

Regular Council Meeting  
September 14, 2020  
7:00 PM

The Regular monthly meeting of Shamokin City Council was held this evening with Mayor John J. Brown presiding.

**CALL TO ORDER:**

**PLEDGE TO THE FLAG:** All

**PRAYER:** Silent

**ROLL CALL:** Moyer, Roughton, Seidel, Verano, Brown  
Absent: None

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

**MINUTES:**

A Motion by Roughton to approve previous Council Meeting Minutes of:

August 10, 2020 (Regular Council Meeting)

Second by: Verano

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Moyer, Roughton, Verano, Seidel, Brown  
Nays: None  
Absent: None

A Motion by Verano to approve previous Council Meeting Minutes of:

August 24, 2020 (Special Council Meeting)

Second by: Roughton

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Moyer, Roughton, Verano, Seidel, Brown  
Nays: None  
Absent: None

**BILL LIST:**

MOTION BY: Moyer to approve the bill list for August 2020

Second by: Seidel

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Ayes: Moyer, Roughton, Verano, Seidel, Brown  
Nays: None  
Absent:

## **DIRECTORS REPORT:**

### **ACCOUNTS & FINANCE:**

General Fund \$ 703,224.61  
Motor License \$238,565.82  
Library \$ 3,613.62  
Debt Service \$268,957.86  
Recreation \$ 415,325.96  
Capital Projects \$ 5,950.00  
Street Lights \$5,222.68  
Total All Accounts \$ 1,640,860.55

Fund balances as of September 1, 2020 submitted by Brenda Scandle, City Treasurer.

### **PARKS & PUBLIC BUILDINGS:**

Thanks Dave Spotts for this past weekend music in the parks it was a nice turnout. I talked to Bob today about having the rigging on the flagpole at Claude Kehler Park replaced. I understand it's been there for quite some time and the way that it goes up it does not fly. Bob is going to talk to Kevin about replacing it. There is a time change for the Fall Festival on October 17. It was originally scheduled from 3-9 and is now going to be 11-6. Due to some conflicts with the band, they want to make sure that they could get everybody in there. There has been some discussion about the community garden in the fifth ward. Cameron Murray is actually running a fundraiser online right now. She is raising \$600 to replace the section of sidewalk outside of the park. Based on our brief discussion, she's almost half way to her goal \$600. And I was wondering if there's a way for us to match if she reaches \$300? Can we match the \$300 from the recreation fund?

MOTION BY: Seidel to match the \$300 donation for the 5<sup>th</sup> street community garden sidewalk project.  
Second by: Verano

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Ayes: Moyer, Roughton, Seidel, Verano, Brown  
Nays: None  
Absent: None

My final part of my report doesn't exactly have to do with Parks and Recreation. It has to do with my position on city council. So is it proper for me to speak about it now or wait? I have some information here and hand out to everybody. It was brought to my attention at the workshop meeting, that there was an issue concerning me and something that I did after I was elected, but prior to being sworn in, and I didn't answer at that time because I like to have my facts in order and get all my information straight. So I went back to my records, and if you will just look at the information I provided. I actually printed out a timeline and the backup documents for that. There were text messages that I sent on November 19 to Mr. Joe Leschinskie and they were not nice text messages. I printed out the full timeline because it was brought to my attention that this information looked as if it was confidential, and I had

leaked it to a member of the public. And if you follow the timeline, that's not how it happened. This came up in a meeting in October of 2019, where Mr. Leschinskie started questioning a permit that was issued to the Alehouse and the lack of transparency in the city. There was a letter, which I'm not sure how anybody knew about it. That was issued on October 21. On the 23rd an Ad was placed in The news item concerning this very issue and that ad is attached. On November 11, at the Shamokin city council meeting and I did attach the minutes and I've marked for your convenience so you can see exactly where it happened. Mr. Leschinskie, he asked a follow up question about his permit because it had not been addressed from October the month before he asked for an answer. Councilman Roughton and Mr. Leschinskie even started discussing a cease and desist letter from the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry at the public meeting. At that time, Councilman Roughton stated that the letter was addressed to him, but that Mr. Leschinskie could see it and that is available to the public. Again, the meeting minutes are posted and marked. On November 11 the right to know request date is the day before the day of the meeting from Rob Naylor at The news item was received at City Hall, the right to know requested a copy of the cease and desist letter. I got a copy of the letter, I snapped a picture of it. And I sent it to Mr. Leschinskie, and an app called WhatsApp the very next day the news item published the same article about the permitting issue the details of the cease and desist letter and quotes from councilmember Roughton stating that he did what he did for the best intention of the city. Now on September 14, almost one year later, I was accused of leaking confidential information. While how I got the letter, by see it there and taking a picture of it may not have been ethical at its worst. It was released the night before. It's public information. I provided the information to Mr. Leschinskie trying to help him with the issue that he had. Did I do it the right way? Questionable as it was already released. What I will say at this point to Mr. Leschinskie directly, you will have hundreds of text messages from me. Some of them messages will say disparaging things about various people, some of them in this room. The difference between you and I is that I will stand here and I will address these issues and I will Apologize. There is real work to be done here. If you're going to accuse me of doing something illegal or unethical, please make sure to provide all the context and to remember the whole situation. I apologize to the rest of council that it's come to this. This is childish at best, but it has to be over. So this is what I did. In that message, I referred to you Councilman Roughton as rodent. it. It was not done in autocorrect. It was done intentionally. And I apologize for that. It was right after the election, things were very heated. It was disparaging and it was wrong. And I asked that you take that into consideration and that we hash that out after the meeting is over.

#### **STREET & PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS:**

Nothing

#### **PUBLIC SAFETY:**

Code Revenue for the Month of August \$5,340.37

Fire Report for the month of August 2020 – 110 calls.

Police Department reported 1,097 calls for the Month of August 2020.

**MOTION BY:** Roughton to hire Alexis Temple as a PT Meter Enforcement clerk for \$8.50 an hour and 28 hours a week.

Second by: Verano

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Ayes: Moyer, Roughton, Seidel, Verano, Brown  
Nays: None  
Absent: None

MOTION BY: Roughton to declare 7 properties a public health and safety nuisance.  
319 s market street, 129 S Franklin, 520 Bear Valley Ave, 5 E. Montgomery, 7 E.  
Montgomery, 4 E. Willow, 314 S Coal Street

Second by: Verano

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Ayes: Moyer, Roughton, Seidel, Verano, Brown  
Nays: None  
Absent: None

#### **SEDA-COG -**

**The City is doing very well during these trying times, there have been 5 new businesses that have opened since March.**

MOTION BY: Roughton to approve SEDA-COG to apply for a EPA Grant in the amount of \$300,000.

Second by: Seidel

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Ayes: Moyer, Roughton, Seidel, Verano, Brown  
Nays: None  
Absent: None

#### **CITIZEN COMMENTS:**

**BIDS: None**

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

MOTION BY: Seidel to add the City Administrator to the Food Truck Committee.

Second by: Verano

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Ayes: Moyer, Roughton, Seidel, Verano, Brown  
Nays: None  
Absent: None

MOTION BY: Verano to add the Chief of Police to the Food Truck Committee.

Second by: Seidel

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Ayes: Moyer, Roughton, Seidel, Verano, Brown  
Nays: None  
Absent: None

MOTION BY: Verano to add the Street Forman to the Food Truck Committee.

Second by: Roughton

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Ayes: Moyer, Roughton, Seidel, Verano, Brown  
Nays: None  
Absent: None

MOTION BY: Verano to add the Eric Kuijpers from the Covered Bridge Brewhaus to the Food Truck Committee.

Second by: Moyer

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Ayes: Moyer, Roughton, Seidel, Verano, Brown  
Nays: None  
Absent: None

MOTION BY: Roughton to add the Brandon Klopp from When Pigs Fly Food Truck to the Food Truck Committee.

Second by: Moyer

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Ayes: Moyer, Roughton, Seidel, Verano, Brown  
Nays: None  
Absent: None

MOTION BY: Seidel to add the Sarah Shepard from SABER to the Food Truck Committee.

Second by: Verano

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Ayes: Moyer, Roughton, Seidel, Verano, Brown  
Nays: None  
Absent: None

MOTION BY: Roughton to extend the Mayors executive order for Outdoor seating for an additional 90 days.

Second by: Moyer

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Ayes: Moyer, Roughton, Seidel, Verano, Brown  
Nays: None  
Absent: None

#### **BOARD & COMMITTEES:**

MOTION BY: Verano to appoint Edward Manning to the Shamokin Are Industrial Development Board

Second by: Roughton

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Ayes: Moyer, Roughton, Seidel, Verano, Brown  
Nays: None  
Absent: None

MOTION BY: Seidel to appoint Andy Twigg to the Shamokin Are Industrial Development Board

Second by: Verano

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Ayes: Moyer, Roughton, Seidel, Verano, Brown  
Nays: None  
Absent: None

MOTION BY: Mayor Brown to appoint Jim Backes to the Shamokin Are Industrial Development Board

Second by: Roughton

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Ayes: Moyer, Roughton, Seidel, Verano, Brown  
Nays: None  
Absent: None

MOTION BY: Mayor Brown to appoint Betsy Kramer to the Shamokin Are Industrial Development Board

Second by: Roughton

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Ayes: Moyer, Roughton, Seidel, Verano, Brown  
Nays: None  
Absent: None

MOTION BY: Mayor Brown to appoint Kathy Vetovich to the Shamokin Are Industrial Development Board

Second by: Roughton

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Ayes: Moyer, Roughton, Seidel, Verano, Brown  
Nays: None  
Absent: None

**SOLICITORS REPORT:**

MOTION BY: Verano to approve the Resolution 20-17 (Liquid Fuels Winter Service Agreement)

Second by: Roughton

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Seidel, Moyer, Brown, Roughton,  
Nays: Verano  
Absent: None

MOTION BY: Verano to approve the Resolution 20-18 (CDBG to Apply)

Second by: Roughton

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Seidel, Moyer, Brown, Roughton,  
Nays: Verano  
Absent: None

MOTION BY: Verano to approve the Second reading of Ordinance 20-06(Proposed Code Codification & Adoption Ordinance)

Second by: Roughton

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Seidel, Moyer, Verano Brown, Roughton,  
Nays: None  
Absent: None

MOTION BY: Verano to approve the first reading of Ordinance 20-07(Vacant Property Registration Ordinance)

Second by: Roughton

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Seidel, Moyer, Verano Brown, Roughton,  
Nays: None  
Absent: None

We need to work on an ordinance for a Gentlemen's club; there are a number of issues that we need to work out at our next workshop.

Executive Session was held after our workshop 9/2 for personnel reasons for approx. 35 minutes

- **Citizens Comments contingent upon new business being added to the agenda at this part of the meeting.**

**John Zanella - Is having water issue at his property up on State Street. He has lived there for 31 years and there are vacant and blighted properties near his property with wild animals living in there. Mr. Slaby will set up a meeting with him and DEP.**

**Edward Manning - Thank you for setting up the IDA Board. How would like the format of the meeting minutes delivered? Council stated that email would be best.**

**Jamie Yerkes - Is rent to owned properties, rentals? Asked if Code inspections building with 5 or more rental units, If they find a rental not registered is there a plenty. Is it illegal for Landlords to share information on previous tenants that did damage? Council Stated that rent to own properties are rentals, Code will inspect a couple of units in a an apartment building, and a landlord will get a citation if they are found not to be registered. And Make sure you have the court documentation to back up the information you share on tenants.**

**Judy Allen - What is the vacant property registration? Home for the Holidays and Light up Lincoln, will that interfere with the downtown Christmas. The Outdoor seating does anyone ever go around and check on that? The Heritage has tables on the sidewalk and there is no room to get around those tables. Council Stated the Vacant Property Registration is nothing more than the city keeping track of vacant properties. There are fees involved to get people to either fix them up or tear them down. There is a registration fee of \$75 per building and inspection fee \$180 per building. Home for the holidays Is on Nov 28<sup>th</sup>, Downtown Christmas is Dec 4. Outdoor seating is to be ADA compliant.**

**Joe Leschinskie - Asked for his 3 minutes and his opportunity to respond. Over the past couple of weeks, he has seen the Mayor and other local residents are going out on weekend and cleaning up the streets, Thanks for going above and beyond. He obtained the OHV Ordinance by going into city hall and asked for a copy. The meetings are recorded and this is how he getting his information. The two that are finger pointing and bellyaching are the same two that have been leaking information out of city hall for almost a year now, when it fits their agenda. I would like to publicly apologize to Mr. and Mrs. Curren as I was a spokesperson for a member of council. I am willing to answer anyone's questions on the record. When I got the information on Mr. Roughton's letter, I did not file a right to know for that. Mr. Slaby failed to complete the right to know that I requested, I requested 4 of them. All 4 were never responded to by Mr. Slaby. I have messages to meet me at a local establishment. On February 12, I was provided information on an agreement with a contract from the Medical Marijuana and the tax office. I met with Mrs. Seidel at 8pm. I then emailed the OOR and canceled my Right to know requests for 3 of the 4 requests. I agreed to drop 3 of the 4 for the Medical Marijuana right to know. I agreed to do so and was told I would get information on the Ale House Bar & Grill had no occupancy permit. When the agenda fit I was used, and I apologize. An Elected official, prior to being sworn in and after, and the City Administrator leaking information. What is City council going to do about it. Councilwomen Seidel - Thank you Mr. Leschinskie, What you said, you need to provide documents and I will respond. We did have dinner at James so many times. You showed them to me the documents. Joe - Don't lie and say you did not show up that night. Seidel - We had dinner many time, I did not show up that night. You are so intelligent; you are so smart if you would keep it above the board and invest in the good things that are going on here in town, you could do good things. That is why I meet with you and why I meet with you I talked to you, I see the good you have to offer if you could just focus on the positive things. Joe - Does the council have no respond on the leaking of information**

**Jesse Storm - Calls for Mayor Brown to openly start an investigation on the Right to know act in Shamokin. He was told he would be getting his information and he never got it. No to strip clubs. The vacant property registration, The supreme court said it is illegal.**



**Gary Haddock - Here to express is disapproval of the OHV routes going back his home on 6<sup>th</sup> street. Come down and sit and watch from his front porch. Watch the intersection of Chestnut and 6<sup>th</sup> street.**

**ADJOURN:**

Minutes taken by Doreen Annis, Administrative Accountant  
Meeting ended at 8:53 PM