

**CHAMBER OF BOROUGH COUNCIL
Shoemakersville Borough**

February 4, 2025

President Kline called the monthly meeting of the Shoemakersville Borough Council to order in the Shoemakersville Borough Office, 846 Main St. Shoemakersville, PA at 7:00 p.m.

In attendance: Chris Kline – President, Amy Botwright – Vice President, Michael Grim, Dana Randazzo, Dana Smith, Joseph Wertz, Jr., Dustin Remp – Mayor, David Kee – Engineer, Keith Mooney – Solicitor, Brandon Nabar – Junior Council Person, Paul Gruber – Borough Manager & Codes, and Melissa Wagner – Secretary/Treasurer.

Absent from the meeting: Tara Kennedy-Kline

Code Enforcement – Mr. Gruber

- **Permits & Notices:** Bill Murphy is working with the tenants of both 600 & 1048 Shoemaker Ave. and will perform final inspections once the interior work is completed at the sites. As Mr. Gruber states that Billy Blankenbiller is running into difficulties completing the stormwater application for his apartments, President Kline suggests that Mr. Gruber reach out to him to determine the specific issues.

Solicitor’s Report – Solicitor Mooney

- **Meeting Attendance:** Moving forward Solicitor Haws will be attending the meetings, with Solicitor Mooney remaining as the borough’s main point of contact.
- **Access to Water Meters:** Mr. Gruber recommends the next step to having residents upgrade to radio read meters is to hand deliver the meter scheduling letters to the individual residents. If residents refuse to grant the borough access to the meter, a next step could be to obtain an administrative search warrant, with Solicitor Mooney discussing the process. Council and Mr. Gruber discuss the content of the letter to be distributed, with Vice President Botwright suggesting a deadline for scheduling the appointment. If residents do not respond, then a certified letter should be mailed. Solicitor Mooney recommends reaching out to residents either in the morning or evening, as work schedules may vary. Solicitor Mooney and President Kline discuss possible termination of water services if residents do not comply, with President Kline noting that this should be communicated to residents in the letter to be distributed. President Kline recommends having a deadline of April 1.
- **Recreation Board Membership Ordinance:** Solicitor Mooney is reviewing Ms. Kennedy-Kline’s draft of the updated ordinance. The individuals that expressed interest in joining the board will be asked to submit a letter of intent.
- **Sale of Pool Property:** Solicitor Mooney spoke with Mark Koch, who stated that once the issues with the fire code are resolved, they will be ready to coordinate a date to close on the property in the 30-60 days thereafter.

Engineer’s Report – Mr. Kee

- **Tractor Supply:** Mr. Gruber heard back from Sue Barnes, who stated that she will reach out to those in charge of the project, to aid in setting up an onsite meeting between, Mr. Gruber, Mr. Kee, Mr. Wertz and a developer representative to review the outstanding concerns. The extension on the sale of the property ends on March 31, with no guarantee of there being any further extensions.

- **LSA Grant for Blower Replacement:** The grant for replacement of the blowers at the wastewater treatment plant and other related improvements was submitted on November 27, 2024. Potential award of the grant could occur in September.
- **LSA Grant for Borough Hall ADA Improvements:** ARRO will begin design of the improvements upon completion of the LSA grant agreement and receipt of the survey information. The borough has signed the agreement and is waiting to hear back from the state. **Mr. Wertz will reach out to ER Felty to obtain an AutoCAD drawing of the survey for Mr. Kee.**

Fire Chief's Report - Chief Wagner

Chief Wagner discusses the North & West end location calls on the January report, noting of a coding issue.

Chief Wagner discusses the fire on Pennsylvania Ave., noting of the frozen hydrant discovered at the site. Another hydrant was able to be utilized and soon thereafter, Mr. Gruber and borough staff reviewed all hydrants and provided a list to Chief Wagner of 8 hydrants in the borough that are currently frozen. Vice President Botwright asks why hydrants have been freezing, with Chief Wagner stating that perhaps prior issues are now being recognized. He and Mr. Gruber discuss instituting a hydrant maintenance plan.

Chief Wagner reports that the fire company will be looking at purchasing an engine tanker, with the process potentially taking up to 3 years. He discusses the benefits of the truck that is being reviewed. Chief Wagner and President Kline review the cost of a new truck, which could range from \$400,000 - \$1.8M. Mr. Grim asks why such a price different, with Chief Wagner citing the manufacturer and the truck features selected.

Secretary's Report/Correspondence – Ms. Wagner

Ms. Wagner reports that the borough office will be closed on February 14 & 17. The 2024 borough audit will take place at the office this Thursday and Friday.

Mayor's Report – Mayor Remp

Mayor Remp reviews the 48 PA State Police calls that occurred in January.

All 17 Hometown Heroes banners and the 1 Welcome to Shoemakersville banner have been received and will be hung weather permitting. He thanks Mr. Gruber and borough staff in quickly remedying two of the currently hung banners that were twisted.

The next Neighborhood Watch Program meeting will be on February 19 at 7:00 p.m.

Operator/Manager's Report – Mr. Gruber

Mr. Gruber reports that borough staff has built a blue print rack holder for much less than what a new holder would cost.

Mr. Gruber reports that a water main break in the 400 block of Pine St. was repaired on January 21 and a break in the 900 block of Main St. was repaired on January 25. Staff as onsite for 24 hours for the break on Main St. UGI improperly marked their gas line location on Main St. and as such, the line was hit. The fire company and UGI responded to repair and restore the gas service to 933 Main St. UGI will be restoring both excavated holes as weather permits. Chief Wagner reviews what to look for when a natural gas line is hit.

Mr. Gruber was contacted by an agency representing Verizon, who is interested in leasing space for their antennae/equipment. T-Mobile currently pays the borough \$850/mo. Verizon would offer \$1,000. He will forward information on the matter as it is received.

Mr. Gruber reports that Chief Wagner will be reviewing the proper operation of hydrants at staff's next team meeting.

Mr. Gruber reports that the timeframe to replace 70 manual water meters would take a total of 23-24 hours. Mr. Gruber, Vice President Botwright and President Kline discussing the scheduling of appointments.
Mr. Gruber and Ms. Wagner will draft a letter for review.

Mr. Gruber and Council review the quotes received for the garage roof repairs. President Kline reports that Bachman's quote using CDX is \$18,530 and would be \$18,186 with OSB. The Joyland quote using CDX is \$19,300 with a quote of \$18,000 using OSB.

*A motion is made by Mr. Wertz to authorize Bachman quote 89346 for a total of \$18,530 pending the review and approval of the additional decking as required by the borough manager and borough engineer to be above the base bid price of \$14,756. Seconded by Mr. Grim. President Kline recommends this CDX quote over the use of OSB. Motion carried unanimously.

Junior Council Person's Report – Mr. Nabar – nothing to report

Property/Streets/Sanitation – Mr. Smith – nothing to report

Sewer – Mr. Wertz – nothing to report

Water – President Kline

Suburban Testing Labs tested the water in January at Bell Trucking and the water plant and all requirements were met.

Parks & Recreation – Ms. Kennedy-Kline

Vice President Botwright reports that the next Recreation Board meeting will be at the borough office on February 11 at 6:00 p.m. The Scibble tournament will be at Ollie's on Saturday, April 5 at 7:00 p.m.

Law/Planning/Zoning – Mr. Wertz – nothing to report

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 January 21, 2025. Seconded by Mr. Wertz. Motion carried unanimously.

*A motion is made by Vice President Botwright to approve the bills payable for February 4, 2025. Seconded by Mr. Wertz. Motion carried unanimously.

Community Outreach – Ms. Randazzo

The spring community yard sale of May 3 has been advertised on various social media sites. Vice President Botwright also included the yard sale in the upcoming newsletter.

New Business

Public Comment

Mark Paine (20 Main St.): Commends borough staff for their efforts during the last snow event.

Mr. Paine asks for additional clarification on the fire tax, as it was his understanding that the fire company would receive the \$24,000 generated in addition to the \$30,000 budgeted amount.

Vice President Botwright replies that the \$24,000 increase is not a fire tax, but an amount that is specifically allocated to the fire company, to aid in funding the \$30,000 donation. She notes it was never intended to be in addition to the \$30,000. Chief Wagner voices his displeasure on the situation, as it was also his understating that the \$24,000 would be in addition to the \$30,000 donation.

Mr. Paine discusses the large price range for a new fire truck.

Richard Geschwindt (603 Reber St.): Asks if the .5 mill increase was advertised, with Ms. Wagner stating that the tax ordinance was advertised.

Mr. Geschwindt reports that a truck hit the sign on his corner again, leaving residue in the gutter. The handicap ramp is showing signs of wear. Mr. Gruber reports that staff poured a concrete block, which will be painted yellow, with a breakaway post inside, that will be used when the current sign is knocked down again. After the sign was previously hit, Mr. Methax stopped at Schneider and asked that the trucks do not turn around in town.

Mr. Geschwindt asks for an update of the business at 600 Shoemaker Ave., with Mr. Gruber noting that the tenant will be keeping the location a diner, but will be increasing the size of the lobby. Bill Murphy will be reviewing the work and performing a final inspection.

Council and Mr. Gruber review a citizen's request for reimbursement of a tire repair invoice. President Kline feels the timing of the incident and the day of the repair seems peculiar. Mayor Remp will view his camera for any information that may have been picked up.

Council reviews a resident's request for her water bill late fees to be waived. She paid the bill several days late but is asking the fee to be waived as she was dealing with her son's medical issues.

*A motion is made by Mr. Smith to waive the late fee. Seconded by Mr. Grim. Mr. Wertz asks what prevented her from paying the bill before the due date. He and President Kline discuss due dates. Motion carried by a vote of 4 yes to 2 no, with Vice President Botwright and Mr. Wertz voting opposed.

Old Business

Mr. Grim asks for a status on the Recreation Board ordinance, with Solicitor Mooney stating that he will forward a copy to Council once he has updated the draft.

A motion is made by Mr. Wertz to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Grim. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melissa Wagner - Secretary/Treasurer