

Summit Hill Borough Council
November 11, 2025, 6:00 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, Vice President Joseph Weber, Karen Ruzicka, Edward Kane, Marlene Basiago, and Solicitor Robert Frycklund were in attendance. Lacey Gonzalez, Alan Kruslicky, and Mayor Jeffrey Szczecina were absent.

Floor – No one signed in to speak.

Minutes – **Motion was made by Edward Kane and seconded by Joseph Weber to approve the meeting minutes from the October 14, 2025 Council meeting.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Mayor’s Report – President Wargo read the Mayor’s report. Total collected from the District Justice was \$804.15 and from Carbon County was \$114.70. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to accept the mayor’s report for the month of October 2025.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Police Report – Chief Woodward read the monthly report. Chief Woodward thanked the borough work crew for fixing one of the police cruisers after an accident with a deer. They obtained the parts and fixed the vehicle themselves. It runs better now than before the incident. **Motion was made by Karen Ruzicka and seconded by Marlene Basiago to accept the resignation from Officer Brian Horos effective October 15, 2025.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. **Motion was made by Karen Ruzicka and seconded by Marlene Basiago to advertise the open full-time position in the Time News and on Indeed.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council. **Motion was made by Joseph Weber and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to accept the Police report for the month of October 2025.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Planning and Zoning – President Wargo mentioned that they have a completed draft of the new Zoning and SALDO ordinances and said they are ready to start the review process with the County and local Planning Commissions. **Motion was made by Edward Kane and seconded by Joseph Weber to forward the drafts of the Zoning and SALDO ordinances to the local and County Planning Commissions.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council. President Wargo added that the committee asked the consultant to add language about data centers and solar fields. **Motion was made by Edward Kane and seconded by Joseph Weber to accept the Planning and Zoning report for the month of October 2025.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

UCC, Code Enforcement and Rental Inspection Reports – Council had a few questions about the rental inspection and the report in general and asked Kira to speak with Ralph about it. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Joseph Weber to accept the UCC and Code Enforcement report for the month of October 2025.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Work Leader Report – **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Joseph Weber to accept the Work Leader report for the month of October 2025.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Tax Collector Report – Nathan Halenar, Tax Collector submitted his Tax Collector Report for the month of October 2025. Total collected was \$44.00 in Occupation Taxes, \$33.00 in Per Capita Taxes, \$8,100.21 in Real Estate Taxes and a commission of \$245.32. **Motion was made by Karen Ruzicka and seconded by Edward**

Kane to accept the Tax Collector Report for the month of October 2025. 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 October 2025. Total collected was \$1,294.77 in Delinquent Real Estate Taxes and \$1,439.03 in Expense Reimbursements. **Motion was made by Karen Ruzicka and seconded by Joseph Weber to accept the Delinquent Real Estate Tax Report for the month of October 2025.** 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 October 2025. Total EIT submitted was \$18,741.80 with a commission of \$324.23 and postage charges of \$26.85. Total LST submitted was \$1,743.00 with a commission of \$35.73, and no postage charges. Total DLT submitted was \$563.86 in delinquent Occupation Assessment Tax and \$248.48 in Per Capita Tax. **Motion was made by Karen Ruzicka and seconded by David Wargo to accept the Wage Tax report for the month of October 2025.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Delinquent Garbage Collection Report – No report received at this time

Receipts – Total receipts received for the month of October 2025 were \$97,700.62. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Edward Kane to accept the Receipts for the month of October 2025.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Bills – General Fund \$148,645.42, Local Services Tax \$35.73, Community Center \$466.56, Street Lighting \$4,577.54, Sanitation Account \$28,655.98, Rental Property Account \$141.46, Liquid Fuels Account \$11,955.27 and HOME Account \$73.75. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to pay the bills from October 15 – November 11, 2025.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Committee Reports

Streets –

1. Kira Steber explained that the 2004 Ford F-550 dump truck was listed on Municibid but the max amount required was not met. They did reach out to the highest bidder, but they did not respond. She said there are a few people in the area that are interested and asked if Council would consider putting it out on bid. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Joseph Weber to advertise for bids for the 2004 Ford F-550 dump truck with bids being received in the borough office no later than 4:00 p.m. on December 9, 2025, with bids to be opened at the meeting that night.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Recreation Committee –

1. Councilwoman Basiago read the meeting minutes from the November 6, 2026 Recreation meeting.
2. Christmas on the Hill will be held on Sunday, December 14th with trolley rides from 5:00-7:00 p.m., Santa arrives at 6:00 p.m. by fire truck, food truck from Kitty Kat Concessions, there will be candy canes and a stuffed animal to be handed out to the children and they are inquiring about a professional decorator for the gazebo.
3. Tentative Calendar of Events for 2026:
 - a. Regular meetings will be held on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m., with no meeting in January or July.
 - b. Health and wellness events will continue to be held
 - c. Easter on the Hill – March 28th, rain date April 4th

- d. Breakfast Sale – May 25th
- e. Summit Hill Community Yard Sale – July 11th
- f. Back to School Event – August 5th
- g. October Event – Hand out candy or glo sticks at the Community Center on Trick or Treat night
- h. Christmas on the Hill – December 13th

Motion was made by Joseph Weber and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to approve the 2026 Calendar of Events for the Recreation Commission. Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

- 4. The Recreation Commission is requesting to lower the number of members on commission due to lack of attendance. **Motion was made by Joseph Weber and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to have the solicitor draft an amendment to the ordinance to lower the members from 7 to 5 members and to advertise the ordinance for approval at the December council meeting.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.
- 5. The Recreation Commission made a motion at their meeting to spend \$750 to have the gazebo professionally decorated by Scripted in Style Events for Christmas on the Hill and the holiday season. With the cost, he will purchase the equipment, decorate, box everything up after the holiday and Recreation will get to keep all equipment.

Motion was made by Joseph Weber and seconded by Alan Kruslicky to approve the list of events for the Recreation Commission. Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Building Committee –

- 1. Karen Ruzicka mentioned that a person tripped and fell outside the municipal building on election night and asked if there was any way to add extra lighting outside to prevent this from happening again in the future. Edward Kane, Committee Chairperson, will look into it.
- 2. Marlene Basiago mentioned that the ceiling in the storage room at the Community Center is still missing tiles and is concerned about the cold air that is coming through. Edward Kane, Committee Chairperson, will also look into this.

Emergency Services Committee – There will be a soup, pierogi and bake sale in December.

Motion was made by Joseph Weber and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to amend the agenda to approve a request to hold an additional fundraiser for the Diligence Fire Co. Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Motion was made by Joseph Weber and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to approve a Soup, Pierogi, and Bake sale on December 6, 2025 from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at the fire company. Motion was opened for comment; none made.

Sanitation Committee – Vice President Weber stated that with the change of ownership of the garbage company, it seems that the hours of pick up have changed. If this is going to be the new norm, he personally does not want to be placing his garbage out the night before due to animals. Ms. Steber said the same thing is happening at the borough office. Sometimes the garbage is gone before 8:00 a.m. and sometimes it is not picked up until 2:00 p.m. It could depend on the driver and the route they take. She also mentioned that she saw 3 trucks in town the other day.

Special Purpose Parking Committee – Councilwoman Basiago said the committee received an application for 132 East Hazard Street. They reviewed it and are recommending it be approved. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Joseph Weber to approve a Special Purpose Parking space at 132 East Hazard Street.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Motion was made by Joseph Weber and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to accept the Committee Reports for the month of October 2025. Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Communications –

- Request from the Diligence Fire Co. No. 1 for support and submission of a Statewide LSA Grant application for P25 radio upgrades in the amount of approximately \$140,608 to purchase compliant portable mobile radios as part of the Carbon County’s ongoing countywide radio communications upgrade. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Edward Kane to write a letter of support and submit a Statewide LSA Grant application on behalf of the Diligence Fire Co. No. 1 in the amount of approximately \$140,608 to purchase portable and mobile radios for the department.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Joseph Weber to adopt a resolution to submit a Statewide LSA grant on behalf of the Diligence Fire Co. No. 1 and approving President David Wargo and Borough Secretary Kira Steber as authorized signers for the grant.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.
- Request from Tyler Calkins to hold multiple wrestling events at the Hill Top Community Center to benefit the Summit Hill Recreation Center. Ms. Steber said all dates are available but the June date. She and Tyler will work on another date. **Motion was made by Edward Kane and seconded by Joseph Weber to grant permission to Tyler Calkins to hold wrestling events at the Hill Top Community Center to benefit the Summit Hill Recreation Commission.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Joseph Weber to accept communications for from October 10 – November 10, 2025. Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Old Business -

1. Short-Term Rental Ordinance was amended by Solicitor Frycklund and presented to Council for further review. There is a typo that needs to be changed but it is ready for advertising. Councilwoman Ruzicka asked if they are going to specify what type of material needs to be placed down when creating an off-street parking area. Solicitor Frycklund said that it would be covered under zoning. **Motion was made by Joseph Weber and seconded by Edward Kane to advertise Ordinance No. 07-2025 to establish rules and regulations for Short-Term Rentals.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.
2. Amusement Tax Ordinance was also amended by Solicitor Frycklund and presented to Council for review. President Wargo went over the changes that were discussed last month and added to the ordinance. Solicitor Frycklund recommended it to strike 4B-2 under tax rates, update the definition of Mechanical Amusement Device under Section 2, and to also remove the reference of pinball machines, arcade games and cigarette vending machines because they are not legal anymore. **Motion was made by Joseph Weber and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to advertise Ordinance No. 08-2025 to establish an Amusement Tax, provide for collection and enforcement and to establish penalties and violations with the corrections that were discussed.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

3. Kira Steber mentioned that Lacey provided a list of grants that can be applied for to obtain an AED for the Community Center.
4. **Motion was made by Joseph Weber and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to table #4 and #5 under Old Business until Solicitor Frycklund has time to put ordinances together for review.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

New Business –

1. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Edward Kane to adopt Ordinance No. 05-2025 amending Chapter 287 to appoint Portnoff Law Associates to collect fees for unpaid real estate taxes and municipal claims for delinquent accounts.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.
2. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Edward Kane to adopt Ordinance No. 06-2025 amending Chapter 450 to regulate winter parking regulations and placing snow on borough streets and/or parks.** Motion opened for comment. Ron Gower, Time News, asked what they consider an alley because some allies are listed as streets. Chief Woodward referenced Berea Street. It is technically an alley but is listed as Berea Street. A brief discussion took place about what streets are to be defined as an alley for the ordinance. Motion did not carry due to questions with the ordinance.

President Wargo suggested taking a recess to discuss further so that it could be adopted at tonight's meeting since it was already advertised. **Motion was made by Joseph Weber and seconded by Edward Kane to enter into a short recess at 7:19 p.m.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Edward Kane to adopt Ordinance No. 06-2025 amending Chapter 450.38 to regulate winter parking regulations in allies. For purposes of this Section 450.38, alley will be defined as Richards Avenue, Union Street, Ridge Avenue, Summit Avenue, McMurtrie Street, Park Avenue, Berea Avenue, School Street, Iron Street, Mill Street, Ross Street, and Klien Street. Also to amend Chapter 450-39 to regulate placing of snow or ice on Borough street and/or parks. Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

3. President Wargo said two quotes were received to replace the transmission in the 2017 Ford Explorer from Stan Graver and Miracle Ford. Stan Graver's quote is \$5,687 and Miracle Ford's quote is \$6,700. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to send the vehicle to Stan Graver at a cost of \$5,687.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.
4. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Joseph Weber to approve the 2026 Solvency Fee in the amount of \$1,467.30.** Motion carried unanimously by Council.
5. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to retain Joseph Collura as the Borough's auditor for the year ended December 31, 2025 with the understanding that the audit will be submitted no later than July 31, 2026.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.
6. President Wargo stated that Lehigh Engineering recommended to put a Solar Field Ordinance in place. Vice President Weber provided an ordinance for Council to review. Council agreed to review the information provided and discuss it at next month's meeting.
7. Solicitor Frycklund gave an overview of the meeting that was held with the CLSH Sewer Authority and the three boroughs. They are seeking a commitment from each of the three municipalities of a contribution

of \$350,000 in matching funds for a federal grant for cleaning and televising to identify the relining or replacement of the lines is needed. There was a soft guarantee that each municipality will receive \$350,000 worth of work. The work will have to be bid in accordance with the federal requirements because there is federal money coming in with the grant. This is just the first step because this is preliminary to the 537 plan which is preliminary to any proposed upgrades to the sewer facility itself to increase the EDUs available to each borough. The implication is that whatever municipality has the greatest issues will be the greatest recipient of the grant money. They do need a commitment by the end of this month from each municipality and have the money available by September 2026, when the grant expires.

Vice President Joseph Weber explained that it is an initial study looking for infiltration. Grant money was received that needs to be used by the end of September 2026, with no exceptions. There was a project submitted to be done down at the sewer authority, but they cannot due the project they were hoping for because they will not get DEP approval without an approved 537 plan. A 537 plan is an official sewage plan, and a state managed comprehensive plan that outlines the municipalities existing and future disposal needs. DEP requires that you do it every 5-10 years or if there is new development in your area. The last submittal of a plan for all three municipalities is from March of 2005, which is about 20 years old. This is also the reason they will not approve anything for the sewer authority. He feels the \$350,000 can go along way. The grant is somewhere around \$3 million of a study or some minor work to be done once some things are found. The timeframe is incredible tight to get the project underway and get some work done. They also talked about needed a 537 plan, in addition to the \$350,000. The \$100 sewer transmission fee that the borough enacted does not even put a dent in the cost for this project and will deplete the account. A rough estimate to do a 537 plan, in conjunction with Lansford and Coaldale, will be close to \$1.3 – \$1.4 million with a 3–5-year timeframe. The work needs to start sooner than later. The alternative would be not to get the work done and DEP coming in and taking over the sewer plant, which is something that we do not want to happen. If one borough bows out, then all boroughs are out. There is not much of an option and need to explore the lines, understand where the problem is to potentially come up with a solution, which means reline the pipes, replace some manholes, maybe rip up some of the infrastructure in town and build new. They will not know what needs to be done until it is studied. Smoke testing was done in the past and there is rainwater infiltration data, but not an extensive project looking at the quality of the lines. As his first tenure on Council, he has seen many street in town, for being 100 or so years old, they did not seem to bad but that was 15 years ago.

Councilwoman Basiago stated that what she is hearing from other towns that DEP took over they are paying \$125 or more a month for sewage. Do residents want to pay \$125 a month or do they just bite the bullet and come up with the \$350,000 and start the process versus the state taking over. Unfortunately, things were not done for many years with previous Councils because they did not feel it was necessary or whatever the reason. Right now, there is a major problem. Something needs to be done before the state takes over and they are paying a ridiculous amount for sewage services.

Vice President Weber stated that Summit Hill has done the least. Lansford has done some work in the past and has some EDUs available, as does Coaldale. Summit Hill has none, as per DEP. If you want expansion or growth, it is not an option right now.

President Wargo said they have been put in a bad position by 30 years of inactivity before the current Council. Unfortunately, they are going to have to be the ones to do something about it. He added that they will have to figure out where they are going to come up with the money and should talk about it at the budget meeting.

Vice President Weber mentioned that all three towns must commit or it is off the table. Ms. Steber asked if only two of the three towns commit, do the two town have to pick up the balance of the third town to move forward with the project. Weber stated that he feels if they could get matching grant money to camera our town, it needs to be done because the plan needs to start somewhere. All three towns need to

move forward with the 537 plan, which is separate, but without it, the Sewer Authority cant do any work to solve the problem either. We are in a unique dilemma with the borough owning the main lines as a town, yet they own the plant and control the building. The sewer rates for the past 60 years, in his opinion, should be paying for every bit of infrastructure whether it be the plant or the mains. A 537 plan also looks at septic systems, and such is one thing. He personally would have a problem taking tax dollars from those in White Bear and spending it on the sewage problem. Most grants are matching or low interest Pennvest loans. The other issue with doing it is that the sewer rates are not high enough to get funding or low-interest rate loans. President Wargo added that they have been hearing it for the past 20 years, same with the water authority rates. Weber said the authority sets the rates, not the borough, so the only way to get the \$350,000 is by putting a sewer transmission fee on. Millie Ashmore stated that the \$100 transmission fee, that the borough already collected, is not enough to pay the \$350,000 so they are looking at potentially asking for more from the residents. Vice President Weber said it has not been discussed yet, as far as in our budget workshops. President Wargo said to come to the next budget workshop because they will need to discuss it and figure it out. Vice President Weber said for right now he would be inclined to keep the fee as it is. Realistically, it is about \$100,000 and even if they did it about 10 years ago, he does not think it would be close enough to improve the infrastructure of the town but maybe to get off the list with DEP.

President Wargo mentioned that it must be contingent with the other towns. DEP looks at Summit Hill as wanting to not do anything. He feels they need to move forward with at least videoing the lines to show them that they are not as defiant as the forefathers were.

Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Joseph Weber to participate in the study with the Sewer Authority at a cost of \$350,000. Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

8. Kira Steber informed Council that she and Sammi had a meeting with Diversified to discuss the new billing system. They also started gathering all the information needed to move forward. The goal is to have the new system in place by January 1st.
9. Kira Steber informed Council that she spoke with Bob at nastudios regarding the website. She has provided 90% of the information to him, which he will start working on. She will make sure to get the remainder of the information to him so that they can wrap it up and get the website up and running.
10. Councilwoman Basiago gave a special thanks to the living and deceased veterans of Summit Hill for their service to our country. She also thanked the borough workers for displaying the flags in honor of the veterans.
11. Councilwoman Basiago received a plaque for the Christmas light project, which displays all the names of those that donated money to purchase 36 Christmas lights. Thirty-one of the lights will be displayed because the other poles that they wanted to place them on do not have electricity so they cannot power a decoration. The borough crew is looking to tentatively start hanging the lights on November 21st. The plaque will be displayed at the Hill Top Community Center. She thanked everyone who helped and those that donated. President Wargo also thanked everyone involved and said it was an amazing effort from everyone.

Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Edward Kane to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m. until the next regular meeting of the Summit Hill Borough on December 9, 2025. Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

David Wargo
Council President

Kira Steber
Secretary/Treasurer