

THE CITY OF SHAMOKIN COUNCIL MEETING
Monday, January 13, 2025
6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER:

PLEDGE TO FLAG:

PRAYER:

ROLL CALL:

PRESENTATIONS:

BIDS:

CORRESPONDENCE:

CITIZENS' COMMENTS (contingent upon business listed on the agenda):

MINUTES:

Motion to accept the minutes of The City of Shamokin Council Meetings of December 9, 2024 (Regular Council Meeting), December 3, 2024 (Special Meeting), and December 30, 2024 (Special Meeting).

BILLS:

Motion to approve the bills from December 2024, as listed on the Bill List.

DIRECTORS' REPORTS:

*Accounts & Finance
Parks and Public Building
Street and Public Improvements
Public Safety
Controller
Treasurer
Chief of Police*

SEDA-COG:

AMERICORPS VISTA:

NEW BUSINESS:

1. *Request a motion to approve Resolution 25-01, a Signature Resolution for the Letter of Adjustment (LOA) to the Reimbursement Agreement (RA) for the Independence Street Project.*
2. *Request a motion to approve moving \$19,317.87 from FFY 2022 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funding Contract Number C000084351 Street Reconstruction to West Commerce Street Reconstruction.*
3. *Request a motion to establish an annual City Treasurer salary for the term beginning January 1, 2026.*

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

BOARDS AND COMMITTEES:

Request a motion to reappoint Daniel McGaw to the Shamokin Housing Authority Board for a five-year term beginning January 1, 2025.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

Request a motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance 25-01, Establishing Regulations Related to Vagrancy and Homelessness Within the City of Shamokin.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS:

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business, adjourn the meeting.

City of Shamokin Regular Council Meeting
Monday, January 13, 2025
Minutes
6:00 PM

The Regular Monthly Meeting of Shamokin City Council was held this evening with Mayor Richard H. Ulrich presiding.

CALL TO ORDER:

PLEDGE TO FLAG:

PRAYER:

ROLL CALL:

PRESENTATIONS:

Michael Stromberg and Sean Garrigan of Stromberg/Garrigan & Associates appeared via virtual conference to present the preliminary engineering plans for the Independence Street Makeover Project. There will also be a public presentation on January 30th at the Shamokin-Coal Township Public Library. Mr. Stromberg and Mr. Garrigan discussed the plan's safety improvements for multi-modal transportation in the Independence Street corridor, new accessibility features, and aesthetic improvements. Bump-out curb extensions will shorten pedestrian crossing distance and recapture space for events, as well as enhance the appeal of the area with full-field paving. String lights are proposed for intersections and new technology will allow trees to be added without the potential for damage to pavement from the root system.

Councilman Duganitz expressed concern that new tree plantings may hinder security camera visibility. Stromberg/Garrigan stated that the plan is an initial layout which can be altered. Councilman McLaughlin questioned whether the City can afford maintenance on trees and added that the addition of trees did not work well in the past. The City Administrator remarked that prior tree plantings grew higher than expected and damaged pavements.

Stromberg/Garrigan stated that the species planted in the City in 1987 is the same size as an elm and although slow-growing, can eventually grow very large. However, the trees were installed in improper tree pits which could not accommodate their full size. The intention of the makeover plan is to choose a larger tree that can be trimmed above the first floor to avoid blocking storefronts. Historically, trees were uniformly spaced without regard to blocking storefronts and entrances. The Stromberg/Garrigan plan will place trees more strategically.

Councilwoman Moyer expressed a different point of view from that of Councilmen Duganitz and McLaughlin, stating that she is a fan of trees. She added that she understands the concerns, but does not want to dismiss the inclusion of trees out-of-hand. Although there have been problems in the past with some of them, she believes they add to the beautification of the community. Councilman McLaughlin added that he also loves the design but questions the practicality. Councilman Duganitz remarked that beautification can also attract business to the downtown. Stromberg/Garrigan commented that they

January 13, 2025

believe a compromise can be reached and trees can be added while taking practical considerations into account.

Councilman McLaughlin asked about snow removal around the bump-outs. Stromberg/Garrigan replied that the design includes space for plows to move around the bump-outs and bollards to protect the area.

The City Administrator noted that the bump-outs appear on almost every streetcorner. He also commented that the property owners' permission had to be obtained in order to remove trees last year, therefore the tree maintenance may be their responsibility. Councilman McLaughlin disagreed.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

BIDS:

CORRESPONDENCE:

CITIZENS' COMMENTS (contingent upon business listed on the agenda):

MINUTES:

MOTION BY: Duganitz to approve the minutes of the City of Shamokin Council Meetings of December 9, 2024 (Regular Council Meeting), December 3, 2024 (Special Council Meeting), and December 30, 2024 (Special Council Meeting).

Second by: Moyer

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Duganitz, McLaughlin, Moyer, Kehler, Ulrich

Nays: None

Absent:

BILLS:

MOTION BY: Moyer to approve the bills from December 2024, as listed on the Bill List.

Second by: Ulrich

The City Administrator extended apologies to Council that the bill list is not yet available for review due to other issues in the month of December. He added that this vote is a formality and the bill list will be distributed as soon as it is available. Councilman McLaughlin stated that he would have a hard time voting to approve the bills without reviewing the bill list. The City Administrator stated that it is his responsibility to pay the bills as they come in.

The Controller asked whether there were any unusual bills in the past month. The City Administrator replied that the only major expense was the Street Department vehicle covered by the ARPA funds, and referenced the other new vehicles which have not yet been delivered. Councilman Duganitz expressed concern at the absence of the bill list. Mayor Ulrich remarked that his own position on the matter is based on trust and questioned whether Council mistrusts the process, to which Councilman Duganitz replied that his concerns are not personal. He stated that he trusts everyone here, but the citizens trust Council to make decisions. McLaughlin added that he cannot vote to pay bills when he does not know

what they are. The City Administrator pointed out that the process of paying bills has been in place for at least eleven years, and that the December bills have already been paid.

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Moyer, Kehler, Ulrich

Nays: McLaughlin

Abstain: Duganitz

DIRECTORS' REPORTS:

Accounts & Finance

Councilwoman Moyer presented the Treasurer's report for the month of December. Total General Fund balance: \$1,000,728.82; total Motor License balance: \$224,798.25; total Library Balance: \$207,110.12; total Sinking Fund #1 balance: \$113,611.35; total Recreation balance: \$286,141.01; total Street Lighting balance: \$8,027.92; total American Legion balance: \$1,025.17; total Neighborhood Mitigation balance: \$31,804.93; total Code Department Credit Cards balance: \$6,638.00; total Police Department Credit Cards balance: \$2,296.26. Total balance in all accounts to January 1, 2025: \$1,882,181.83.

Councilwoman Moyer thanked the Treasurer for preparing the report and commented on the bill list issue, stating that she understands everyone's point of view and feels there can be a "happy medium." She added that she is comfortable with approving payment of bills as they have already been paid. This is necessary to keep our city functioning but sometimes glitches occur. Councilman McLaughlin interposed to note a typographical error on the Treasurer's report. The Controller commented that the City only has a certain amount of employees and it can be difficult especially in December. The City Administrator added that the Accountant has only been on the job for six months, the secretary works part-time, and significant time was spent packing 1,000 registration renewal letters last month.

Parks and Public Buildings

Councilman Duganitz commented on the wonderful New Year's Eve celebrations and gave a shoutout to the event's sponsors, Klacik and Associates, Service Electric, Majik Rent-to-Own, DJ Hollenbach, and fireworks technician Steve Funk, as well as the police and fire departments.

Councilman Duganitz discussed a feasibility assessment regarding solar panels at the pool and stated he would be meeting with the City Administrator on the matter in the near future. He also commented on the recent water main break affecting nine or ten homes and recognized everyone who gave their support, including the police, street and code departments, neighbors, and volunteer and junior firefighters who went above and beyond.

Streets and Public Improvements

Councilman McLaughlin agreed that efforts at the water main break were exceptional, praised everyone's teamwork, and stated that he saw no issues except the ice problem which could not be avoided. A temporary patch was applied until the issue can be completely repaired in the spring, and some pavements may need repairs. A few fire truck pumps went bad and will need to be addressed. He raised the question of whether the City can seek reimbursement for correcting a public utility issue. The City Administrator stated that he believes this will be taken care of and that Aqua's insurance usually covers this type of issue. The Solicitor advised putting together a report of our losses.

January 13, 2025

Councilman McLaughlin reported that the signs for 8th Street at the bridge were installed. A reorganization of the warehouse is in progress, as is the removal of holiday decorations in the City. He reiterated that his questions regarding the bill list have nothing to do with trust.

Public Safety

The Fire Department reported 462 calls for the month of December. The Code Department reported \$4,387.50 in revenue for the month of December.

Councilman Kehler reported that a deposit has been made on a fire truck and an application is in progress for a grant to fund the purchase.

Controller

The Controller had nothing to report.

Treasurer

The Treasurer thanked Councilman McLaughlin for pointing out the typographical error on her report which showed a 2023 date instead of 2024. She also directed his attention to the January 1, 2025 date elsewhere on the report, which should clear up any confusion.

Chief of Police

The Police Department reported 1,120 calls for the month of December and 3,164 miles patrolled. For the year 2024, the Police Department reported a total of 18,191 calls and 44,665 miles patrolled. The Chief added that the department averages between 36 and 38 calls per day.

In a response to a question from Councilman Duganitz, the Chief replied that the downtown parking meters are uncovered after the holidays. The Chief also reported that he is currently drafting a job description for a parking enforcement officer and will be submitting it to the Solicitor for review.

SEDA-COG

Betsy Kramer explained that Item #1 on the agenda approves an adjustment of the scope of the Downtown Makeover project. In the original plan, each phase of the project covered the completion of a single portion of the street, but the plan was revised so that the scope of the project is the design and engineering of the entire area, broken down into work phases.

Ms. Kramer reminded the public that a meeting will be held January 30th from 6:00-7:30 P.M. in the public library. This meeting will address both the makeover and the Safe Streets for All project. Councilwoman Moyer asked if the meeting will be livestreamed and Ms. Kramer stated that she would check with the consultants.

Tonia Troup provided an update on the CDBG funding. This year the West Commerce Street road reconstruction and some blighted property cleanups were completed. Ms. Troup is currently working on demolition plans for six additional properties. Reconstruction of Liberty and Water Streets is planned for spring.

Justin Bainbridge discussed the Claude Kehler/Volunteer Park footbridge plan, for which a design package was presented last week. A draft plan will be available in February for Council to review. The

GoShamokin website is fully live. Mr. Bainbridge encouraged anyone who needs help setting up their city business or organization on the website to reach out to him for assistance.

Matt McMullen of AmeriCorps Vista reported that the solar feasibility study is progressing. He discussed the recent MORE energy audit and encouraged Council to reach out to him with any questions they may have.

NEW BUSINESS:

MOTION BY: Kehler to approve Items #1-3 on the agenda and table Item #4.

Second by: Moyer

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Duganitz, McLaughlin, Moyer, Kehler, Ulrich

Nays: None

Absent:

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

BOARDS AND COMMITTEES:

MOTION BY: Ulrich to reappoint Daniel McGaw to the Shamokin Housing Authority Board for a five-year term beginning January 1, 2025.

Second by: Kehler

Councilman Duganitz asked if a letter of recommendation were received from anyone on the Housing Authority board. The City Administrator replied that he received a letter of recommendation from Mr. Miller as well as a request from Mr. McGaw asking that he be reappointed.

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Duganitz, McLaughlin, Moyer, Kehler, Ulrich

Nays: None

Absent:

SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

MOTION BY: Kehler to approve the first reading of Ordinance 25-01, Establishing Regulations Related to Vagrancy and Homelessness Within the City of Shamokin.

Second by: McLaughlin

Councilman Duganitz asked whether this will be available downstairs for public review. The City Administrator replied that it will be on the counter tomorrow and will also be advertised in the newspaper. Councilman McLaughlin asked whether it can be made available on the City's Facebook page as well, to which the City Administrator replied in the affirmative.

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Duganitz, McLaughlin, Moyer, Kehler, Ulrich

Nays: None

Absent:

January 13, 2025

CITIZENS' COMMENTS:

There were no citizens' comments.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Councilman Duganitz announced that his son will be attending basic training with the U.S. Navy beginning Monday. Council expressed their congratulations.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Meeting ended at 7:22 P.M.

Minutes taken by Valentine Mountjoy, Administrative Accountant