

**Borough of Sinking Spring**  
**November 13, 2025**  
**Council Meeting Minutes**

The regular meeting of the Borough Council of the Borough of Sinking Spring was called to order on Thursday, November 13, 2025, at 7:00 p.m., by Council President Tracy Peterson. After the pledge to the flag, Elizabeth Egelman called the roll reflecting the following Council Members present:

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

Other officials present: Mayor Gary Cirulli; Charles Haws, Barley Snyder, Borough Solicitor; David M. Schlott Jr., ARRO Consulting; Michael Hart, Borough Manager; Police Chief James Oxenreider; Debra Bohn, Treasurer, and Elizabeth Egelman, Borough Secretary, who recorded the minutes of the proceedings.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes – October 9, 2025 Council Meeting**

Motion to approve the meeting minutes from October 9, 2025 Council Meeting was made by Mr. Egelman, seconded by Mr. Miller. Motion carried with all in favor.

**Visitors**

**SRJ Real Estate LLC**

Attorney Alex Elliker, land planner Jerome Skrincosky, and engineer Michael Hartman presented on behalf of SRJ Real Estate LLC. They discussed a development proposal for properties at 20 Woodrow Avenue, 4100 Penn Avenue, and an additional Penn Avenue parcel without an address designation that is currently a vacant lot next to the post office.

Mr. Elliker explained their plan to maintain the post office while demolishing a single-family dwelling and constructing two 10-unit apartment buildings. The proposal requires 18 variances due to current zoning limitations. He noted the post office has a long-term lease with renewal options, and this would be a mixed-use development with primarily commercial zoning.

Mr. Skrincosky described the plan as "creative infill development" with 20 residential apartments, mostly two-bedroom units of approximately 1,200 square feet. He explained the proposed density (19.33 units per acre versus the required 12) and other variance requests related to common open space, impervious coverage, parking requirements, and setbacks. He suggested a fee-in-lieu payment for open space requirements.

Council members expressed concerns about:

- Parking adequacy (38 spaces for 20 units)
- Traffic congestion on Woodrow Avenue and Penn Avenue
- Safety issues with no green space for potential children
- The high density (20 units vs. 12 per acre permitted)
- The number of variances requested (18 total)

Mr. Metzgar noted the borough already has a high percentage (47%) of rental properties and concerns about further increasing this ratio.

Dr. Mannepuli, the property owner, spoke about the need for apartments in the area and argued the project would be an asset to the township by providing a good model for development in a small space with internal parking.

Motion that Council take no action ahead of the Planning Commission and Zoning Hearing Board was made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mrs. Stine. Motion carried with all in favor.

Council's solicitor confirmed he would attend the zoning hearing and participate as a party should Council not agree with the decision.

## Correspondence

No correspondence was reported.

## Approval of the Bills for October 2025

Motion to approve the bills from October 2025 was made by Mrs. Stine, seconded by Mr. Eagelman. Motion carried with all in favor.

## Approval of the Treasurers Report for October 2025

Motion to approve the Treasurer's Report from October 2025 was made by Mrs. Stine, seconded by Mr. Metzgar. Motion carried with all in favor.

## Western Berks Fire Department Report

The report was included in the council packet. No discussion occurred.

## Western Berks Ambulance Report

The report was included in the council packet. No discussion occurred.

## Revitalization

Mrs. Gantner mentioned that they have a small committee that is looking at an electronic sign for the borough in the town square area. The proposal faces zoning challenges as the borough currently doesn't allow electronic signage. The three existing electronic signs in the borough (two churches and McDonald's) all required variances.

Council members discussed potential zoning amendments to allow for appropriate electronic signage, including limitations on lumen output, hours of operation, and motion restrictions. There was general agreement to have the revitalization committee develop a detailed proposal with recommendations.

## Unfinished Business/Possible Action Items

### Budgets – Approve Advertising

Mr. Hart presented two versions of the budget - one with and one without funding for an additional full-time police officer. The version with the additional officer would require a 0.5 mill tax increase (approximately \$123 per \$100,000 of assessed property value).

Mayor Cirulli advocated for the additional officer, noting they have operated with one less officer for seven years, face difficulties hiring part-time officers, and struggle with coverage when officers take leave. He highlighted the department's difficulties managing traffic enforcement due to staffing limitations.

Council members debated whether sufficient data existed to justify the position but ultimately agreed with the need based on population growth, safety concerns, and industry standards of 1.5-2 officers per 1,000 residents.

The fire budget included a proposed millage increase from 1.155 to 1.23.

Motion to advertise all three budgets (general fund with police increase, sewer, and fire) was made by Mrs. Stine and seconded by Mr. Egelman. Motion carried with all in favor.

### Trash Rate Increase & Changes to Master Fee Schedule

Mr. Hart presented a proposed \$25 increase to the residential trash rate due to a new contract. Commercial rates would increase by \$50 to \$525.

Motion to approve the recommended increase in trash rates was made by Mr. Miller and seconded by Mr. Egelman. Motion carried with all in favor.

Discussion of other changes to the master fee schedule (including zoning hearing fees, playground fees, and mass gathering permits) was deferred to a future meeting.

### Approve Changes to Ordinance 625-2016 – Amending & Restating Chapter 196, Section 616 pertaining to the parking of recreational equipment

Mr. Egelman presented proposed changes to the ordinance regarding recreational vehicles. The amendment would allow concrete blocks or pads under each point of contact with the RV rather than requiring the entire area to be paved, which is both costly and creates runoff concerns.

Motion to advertise the ordinance changes was made by Mr. Eagelman, seconded by Mrs. Stine. Motion carried with all in favor.

## New Business/Possible Action Items

### Approve Advertising Tax Rates

Mr. Hart presented the proposed tax rates: general fund at 7.66 mills (including 0.5 mills for capital budget), fire at 1.23 mills, and EMS at 0.481 mills.

Motion to advertise the tax rates was made by Mrs. Stine, seconded by Mrs. Gantner. Motion carried with all in favor.

### Resolution No. 2025-09 – Setting the 2026 Council Meeting Dates

Council meetings for 2026 will be held on the second Thursday of every month except January, which will be the first Monday.

Motion to approve Resolution No. 2025-09 setting the 2026 Council Meeting dates was made by Mrs. Stine, seconded by Mr. Eagelman. Motion carried with all in favor.

### Slide Gate Upgrade – Blooming Glen \$32,750.00

Mr. Hart explained this emergency repair involved fixing a gate in the division box between two main tanks going into the clarifiers at the treatment plant. The concrete structure around the gate has broken, preventing operation. The repair will require 24-hour plant manning and bypass pumping by staff.

Motion to approve the slide gate upgrade by Blooming Glen for \$32,750 was made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mrs. Gantner. Motion carried with all in favor.

## Environmental & Municipal Engineer's Report

The engineer's report was provided to council members. Discussion focused on the pedestrian crossing project, which has faced submittal problems with PennDOT but is now moving forward. The contract has been signed, and the next steps involve scheduling the boring work.

## Committee Reports

Chief Oxenreider reported 228 calls for service in October, including 12 non-reportable accidents, 3 reportable accidents, and 16 domestic situations. The department issued 25 traffic citations and 20 warning notices.

Mike reported that the Freight House construction is progressing, with subflooring installed and main beams being erected.

Tracy reported the library is holding fundraisers, including one for a quilt and for the upcoming holiday open house. The Halloween activity drew over 150 children and 75 adults.

The holiday open house is scheduled for December 3rd at 6:30 PM, with Santa Claus scheduled to attend. The staff luncheon was tentatively set for December 19th.

## Public comment for matters not on the agenda

Several residents from Cacoosing Avenue addressed the council regarding parking issues created by the new parking restrictions (no parking 6 AM to 6 PM on one side of the street). Residents shared concerns about:

- Having nowhere to park, especially on weekends or evenings
- Traffic safety issues, with cars now speeding due to the wider roadway
- The lack of notice or input from residents before implementing the changes
- The limited off-street parking options, with unusable alleyways behind properties

Council acknowledged these concerns and agreed to revisit the parking restrictions, with Mr. Hart offering to measure and mark parking spaces to maximize available parking. Council members requested that residents submit written suggestions for possible solutions.

## Executive Session – Personnel matter

Council adjourned to executive session at 8:44 p.m. for a personnel matter with no intent to return.

## Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned to executive session with no intent to return.

Respectfully submitted,



Elizabeth A. Eagelman  
Borough Secretary