement. A copy of the Agreement and approving Resolution were circulated for formal consideration at the December 5 Borough Council meeting. The agreement formalizes already mandated maintenance requirements for traffic signals. The agreement will not expand any additional Borough responsibility.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

President Tracy Burke further discussed an action plan to begin the process to transition to a new Borough Manager. The sub committees have been meeting and a next step will be to interview the Borough Manager and all Borough employees to learn more about operational matters and responsibilities.

#### DEVELOPMENT ITEMS

Borough Manager Michael Coll reported progress with Brass Collar Brewing Company, execution of the Lease Agreement, and the development of construction plans to fit out the interior of the Freight Building. Gilmore and Associates developed three sketch plans for the plaza area adjacent to the Freight Building. Borough Council preferred sketch plan 2. The Borough Manager will report back to the Borough Engineer to complete the site construction details to move the project forward.

The Souderton Planning Commission has been working on a revised sign ordinance, which includes regulations for murals. The Planning Commission continues to have a divided opinion of restricting the size of murals on buildings to 25% of the front building façade and 100% on the side and rear facades. Borough Council suggested that Souderton Connects might provide an opinion on this matter.

Borough Manager Michael Coll reported that the Borough Solicitor has drafted the Zoning Ordinance amendment addressing the installation and maintenance of Small Wireless Facilities within the public rights of way. The Ordinance will need to be reviewed by the Montgomery County Planning Commission prior to formal considerations. The Zoning Ordinance amendment will be scheduled for formal review at the January, 2023 Borough Council meeting.

#### SANITATION ITEMS

Borough Manager Michael Coll noted that the Leidy's Meats facility on Cherry Lane is under agreement of sale. We have been working on the development of an Industrial waste ordinance and permitting process for industrial users. Given this pending sale, Borough Council should continue to complete this Ordinance and process to address the new ownership.

A main drive gear for the clarifier arm in one of the main treatment tanks failed and was recently replaced. Borough Council may notice a fairly large expense from Derstine to complete this work.

#### RECREATION ITEMS

Public Works Director Steven Coll reported on progress with the installation of playground equipment as part of the Community Park improvement project. All playground and exercise equipment is installed along with the safety surfacing. The adjoining pathways have been cut in and stoned for paving. It was decided to keep the playground closed until the pathways are paved in the coming weeks depending on weather conditions and availability of crew. The Pennsylvania DCNR field representative is scheduled to inspect the park on December 16, 2022 to close out the grant application for the project.

#### PROPERTY ITEMS

President Tracy Burke discussed a marketing agreement with Schwartz and Company to sell the front three acre parcel on the Borough's Cherry Lane property for commercial development. He will meet with Joe Schwartz to discuss modifications to the agreement to address the requirement to obtain sealed bids. He will recommend formal authorization at the December Borough Council meeting.

Borough Manager Michael Coll reported that he had discussions with Phillips and Donovan Architects about bidding the initial phase of work to renovate the Municipal Building. The architects recommended that the Borough consider bidding the initial phase of construction as planned. A smaller phase of construction may not prove to be feasible. Borough Council agreed with the recommendation and the Borough Manager will instruct

the architects to complete the plans, specifications and bidding documents to formally bid the project as soon as possible.

The Property Committee suggested that Gilmore and Associates complete the design and specifications to expand the parking lot behind the Souderton Train Station to provide additional parking opportunities in the downtown core district.

#### FINANCE ITEMS

Borough Council is scheduled to formally consider the 2023 Budget Resolution and the Real Estate Tax ordinance as advertised at the December 5 Borough Council meeting.

The Borough Solicitor has completed documents and a Resolution approving the \$250,000 Tax Anticipation Loan for the 2023 calendar year.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

P. Michael Coll, Secretary