

**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
OF THE FREEBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL
November 21, 2023**

Approved Dec. 19, 2023

The council of Freeburg Borough, Snyder County, Pennsylvania, held its regular monthly meeting on this date in the meeting room of the Freeburg Community Building. Members of the council present were: Tabbetha VanHorn-Price, Chairperson, presiding; Catherine Dent, John Wiegler, Angela Weaver, Weston Hoffman and Shawn Hokenbrough.

Others present were: Attorney Cravitz, Trent Hoffman, Wayne Enders, Rob Heddens, Brabara Schlieff, Kevin Meiser, Christine Meiser and Wanda Kantz.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Council observed a moment of silence in memory of Donald Mervine, who passed away on November 7, 2023.

Due to Donald Mervine's passing there is a vacancy on the Freeburg Borough Council. His term ends December 2023. ***Catherine Dent made a motion to appoint Erica Stephenson to fill the vacant position, Angela Weaver seconded and all Borough Council member approved the appointment of Erica Stephenson to finish the term till December 31, 2023.*** Wanda Kantz will notify Erica Stephenson that the appointment was approved and provide her with any need council information. Fred Moyer will swear in Erica Stephenson before the next council meeting.

On a motion by John Wiegler and seconded by Tabbetha VanHorn Price the minutes of October 17, 2023 meeting were approved by the Borough Council.

On a motion by Weston Hoffman the bills to pay bills presented for payment and seconded John Wiegler the motion was approved by Borough Council. All submitted bills will be paid.

PUBLIC CONCERNS

Building Permit Request for 301 East Market Street – The Property owners are requesting approval for construction of an addition on their property. After review, ***Catherine Dent made a motion to approve the permit request for 301 East Market Street, Weston Hoffman seconded; the Borough Council approved the building permit for 301 East Market Street.*** Wanda Kantz will inform the contractor, property owner and CK-COG of the permit approval.

REPORTS FROM FREEBURG FIRE CO. –

Monthly Report – From October 17 to November 21, 2023; there were 9 calls in the borough, 11 calls in Washington Township and 3 mutual aids calls, for a total of 23 calls.

Emergency Services Agreement – Washington Township Supervisors, Fremont Fire Company and Freeburg Volunteer Fire Company signed an Emergency Services Agreement

between Fremont Fire Department and Freeburg Volunteer Fire Company. This agreement is a year-by-year agreement. This agreement will list call boxes 30-6, 30-7 & 30-8 as Fremont Fire Company as primary coverage and Freeburg Volunteer Fire Company as secondary.

CENTRAL KEYSTONE COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (CK-COG) – See attached report.

10 East Front Street – Citation has been issued. District Magistrate found the property owner guilty of property maintenance violations, fined and order the property owner to come up with a solution in a reasonable amount of time, to resolve the violations.

PESI REPORT – The November 2023 report from PESI regarding the Waste Water System was reviewed.

WWTP Corrective Action Plan Response– Josh Owens presented a Memorandum with potential corrective action plans for the WWTP. Josh Owens submitted the CAP response to DEP. CAP was accepted by DEP on December 9, 2022. A CAP update was submitted April 28, 2023. Ordinance education and remediation survey was included with the 2nd quarter water & sewer bills, on June 30, 2023. The most recent request for an additional 12 EDUs was denied by DEP.

CCTV Inspection – CCTV inspection has been completed. Reports has been completed and to be sent to DEP on May 17, 2023. The inspection noted three major areas of repairs.

Smoke Testing Notices for Remediation- Letters will be mailed out for repairs to be made, after 90 days PESI will inspect properties for completed repairs.

Sewer Surveys – Josh Owens has compiled data from the sewer surveys that have been returned from residents. We had a 46% return rate for the first round of survey letters, a second round of survey letter will be sent out soon. If the second request is not returned in a timely manner ***Catherine Dent made a motion to access a \$100.00/month fee on future water and sewer bill until this survey is returned completed. Angela Weaver seconded and the Borough Council unanimously approved the motion.*** Wanda Kantz will work on sending out the second round of survey letters.

Remediation Extension - Due to recent situation, ***Catherine Dent made a motion to grant Lydia Mervine an extension on any sewer remediation issues, Tabbetha Van-Horn Price seconded and the Borough Council member unanimously approved.***

PA Small Water and Sewer Grant – Josh Owens submitted a grant application for lining sewer line in the Borough, with a \$500,000.00 grant we would be able to complete lining half of the town’s sewer lines. Lining areas will be determined by the CCTV investigation. Grant application was submitted on December 21, 2022. Grant determinations have been delayed at least until January 2024.

High Flow Pump Control Issues – A new controller has arrived and will be installed.

Cross-Connection on Market Street – During smoke testing a cross connection issue was discovered on Market Street. Ways to further test this issue is to do dye test during a

heavy rain event and/or lateral camera testing of the lines. Dye testing was approved at the August 15, 2023 meeting. Josh Owens will look into dye testing for this issue.

Future Waste Water Treatment Plant Project – The WWTP area has been surveyed to help facilitate planning for future WWTP projects.

MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY REPORT –

Nitrate Removal System – The Nitrate Removal Systems is currently running; issues are being trouble shot as they arise.

Currently, daily nitrate levels have be between 4.5 and 5.50 mg/l.

PA Small Water & Sewer Grant – This grant program is for project under \$500,000.00. The FMA has submitted a grant application this grant program. Freeburg Municipal Authority was awarded a grant for **\$418,000.00**. A one-year extension has been requested for this grant.

Timber Bids – The timber bid has been awarded to Steve’s Excavating & Logging in the amount of \$12,565.00 (income).

Level Monitoring Systems Bid Has Been Awarded – The level monitoring systems bid has been awarded to TRA Electric. This project cost is covered under the PA Small Water & Sewer Grant #1.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE – *Catherine Dent, Chair; Angela Weaver and Tabbetha VanHorn Price.*

Coverage for Brough Office, Part-Time/As Needed – The Committee interviewed one candidate for the office assistance position, Barbara Schlief. ***Catherine Dent made a motion to hire Barbara Schlief to fill the position on an as needed basis, Angela Weaver seconded, the Borough Council members unanimously approved the motion.***

Part Time/As Needed Labor Position – The Committee has interview one candidate for the office assistance position, Rob Heddens. ***Catherine Dent made a motion to hire Rob Heddens to fill the position on an as needed basis, Angela Weaver seconded, the Borough Council members unanimously approved the motion.***

Pay Rate for New Hires – The current pay rate for Borough workers is \$23.00/hour. ***Catherine Dent made a motion to approve the \$23.00/hour payrate for Rob Heddens and Barbara Schlief, Angela Weaver seconded, the Borough Council unanimously approved the motion.***

2024 Budget – A rough draft of the budget has been completed. ***Weston Hoffman made a motion to advertise the summary of the 2024 draft budget, John Wiegler seconded, the Borough Council unanimously approved the motion.*** The draft budget will be advertised and approved at the December 19, 2023 meeting.

2024 Salary Review – Committee member have been given the 2023 employee salary information to review. Recommendation will be made at the December 19, 2023 meeting.

ORDINANCES & PLANNING – *Tabbetha VanHorn Price, Chair, Donald Mervine, Shawn Hokenbrough.*

Pedestrian Signs – Penn DOT has approved the installation of two pedestrian signs on the blocks before the post office crossing. Signs have been ordered, received and waiting for installation.

Crosswalk at Post Office – Penn DOT has completed the crosswalk survey and the crosswalk was denied. Additional options for safety are being review with Penn DOT.

Storm Damage on Willow Ave/Tree Removal – This issue was discussed again and the council again decided to no change the original billed amount. This information will be relayed to the property owner.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – *Angela Weaver, Chair, Catherine Dent and Weston Hoffman*

Borough Website – The borough website is now live. The web address is www.freeburghorough.com.

Borough Website Auto-Renewal – Weston Hoffman informed the council that it is time for the borough website to renew, this is set up on an auto-payment option, annual renew amount is \$300.00.

Kids' Garden Club – After review and discussion, ***Angela Weaver made a motion to approve the Kids' Garden Club, Catherine Dent seconded, the Borough Council member unanimously approved the motion.*** Wanda Kantz will inform Central Pa Youth Ministries of the approval.

PUBLIC FACILITIES, SERVICES AND SAFETY – *Weston Hoffman, Chair, John Wiegler and Shawn Hokenbrough.*

Community Center Income – November 2023 income was \$965.00

2023 County Aid Project – The 2023 County Aid Project has been submitted and approved. Completion form will be submitted.

Bridge repairs – The Committee reviewed the bridge survey report and made a recommendation to start with the Front Street Bridge between Willow & Center Square Street. Penn Dot stated there is not enough info on the report to compile a bid notice. Wanda Kantz has reached out to Stahl, Sheaffer for additional info for the bids. Repairs of the Front Street Cherry Run bridge is estimated at \$63,075.00; bridge replacement is estimated at \$394,013.00.

Drainage Issue at Soft Ball Field – Penn Dot has completed the revised draining project. Still some issues with Softball field drainage. Borough Council to work on additional resolution for this issue. Looking for additional grant to help with this issue.

Security System –Security cameras have been purchased and will be install in the near future. Currently, Trent Hoffman is working on running the wiring for the security cameras.

Handicap Ramp for Borough Office Entrance. –Stahl, Sheaffer Engineering has provided the borough with a project estimate of \$40,000.00 for grant planning purposes.

Stump at Community Center – A stump grinder will be rented and the borough staff will grind the remaining stump and remove.

Roof Leaks – Contactor has been contacted.

Blinds for Council Meeting Room – New window blinds had arrived; they will be installed once window trim is painted.

Chair Lift Repair – Chair life has been repaired.

Hometown Hero Banner – The Hometown Hero Banners have been taken down.

Tabbatha VanHorn Price made a motion to donate \$200.00 to the Freeburg Fire Police for their assistance in this project, Catherine Dent seconded, the Borough Council members unanimously approved the motion. Wanda Kantz will process a check for the donation.

Long Term Parking at the Community Center – There have been issues with a truck being parked long term in front of the community center building. The only option to control the parking is to install parking restriction signs. Three signs have been ordered.

CORRESPONDENCE – None

NEW BUSINESS –

2024 Tax Rates – There was discussion regarding the real estate tax rate and borough income. ***After discussion, Angela Weaver made a motion to increase the real estate tax millage to 11.0 mills, an increase from the 2023 rate of 10.0 mills, Tabbatha VanHorn Price seconded, the Borough Council members approved the motion to advertise the real estate tax millage increase for 2024.*** Attorney Cravitz office will advertise the tax rate ordinance for 2024. The 2024 tax rate ordinance will be approved at the December 19, 2023 meeting.

Old Zero Turn Mower – The old zero turn mower was taken to Hilly Ridge for an estimate cost of repairs. After inspection, Hilly Ridge estimated a potential cost of \$800-\$1000 to make needed repairs to the mower. Hilly Ridge offered a \$500.00 credit towards a future purchase for the mower. ***John Wiegler made a motion to trade the old zero turn mower to Hilly Ridge for a \$500.00 credit towards a future purchase, Weston Hoffman seconded, the Borough Council members unanimously approved the motion.*** Wayne Ender will contact Hilly Ridge regarding the decision.

COUNCIL, MAYOR, SOLICITOR, EMPLOYEE CONCERNS –

The next regular meeting of the Borough Council will be Tuesday, December 19, 2023 at 7 pm.

A motion was made by Weston Hoffman, seconded by John Wiegler to adjourn. Motion carried. The Borough Council meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Wanda Kantz, Secretary