

Summit Hill Borough Council
September 12, 2011, 7:00 p.m., Borough Hall

The regular scheduled meeting of the Summit Hill Borough Council was held at the above time and place with President Joseph Weber presiding.

Roll Call – President Joseph Weber, Vice- President John O’Gurek, Harry Miller, Michael Alabovitz, Ken Boyd, William Chapman, Michael Kokinda, Solicitor Joseph Matika and Mayor Paul McArdle were all in attendance.

Minutes – Motion was made by Bill Chapman and second by John O’Gurek to approve the minutes from the August 8th (Regular meeting), August 16th (Special Meeting), and August 31st (Special Meeting) for Summit Hill Borough Council Meetings for August 2011. The motion was opened to the floor for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Floor –

1. Michael Keip, 141 E. White Street, said that he hasn’t had a flooded basement in 64 years and now with in the past year he has had sewage back up in basement 3 times with at least 3 feet of raw sewage each time. Michael also told Council that he has lost a lot of items due to the back up. He is asking Council what can be done to resolve this problem.
 - Stan Szczecina, 146 E. White Street, said that he is having the same problem with sewage backup in his basement as well, and he has already had to replace the motor on his oil burner he as well would like Council to investigate where the problem is coming from. Stan said that he believes the problems are related to the sewer work they did on the high way last year. He said that there used to be 12’’ pipes in the ground and they replaced them with 7’’ pipes and now when ever there is a heavy rain they back up. Joe Weber told Stan that he is not sure of the pipe size because the Sewer Authority was in charge of the project, Joe added that they replaced the force main in the road but he isn’t aware of any changes made to the outlet. John O’Gurek said that the Sewer Authority will know what size pipe was put into the ground. Edith Szczecina said that each year the Fire Company, Water Authority and Sewer Authority used to flush the water and sewer system; she asked if the still do this.
 - Ralph Parsons, 6 E. Hazard Street, said that on Friday he had urine back up into his basement and his 1st floor bathroom. Joe Weber said what happened was they were investigating a problem. Joe explained that there was a blockage with small stones so they had to blast the line in order to unblock the line.
 - Atty. Matika said that any open drains leading to the sewer are illegal; he added that years ago they were required to smoke the lines to find out where all open drains were located. Atty. Matika said that if you have a open sewer drain in you basement and your basement gets flooded the water is going down into the sewer system and overloading it and that is where some of our problems may be coming from.
 - John O’Gurek said that if this problem is coming from the project that was done on the highway, the sewer authority is going to need to fix the problem. Mike Alabovitz said that he believes that we can’t get rid of as much water as we used to, he said that the sewer authority gets rid of approximately 40,000 gallons of water a day. He added that if people have sum pumps and are pumping the water into the sewer system that can be causing part of the problem as well. Joe Weber explained that we had 26 inches of extra rain than usual this year so this may be part of the problem, Joe said that we can call a special meeting and ask the Borough’s engineer Ron Tirpak to attend and maybe he has a better explanation of where the problem is coming from. Edith Szczecina mentioned the vacant home on E. White Street, she asked Council what they can do because there is raw sewage backing up into that home as well and she doesn’t have a key to go in and clean it out. Atty. Matika said that we can get in touch with our code enforcement officer and see what they can do to

get it cleaned out. John O’Gurek said that if you plug the drains in your basement it can be a quick fix until we can find out where the problem is coming from.

- Charles Gafrarar, 149 E. White Street, said that on September 30, 2010 he began having problems with sewer backing up into his basement shower drain. Charles said that he believes that the problem is coming from Kossie paving over the man holes in town.
- Nicholas Delman, 150 E. White Street, said that he is having the same problems as the rest of the residents. He suggested that if you put a check valve in maybe it will alleviate some of the problems that we are having, he added that as per the plumbing code there has to be a check valves on all new lines.
- David Ogozalek, 7 E. Amidon Street, told Council that his sewer is getting blocked after every rain storm, and he is getting water in his basement from every storm. Dave said that he re-ran his rain spouting to try and solve them problem and it still isn’t helping. Mr. Ogozalek said that during this past storm water was shooting out of his floor drains like a geyser, he added that he had almost 3 feet of water in his basement. Dave asked if there was anyway that the Borough could start a fund to help out with the damage costs. Joe Weber explained that in order to fix all of the lines in town it is going to be costly, he said that in order to get the money to do this the borough would need to raise the sewer rates, and we don’t qualify for grants because they will tell us that we need to raise our rates at well. Ralph Parsons asked if the Borough decides to work on the lines again can we let him know before we do it, so that the can try to prevent it from backing up into his home again. Joe Weber said that the Borough is probably going to dig up the street to look for the problem.
- George Paton, said that he was a member of the fire company when the Domarecki’s had problems with ground seepage. He said that they put a check valve in by the Presbyterian Church to stop the seepage, and there haven’t been any problems since. Joe Weber said that he wants to schedule a meeting so we can discuss these problems further.
- Joe Bohovich, 44 E. Hazard Street, told Council that he has been getting water and raw sewage in his basement for the past 6 months and it’s about 12 to 18 inches each time that we have a heavy rain. Mr. Bohovich added that he had a contractor come to his home and temporally block off the floor drain in his basement. He said that when they flushed the lines on Friday he heard strange noises coming from his toilet. Joe stressed that he is becoming extremely frustrated with this problem and he wants to know what the Borough is going to do to fix it. Joe Weber briefly explained what the Borough’s plan of action is to resolve this problem. George Paton asked if the Borough still flushes the sewer lines; Joe Weber said that we do not.
- Shannon Vasiliou, 143 E. White Street, told Council when the sewer backed up into her home it destroyed a lot of items in her basement. She said that there is about 40 bags of trash and is wondering if she puts it out will Tamaqua Transfer take it.

Mayor’s Report – Council received a copy of the Mayor’s Report for the month of August 2011. He reported the magistrate income for the month of August 2011 was \$919.68. **Motion was made by Bill Chapman and second by Harry Miller to approve the Mayor’s Report for the month of August 2011.** The motion was opened to the floor for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Police Report – Council received copies of Chief Fittos’ Police reports for the month of August 2011. Chief Fittos said on Sunday, September 18, 2011 St. Joseph’s the Worker Roman Catholic Church is holding their 10th Anniversary Angel Ride, which will have anywhere from 100-150 motorcycles and they are asking for a police escort though the town. Chief Fittos also said that he received a letter from MHMR and they are sponsoring a seminar on October 12 and 13, 2011, he explained that they seminar is about the criminal justice system and how to identify gaps in service, he is asking permission to attend. **Motion was made by Mike Kokinda and second by Bill Chapman to allow Chief Fittos to attend the MHMR seminar on October 12, and 13, 2011.** The motion was opened to the floor for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council. **Motion was made by Bill Chapman and second by Mike Kokinda to accept the Police**

Report for the month of August 2011. The motion was opened to the floor for comment; none made.
Motion carried unanimously by Council

Planning and Zoning Report – Council received copies of Larry Marek’s Planning and Zoning report for the month of August 2011. Larry told Council that he is aware of the illegal business being run in town, and his will be acting on it. **Motion was made by Bill Chapman and second by Mike Kokinda to accept the Planning and Zoning Report for the month of August 2011.** The motion was opened to the floor for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Work Leader Report – Council received copies of the Work Leader Report for the month of August 2011. **Motion was made by Mike Kokinda and second by John O’Gurek to accept the Work Leader Report for the month of August 2011.** The motion was opened to the floor for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Tax Collector Report – Assistant Borough Secretary, Amber Shemansik read the Tax Collector’s Report for the month of August 2011. Alice Kane submitted total taxes as \$7,873.33 with a commission of \$393.66. **Motion was made by Mike Kokinda and second by Bill Chapman to accept the Tax Collector Report for the month of August 2011.** The motion was opened to the floor for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Wage Tax Report – Assistant Borough Secretary, Amber Shemansik, read Berkheimer’s Wage Tax Report for the month of August 2011. They submitted total Earned Income Tax of \$22,170.69 with a commission of \$434.50. The total LST submitted for August was \$95.50 with a commission of \$1.83. **Motion was made by Mike Kokinda and second by Harry Miller to accept the Wage Tax Report for the month of August 2011.** The motion was opened to the floor for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Receipts – Assistant Borough Secretary, Amber Shemansik, reported the total General Account receipts for the month of August 2011 as \$73,115.81 and the total Sanitation Account receipts for the month of August 2011 as \$29,834.52. **Motion was made by Bill Chapman and Second by Ken Boyd to accept the receipts for the month of August 2011.** The motion was opened to the floor for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Committee Reports –

Streets –

- John O’Gurek said there is nothing to report at this time. Joe Weber said that we have a quote for a push camera, but currently at this time we don’t have room for it in the budget.

Building –

- Joe Weber said that Council received a letter from Shawn Hoben regarding the emergency vehicle exhaust system. Mike Alabovitz said that he had someone over at the fire company to look over the system and he is waiting to hear back from them if we can re-work the current system that we have because every manufacturer is different.

Fire and Emergency Services-

- Shawn Hoben stressed that the HVAC at the fire company has to be fixed because mold is starting to form. Mike Alabovitz informed him that he had someone look at that issue as well.

Recreation – nothing at this time

Motion was made by Bill Chapman and second by Mike Kokinda to accept all Committee Reports for the month of August 2011. The motion was opened to the floor for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Communications – See attached sheet.

1. Joe Weber read a written complaint from Jack Dopira regarding moisture and dampness in his basement; Joe said they will investigate this complaint further.

Communications

1. Notice of Property Assessments from the Board of Assessment and Revision of Taxes
2. Notice of Assessment Appeal from the Board of Assessment and Revision of Taxes
3. 2010 H. A. Berkheimer, Inc. Earned Income Tax Audit
4. PLGIT 3rd Quarter 2011 newsletter
5. Five Star Forum June 2011 newsletter

Motion was made by Bill Chapman and second by Mike Kokinda to accept communications for the month of August 2011. The motion was opened to the floor for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Bills – Assistant Borough Secretary, Amber Shemansik, reported total expenses for the General Account for the month of August 2011 as \$155,636.24 and the total expenses for the Sanitation Account for the month of August 2011 as \$23,054.13. **Motion was made by Mike Kokinda and second by Harry Miller to pay all bills for the month of August 2011.** The motion was opened to the floor for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Unfinished Business –

1. Mike Kokinda asked what is the status of the property located at 38 W. White Street. Joe Weber said that the owners were notified of the problem and they have 5 days to contact Barry Isett and Associates with a plan of action and the 5 days isn't up yet. Joe said that we can not comment until the time is up.

New Business –

1. Harry Miller presented Council with one exemption for the 2011 garbage collection fee.
 - a. 152 E. Hazard Street. Harry explained that the property owners have a water leak and that is the reason for the high water usage, he said that he was in the home and there is no one living at this property. **Motion was made by Harry Miller and second by Bill Chapman to approve 152 E. Hazard Street for a garbage exemption for the 2011 collection fee effective May 6, 2011.** The motion was opened to the floor for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council. Mike Kokinda opposed.
2. Harry Miller reported one handicap parking permit has been submitted for renewal.
 - a. Lois Ciavaglia, 342 West Iron Street, for renewal. **Motion was made by Harry Miller and second by Bill Chapman to approve the renewal of a handicap application for Lois Ciavaglia at 342 West Iron Street with the additional fees waived based on their income.** The motion was opened to the floor for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council

3. Amber Shemansik stated that the 2011 fall clean-up dates have been set and they will be Thursday October 6, 2010 for the East side of the town including Knepper's Trailer Court, East and West White Bear Drive; Tuesday October 11, 2010 for the West side of town including Laurel Drive, East and West Mountaintop Road. Items to be picked up will be 5 tires, tire rims, auto body parts, refrigerators, freezers, vending machines, humidifiers, water coolers, heat pumps, washers, dryers, stoves, all items should have the chemicals removed and doors taken off in addition up to 10 bags of garbage will be taken.

4. Tom Tkach, 105 W. Holland Street, told Council that the older trees in Ludlow Park are very high and becoming extremely hazardous especially with all of high winds that we have been having and he is asking if we can top some of the trees. Joe Weber said that the shade tree commission is in charge of making those calls so Joe will run it by him and see what he says.

Council entered into executive session at 8:35 p.m. to discuss possible litigation.

Council entered back into regular session at 8:59 p.m.

Motion was made by Harry Miller and second by Bill Chapman to adjourn at 9:00 p.m. until the next regular scheduled meeting of the Summit Hill Borough on October 10, 2011. The motion was opened to the floor for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Amber Shemansik
Summit Hill Borough
Assistant Secretary

Joseph Weber
Summit Hill Borough
Council President