



**Borough Council- Regular Meeting
December 4, 2023**

The Regular Meeting of Souderton Borough Council, held on the above date, was called to order by Council President Tracy W. Burke at 7:00pm. President Burke stated that this evening's meeting will be recorded this evening. Councilor Daryl Littlefield provided the Invocation, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Borough Secretary Stacy E. Crandell noted that Junior Councilor Elijah S. Steglik was absent this evening and the following Borough Council and staff were present:

Council President Tracy W. Burke
Councilor Matthew J. DiNenna
Councilor Stephanie Hall
Councilor Edward M. Huber
Councilor Daryl W. Littlefield
Councilor Julie A. Munden
Councilor Donna M. Rogers
Councilor Matthew R. Sholly
Councilor Richard M. Walczak

Mayor Daniel L. Yocum
Borough Manager Stacy E. Crandell
Solicitor Charlotte Hunsberger
Police Chief Brian A. Newhall
Public Works Director Steven Coll

Council President Tracy Burke explained as previously discussed, that going forward the minutes and approval of the bills will fall under a consent agenda portion of the Council Meeting per a discussion with the Borough Manager.

A motion made by Councilor Matthew Sholly, and seconded by Councilor Daryl Littlefield, to approve the November 2, 2023, Regular Borough Council Meeting and the November 20, 2023, Work Session Minutes as presented. The motion was approved.

Council President Tracy Burke asked for one motion to approve the bills. A motion made by Councilor Daryl Littlefield, and seconded by Councilor Matthew DiNenna approved the bills for the month of November 2023 and approved the payment of the recurring bills for December 2023. The motion was approved.

Jessica Cimini, Souderton Connects Manager, provided an update. She stated that the weekend events of the Tree Lighting and the Holiday Parade were a huge success. She expressed her appreciation for the assistance from the Public Works Department and the Police Department. The Economic Development Committee is hosting an event on Wednesday, December 6 at the Hub regarding HR for small businesses. In addition, on Wednesday, December 6, they will be celebrating Northbound's 5th Anniversary.

Council President Tracy Burke opened the public hearing for the Liquor License Transfer to Souderton Food Mart (672 E. Broad Street). Borough Manager Stacy Crandell gave a brief overview and turned it over to the applicant, Mr. Patel and his attorney Gregory Szallar. Mr. Szallar explained that the Mr. Patel is applying for a liquor license in order to sell six packs of beer and wine. Due to the State Liquor Control Board requirements, Mr. Patel has to provide enough seating for 30 people even though it is highly unlikely the majority of people will be drinking at the establishment since it more of convenience store with prepackaged food. Councilor Edward Huber asked about the hours for the sale of alcohol. Mayor Daniel Yocum asked the applicant and applicant's attorney to explain the Liquor



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Control Board requirements and why seating was required. He also expressed appreciation to Mr. Patel for maintaining his business in Souderton for many years. Council President Tracy Burke asked if the Borough Manager could elaborate on the parking spots and if they can meet it with the requirements of the license. Ms. Crandell expressed that parking can be calculated in a couple different ways but with their non-conforming parking spots that were allowed since this property use was opened in 1985, the Borough Staff in consultation with the Montgomery County Planner and the Borough Solicitor feel that this requirement is met. Councilor Richard Walczak asked about the seating and how the patrons would be monitored if they chose to remain at the store and consume alcohol. Mr. Patel explained that two employees would be on duty at all times, and they have a camera system that stores footage for a period of time. It was also noted that the public hearing was advertised on November 19, November 23, and November 26 in the Souderton Independent and Montgomery News Digital. The public hearing was closed.

A motion made by Councilor Julie Munden, and seconded by Councilor Donna Rogers, to approve Resolution#2023-11 to allow the transfer of the liquor license to 672 E. Broad Street as long as the applicable zoning and accessibility requirements are met. This was approved with a vote of 7-2, with Councilor Richard Walczak and Councilor Edward Huber opposing the motion.

Council President Tracy Burke asked Borough Manager Stacy Crandell if there were any presentations/correspondences. Ms. Crandell explained that she received a flyer regarding the Telford Tree Lighting that will be taking place on Friday, December 8th from 6-8pm at the Telford Train Station and that all are welcome to attend.

Mayor Daniel Yocum started off by thanking Souderton Connects for the great events in Souderton this weekend including the Tree Lighting and Holiday Parade. He expressed appreciation for all participants in the parade and the creative floats that were part of the parade. He also announced that there are still trees available from the Fire Company which are being sold in the Souderton Community Park Parking Lot off of Main Street and the Boy Scouts are selling Christmas Trees at the Scout Cabin.

Police Chief Brian Newhall summarized the monthly report of the police department activities. Chief Newhall noted that the Department performed their first Child Safety Seat Installation. Chief Newhall thanked everyone who donated to the Police Department for the No Shave November. The Department was able to raise over \$1,200 for God's Treasure House Ministries, an organization in Souderton that assists women who are leaving domestic violence situations and women who are newly released from prison. Chief Newhall also asked for thoughts on ways to improve the monthly report with some goals and benchmarks from the Council or the Community that they would like to see from the Police Department.

Public Works Director Steven Coll summarized the activities of the Public Works Department. Mr. Coll explained that the Department is still working on leaf collection. They are also looking to finish up Christmas Decorations this week.

Borough Solicitor Charlotte Hunsberger noted that the Solicitor's Report was presented.

Under Committee Reports, Councilor Julie Munden explained that the Municipal Building Committee is going to start meeting again to help figure out a new approach for options for the



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Municipal Building and Public Works Facility. Council President Tracy Burke explained that the Administrative Committee has been working with the Borough Manager regarding options for the public works facility and potentially selling the entire Cherry Lane property which is currently under evaluation. Councilor Daryl Littlefield gave an update on the Public Outreach Committee. Mr. Littlefield explained that there will be Council Office Hours on December 16th and then the Committee will meet next year to see what efforts they will implement for 2024.

Council President Tracy Burke also noted that this is the last Borough Council Meeting of the year and there will no work session in December. The next meeting of the Council will take place on Tuesday, January 2nd for the reorganization and regular meeting of the Council.

Council President Tracy Burke opened the floor to the audience for public comment. Jennifer Arevalo, CEO and Director of Organizational Operations for the Souderton Chart School Collaborative, wanted to thank Steve Coll and Steve Toy for their communication and coordination with the school regarding the paving of Front Street and the restricted parking signs on Front Street which is helping with the dropping off and picking up process at the school. She also expressed appreciation for Chief Newhall who came to the school and provided safety information to the teachers and staff. Council President Tracy Burke thanked Ms. Arevalo for her comments and moved to the Business portion of the agenda.

Borough Manager Stacy Crandell explained Resolution#2023-08 is a resolution to approve the Tax Anticipation Loan Note from Univest for \$250,000. This is something the Borough has done in the past to help handling bills and payroll early in the year before the tax revenue comes into the Borough. The loan is normally paid off once the funds are received from tax revenue. A motion was made by Councilor Daryl Littlefield and seconded by Councilor Matthew DiNenna to approve Resolution#2023-08 authorizing the execution and private sale of a tax and revenue anticipation note to Univest Bank and Trust Company and pledging the anticipated taxes and revenues as security. The motion was approved.

Borough Manager Stacy Crandell stated that Resolution#2023-09 was for the approval of the Annual Budget for 2024 Calendar Year which called for a tax increase of 2.5 mills for 2024. Councilor Richard Walczak read a statement that he had concerns for the tax increase and the affordability of the increase and asked the Council to reevaluate the proposed budget. Mayor Daniel Yocum explained that everyone on Council take tax increases seriously and the Council has historically provided an incremental tax increase but under new leadership with the hire of our new Borough Manager, we realize that in order to help our community and her ability to bring some new initiatives to help move the Borough forward, this increase is necessary. Mayor Yocum explained that every year the auditor explained that the Borough is falling short of capital reserves and the Borough is trying to improve this. Council President Tracy Burke explained that part of the budget increase is the hiring of two full time police officers as our community has been understaffed for a number of years. Mr. Burke explained that while the increase is never easy, this will assist our new Borough Manager to help achieve the vision she has for the community to help continue to move the Borough forward in a positive direction. A motion by Councilor Matthew Sholly and seconded by Councilor Julie Munden, to approve Resolution#2023-09 for the Annual Budget of the Borough of Souderton for the Calendar Year 2024. The motion was approved by a vote of 8-1 with Councilor Richard Walczak opposing the motion.

Borough Manager Stacy Crandell explained that Ordinance#23-758-03 approves the Real Estate Tax Rate for 2024. Ms. Crandell explained that the millage for 2024 Budget would be a total of 9.750 mills. A motion was made by Councilor Julie Munden and seconded by Councilor Donna Rogers, to



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adopt Ordinance#23-758-03 to approve the Real Estate Tax rates for 2024 and setting the discounts and penalties on taxes. The motion was approved by a vote of 8-1 with Councilor Richard Walczak opposing the motion.

Borough Manager Stacy Crandell explained that Resolution#2023-10 is to increase the trash and recycling fees for 2024. Ms. Crandell noted that this was not a surprise as it was stated that there would be yearly increases when the trash contract was approved. A motion by Councilor Matthew Sholly and seconded by Councilor Stephanie Hall, to approve Resolution#2023-10 establishing the fees for curbside collection of solid waste and recycling materials and providing penalties for late payments for the year 2024. The motion was approved.

Borough Manager Stacy Crandell asked for authorization to advertise for the Ordinance#24-759-01 which would increase the sewer rate by 5%. This would be up for approval at the Council's January 2nd Meeting. Ms. Crandell explained that sewer rates have not been increased since 2017 and she recommended this increase to continue to help the Borough to have a capital reserve fund for any improvements that may be needed. Ms. Crandell explained that the Wastewater Treatment Plant is thirty years old and while the Staff does an excellent job of maintaining the plant, there will need to be improvements and renovations as some point, and we need to be ready. Also, she explained that the Borough just entered a new five-year permit with DEP and there is one modification that is needed that will cost about \$250,000 but every five years the DEP could reevaluate and require the Borough to complete or modify our system to comply with their standards. A motion by Councilor Matthew DiNenna and seconded by Councilor Julie Munden, to authorize the advertisement of Ordinance#24-759-01 amending the sewer funds for 2024. The motion was approved.

Borough Manager Stacy Crandell explained that the activity pool needs to be replastered and is seeking authorization to advertise for bids on PennBid. A motion made by Council Vice-President Edward Huber and seconded by Councilor Daryl Littlefield, to authorize the advertisement for the Bids for the Pool Plastering Project for the Activity Pool. The motion was approved.

Borough Manager Stacy Crandell asked for authorization to execute the proposal from Styer Associates to perform the Audit for the Borough Financials for the Fiscal Year ending December 31, 2023. Council President Tracy Burke asked that the audit information is presented earlier than October and Borough Manager Stacy Crandell stated she would make sure that presentation would happen earlier in the year. A motion by Councilor Donna Rogers, and seconded by Councilor Matthew Sholly, to approve the execution of the proposal from Styer Associates to perform the audit for the Borough financials for the Fiscal Year ending December 31, 2023. The motion was approved.

Borough Manager Stacy Crandell stated this is the cost saving portion of the meeting as she evaluates the current services and providers to see if there is ways to save but retain the same or better benefits. Ms. Crandell explained she has experience with the Delaware Valley Insurance Trust which consists of three trusts including Workers Compensation, Health, and Property Liability Insurance. She received a proposal from the Delaware Valley Workers Compensation Trust that will be about 20 percent less than what the current policy is costing the Borough. In addition, there are some value-added services like free to low-cost training. Ms. Crandell will continue to monitor the other two trusts and if the Borough can get competitive pricing will investigate joining the other two trusts, which will result in an additional discount on the premium. A motion by Councilor Donna Rogers, and seconded by



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Councilor Julie Munden, to approve and authorize the execution of the Delaware Valley Workers Compensation Trust Agreement effective January 1, 2024. The motion was approved.

Borough Manager Stacy Crandell investigated other options for IT services for the Borough. She received a proposal from Premier Technology Solutions, LLC, who she used previously at Doylestown Township and the monthly service agreement would be cheaper than our current contract. In addition, Ms. Crandell explained they can make sure to get the Borough up to date with security and can assist with consulting on technology and software implementation to help streamline operations. The Council and Mayor also expressed support for a way to auto-pay trash and sewer bills. Ms. Crandell said that the Borough will look into options for that. A motion by Councilor Julie Munden, and seconded by Councilor Stephanie Hall, to approve the execution of the proposal from Premier Technology Solutions, LLC for the Network Management Services Support Plan. The motion was approved.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:37PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacy E. Crandell

Stacy E. Crandell, Secretary