

**CHAMBER OF BOROUGH COUNCIL
Shoemakersville Borough**

August 15, 2023

President Kline called the workshop of the Shoemakersville Borough Council to order in the Shoemakersville Borough Office, 846 Main St., Shoemakersville, PA at 7:01 p.m.

In attendance: Chris Kline – President, Amy Botwright – Vice President, Michael Grim, Tara Kennedy-Kline, Dana Randazzo, Dana Smith, Joseph Wertz, Jr., and Paul Gruber – Manager.

Absent from the meeting: Dustin Remp – Mayor

Manager’s Report – Mr. Gruber

Mr. Gruber introduces Brandon Nabar, who performed the data entry for the water valves and is working on the GIS data.

Mr. Gruber has not heard back from Martin Paving regarding a timeline for repairing the road project paving deficiencies.

Mr. Gruber reviews the Folk Paving quote for asphalt paving of 3 patches on the south end of Main St. Council discusses the location of the potholes, mainly the area where the fire occurred at 142-146 Main St. Mr. Gruber notes that UGI already made their repairs, via 2nd St. The property owner reported to Mr. Gruber that the insurance investigation on the fire is near completion.

*A motion is made by Mr. Wertz to approve the Ronnie Folk proposal dated 8/7/23 for \$4,360 to repair the potholes in the 100-200 blocks of Main St., totaling 81 sq yds. Seconded by Ms. Kennedy-Kline. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Gruber recommends hiring Dawson Dissinger to fill the vacant public works position. He is able to begin work on August 21.

*A motion is made by Ms. Kennedy-Kline to approve the hiring of Dawson Dissinger at a rate of \$17/hr, with a start date of August 21. Seconded by Mr. Wertz. Motion carried unanimously.

Although Mr. Gruber will be on vacation next week, Mr. Methax will be able to contact him with any concerns during that time.

Mr. Methax will be a part of the work on the sewer line blockage, which is scheduled to begin next week. Mr. Wertz, Mr. Gruber and President Kline discuss the blockage and the excavation required. Council and Mr. Gruber discuss the possible location of air leaks and the process of lining the pipes.

Mr. Gruber reports that the sump pump at well house #1 brought the water out the side of the well house and essentially flooded a 12’ x 16’ grass area by the fence. Staff excavated from outside the fence, moved the pipe underground and installed stone for drainage.

All the valves are installed on filter #1. The new valves were tested on August 7 & 8 and are functioning as designed.

Mr. Gruber and Vice President Botwright discuss a repair list for the pool.

Property/Streets/Sanitation – Mr. Smith

President Kline reports that Mr. Gruber will be acquiring new batteries for the speed limit signs. President Kline suggests contacting the Deka store for pricing. Mr. Gruber will forward photos of the current batteries to Mr. Grim, who may be able to obtain an employee discount on new batteries.

Sewer – Mr. Wertz – nothing to report

Water – President Kline

President Kline reports that after the filter project under the grant is complete, he and Mr. Gruber will speak with Renegade to discuss possible enhancements. President Kline and Mr. Wertz discuss how the plant is designed to run automatically.

Parks & Recreation – Ms. Kennedy-Kline

Vice President Botwright discusses the professional services agreement for the Park Master Plan. One option in the agreement is a structural assessment of the stage/pavilion for an additional \$3,000. An additional structural assessment of the other structures would be \$3,500. A topographical survey would cost \$9,500. Ms. Kennedy-Kline feels a structural assessment of the stage would be beneficial. Mr. Wertz suggests that as a new stage/pavilion is needed, the assessment would not be required. He feels that ER Felty could perform the topographical survey at a lower cost. The survey would contain the area up to the stream.

*A motion is made by Vice President Botwright to approve the contract for professional services with Barry Issett & Associates for the Park Master Plan. Seconded by Ms. Kennedy-Kline. President Kline asks if the borough can be reimbursed, as part of the grant, for the expense if ER Felty performs the survey. Vice President Botwright notes that the remainder of the work will utilize the remaining grant funds. Motion carried unanimously.

Law/Planning/Zoning – Mr. Wertz

President Kline reviews the Quick Start Agreement that was forwarded by Solicitor Mooney. He reports the work that can be performed now is only for site grading and E&S control improvements, before approval of the final site plan. President Kline is concerned that the contractor has not yet begun work on the south side area, where the garden center is to be located, and that they may feel the approved Quick Start Agreement will grant them permission to finish the project. Mr. Wertz states that this may not be the case, as an engineer was hired to complete the plan and review the improvements.

Ms. Kennedy-Kline reads a portion of the agreement, with Council and Mr. Gruber discussing the project and improvements. Vice President Botwright reads from prior meeting minutes what work is to be included in the agreement. Mr. Wertz reports that both Solicitor Mooney and Mr. Kee previously noted that this is a land development project. As such, a plan is required. Mr. Wertz notes that the agreement was intended to allow the contractor to perform the required improvements without yet having the required plan. Mr. Grim and Vice President Botwright further discuss the agreement. Plans have not yet been received. Council will further review the agreement. No action taken on the agreement at this time.

Employee Relations – President Kline – nothing to report

Approvals/Finance/Pension – Vice President Botwright

*A motion is made by Vice President Botwright to approve the minutes for August 2, 2023. Seconded by Mr. Wertz. Motion carried unanimously.

*A motion is made by Vice President Botwright to approve the bills payable for August 15, 2023. Seconded by Mr. Wertz. Motion carried unanimously.

Vice President Botwright addresses the meeting decorum resolution, with her and President Kline noting that council members abstaining from a vote are to notify the borough secretary, in writing, as to the reason for the abstention. Vice President Botwright discusses the provision that members may participate in a meeting remotely, provided there would be a quorum physically present. Council further reviews the resolution, as well as the public comment portion of a meeting. Further Council comments are to be forwarded to Vice President Botwright.

Community Outreach – Ms. Randazzo

Ms. Randazzo discusses the email received on why the Animal Rescue League has placed their TNR program on hold. She notes that Alexis Pagoulatos has stepped down from her position with the organization. Ms. Hyde has informed Ms. Randazzo that the CatSnip grant funding has been exhausted. Vouchers are still available through No Nonsense Neutering. Vouchers through Berks Animal Hospital would be \$50, with the borough covering \$35 of the cost. The voucher process is discussed.

*A motion is made by Mr. Wertz to spend \$30/voucher x 20 vouchers, for a total of \$600, for feral cat spaying/neutering, provided the cat is captured within the borough. Seconded by Mr. Grim. Motion amended to include the vouchers may be used at Berks Animal Hospital or No Nonsense Neutering. Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Randazzo reviewed the Leesport Borough newsletter that was forwarded to her by Vice President Botwright. Leesport prints 1,000 copies of their 12-page color publication. Ms. Randazzo reports that the quote she received from RTC to mail 1,000 newsletters is \$360. As the borough would only need approximately 620 newsletters for residents, the remaining copies would be available at the borough office or business locations that have advertised in the newsletter. The borough could also email digital copies as well. Council discusses the newsletter design.

Ms. Randazzo reviews the options and costs for printing the borough newsletter. The expense will be included in the 2024 budget. Vice President Botwright discusses a design program for the newsletter. Ms. Randazzo will tailor the advertising sheet to distribute to local businesses.

Ms. Randazzo shares information she received from Mr. Gruber regarding how boroughs can advertise public events for free in the Borough News Magazine. Content for the fall/winter issues must be forwarded to them by August 25.

New Business

Public Comment

Brandon Nabar (372 Luisa Ct.): Asks what typically occurs during the public comment period of a meeting, with President Kline noting that comments taken from the meeting recording are summarized and included in the meeting minutes. Depending on the nature of the comment, action could be taken.

Mr. Nabar has an interest in local government and enjoys working for the borough. He conducted interviews with Vice President Botwright and Mr. Wertz for a college assignment and feels that more people should attend Council meetings, as the residents are directly affected by the outcome. He discusses the possibility of conducting additional interviews with borough officials that could be made available to the public.

Mr. Nabar also proposed the idea of conducting local government workshops within the school district. Vice President Botwright discusses the Junior Councilperson Program. An application for the program will be forwarded to Mr. Nabar.

President Kline received information from Kraft Code Services, to provide zoning and building enforcement services. They could provide ordinance enforcement, but only if the borough opts for the zoning and building enforcement as well. Their rate is \$72.50/hr if it is not fee structure based. President Kline reviews Kraft's fee structure.

There being no further business, a motion is made by Mr. Wertz to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Grim. Meeting adjourned at 9:22 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa Wagner - Secretary/Treasurer