

The workshop meeting of the Borough Council of the Borough of Sinking Spring was called to order on Wednesday, October 26, 2022, 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
Robert Metzgar
Patrick Giambalvo

Other officials present were Charles Haws, Barley Snyder, Borough Solicitor; Brad Smith, Engineer, ARRO Consulting; Michael Hart, Borough Manager; Police Chief James Oxenreider; and Elizabeth Egelman, Borough Secretary, who recorded the minutes of the proceeding.

VISITORS/PUBLIC COMMENT:

There were no visitors in attendance.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Mrs. Peterson stated that we received correspondence from Mr. Tom Bausher, Emergency Management Coordinator for the West Side Regional Emergency Management Agency via email. He states that they have arranged for an Open House at the Emergency Operations Center on Wednesday, November 16th from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Spring Township Fire Station at 2301 Monroe Avenue in West Lawn.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS/POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS:

Mrs. Peterson stated that the first item is the Borough Website. Mr. Metzgar stated that he contacted PSAB today and talked to Joshua and Gabriel. He stated that they offer web development services, hosting, and domain services. He mentioned that the Borough would own all the content and that they can mirror the look and feel of the new BOSS Forward site. He stated that the first-year cost is under \$5,000.00 and he would like to go ahead and complete the design work sheet with Mrs. Egelman and get a more formal quote and share that with the group. Mrs. Egelman mentioned that Joshua states in the email to get approval from the Council for a not to exceed \$2,500 for the first year and then \$597.00 per year moving forward for the renewal for the Borough site and a not to exceed \$1,500.00 for the first year and then \$597.00 per year moving forward for the renewal for the Police site. Mr. Metzgar stated that they told him the yearly renewal fee may change. Mr. Miller made a motion to proceed with PSAB for web site development for any department at a cost not the exceed \$5,000.00; seconded by Mr. Hoffa. Mr. Giambalvo questioned

UNFINISHED BUSINESS/POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS:

why the Police and Borough websites separate. He stated that they could just have a secondary tab that has a reference that links to it. Mr. Hart stated that it is for security for their side. Mr. Metzgar stated that we could talk to PSAB and see if we could just do them both on one site and manage the permissions. Chief Oxenreider stated that they don't put anything confidential on the web site. AYES – 7, NAYS – 0, ABSENT - 0. Motion carried.

The next item was 8 Krick Avenue. Mr. Hart mentioned that he met with the owner of 8 Krick Avenue and that she has signed a sales agreement to purchase another house. He mentioned that he still can not use the grant money because we don't have plans that are ready to go and secured financing for the entire project. He mentioned that we used Capital Fund money to buy the other two properties with plans to reimburse it with the grant money. He stated that the agreed upon price for 8 Krick Avenue is \$178,000.00 and we will have to pay for relocation fees. He mentioned that we could use General Fund money to purchase this property and have 14 Krick Avenue hold off until we can use the grant money. Mr. Metzgar made a motion to proceed with the acquisition of 8 Krick Avenue to be paid from the General Fund; seconded by Mrs. Gantner. AYES – 7, NAYS – 0, ABSENT - 0. Motion carried. Mr. Hart stated that he is going to reach out to Mr. & Mrs. Norris at 14 Krick Avenue to have a meeting with them to let them know where we are at. Mr. Haws stated that he will contact the Redevelopment Authority to see why we are not receiving any of the paperwork.

The next item was Resolution #2022-09 to Implement Act 57 of 2022. Mr. Haws stated that he mentioned this at the last meeting and that this new law takes effect October 10, 2022, and the Borough is required to adopt a Resolution by January 9, 2023, to Implement it. He explained that it addresses the situation where the tax collector has outdated information and sends the tax bill to somebody other than the current owner as in the case of a sale of a property and it would allow a process to waive penalties and interest for real estate taxes in certain situations of the property owner provides the required documentation. Mrs. Stine made a motion to approve Resolution #2022-09; seconded by Mr. Miller. AYES – 7, NAYS – 0, ABSENT - 0. Motion carried

NEW BUSINESS/POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS:

Mrs. Peterson stated that the first item is the Budgets and turn it over to Mr. Hart. Mr. Hart started with the General Fund and stated that there are no significant changes in the General Budget and that we will keep the same tax rate. He mentioned that he did, on the income side, put a little bit extra in because Village Greens will be picking up. He also mentioned that the only capital item is the replacement of the police firearms for \$12,000.00. He stated that there were a few items that were cut back a little to make it work. Mrs. Gantner mentioned the reduction in the Recreation Salaries and if it was because we did not hire anyone for the Recreation Director position. Mr. Hart stated yes and mentioned that he just had someone contact him asking if we were still looking. Mr. Metzgar stated that they should discuss that and that he feels we are moving in the wrong direction from where we want to be. Mr. Hart mentioned that he did raise the budget item for Recreation maintenance and repairs because they have a water leak somewhere between the meter pit and the Railroad Station so they are going to have to replace about 500 feet of piping because they can't find the leak because it is plastic pipe.

NEW BUSINESS/POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS (Cont.):

Mr. Hart moved onto the Sewer Fund Budget. He mentioned that the costs for required sampling and the cost of the chemicals they use at the plant has almost doubled and may go higher. He also mentioned that they are having a hard time getting some of the chemicals needed. He stated that at the current rate we would be almost \$148,000.00 in the hole for 2023. He explained that he put together three (3) different options to cover the shortfall and that he suggests the third option which because it would be the least impact on the residents. He stated that option three would raise the sewer rate per 1000 gallons used 15% so for residential properties it would be \$5.42/1000 gallons up \$.70 from \$4.72 per 1000 gallons. Mr. Hoffa made a motion to increase the sewer usage rate for 2023 15%; seconded by Mr. Metzgar. Mr. Metzgar asked about the contributing municipalities and how their rate is figured. Mr. Hart stated that their rates are figured by ARRO where they combine all expenses to come up with the shared cost. Mr. Hoffa suggested that we try to get something out to the residents advising them of the increase. AYES – 7, NAYS – 0, ABSENT - 0. Motion carried.

The next budget was for the Emergency Services. Mr. Hart mentioned that he has not received the dispatch fee information from the County yet, so he used the same numbers for this year. He stated that he doesn't expect a large increase. He mentioned that we have a signed 5-year Agreement with Western Berks Ambulance that was signed in 2019 that was to cover 2020 – 2024 for a rate of \$55,116.75 but last year they came to us and requested additional funds to cover their shortfall so that is how we came up with the \$64,572.62 that was paid in 2022 and I continued that for the 2023 budget.

Mrs. Peterson stated that we will wait for the Council meeting in November to see if anything changes and then we can vote to advertise them.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Hoffa made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Elizabeth A. Eagelman
Borough Secretary