

MARCH 6, 2023 - 6:30 PM
REGULAR MEETING OF SWOYERSVILLE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Council President Cwalina calls the meeting to order.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call was taken, those present included Mr. Binkley, Mr. Brown, Mr. Christian, Mr. Cwalina, Mr. Lamereaux and Mr. Olejnick. Also present were Mayor Concert, Gene Breznay, Borough Manager, Dave Hampton, Street Commissioner, Attorney Yeager, Borough Solicitor and Ray Mackiewicz, Zoning Officer.

Mayor Concert administered the Oath of Office to John Owens. Mr. Owens was sworn in as Sergeant for the Swoyersville Police Department. Council extended congratulations to Mr. Owens.

Mayor Concert administered the Oath of Office to Dan Roper. Mr. Roper was sworn in as Police Officer for the Swoyersville Police Department. Council extended congratulations to Mr. Roper.

Mayor Concert administered the Oath of Office to Kevin Walkowiak. Mr. Walkowiak was sworn in as Police Officer for the Swoyersville Police Department. Council extended congratulations to Mr. Walkowiak.

Mayor Concert administered the Oath of Office to Mia Vera. Ms. Vera was sworn in as Police Officer for the Swoyersville Police Department. Council extended congratulations to Ms. Vera.

An Executive Session was called by President Cwalina at 6:39 pm. Executive Session ended at 6:50 pm.

A motion was requested by Mr. Cwalina to accept the minutes from the February 6, 2023 regular meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Olejnick and seconded by Mr. Binkley. Vote was 5-0 in favor with Mr. Cwalina abstaining from the vote.

Monthly bills totaling \$36,808.51 were presented by Ms. O'Donnell, Council Secretary. Mr. Lamereaux questioned the Single Stream recycling expense of \$936.30. Mr. Hampton, Street Department shared that for this monthly bill period single stream was still in place. Effective with the new March 5, 2023 recycling guidelines that will change. Mr. Binkley questioned the No Nonsense Neutering (NNN) expense of \$90.00 for 6 services provided. The NNN contract involves the Borough being billed \$15.00 for each voucher used. There are a total of 6 vouchers used (6 services provided) during this monthly bill period which comes to \$90.00 expense. A motion was made by Mr. Olejnick to approve the monthly bills and seconded by Mr. Binkley. Vote was 6-0 in favor of approving the monthly bills presented.

BOROUGH MANAGER'S REPORT

-Mr. Breznay requested a motion and vote to pay half of the sign on bonus for the three new police officers hired. \$2,000 each with funding coming from the American Rescue Plan Act. The next payment will be in one year. A motion was made by Mr. Brown to approve and seconded by Mr. Olejnick. Vote was 6-0 in favor.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance: Mr. Lamereaux presented the January 2023 Treasure's Report. **General Fund:** beginning checkbook balance: \$33,017.49; transfers & revenue for the month: \$97,196.48; Expenses & Transfers for the month: \$116,989.21; ending checkbook balance: \$13,224.76. **Liquid Fuels:** beginning checkbook balance: \$120.18; transfers and revenue for month: \$24,101.00; expenses and transfers for the month: \$24,024.19; ending checkbook balance: \$196.99. **Sanitary/Storm Water Assessment:** beginning checkbook balance: \$13,688.20; transfers and revenue for the month: \$2,442.56; expenses and transfers for the month: \$4,986.46; ending checkbook balance: \$11,144.30. **Solid Waste Collection:** beginning checkbook balance: \$17,238.02; transfers and revenue for the month: \$80,142.96; expenses and transfers for the month: \$17,091.04; ending checkbook balance: \$80,289.94.

Liaison Officer: No report provided at this meeting.

Police Department: Mr. Brown read the police report for February 2023 which included a summary of Crossing Guard hours. There was a total of 113 service calls, 3 vehicle accident and three (3) school crossing guard duty. Fees collected totaled \$197.71. A motion was made by Mr. Brown to place monies in the appropriate funds and seconded by Mr. Binkley. The vote was 6-0 in favor.

Street Department: Mr. Olejnick reported that Mr. Anthony Hunzer had obtained a CDL license; however, was not granted a pay increase. Mr. Olejnick made a motion to approve a \$2.00/hr. pay increase that will include retroactive pay. The motion was seconded by Mr. Brown. Vote was 6-0 in favor.

Mr. Olejnick made a motion to purchase an air compressor for the Borough Garage for \$1,399.99. The compressor will be purchased from Tractor Supply. It was noted that the current compressor that was purchased in 2009 is broken. Mr. Brown seconded the motion. Vote was 6-0 in favor.

Mr. Olejnick inquired about an abandoned vehicle parked at the UGI lot between the Borough Garage and UGI substation has been addressed. Chief Wolinski informed Council that the owner of the vehicle was deceased and that along with Ray Mackiewicz, Zoning Officer they are working with UGI to address it. Mr. Olejnick thanked Chief Wolinski & Mr. Mackiewicz for addressing the issue.

Fire Department: Mr. Cwalina reported that Kingston Ambulance reported 36 EMS calls for February. Maltby Fire Department reported 10 calls along with 6 that involved volunteers. No report was received from Station #2.

-Mr. Cwalina requested a motion and vote to donate \$1,000.00 to West Side Mutual Aid to help purchase a smoke house (trailer) which will be used for educational purposes. Educational opportunities will be held for school students and can also be requested by the Borough for events being held by the Recreation Board and or Mayor Concert. The funds will come from the American Rescue Act funds. Mr. Christian made a motion to approve the donation of \$1,000.00. Mr. Lamereaux seconded the motion. Vote was 6-0 in favor.

-Mr. Cwalina requested a motion and vote to approve purchasing a lockable filing cabinet & locking cash box for the Tax Collector's Office. Cost approved would be up to \$300.00. Mr. Olejnick made a motion to approve the purchase. Mr. Christian seconded the motion. Vote was 6-0 in favor.

Recreation Board: Mr. Binkley shared that the board held two meetings in February 2023. The board met on February 22, 2023 to review the Board Bylaw's.

The Recreation Board Funds total \$3,752.79. The Board created a Venmo account for future events. Monies received will be held in an account with statements forwarded to Swoyersville Borough Manager, Mr. Breznay. The Recreation Board will transfer monies to the board's Luzerne Bank account.

The board held a successful bird feeder craft make and take event. 40 residents registered for pick up and an additional 10 were delivered by board members.

The board made the top 75 list of recipients for the Luzerne County American Rescue Plan Act Grant. The board requested \$250,000 which will be used for renovation of the parks throughout Swoyersville. Luzerne County is still working through the process & date for distribution of funds is unknow at this time. The board also opened up a special needs park committee and are looking for community volunteers to assist. Interested residents can reach out to the board through its face book page.

The board is partnering with NEPA Chicken Wing Bulletin, a face book page created by Swoyersville resident Jeff Lewis that promotes area chicken wing businesses. On July 29, 2023, a Swoyersville Chicken Wing Fling will be held at the softball field. Local food vendors will be invited to participate. A request was made for Council to approve use of Police, EMS, Fire Department and DPW services to ensure that the event is a safe & clean family friendly event. Mr. Binkley made a motion to approve use of department services. Motion was seconded by Mr. Christian. Vote was 6-0 in favor.

-Mr. Binkley discussed the purchase of a Borough mobile application and presented information on two applications for consideration. The purpose of a mobile application would be to support ongoing borough communication with Swoyersville residents through a notification and alert system. The two plans were discussed. It was recommended by Borough Manager, Gene Breznay, that the Go Gov plan be considered. The plan has an annual cost of \$3,900.00 and has several upgrade options that include online bill pay. There is no long-term contract involved. The cost is for one year with the option to renew at the end of each year. Kathy Breznay, Church questioned if any other boroughs or towns have this application in place as she is not familiar with it. Mr. Binkley shared that he does not believe they do and believes Swoyersville has an opportunity to move forward with innovative communication options for its residents. A motion was made by Mr. Binkley to approve purchase of Go Gov. Motion was seconded by Lamereaux. Vote was 6-0 in favor.

-Mr. Binkley made a motion to appoint Joseph Simon and Jeffrey Lewis to the Recreation Board. The motion was seconded by Mr. Christian. The vote was 6-0 in favor. It is noted that one open seat is still available for the Recreation Board.

Attorney Yeager: No report given at this meeting.

Mayor Concert: - Mayor Concert shared the upcoming events to include Bumper Bonnies, 4/8/23 at 1:00 pm at Roosevelt Field; Polka on The Corner with the John Stevens Polka Band, 5/21/23 beginning at 3:00 pm and Swoyersville Community Yard Sale 6/3/23. Residents interest in participating in the yard sale can reach out to Mayor Concert to be added to the participation list. Mayor Concert shared a thank you letter received from the Wolinski family. A thank you was extended for support provided during the recent passing of Chief Wolinski's mother. A second thank you letter was received from Mrs. Levenoskie thanking the Borough and Council for listening to concerns regarding street parking problems noted within the Borough.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM BOROUGH COUNCIL

-Mr. Lamereaux requested an update on the paving project for Jackson Street. Mr. Breznay shared that an overlay will be completed during the time that the Block Grant paving project is occurring. Work is anticipated to occur in July 2023. Mr. Lamereaux questioned if ADA ramps will be included in the project. Mr. Breznay will inquire about ADA ramps and will follow up with Mr. Lamereaux.

Mr. Lamereaux followed up on prior complaints from residents who reported water back up into their toilets when the when the Sanitary Authority is working on flushing sewer lines on Oliver, Jackson, and Chestnut Streets. Dave Hampton, Street Department Manager shared that the Sanitary Authority has stopped working routinely on the lines in that area due to the complaints received. They will respond when they receive a call for a blockage. Mr. Lamereaux shared that residents are looking for a notice when work is scheduled to occur.

Mr. Lamereaux asked the Street Department to check on over hanging tree limbs on Main Street from the Borough Garage to Slocum. It is noted that the road is a state road; however, Dave Hampton will look at the issue and trim the trees if needed.

-Mr. Christian made a motion and vote to amend the Rules & Regulations of Swoyersville Civil Service Commission. The amendment would change the title of Patrolman II to the title of Corporal. Current language for Section 306 reads "General Qualifications – Application for Patrolman II, Sergeant, Chief of Police". That language will be revised to read "General Qualifications – Application for Corporal, Sergeant, Chief of Police." A motion was seconded by Mr. Lamereaux. The Vote was 6-0 in favor.

Mr. Christian requested a motion and vote to authorize the Civil Service Commission to administer a competitive test for promotion to Corporal. Motion was made by Mr. Olejnick and seconded by Mr. Binkley. Vote was 6-0 in favor.

Mr. Christian requested a motion and vote to promote April Dulsky to Acting Corporal effective immediately. Mr. Lamereaux made a motion to promote April Dulsky to Acting Corporal effective immediate and motion was seconded by Mr. Olejnick. Vote was 6-0 in favor.

Mr. Christian requested a motion and vote to purchase L-Tron software/equipment for the police department. The cost involved is \$4,293.60 and funds will come from the American Rescue Plan Act. Sergeant Owens shared that equipment to be purchased includes, computer, printer, and necessary wiring for 4 police cruisers. The program will eliminate the need to handwrite citations and will support e-filing of citations. A motion was made by Mr. Brown and seconded by Mr. Lamereaux. Vote was 6-0 in favor.

-Mayor Concert shared a concern received from resident Mary Ann Gregory regarding the road condition at the top of Warsaw Street. The issue includes a ditch and water washout of the road. Mayor Concert inquired as to whether the Block Grant can be used for repairs. Mr. Breznay, Borough Manager, will check to see if it can be covered. Mayor Concert also questioned if paving of Bohac and Brook Streets is planned. Mr. Breznay, Borough Manager, shared that it is being scheduled for this year.

Mayor Concert shared he has received complaints regarding residents not cleaning up after their dogs. It was recommended that residents contact the police department if they witness someone walking their dog and not cleaning up after them.

Mayor Concert shared that he received requests from some residents for an extension of the deadline for purchasing recycling stickers. Some residents waited as there was uncertainty if glass was going to be accepted. Mr. Cwalina asked if stickers had been sold at the increased rate of \$27.50. It was reported that several stickers have already been purchased at the increased rate. With that, Council agreed that it would not be fair to extend the deadline.

Mayor Concert suggested removing the old Borough Facebook page as it is causing some confusion for residents. The new Borough page has been established. Mr. Binkley will assist with removing the old page.

Mayor Concert questioned if a camera was ever purchased for Roosevelt Field. Mr. Breznay that a trail camera was purchased; however, is not appropriate for monitoring the field. It is a motion detective device and cannot cover a large area.

Mayor Concert addressed a rumor that Swoyersville Borough was going to require that sport teams get Safe Service Certificates from the Department of Agriculture in order to be able to run and be in the stands serving food. He noted that teams are exempt from having to have a Safe Service Certificate and is not being required by the Borough to obtain one.

Mr. Christian addressed a complaint that he received regarding excessing pallets near the side of the Legion building. Ray Mackiewicz, Zoning Officer is aware of the issue, and it is being addressed.

MEETING OPENED TO THE PUBLIC

Greg Griffin, Swoyersville, shared that the citizens group will continue with cleaning up the back road in Swoyersville. A thank you was extended to Mayor Concert, the Street Department and all those who volunteer with cleaning up the roadways through Swoyersville. A thank you was also extended to Council for the lunch that was provided last year for the citizen group volunteers. Council thanked Mr. Griffin for his continued efforts with maintaining clean roadways throughout the Borough.

Mr. Yankey, Kossick Street, also commented on the excellent job the Street Department is doing through the Borough. He also thanked Councilman Brown and Christian for assisting with an issue he experienced with his property. Mr. Christian noted that the issue was resolved. Mr. Yankey appreciates the availability of Councilman Christian and Brown when he reaches out with an issue or concern.

A question was presented regarding what was being to address property issues at 5 Mary Street. Mr. Yankey shared that there are issues with woodchucks and skunks on the property and garbage. Ray Mackiewicz, Zoning Officer shared cages had been placed on the property. The issue has been discussed with Mr. Shefler, Code Enforcement and a citation is in the process of being issued. Gene Breznay will follow up with a call to Erlich.

Mr. Yankey requested a job description for a position within the Street Department. Resident may be interested in employment opportunities. Council shared that there are currently no openings within the Street Department; however, if one does open, a description of the job will be posted with an advertisement to apply. The job description will be available if a position opens.

Mr. Nice shared that he has been designated as the liaison between No Nonsense Neutering and the Borough. He verified that there were six cats that received services last month. The cats were neutered, given rabies shots, received flea treatment and heartworm medication. Mr. Nice will provide a quarterly report on services on a quarterly basis and will provide records outlining services received to Gene Breznay. Mr. Lamereaux questioned how residents can recognize if a cat has been treated by No Nonsense Neutering. Mr. Nice shared that feral cats treated will have an ear tipped. Mayor Concert questioned if residents could obtain their own vouchers for cats that they may catch. Mr. Nice shared that residents should contact himself or Councilman Brown so the No Nonsense Neutering committee can assist with getting the process started. The program is noted as only available for feral cats and not pets.

Mr. Cwalina requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made to adjourn by Mr. Binkley and seconded by Mr. Christian. Vote was 6-0 in favor. Meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm. Next meeting will be held on April 3, 2023 at 6:30 pm.



Barb O'Donnell
Borough Council Secretary

Pete Cwalina, Jr.
Council President