

**Milesburg Borough Council Meeting
416 Front Street
October 14, 2024**

Council Members Present: Fred Kellerman, Plummer Davidson, Shirley Martin, Kirsty Lloyd, Barry Campbell, Jr., and Lauren Davidson-Haupt.

Mayor Clair Martin and Solicitor Tracey Benson were also present.

President Fred Kellerman called the meeting to order at 6:47 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

President Kellerman and Solicitor Tracey Benson announce that the council had an executive session pending litigation and personnel matters. Executive Session was from 6:00 to 6:45 p.m.

Visitors

APPROVE MEETING MINUTES & PAY BILLS

Motion made by Plummer Davidson and seconded by Shirley Martin to approve meeting minutes and pay the bills. Approved unanimously.

BOROUGH NEW EMPLOYEES' INTRODUCTION

- Devon Bechdel, Lead Maintenance Worker & Chad Bechdel, General Maintenance Worker

Devon Bechdel and Chad Bechdel introduced themselves to everyone.

SOLICITOR (Tracey Benson)

Benson mentioned in the last meeting he attended that the council instructed him to send a letter to Mr. Leason, informing him of his ban from Milesburg Community Park for the rest of the season. He wrote the letter and sent it to the given address, but it was returned as undeliverable.

ORDINANCE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER (Constable Ray Reed, Jr.)

- Introduction & Ordinance violations discussion

Constable Ray Reed, Jr. identified himself as the Pennsylvania State Constable and Ordinance Enforcement Officer for the borough. He mentioned that he is currently issuing warnings instead of tickets, unless there is a repeated violation, in which case he will issue tickets for non-compliance with the borough's ordinances. He clarified that he does not have the authority to make arrests, except when serving a warrant, which is issued by the district courts.

MAYOR'S REPORT (Clair Martin)

- Mowing grass and leaves onto the borough roads. – The mayor report that he had observed that residents mowing their lawns and leaving the grass clippings on the streets, creating a safety risk and potentially clogging the storm drains in the borough. He mentioned that the upcoming newsletter will include a list of commonly violated ordinances, as some people may not be aware of them.
- Underaged unsupervised children being dropped off at the park – The mayor expressed concerns about underage children being left at the park without adult supervision.
- Radar Speed Monitors on Turnpike Street update – The mayor announced that PennDOT reached out to him and will take down the speed enforcement signs for the winter, with plans to reinstall them in the spring.

OLD BUSINESS

- Milesburg Borough Website estimates – Kessler Freedom, Inc. & CourseVector – The secretary-treasurer mentioned that she included estimates from Kessler Freedom, Inc. and CourseVector, along with information about GoDaddy, a domain registry that enables you to create your own website. Lloyd pointed out that managing GoDaddy requires someone who has both the time and expertise, raising her concern about who would be responsible for updating the website. The secretary-treasurer indicated she would collaborate with CourseVector initially but emphasized the need for a website committee or a similar group to decide on the content for the site. President Kellerman agreed to establish a committee to focus on the website, with discussions about the website and the individuals responsible for its updates to occur at the next council meeting.

Motion made by Shirley Martin and seconded by Kirsty Lloyd to go with CourseVector for creating and hosting the borough's new website. Approved unanimously.

PARK COMMITTEE

- Chair report – Davidson-Haupt discussed the Milesburg Community Park's security system and mentioned that she was tasked with obtaining quotes for expanding the hard drive. She noted that the cable connectors might have been improperly installed. Greg from Keystone Securities and Technology, Inc. pointed out that the connectors his company uses can be sensitive, potentially causing cameras to malfunction and prevent recordings. He informed Davidson-Haupt that he would come to make the necessary repairs and replace the connectors at no charge to the borough. Furthermore, he indicated that adjusting the quality settings for better clarity would require an extension of the hard drive.
- Surveillance System estimates needed – Davidson-Haupt recommended that the borough upgrade the existing hard drive system for the park's security cameras to a larger 6TB model.

She advised against delaying the replacement until spring, as incidents could still occur during the winter months, regardless of whether the park is open.

Motion made by Lauren Davidson-Haupt and seconded by Shirley Martin to acquire the 6TB hard drive extension from Keystone Securities and Technology, along with their installation of the hard drive and repair of the computer system at Milesburg Community Park. Approved unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

- Ordinance Enforcement Officer - what certifications and training are necessary, and what qualifications do Constables possess? - Lloyd inquired about the legal and illegal aspects of being an ordinance enforcement officer. The mayor emphasized that any alterations in the council or the mayor's position necessitate the re-swearing of the Ordinance Enforcement Officer, as a single oath, is insufficient. Additionally, passing an exam is required to operate license plates and verify addresses. This process must be carried out through the borough's Originating Agency Identifier (ORI), which is connected to 911, and includes fingerprinting.
- Budget 2025 – The secretary-treasurer stated that the budget committee needs to meet to prepare the budget for 2025, ensuring it can be approved at the upcoming council meeting. Lloyd asked about the status of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant funds. Benson replied that he and the secretary-treasurer had sent a report outlining the eligible expenditure for the ARPA grant and are now waiting for a response.
- Flood Insurance Renewal – The secretary-treasurer provided the council with two distinct quotes for renewing the borough building's flood insurance from Assurant American Bankers Insurance Company of Florida. According to the borough's lease agreement with the Milesburg Water Authority, they are required to pay half of the premium.

Motion made by Lauren Davidson-Haupt and seconded by Barry Campbell, Jr. to acquire the premium plan, Option B, from Assurant American Bankers Insurance Company of Florida for flood insurance for the borough building.

- Borough Brush and Leaf pick-up [future dates and where to dump] – The secretary-treasurer mentioned that Devon inquired about locating alternative sites for disposing of brush chippings and leaves nearer to the borough. Currently, the usual procedure involves transporting these materials to KLR Landscaping in Julian, Pa. Although the company allows the borough to dispose of waste there for free, they require the piles to be pushed back after dumping. This necessitates the borough using its own machinery, which means an employee must drive the backhoe from Milesburg to Julian, Pa. Devon expressed to the secretary-treasurer that this process is inefficient. The mayor authorized the borough to dispose of the brush chippings and leaves on his property. The secretary-treasurer inquired with the council regarding brush pickup

schedule and whether any changes were desired. The council decided to maintain the schedule for the last Monday of the month, with leaf collection continuing until November 18th.

- Pension [for new employees and update] - The secretary-treasurer shared details of a meeting with James Fay, the financial planner from Athlon Advisors, who manages the borough's pension account. She reported that they finalized the pension funds for former Milesburg Borough employees who resigned on January 2, 2024, and James Fay recommended that the Secretary-Treasurer reach out to him at the beginning of the year for advice on setting up pension plans for the borough's new full-time hires. The Secretary-Treasurer also noted that the borough does not incur any costs for these services, as expenses are covered by the partnering companies, and the Milesburg Water Authority is ineligible for pension funds from the state since they are no longer affiliated with a municipality. Lloyd pointed out that state aid is allocated primarily to Police Officers and Fire Fighters, while municipal employees receive half of that funding, based on the number of employees.
- Milesburg Borough/Water Authority computer and rental lease agreement [Plummer Davidson] - Davidson proposed that the Milesburg Water Authority purchase the shared computer from the borough, allowing the borough to then purchase a new computer for the secretary-treasurer. The secretary-treasurer indicated that she would collect quotes to present at the next meeting regarding the new computer purchase. She also noted her ability to transfer borough files from the current computer to the new one and expressed interest in using QuickBooks online for the upcoming year, as the existing desktop data is shared with the Milesburg Water Authority. Benson advised the secretary-treasurer to continue using the desktop version of QuickBooks for the remainder of the year and reminded the council that the QuickBooks desktop financial data would be essential for the annual audit.
- Grant writer discussion – Rep. Paul Takac's office referral – The Secretary-Treasurer reported that she reached out to Claire Gray, a Constituent Services Advisor in the office of State Representative Paul Takac, to seek recommendations for grant writing assistance. Gray suggested Michelle Merrow as a potential candidate. Merrow informed the Secretary-Treasurer that if the council specified the types of grants they are interested in pursuing, she can provide estimates and follow up with pricing information, and her billing is based on an hourly rate rather than a percentage of the grants obtained. Lloyd mentioned that if Merrow could create templates for these grants, the council could use them each year with the required updates to the applications. Davidson-Haupt noted that there are additional resources available for grant assistance, and before proceeding, a Keystone ID must be acquired for the borough.
- Keystone ID for grant writing and the broadband initiative [Lauren Davidson-Haupt] – Davidson-Haupt highlighted the importance of the borough acquiring a Keystone ID, as it is crucial for evaluating grant applications and assessing the council's ability to fund mixed-grant applications if the borough opts to apply. Visitor Elizabeth Lose from the Centre

County Office of Planning attended the meeting at Davidson-Haupt's invitation to discuss grants and the broadband initiative. She pointed out that while there are numerous opportunities available, it is vital to have someone in place to manage the grant once it is awarded, including handling reimbursements and necessary paperwork. Davidson-Haupt noted that Ernest Greene mentioned Stephanie Borowitz's office could assist with this process. The secretary-treasurer stated she would look into the Keystone ID and provide an update at the next council meeting.

- The broadband initiative – Elizabeth Lose explained that while Milesburg Borough is not an internet service provider, it can still engage in the broadband initiative managed by the Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority. She suggested examining the borough's ordinances and regulations that might hinder broadband deployment, as some companies may explore underground options and conduit installations, with the grant covering these costs. Lose noted that communities interested in participating must submit their applications by December 31, 2024. Davidson-Haupt highlighted that the initiative aims to improve reliable internet and wireless connectivity, fostering competition among businesses, which could result in lower costs for borough residents. Lose also stressed the significance of BEAD funding, which stands for broadband equity access and deployment, calling it an essential financial resource, and mentioned that county commissioners might consider using some ARPA funds. The secretary-treasurer mentioned that she would investigate this matter and provide an update at the next meeting. Lose indicated that the first step is to register and offered her help if there were any questions.
- Newsletter Fall/Winter 2024 – The Secretary-Treasurer presented the newsletter she developed with help from council member Martin. She acknowledged that it was longer than the council preferred but emphasized that as the first newsletter of the year, it contained a lot of information. She highlighted the significance of distributing a newsletter to the borough residents and suggested that, in the future, a committee could be formed to design it, allowing her to create a template for all upcoming newsletters.

Motion made by Lauren Davidson-Haupt and seconded by Ethel Kellerman, to approve the newsletter for mailing to borough residents following the council's edits. Approved unanimously.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

- Appointed Secretary and Appointed Treasurer [compensation discussion] – The matter of the appointed Secretary-Treasurer's compensation was addressed during the Executive Session, and no adjustments to their pay were approved.

STREET COMMITTEE

- Mary Lose Property – storm sewer repair update [Plummer Davidson] Davidson mentioned that Eger Excavating & Concrete LLC finished all the work. The Secretary-Treasurer noted that she added estimates from Eby Paving to the council's packets, and Devon had reached out to Jeff Tate and is awaiting an estimate for paving and curb installation. A decision regarding paving
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and curb installation needs to be made, and the secretary-treasurer noted that Eby Paving indicated the deadline for paving is Thanksgiving.

FIRE & POLICE

- Oversight Committee – Chair report [Barry Campbell, Jr.] – Campbell, Jr. had no updates regarding the committee, but mentioned that Jon McClure, the President of the CH&L Fire Company, and Keith Russell, the Fire Chief of the CH&L Fire Company, were present to talk about the fire hall budget.
- CH&L Fire Company [Special Guest Speaker] - Jon McClure, the President of the Fire Company, provided a summary of their expenses and highlighted that much of their equipment was aging and requires replacement. He mentioned that they are seeking financial support from all municipalities and townships to fund the necessary apparatus and equipment upgrades. They are requesting an annual increase from one-third of a mil \$21,154 to be raised to two mills, which would amount to \$28,795, translating to about \$10 per household in the borough. President Kellerman recommended waiting until the 2025 budget is prepared and approved. Benson proposed that the secretary-treasurer determine the value of a mil for budget planning and contact the county tax assessment office for this information.

APPOINTMENTS

- Sewer Authority
- Zoning & Hearing Board

President Kellerman asked the visitors if anyone would like to join the Sewer Authority or Zoning & Hearing - no one responded.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Plummer Davidson and seconded by Shirley Martin. Approved unanimously. The meeting ended at 8:51 p.m.

Submitted by,

Robyn D. Dyke, Secretary-Treasurer