

**Summit Hill Borough Council**  
**July 22, 2015, 7:00 p.m. Borough Hall**

**Snow Parking Ordinance Workshop**

A special meeting of the Summit Hill Borough Council was held at the above time and place with Vice President John O'Gurek residing.

**Roll Call** – Vice President John O'Gurek, Michael Alabovitz, Greg Kosciolk and William O'Gurek were all present. President Mike Kokinda, Jesse Walck, Bill Chapman and Mayor Paul McArdle were absent. Solicitor Michael Greek arrived at 6:41 p.m.

Vice President John O'Gurek stated that the meeting tonight is to discuss the snow ordinance. We will try to come up with a better system than what is already in place. Whoever has ideas or would like to speak can do so.

**Floor -**

1. Dave Wargo, 236 East Hazard Street, asked who determines that there is 3 inches of snow or more and where is it measured. John O'Gurek said to plow curb to curb is 3 inches, which isn't much. The Borough crew go around and clean up here and there. Anyone can look out their window and say there is 3 inches out there. He feels 3 inches is fair. The signs say that you need to be moved by 7 or 8 a.m. A lot of people are not understanding what the rules are. The signs state that it starts on the north and East sides. The problem comes in when the police go and canvas the whole town and then put tickets on cars. The people are getting made because they get the ticket but their street doesn't get plowed until 1:00 p.m. The police need to start staying a street or two ahead of the plow. Maybe we need to wait until the next day to do curb to curb. Take Dave Hiles' street for instance. The whole street was ticketed and the sign said you have to move if there is 3 inches of snow and the police officer said read the ordinance. The way the ordinance reads, the officer had every right to ticket them. This is not what we are about. Dave Wargo read Amendment #1 of 1998, which reads that it states until cleared by the Borough. That implies that the police should not be able to ticket until the streets are being cleared. O'Gurek said this is not about the money. The reason tickets went from \$5.00 to \$25.00 is because people thought if it was only \$5.00 they won't bother to move their cars. It is written correctly and they can hand those tickets out any time they want; he just doesn't agree with it. He thinks it should be tweaked a little bit and give a little more leniency.
2. John Gawlik, 215 North Spruce Street, stressed that we went from being the best plowed town in the area to the worst. We have streets on the North side that were one lane because of the way they were being plowed. They are not plowing close enough to the curbs. When Kossie and Mucker were here, if the cars were moved, they were plowed. It is common sense. Dave Wargo said there is language in the original ordinance that takes care of that. Things were changed with the amendment. The original ordinance reads that within 24 hours of the South and East sides of the street being cleared pursuant to subparagraph B, which he read earlier, it shall be unlawful for any vehicles to park on the North and West sides of any Borough street until such time as those sides are cleared. There is no time limit there so what Kossie and Mucker use to do is if all the cars were moved, they would plow.
3. Dave Hiles, 219 East White Street, said that the neighbors on his block do not understand the parking when it is time to plow. He thinks it is a great idea to have the guys plow curb to curb if they can, but every car has to be moved. You cannot go up three quarters of the way, go around three cars and leave a mess. John O'Gurek said the workers were instructed that if there was one car on the block, they are not to clean that block.

4. William Searfoss, 230 West Ludlow Street, said that last year everyone moved their cars and the driver said that it wouldn't be done until the next day. John O'Gurek added that riding around in the middle of the street with the plow up is not productive by any means. Dave Wargo added that the amendment stopped cleaning of the other side of the street on the same day.
  
5. Dave Hiles asked if there was a recent time study done on what it costs the borough to plow our town curb to curb. John O'Gurek said basically whatever the wages are and then they are doing maintenance on the vehicles. Hiles said what he meant was after a snow storm. O'Gurek explained that he was trying to give an accurate number because we do not know how many times the police will call them out to sit there. Michael Alabovitz said time wise, and this is on an average snow storm of six inches, it would take them 8 to 10 hours and that is doing the main thoroughfares and to the curb on one side. The next day is about half the time, so say about 4 hours. Hiles said the reason he is asking is because with what the workers are getting paid now, he would like to see if some of this could be outsourced. It is definitely something to think about because as of the middle of June, the Borough workers have made almost over \$30,000.00. By the end of the year, with benefits, they are making \$80,000 per employee; that is a lot to be cutting grass and snow plowing. Alabovitz said there is a lot more that people do not see. Hiles stated that he was talking to the Chief the other day and was watching the guys cut grass. He said that he realized that is \$100 an hour to cut the grass. Kira Steber explained that they did sign up for the county program to get summer help to cut the grass, but we did not get any kids this year. Hiles said let me give you an example. He saw one of the workers up by the Presbyterian Church on a lawn tractor cutting grass; does anyone know how long he spends on the garden tractor cutting grass. John O'Gurek stated that it is not 8 hours but close to 5 or 6 hours without a doubt. Hiles said we are talking a 30 inch cut and he can make a few passes; let's figure about \$40.00 an hour. It is costing the Borough \$320.00 to get the lot cut. He can't believe that they can't find a subcontractor to come in and cut that lot in one hour and not charge \$320.00. They are using a little garden tractor to cut the Ginder Stadium. He said the school just cut back all the janitors jobs and hired subcontractors and taught one guy how to use the backhoe. Look at what it is costing the Borough. Maybe when the guys were making \$14.00 an hour it wasn't worth looking to subcontract it out. Now they are making \$24.00 an hour. Here is something else that needs to be addressed. Their work schedules need to be addressed so that you are not paying out overtime if they are just sitting around. My main point is that clearing the snow has to be done on a case by case situation. We need one person to make the calls with the police and the Borough workers. That one person should be somebody in the Borough, not 10 different councilmen or two different Borough workers. It needs to be somebody who is responsible for contacting the police and it should be just one person to dictate this to and to make good decisions. He is not complaining that they are doing a bum job or anything, just someone to be in charge. O'Gurek addressed the overtime and said bottom line is that yes it is time and a half, which is how their contract is written. Their contract is coming up in a year or so and maybe it can be tweaked. Now getting back to what was said about hiring someone from outside. He said let's say it costs \$150.00 to cut the park and someone comes in and charges us \$100.00; we are saving \$50.00 but then we are still paying almost \$50.00 an hour out for the workers. When that guy gets caught up with everything, then what. Hiles said that way you do not need two full-time Borough workers. If you outsource all grass, you won't need two workers. Maybe it would pay to buy a new piece of equipment to save time and money. Maybe there is someone out there who is willing to use their own equipment to plow certain streets. He has heard a lot of complaints that the Ginder Field is not being cut enough. Kossie use to do it with a push mower and had it done. Hiles said he is getting back to the plowing. He is looking at it from a businessman's perspective. He can plow both sides of his block in 20 minutes. There are 7 blocks on White Street that is less than 3 hours. With his son's truck, he can plow all of White Street in less than 3 hours. If you get to it before it turns to ice, a smaller truck can get it done. There may be guys out there that will sign contracts saying they will do one street but do not want anything to do with the plowing in Summit Hill. Michael Alabovitz said someone will most likely charge \$90.00 an hour. Someone is not going to bring a piece of equipment out for \$40.00 an hour. O'Gurek said that it is something that they can entertain at some point but it is not an issue right now. The ordinance is more or less the issue. We are talking about the parking and

when they should or should not move. This why we are here. We need to try to make it better for everyone in the Borough. Hiles said the biggest complaint he is hearing is the snow might be stopped by 10 a.m. and they are driving around and clearing the center of the street. Cooperation goes a long way during snow storms. Sometimes we have people who move in and they will come out, move their car and ask if they are going to plow. At one time you could knock on someone's door and ask them to move their car. O'Gurek stated that years ago everyone did work together. John Gawlik added that once you have the main road open, start doing curb to curb. Dave Hiles said to think back when we were kids. When the snow stopped, they started plowing and worked until the town was clean. Can we look at having people on call so that it can be done in one day. It is just common sense. William O'Gurek said that people want to see progress. John O'Gurek stated that a few years back, we moved more and more in advance for the next day. Plowed as much as they could in one day. Thirty years ago there was one car per household. Year ago there were designated areas for people to park their cars until the streets are cleared. Alabovitz added that some people work night shift too. John O'Gurek said that if people move their cars and the guys are still on the clock, we will plow their street. This will open up parking spaces for the next day. Businesses need to be cleared the same day as the storm. This is for safety purposes as well. It is a courtesy to people and the business. It is common sense and it goes a long way.

6. Wayne Gryzik, 15 West White Bear Drive, said that the ordinance is ok but management is a problem. John Gawlik added that shared services need to stop too. It seems like we are sending both of our guys all over the place and the other towns are only sending us one guy. Seems like we are getting shafted. John O'Gurek said this is not the case. We do very little for Coaldale. We help with their Christmas lights. The amount of time we give them compared to them sending up their trucks; we are making out better. O'Gurek said we are here to listen to what all of you have to say and figure something out that will work for all of us.
7. Kira Steber interrupted stating that we are getting off track. We scheduled this meeting to discuss the snow plowing ordinance. Getting back to Dave Wargo's original question, who determines when it is 3 inches of snow or more. She believes that is decided between the police department and the Borough workers. John O'Gurek added that it is the police who make the decision. John Gawlik stated that he asked who was responsible to call the workers out and was told by Chief Fittos no to ask. Dave Wargo stressed that specifications and procedures need to be spelled out in the ordinance as well as a location site for measuring the snow. This needs to be treated like a business because it is a business and the police should be out monitoring. William O'Gurek agreed with Wargo saying that we need to designate a person and have an area to measure. John O'Gurek said all police officers are supposed to be patrolling and if they are, their responsible to call out the workers if the street are slick and need to be cindered or plowed. There needs to be something put in writing for all of our officers that this is the procedure and for after hours as well. If an officer is out there and sees the roads are slick, call out the workers. He added that when the workers get called out, it is an automatic 2 hours. Michael Alabovitz asked who you would want to designate. Wargo stated that the officer on duty would be the ideal and an alternate person. John O'Gurek explained that there is never an issue with when to plow or cinder, they are intelligent enough to know when it needs to be done. The problem is when the police are not calling the workers out in time and then it gets real bad. Part-time officers are not being told that to do and it need to be discussed with the Chief. The bottom line is it is going to be addressed and it is going to be stressed and in writing. Many times I have called because the part-time officer did not make the call. Bill Searfoss said there was a part-timer by his house during a snow storm and he had to call the Chief because he wasn't sure what to do. If he doesn't know what he should be doing, then he should get the hell out of here. John O'Gurek stated that this is why we voted to raise the rates at the last meeting; maybe we can get better help. We have been going through part-time officers pretty regularly lately. O'Gurek said he feels that we are all on the same page and that the ordinance isn't a bad ordinance, we just need to tweak it a bit and get on the same page. He asked if everyone is ok with what we have and if anyone else had anything to add. Hiles stated that he feels the biggest problem is how the plowing is getting done with one side one day and the other side the next

day. Dave Wargo added that in the original ordinance it states that both sides will be plowed within 24 hours. O'Gurek said if no one else has anything to add, they will have another meeting in early October so that we can have one more meeting before it snows.

Council entered into an Executive Session to discuss personnel matters at 7:25 p.m.

Council entered back into Regular Session at 7:40 p.m.

**Motion was made by Michael Alabovitz and second by Greg Kosciolk to adjourn until the next regular scheduled meeting of the Summit Hill Borough on July 27, 2015.** Motion was opened to the floor for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.



Mike Kokinda  
Council President



Kira Steber  
Secretary/Treasurer