

The regular meeting of the Borough Council of the Borough of Sinking Spring was called to order on Thursday, July 9, 2026, at 7:00 p.m., by Council President Tracy Peterson. After the pledge to the flag, Elizabeth Eagelman called the roll reflecting the following Council Members present:

Tracy Peterson
H. David Miller
Denise Stine
Lisa Gantner
Brian Hoffa (Absent)
Robert Metzgar (Absent)
John Eagelman

Other officials present: Mayor Gary Cirulli; Charles Haws, Barley Snyder, Borough Solicitor; Lowell Leaman, ARRO Consulting; Michael Hart, Borough Manager; Police Chief James Oxenreider; and Elizabeth Eagelman, Borough Secretary, who recorded the minutes of the proceedings.

Approval of Meeting Minutes – 6-11-26 Council Meeting

Motion to approve the minutes of the June 11, 2026 Council Meeting was made by Mrs. Stine and seconded by Mr. Eagelman. The motion carried.

Visitors/Public Comment

Patricia Kissling, a resident of the Ponds at Village Green (2204 Hanes Street) addressed Council regarding an ongoing failure of USPS mail delivery to her community. She explained that neither the leasing office nor the post office had resolved the matter, that the dispute had escalated to a congressional inquiry through Senator John Fetterman's office, and that residents had received no timeline for resolution. The root of the dispute, she noted, was a disagreement over the location of the community's mailboxes.

Mr. Hart confirmed he was aware of the situation, explaining that the original building design placed mailboxes at each unit, but the post office had pushed back in favor of a single centralized cluster location. Mr. Miller welcomed the resident and affirmed her right to participate in the community process. Mr. Hart committed to reaching out to the developer to follow up on the status of the dispute. The resident's contact information was recorded for follow-up correspondence.

Correspondence

No correspondence was presented.

Approval of the Bills for June 2026

Motion to approve the bills for June 2026 was made by Mrs. Stine and seconded by Mrs. Gantner. The motion carried.

Approval of the Treasurers Report for June 2026

Motion to approve the Treasurer's Report for June 2026 was made by Mrs. Gantner and seconded by Mrs. Stine. The motion carried.

Western Berks Fire Department Report

Fire Commissioner Jared Renshaw noted the report was included in the Council packet and invited questions. No questions were raised.

Western Berks Ambulance Report

The Ambulance Report was included in the Council packet. No discussion was recorded.

Revitalization

Mrs. Gantner reported that the Revitalization Committee met and discussed fundraising efforts for the Freight House, noting that a "Give Butter" fundraising campaign was being organized. She further noted that an open house is being planned, with the same group expected to be actively involved. Council members expressed enthusiasm about the Freight House's progress, with several remarking on its appearance. Mr. Miller suggested holding a future Council meeting at the Freight House.

Unfinished Business

No unfinished business was presented.

New Business – Possible Action Items**A. Approve Servpro's Final Invoice for Freight House Reconstruction – \$83,731.82**

Mr. Hart confirmed the invoice had been reviewed and recommended for approval. Council noted Servpro's active involvement in planning the upcoming Freight House open house, viewing the project as a significant portfolio achievement for the contractor.

Motion to approve Servpro's final invoice for the Freight House Reconstruction in the amount of \$83,731.82 was made by Mr. Miller and seconded by Mr. Eagelman. The motion carried.

B. Approve Cacoosing Creek Manhole Lining Proposal from Abel Recon – \$14,830.00

Waste Water Treatment Plant Superintendent Kim Cherry explained that the work involves repairs to a manhole on the 15-inch interceptor line located behind the Toll House, near the creek. A prior lateral repair water plug had failed, and root intrusion had been addressed. The proposed scope includes fiberglass lining of the manhole interior to fully seal it, along with required bypass pumping, which accounts for much of the cost.

Motion to approve the Cacoosing Creek Manhole Lining Proposal from Abel Recon in the amount of \$14,830.00 was made by Mr. Miller and seconded by Mrs. Gantner. The motion carried.

C. Verizon Cell Tower Lease Agreement Amendment

Mr. Hart presented a proposed lease amendment from the cell tower tenant for Council review, noting that no action was sought at this meeting. Under the current arrangement, the Borough receives approximately \$2,300 per month. The proposed amendment would reduce that payment by nearly half, dropping to approximately \$1,200 per month and reducing the annual escalator from 2.5% to 2%. Council expressed reluctance to accept the reduced terms and noted that the tenant had previously attempted to purchase the site, which Council declined. Discussion centered on the need for the tenant to provide justification for the reduction, including how coverage would be maintained without the tower. Mr. Hart indicated the matter would be deferred to the August meeting and suggested an administrative meeting for further discussion.

No action was taken. The item is tabled pending additional information from the tenant regarding the rationale for the proposed rate reduction.

D. Authorize Ms. Cherry to continue discussions for PRP Project

Ms. Cherry briefed Council on the Pollution Reduction Plan (PRP) project for the Borough's stormwater permit. She explained that the originally planned Broad Street swale project was determined to be impractical due to washout risk. An alternative has been identified in coordination with Berks County and the Township of South Heidelberg: a series of county-grant-funded restoration projects along the Cacoosing Creek, running from Olive Leaf Chapel through the Lutz Stables and into a portion of Willow Bend. The Borough, along with South Heidelberg and Spring Township, would contribute a share of ongoing operational and maintenance costs — estimated at no more than \$5,000 annually for the first three years — in exchange for partial pollution reduction credits to satisfy their respective PRP requirements. Superintendent Cherry noted the arrangement would utilize a third-party contractor for ongoing maintenance rather than municipal staff, and that South Heidelberg had indicated support for the approach as of a recent meeting.

Motion to authorize Ms. Cherry to continue discussions and investigative work related to the PRP Project was made by Mr. Miller and seconded by Mrs. Gantner. The motion carried.

Environmental & Municipal Engineer's Report – Possible Action Items**A. Approve Sinking Spring OP Holdings Escrow Release No. 3 – \$70,093.64**

Mr. Leaman reported that Sinking Spring OP Holdings had requested a full Phase 1 escrow release; however, a site visit identified multiple incomplete items. The Engineer recommended a partial release reflecting work completed to date.

Motion to approve Sinking Spring OP Holdings Escrow Release No. 3 in the amount of \$70,093.64 was made by Mr. Eagelman and seconded by Mrs. Stine. The motion carried.

Committee Reports

Police: Chief Oxenreider reported 210 calls for service in June 2026, compared to 191 in June 2025. The department recorded 9 non-reportable accidents, 1 pedestrian accident (minor), 45 traffic citations, and 15 warning notices. Two officers completed VASCAR speed enforcement training, and enforcement activity is expected to increase with an incoming new hire. He also confirmed that National Night Out is scheduled for August 4th at South Heidelberg Township starting at 5:30 P.M.

Solicitor: Mr. Haws reported that Sinking Spring OP Holdings and its contractor have been creating administrative complications related to mismatched pay applications and escrow documentation. He indicated the issue is not expected to become a legal problem for the Borough but noted it has required significant correspondence to manage. The discrepancy stems from the developer's use of AIA-format pay applications that do not align with the line items incorporated into the Borough's improvements agreement.

Borough Manager: Mr. Hart updated Council on preparations for the Freight House open house scheduled for September 19th, 1:00–4:00 PM. He stated that Mr. Hirsch is coordinating with Servpro representatives weekly, and outreach has been initiated to radio stations, food trucks, and other vendors. The event will also serve as a celebration of the 250th anniversary.

Newsletter: Mrs. Egelman advised Council that the fall newsletter printer requires 6 to 7 weeks of lead time from submission. Given anticipated election mail delays, it was noted that content should be gathered promptly to allow inclusion of the Freight House open house, Halloween/trick-or-treating information, and other fall community events.

Library: Mrs. Peterson noted strong participation in the summer reading challenge for both adults and children. A concern was raised regarding a potential federal policy change that would allow residents to submit self-taken passport photographs, which could significantly reduce library revenue from passport photo services — currently estimated at approximately \$45,000–\$50,000 annually. The Library would continue processing passport applications regardless, but the photo revenue would be at risk. The matter is being monitored.

Recreation: Mrs. Gantner reported that they had a water leak from the water heater that flooded the closet and storage area of the Evans Avenue pavilion. She stated that she is thankful that Mr. Ernst answered his phone and came in on his day off and checked it out. She also reported that they have had great attendance for the Summer Playground Program and the field trips.

Public Works: Mr. Egelman noted that a full report was unavailable due to scheduling but confirmed the department had been engaged in crack sealing, mowing, street cleaning, and work at the Freight House. A meeting with Public Works staff is scheduled for the following Tuesday to refine the reporting processes.

Executive Session – Personnel Issue

Council went into an Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter at 7:39 P.M. They reconvened at 8:16 P.M. No action was taken.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned following the conclusion of the Executive Session.

Respectfully submitted,


Elizabeth A. Eagelman
Borough Secretary