

Summit Hill Borough Council
July 9, 2024, 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 David Wargo presiding.

Roll Call – President David Wargo, Lacey Gonzalez, Karen Ruzicka, Marlene Basiago, Solicitor Robert Frycklund and Mayor Jeffrey Szczecina were all present. Vice President William O’Gurek, Alan Kruslicky and Joseph Weber were absent.

Floor –

1. Tyler Calkins, Elite Generation Wrestling, informed Council that he is interested in holding several wrestling events in Summit Hill. He gave some history about how EGW started in Summit Hill and how he would like to bring it back to town. President Wargo asked if the organization is still running like they did in the past by holding events for benefits. Mr. Calkins stated that they will be doing benefit shows but the first couple he would like to do to get them back up on their feet.
2. Charles Durning, Jaded Angel Wrestling Academy, said he is there as a liaison for EGW and would also like to speak on their behalf.
3. Dianne Smith, 230 West Hazard Street, complimented Chief Woodward and Mayor Szczecina for addressing her concerns that she had a few months back regarding police presence in town. Since then, she has seen an increase in patrolling in her neighborhood. She would like to see more cruises come through during the early morning hours because that is when the incidents at her home took place. She understands that no one is thrilled about nightshift, she also works per diem nights at St. Luke’s. On her nights off she does not see cruisers in her neighborhood and hopes that someone will address her concern.

Minutes – Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to approve the meeting minutes from the April 22, 2024 Public Hearing and the June 11, 2024 Council meeting. Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Mayor’s Report – Mayor Szczecina said the financial information was not received yet but he did have a letter from Terri Kane and the Hootenanny volunteers that he read to Council. The letter expressed their appreciation for allowing them to hold the event and look forward to next year’s event. Mayor Szczecina stated that he feels the shoe should be on the other foot. This event had to be a massive undertaking. The event is not only becoming a Summit Hill event but a regional event. On behalf of himself and Council he thanked Terri and Ed Kane and the volunteers for everything they did to organize and run the event. He also thanked Ronnie and Colton for helping out with getting things set up for the event. They not only do it for this event but for all events that take place in town.

Mayor Szczecina also addressed a situation that took place on July 4th. He is not a social media person, but people have to realize that social media is not an accurate source of information. A post was made about the chaos at Mauch Chunk Lake Park, which began about 10:00 a.m. He said there were lots of comments about the situation which became total chaos on social media. Around 11:30 a.m. he took a ride down to the lake and when he arrived everything was completely calm. Park Director, David Horvath, was checking all IDs as people were entering the park and turning away those with out of state plates. He was very professional, courteous and explained the situation to everyone who entered. There were also rangers at each entrance to the park so that no one could enter the park illegally. He went back around 1:45 p.m. and they were doing the same thing with no major issues. Even though it wasn’t a Summit Hill problem, he was concerned that our police were going to have to get involved. There were absolutely no problems, the staff did a fantastic job with the situation and people should be proud of what we have. To the residents, social media is not an accurate source of information. Channel 13, Channel 16 and Channel 28 go out and investigate things before they report it. If people could drive away from the craze of comments on social media without knowing what is

really going on, it would make things a lot easier for all involved. Mayor Szczecina thanked David Horvath and his staff for doing a great job.

President Wargo, on behalf of Borough Council, said that he felt this years Hootenanny was the best yet. He thanked the employees and those on the Hootenanny committee for all the hard work they did to make the event so successful. It is an event they can be proud of and hope they can continue to grow and prosper with the event.

Motion was made by Lacey Gonzalez and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to accept the mayor's report for the month of June 2024. Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Police Report – Mayor Szczecina read the monthly report. He complimented Officer Fischi who was the officer on duty when the burglary at the Post Office occurred. He spoke with post office employees and a few other people. He really did a textbook investigation initially upon arriving. Once he understood what had happened, he secured the scene, notified the state police and federal authorities, who were there fairly quickly and were there most of the day. Officer Fischi did a really good job securing the scene and made the department look good in the eyes of the federal authorities and state police who came to process the scene. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Lacey Gonzalez to approve the Police report for the month of June 2024.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Planning and Zoning Report – **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by David Wargo to accept the Planning and Zoning report for the month of June 2024.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

UCC, Code Enforcement and Rental Inspection Reports – Councilwoman Basiago asked if there was a fine if a rental inspection failed and they have done anything to make the corrections in a few months. She would imagine that there are some people living at some of the places that did not pass inspection. President Wargo stated that if the inspection fails, they don't have a legal certification to rent. At some point, the code officer should fine the property owner. Councilwoman Gonzalez asked if it was Lehigh Engineering's responsibility to follow up. She didn't see any inspection that were done in June. President Wargo said Lehigh Engineering is the rental inspector and he usually groups things together and does them on a day when he is going to be in the area. Ms. Gonzalez asked if they know someone is or isn't living in the places that are being inspected. President Wargo said they don't know for sure. Councilwoman Ruzicka asked if Lehigh Engineering can add another column to their report and mark it, so Council knows. President Wargo added that if anyone sees a moving van in the area, they need to report it to the office so they can make sure that a moving permit was obtained. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to accept the UCC, Code Enforcement and Rental Inspection reports for the month of June 2024.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Work Leader Report – **Motion was made by Karen Ruzicka and seconded by Marlene Basiago to accept the Work Leader Reports for the months of May and June 2024.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Tax Collector Report – Nathan Halenar submitted his Tax Collector Report for the month of June 2024. Total taxes collected were \$20,809.26 with a commission of \$624.28. Councilwoman Gonzalez stated that she has a hard time tracking it; not that anything is wrong. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by David Wargo to accept the Tax Collector Report for the month of June 2024.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Delinquent Real Estate Tax Report – Portnoff submitted their Delinquent Real Estate Tax Report for the month of June 2024. Total delinquent real estate tax collected was \$2,875.26; no expense reimbursement to report. **Motion was made by Lacey Gonzalez and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to accept the Delinquent**

Real Estate Tax Report for the month of June 2024. Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Wage Tax Report – Berkheimer submitted their Wage Tax Report for the month of June 2024. Total EIT submitted was \$12,966.68 with a commission of \$224.32 and postage charges of \$22.49. Total LST submitted was \$87.76 with a commission of \$1.80 and postage charges of \$14.52. Total DLT submitted was \$129.25 in delinquent Occupation Tax and \$54.00 in delinquent Per Capita Tax. **Motion was made by Lacey Gonzalez and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to accept the Wage Tax report for the month of June 2024.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Delinquent Garbage Collection Report – Creditech Collection Solutions submitted their Delinquent Garbage Collection Report for the month of June 2024. Total collected from Creditech was \$195.75. **Motion was made by Karen Ruzicka and seconded by David Wargo to accept the Delinquent Garbage Collection report for the month of June 2024.** Motion was opened for comment. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Receipts – Total receipts received for the month of June 2024 were \$542,840.48. **Motion was made by Lacey Gonzalez and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to accept the Receipts for the month of June 2024.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Committee Reports

Streets – Mayor Szczecina mentioned that the road crew is going to mill the streets to be paved first and then they will pave what was milled.

Police – President Wargo stated that National Night Out is on the agenda. He noted that any police officers that would be at the event would have to be paid because it is contractual. If they aren't on duty during the hours of the event, they would be paid overtime.

Recreation –

1. Councilwoman Basiago said the pickleball court has been sealed and the borough crew painted the lines for both basketball and pickleball. A container has been ordered to keep the pickleball nets in. Those playing will have access to the code for the lock. Pickleball will only be played inside on Wednesday nights. There were two baby swings that were broken and have been replaced. The commission is looking to purchase another piece of equipment for the Little League Field.
2. Councilwoman Basiago stated that they decided to not hold a dan class in Ludlow Park. Classes have been suspended for now and will resume in August. Ms. Basiago said Cathy had mentioned doing classes on Mondays and Wednesday in the community center, however, she would like to hold them on Wednesday only for now to see how many people come back.
3. President Wargo asked the status of the agreement to rent the Ginder Park. Councilwoman Basiago mentioned that at the last meeting Lacey and Karen said they would work on putting it together. Councilwoman Gonzalez stated that they were going to work on it but never got to at the last committee meeting.

Building Committee –

1. Councilwoman Ruzicka thank Ronnie, Colton and the summer helpers for repairing and painting the community center. They did a wonderful job. Kira Steber mentioned that the agreement to rent the community center will need to be updated to state that the new wooden boarder must be used to hang things up and not on the walls. President Wargo asked that Councilwoman Ruzicka work with committee and Kira to update the agreement.

Personnel – President Wargo said there is a request to give the Assistant Secretary a .50 cent raise, which is budgeted. Kira Steber said that when she was taken off of probation Council said to give her .50 cents at that time and reevaluate it again in a few months. Ms. Steber stated that she feels the additional .50 cents is deserved and funds to pay her come out of Sanitation, not the General Fund. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to approve a .50 cent raise for Assistant Secretary, Samantha Jones, effective 7/9/2024.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Motion was made by Kare Ruzicka and seconded by Marlene Basiago to accept the Committee Reports for the month of June 2024. Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Communications –

Communications for the Month of June 2024:

1. Request from Paige Brunell to use the Ginder Park/Pavilion on Saturday, July 20, 2024 from 2:00-7:00 p.m. for a birthday party.
2. Request from Diana Hoffman to use the Ginder Park/Pavilion on Saturday, August 3, 2024 from 11:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. for a birthday party.
3. Request from Anastasia and Wesley LaVeque to use the Ginder Park/Pavilion on Saturday, September 7, 2024 from 12:00-5:00 p.m. for a birthday party.
4. The Knights of Columbus resubmitted the request to use the Ginder Field to correct the date for their event to Saturday, September 21, 2024 from 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. for a Punt Pass and Kick Contest.
5. Letter from Tyler Calkins asking to hold wrestling matches in the Community Center every other month
6. Notice of Occupational Assessment from the Carbon County Board of Assessment and Revision of Taxes
7. Notice of Board of Assessment Appeals Determination for 330 East Holland Street from the Carbon County Board of Assessment and Revision of Taxes
8. Notice of Assessment Appeal from the Carbon County Board of Assessment and Revision of Taxes for a hearing to be held on August 14, 2024 for the following properties:
 - 18 East Hazard Street
 - 131 North Chestnut Street
 - 249 East Mountaintop Road
 - 248 East Hazard Street
9. Letter from Riley and Company, Inc. offering their audit services
 - **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Lacey Gonzalez to approve the request from Paige Bruell to use the Ginder Park/Pavilion on Saturday, July 20, 2024 from 2:00-7:00 p.m. for a birthday party.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.
 - **Motion was made by Karen Ruzicka and seconded by David Wargo to approve the request from Diana Hoffman to use the Ginder Park/Pavilion on Saturday, August 3, 2024 from 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. for a birthday party.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

- **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to approve the request from Anastasia and Wesley LaVeque to use the Ginder Park/Pavilion on Saturday, September 7, 2024 from 12:00-5:00 p.m. for a birthday party.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.
- **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to approve the resubmitted request from the Knights of Columbus to correct the date to use the Ginder Field for their event on Saturday, September 21, 2024 from 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. for a Punt Pass and Kick contest.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.
- President Wargo said a letter was submitted from Tyler Calkins asking for permission to hold wrestling matches in the Community Center every other month. He stated that there is a policy that has been standing since the community center was opened. They do not allow the building to be rented for commercial purposes. It can be used for fundraising as long as the event benefits a charity that is part of the borough. Tyler Calkins said that they have done events for the recreation commission in the past and wanted to know if this was something they can offer. President Wargo said they can talk with the president of the commission after the meeting and plan a benefit. Once a date has been decided, they can resubmit a letter for the event. President Wargo stated that this request has been withdrawn.

Motion was made by Lacey Gonzalez and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to accept communications for the month of June 2024. Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Bills – General Fund \$358,874.72, Community Center \$995.04, Sanitation Account \$28,251.34, and Street Account \$256.76. Councilwoman Gonzalez questioned the title for the General Account. It is marked as a new account and doesn't remember voting to open a new account. Kira Steber explained that it is not a new account. It is just the title that was put into QuickBooks by a previous secretary and has been that way since the account was opened. Ms. Gonzalez also questioned the lumpsum transfer into the payroll account. Ms. Steber explained that she only transfers what the total payroll is, however, due to the holiday the past week, it was not submitted in time for direct deposit so she gave the employees the option to wait until payroll was deposited into their accounts, or she could write them a check. Some people wanted a check, so she made sure to deposit enough money to cover the account. Once payroll hit the account on Monday, she made a transaction to reverse those that received a check to correct the error. Ms. Gonzalez asked if she transfers the total gross or net pay; Ms. Steber said the net.

Councilwoman Ruzicka questioned the Street Opening permit refund. She thought the fees were one set price. Ms. Steber explained that there are set fees, which are based off the square footage of the hole that will be dug open. The fees are either \$700 or \$1,400, depending on the square footage of the opening. As per the ordinance, there is an application fee, engineering fees, reinspection fees, and any borough costs that are deducted from the total fee paid. The balance is refunded to the applicant.

Motion was made by Karen Ruzicka and seconded by David Wargo to pay the bills from June 12 – July 9, 2024. Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Old Business -

1. President Wargo went over the changes that were made to the ordinance last month, which is now ready for advertisement. **Motion was made by Lacey Gonzalez and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to advertise the amended articles under Chapter 30, Property Maintenance.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.
2. President Wargo went over the changes that were also made to the ordinance, which is now ready for advertisement. Solicitor Frycklund explained that in the Borough Code, it specifies that fines must be in the ordinance itself. Things like fees and other costs can be put into a resolution. **Motion was made by**

Marlene Basiago and seconded by David Wargo to advertise the amended Article V under Handicapped Parking and Street Regulations. Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

New Business –

1. Kira Steber explained that she does not have the paperwork at this time because she needs a check to open the account, so she is just looking for a motion to adopt the resolution to open the account. Councilwoman Gonzalez stated that they already approved to open the account at a previous meeting. Ms. Steber said that she was correct, however, the paperwork from the bank will be an official resolution that will need to be on record. Ms. Gonzalez asked if Atty. Frycklund prepared the resolution. Ms. Steber said he won't have to prepare the resolution because the document will come directly from the bank. **Motion was made by Lacey Gonzalez and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to adopt Resolution No. 05-2024 Authorizing Jim Thorpe Neighborhood Bank to open a new account for the Local Services Tax for the Borough.** Motion was opened for comment. Ms. Gonzalez said she thought they were making the motion to adopt the resolution and not to open the account. President Wargo said it is an adoption of the resolution to document the opening of the account. No more comments made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.
2. **Motion was made by Lacey Gonzalez and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to Transfer \$2,073.39 from the General Fund to the new account for Local Services Tax.** Motion was opened for comment. President Wargo asked Ms. Steber to verify that this is the balance of what would be for the Local Services Tax. Councilwoman said it is correct. She has the budget in front of her, so she has verified it. No more comments made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to enter into Executive Session at 7:51 p.m. to discuss litigation. Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Motion was made by Lacey Gonzalez and seconded by Marlene Basiago to enter back into regular session at 8:18 p.m. Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by council.

Motion was made by Lacey Gonzalez and seconded by Marlene Basiago to amend the agenda for the purpose of posting regulations at the park as soon as possible due to the heavy use of the pavilion in the park. Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Motion was made by Lacey Gonzalez and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to approve the purchase of signs for the parks not to exceed \$200 with each sign having a summary of the park regulations A-K from the ordinance. Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Motion was made by Lacey Gonzalez and seconded by Marlene Basiago to adjourn at 8:42 p.m. until the next meeting of the Summit Hill Borough on August 13, 2024. Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

David Wargo
Council President

Kira Steber
Secretary/Treasurer