

Summit Hill Borough Council
June 23, 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, Edward Kane, Marlene Basiago, and Mayor Jeffrey Szczecina were in attendance. Vice President Joseph Weber and Alan Kruslicky were in attendance via ZOOM. Lacey Gonzalez, Karen Ruzicka, and Solicitor Robert Frycklund were absent.

Floor – No comments from the floor.

New Business –

1. Council President said that they need to discuss purchasing portable radios for the police department and turned the floor over to Mr. Steber. Kevin Steber, 50 East Lehigh Street, speaking on behalf of Bob Green from Green’s Communications, explained that with the recent tariffs that are being put into place by the federal government, Motorola has decided to implement those tariffs effective July 1, 2025. Any orders received prior to this date will receive standard pricing as it is priced today. Mr. Green had reached out to Chief Woodward to discuss the ongoing situation with Carbon County switching over to a digital system and the need to move forward with obtaining radios for officers. He does know that the grant was received for the mobile radios for the 3 cruisers and base station in the department, which is part of the grant to the entire County Police Association. Mr. Green has also indicated that, if possible, the Borough can purchase at least 2 radios and save money in the long run. The radios currently are approximately \$6,300. The increase in cost, with the tariffs, will be a substantial increase in cost. He also mentioned that regardless of the tariffs, Motorola will not be lowering their price increase.

Chief Woodward explained that the County is going to be switching to a digital system, and the current radios are analog. Federal grants have already been granted to the county for the upgrade of the towers and stations. The County has also applied for a grant for mobile radios, which are the ones in the vehicles, and it has already been awarded. They will be county owned radios but will have one in each of the 3 vehicles and one in the department. When he spoke to Bob Green, it was mentioned that there will be a grant available next month to apply for the portable radios. However, there is not going to be enough money to supply each department in Carbon County with portable radios for each officer. They are looking to go live next year once every department is outfitted. This is why Bob is asking each department to purchase 2 radios, if possible, to get a head start and mitigate the cost before the tariffs hit. We can spend the money now or spend more on the radios next year.

Mr. Steber explained that the fire department got a grant last year, 2023 money spent in 2024, to purchase 4 portable radios, which are more expensive than the police department radios. The system itself is actually live; it can be used but you cannot speak to the communications center. But you can switch over to a digital channel to talk to fire companies in Schuylkill County, the Chief can speak to Tamaqua Police Department or other local departments. There are currently 15 tower sites in Schuylkill County with addition of 4 that will be added to Carbon County. It will become a meshed system that all comes together as one. There will be no dead zones and no opportunity for the public to hear radio communications, which provides officer safety on the police side and safety for everyone else.

Kira Steber said currently they have \$36,000 in the Police Capital Improvement Fund and about \$8,000 in the Local Services Tax account. President Wargo mentioned another purchase that will have to be made but they can discuss it at the next meeting.

Mr. Steber mentioned that there are always opportunities to look for money. The fire department will be coming to Council in the near future because the LSA will be opening soon and they are going to apply for

the balance of their mobile radios, which could be an opportunity for the police department to tag in on as well and move forward to obtain what they need. Because it is the game sharing money, the borough would need to apply for the grant on behalf of the fire company but then they can also piggyback on the grant for the police department.

Councilwoman Basiago asked how many radios the department would need. Chief Woodward said they would need 7 radios for the officers, but they are not sure what they will receive if the grant is approved. Even if they purchase 2 radio now, it still does not mean they will get the 5 others that are needed. President Wargo asked if a radio is a mandatory part of the uniform according to the contract. Chief Woodward said he does not believe it is.

Mr. Steber informed Council that by going on the existing system that is already in place in Schuylkill County, it will save the taxpayers a lot of money, in the area of \$35 million. If the county had to put in an entire new system, it would never happen because it would cost an astronomical amount of money. It is a proven system because it has been in Schuylkill County for 13 years.

President Wargo added that they will need to purchase firearms for the police department soon. The cost will be around \$7,000. They do not have to discuss it now, but it is something they need to consider. Mayor Szczecina explained that the State Police just upgraded to the same firearm and the company is willing to give the borough the same price that they are giving the State Police. The price will only be limited for a short amount of time. They will also need the leather gear to carry the extra clips, but the cost would not be significant. When he was in the State Police, they replaced their guns every 5-6 years. The guns for our police are coming up on 12 years.

A brief discussion took place as to how many radios they should purchase and more details about the current and future systems.

Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Alan Kruslicky to purchase four (4) portable radios for the Police Department at a cost of \$25,558. Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

2. President Wargo stated that they need to change the July meeting date because the July 4th holiday and cuts the prep time shorter to prepare for the meeting. Council agreed to move the date to July 16th. **Motion was made by Joseph Weber and seconded by Alan Kruslicky to advertise the change of the July meeting from July 8 to July 16, 2025 starting at 6:00 p.m.** Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Motion was made by Edward Kane and seconded by David Wargo to adjourn at 6:28 p.m. until the next regular meeting of the Summit Hill Borough on July 16, 2025. Motion was opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

David Wargo
Council President

Kira Steber
Secretary/Treasurer