

**Summit Hill Borough Council**  
**March 14, 2023, 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 Michael Kokinda presiding.

**Roll Call** – President Michael Kokinda, Gino DeGiosio, Karen Ruzicka, Alan Kruslicky, Joseph Weber, David Wargo and Solicitor Robert Frycklund were in attendance. Vice President William O’Gurek and Mayor Jeffrey Szczecina were absent.

**Floor** –

1. Marlene Basiago, 20 West Walter Street, addressed an issue with a car that has been parked on West Berea Avenue, near the Chestnut Street intersection. She said the vehicle has been parked in the same spot for at least 9 months or longer, has a flat tire and doesn’t move during storms. It is a black car that is parked halfway on the street and halfway on the sidewalk. She asked what is going to be done about it. Chief Woodward stated that he will look into it on his next shift and have it addressed.

**Minutes** – **Motion was made by Gino DeGiosio and seconded by Joseph Weber to approve the meeting minutes from the February 14, 2023 Council meeting.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

**Mayor’s Report** – Kira Steber reported that the total collected from the District Justice was \$1,445.67 and total from Carbon County was \$161.11. **Motion was made by Joseph Weber and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to accept the mayor’s report for the month of February 2023.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

**Police Report** – **Motion was made by David Wargo and seconded by Gino DeGiosio to accept the Police report for the month of February 2023.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

**Planning and Zoning** – David Wargo complimented Officer Bell for the work that he had done in a few short weeks as the new Zoning Officer. Kira Steber added that it is a pleasure working with Officer Bell and that they work very well together. **Motion was made by David Wargo and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to accept the Planning and Zoning report for the month of February 2023.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

**UCC and Code Enforcement Report** – Kira Steber noted that an email was received from Ralph Hummel, Lehigh Engineering, offering rental inspection services on a temporary 6 month basis with a cost of \$90 for the rental inspection fee and \$50 for a reinspection fee. Officer Bell has spoken to Mr. Hummel and will shadow him until he can get certified. Ms. Steber added that the borough will handle the administrative work to not cost the borough any more money. **Motion was made by David Wargo and seconded by Gino DeGiosio to approve Lehigh Engineering as the Rental Inspector on a temporary basis and to accept their fee schedule to do the work.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council. **Motion was made by David Wargo and seconded by Joseph Weber to accept the UCC and Code Enforcement report for the month of February 2023.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

**Work Leader Report** – **Motion was made by Joseph Weber and seconded by Alan Kruslicky to accept the Work Leader report for the month of February 2023.** 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 February 2023. Total collected was \$1,167.18; the monthly expense reimbursement report was not received. **Motion was made by David Wargo and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to accept the Delinquent Real Estate Tax Report for the month of February 2023.** 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 February 2023. Total EIT submitted was \$53,938.61 with a commission of \$933.14 and postage charges of \$22.64. Total LST submitted was \$138.32 with a commission of \$2.84 and postage charges of \$3.30. Total DLT submitted was \$217.25 in delinquent Occupation Tax and \$82.50 in delinquent Per Capita Tax. **Motion was made by David Wargo and seconded by Alan Kruslicky to accept the Wage Tax report for the month of February 2023.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

**Delinquent Garbage Collection Report** – Central Credit Audit submitted their Delinquent Garbage Collection Report for the month of February 2023. Total collected from Central Credit was \$835.63. Karen Ruzicka asked if anyone is cross-referencing the delinquent garbage collections with rental units. She added that they are not supposed to rent out a property if they are behind in bills. Joseph Weber asked if they would kick a tenant out if the bills aren't paid. Ms. Ruzicka stated that as per the ordinance, we are supposed to. A brief discussion took place regarding the ordinance. **Motion was made by David Wargo and seconded by Gino DeGiosio to accept the Delinquent Garbage Collection Report for the month of February 2023.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

**Receipts** – Total receipts received for the month of February 2023 were \$358,364.42. **Motion was made by Karen Ruzicka and seconded by Joseph Weber to accept the Receipts for the month of February 2023.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Streets –**

1. Alan Kruslicky mentioned that he drove around with Ronnie in the plow truck during the storm. He also mentioned that he noticed that is one streetlight out and two that were never upgraded in West White Bear. He has the pole numbers and will pass them on to Kira to address.
2. The 2023 Liquid Fuels Allocation was received on March 1, 2023 in the amount of \$102,235.59.

**Police** – David Wargo reiterated that the police department has taken over Zoning and Code Enforcement back in February.

**Sanitation** – Gino DeGiosio mentioned that dates have been set for Spring Cleanup and Electronics Recycling.

- a. Saturday, April 22, 2023 – East side of town along with Knepper's Trailer Court and East & West White Bear Drive
- b. Saturday, April 29, 2023 – West side of town along with Laurel Drive and East & West Mountaintop Road
- c. Electronics Recycling will be held on Saturday, May 6, 2023 from 7:00–11:00 a.m. – Drop off only and ID is required.

**Handicap Committee** – Joseph Weber said that an application for 240 West Hazard Street was resubmitted for further review. He stated that they completed the missing information, and everything looks like it is in Summit Hill Borough – March 14, 2023 Council Meeting

order. **Motion was made by Joseph Weber and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to grant the handicap parking application for 240 West Hazard Street.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion was carried unanimously by Council.

**Economic Development** – David Wargo stated the March 27<sup>th</sup> meeting will have to be cancelled due to another engagement with Council. The next meeting will be held in May.

**Motion was made by Gino DeGiosio and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to accept the Committee Reports for the month of February 2023.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by council.

### **Communications** –

1. President Kokinda mentioned an email that was received regarding the bus stop that is located at Ludlow and Elm Streets. Karen Ruzicka said that her understanding is that the bus stop is actually located across the street but the kids are standing on the wrong side of the street. Kira Steber explained that the bus comes down the hill on Elm Street and that is why the kids stand on that corner. She mentioned that the bus used to come up Ludlow Street until the ambulance garage was built. They stopped coming that way to not block the driveway for the ambulance. Chief Woodward recommended having the buses drive around the cemetery on White so they could come around and pick the kids up on Ludlow Street, at the opposite corner. Ms. Steber said she can contact the school to see if they can come to a solution to rectify the issue.

### **Communications for the Month of February 2023:**

1. Email from Kevin Gustave, 354 East Ludlow Street, regarding the bus stop at the corner of Ludlow and Elm Streets. Has concerns about safety, vandalism to his property and issues with littering.
2. Notice of Occupation Assessment from the Carbon County Board of Assessment and Revision of Taxes
3. Letter from PPL Electric Utilities explaining actions they are taking to support their customers.

**Motion was made by David Wargo and seconded by Gino DeGiosio to accept communications for the month of February 2023.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

**Bills** – General Fund \$213,443.27, Community Center \$493.86, Sanitation Account \$28,820.50, Street Account \$6,825.96, Sewer Fund \$55,000 and HOME Account \$110,000. **Motion was made by Joseph Weber and seconded by Gino DeGiosio to pay the bills from February 15 – March 14, 2023.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

### **Old Business** –

1. Kira Steber resubmitted the quote from Ironton Global. She stated that Atty. Frycklund wanted to review the additional terms of the Service Agreement. Atty. Frycklund went over the areas that he was concerned about and would request that the suggested modifications be made by Ironton Global before they enter into the agreement. He will reach out to the contact at Ironton Global to discuss his concerns with them. Ms. Steber stated that the current price is good until April 1<sup>st</sup>. If Atty. Frycklund gets the matter resolved with the agreement before April 1<sup>st</sup>, can they make a motion to enter into the agreement with conditional approval. **Motion was made by Gino DeGiosio and seconded by Alan Kruslicky to enter into the agreement with Ironton Global once the solicitor is satisfied with the language in the service**

**agreement that will not expose the Borough to any type of litigation.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

**New Business** –

1. Kira Steber mentioned that the grant to update the Zoning and SALDO for Summit Hill and Jim Thorpe is going to expire and they will need to ask for an additional timeline extension from the PA-DCED to extend the contract for another year. **Motion was made by David Wargo and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to request an additional extension on Project No. C000073143 to DCED for the updates to the Zoning ordinance, map and SALDO for the Jim Thorpe and Summit Hill Boroughs.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.
2. Kira Steber presented an invoice for the 2023 Dodge Durango for the Police Department. She received financing information from Ford Credit Municipal Finance with an 8.49% rate and Fulton Bank with a 9.14% rate. She mentioned that JTNB can give us a better rate of 6.25%. **Motion was made by Joseph Weber and seconded by David Wargo to enter into a loan agreement with Jim Thorpe Neighborhood Bank in the amount of \$41,150 with a fixed rate of 6.25%.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion was carried by majority vote with Gino DeGiosio abstaining because he works for JTNB.
3. **Motion was made by Joseph Weber and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to advertise Ordinance No. 02-2023 amending the ordinance to Laying Out and Taking Over Various Roads in the Borough of Summit Hill.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.
4. Kira Steber mentioned the Steet Opening and Encroachment Ordinance. She said it was discussed a while ago to change some of the language in the ordinance. They had talked about the Borough Workforce and/or Street Committee to be the ones to do the inspections on the streets. David Wargo feels that nothing should be changed in the ordinance because there should be someone qualified to do the inspections. Joseph Weber recommended talking to Arro Engineering before changing anything in the ordinance.
5. Kira Steber discussed the Rental Property Ordinance. She mentioned updating the fees in the ordinance to match what Lehigh Engineering will be charging to do the rental inspections. David Wargo said that when they codified the ordinances, one thing they talked about was putting all the fees into resolutions so that they wouldn't have to change and advertise the ordinance. Atty. Frycklund agreed that it would be the best solution to make those changes. Karen Ruzicka stated that Section 8 Housing is currently exempt from the rental inspections and feels that the borough should also do an inspection to make sure it is up to the borough's specifications. A brief discussion took place regarding the section of the ordinance that talks about Section 8 Housing. Atty. Frycklund said he would like to take a closer look at Section 8 requirements. Ms. Ruzicka also mentioned issues with moving permits. She asked if moving permits are being obtained when people move in or out. Ms. Steber said they will do a moving permit if people come in to get them. Ms. Ruzicka stated that landlords are supposed to make sure the tenants are getting them and asked how they can enforce it. There have been 14 total moving permits obtained since January. David Wargo said that he personally calls the police department when he sees a moving van. Ms. Steber mentioned that when they get property transfers every month, they will send letters out reminding people that they need to obtain a moving permit. Mr. Wargo said that it needs to be a joint effort between Council, the police and Water Authority.
6. President Kokinda stated that a letter of resignation was received from Mary Ann Eickhoff, effective April 30<sup>th</sup>. She also offered to fill in on an as needed basis if Council is ever shorthanded. **Motion was made by David Wargo and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to accept Mary Ann Eickhoff's resignation from the Assistant Secretary position effective April 30, 2023, with regret.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

7. **Motion was made by Karen Ruzicka and seconded by Alan Kruslicky to advertise for open position for the Assistant Secretary with applications due by 4:00 p.m. on March 31, 2023.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.
8. **Motion was made by Karen Ruzicka and seconded by Gino DeGiosio to amend the agenda to add the request for a kickball tournament, request for cleanup in the park and to discuss a personnel matter regarding borough worker Colton Black.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.
9. Request from Patricia Baker to hold a kickball tournament in the Ginder Field. **Motion was made by Joseph Weber and seconded by Karen Ruzicka to grant permission to Patricia Baker to hold their annual kickball tournament in the Ginder Field on June 24, 2023 and use of the pavilions, electric and restrooms.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.
10. Request from Rev. Ruth Ann Christopher about cleaning up Ludlow Park at a date to be determined in the near future once the weather cooperates. They do have their own insurance. **Motion was made by Karen Ruzicka and seconded by Gino DeGiosio to grant permission to Hope of Christ Presbyterian Church to clean up Ludlow Park on a date that is suitable for them, weather permitting.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.
11. Joseph Weber stated that he would like to discuss the new Borough Worker, Colton Black's salary. The regular Equipment Operator rate is \$27.56 per hour; he is currently making \$22.04 based on the pay scale for new hires. If he had stayed at his last place of employment, he would have been making \$24.29 per hour, which is a difference of \$2.25 per hour and a total loss of \$4,000 for the year. He is recommending that he be bumped up to 90% after his probationary period, bringing him to \$24.80 per hour. The last three borough employees hired all had their probationary period considerably shortened by Council. He is doing a great job, has over 5 years experience and feel it would be in their best interest to keep him a happy employee. **Motion was made by Joseph Weber and seconded by Alan Kruslicky to adjust Colton Black's rate of pay to 90% after his probationary period and to then follow the terms of the pay scale as per the Teamsters Agreement.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

**Motion was made by Joseph Weber and seconded by Alan Kruslicky to adjourn at 7:59 p.m. until the next regular meeting of the Summit Hill Borough on April 11, 2023.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Michael Kokinda  
Council President

Kira Steber  
Secretary/Treasurer