

Meeting Minutes
September 15, 2015

The regular monthly meeting of the Gordon Borough Council was held on Tuesday, September 15, 2015. The meeting was held at 7:00 p.m. in the Gordon Municipal Building and Council President Michael Rader was presiding. Council persons present: Michael Rader, Valerie Stitzer, Richard Babb, Jason Quick and Shannon Dumboski. Council absent: Councilmen Barry Brecker and Jeffrey Hoffman. Also present at this meeting: Mayor George Brocius, Borough Solicitor Christopher Riedlinger, Esq., Borough Manager/Secretary-Treasurer Paul Snyder, Assistant Linda Gately, Republican-Herald Reporter John Usalis; and Citizens Ramon Soto, Leo Rauber, Dominic Puglia, Susie Hocking and Lynn Korn.

Motion by Dumboski that borough council accept the minutes from the last meeting August 11, 2015, as they were presented in written form by the secretary-treasurer. Council President Michael Rader asked if council had any objections. The motion was carried unanimously upon voice vote.

Motion by Stitzer that borough council accept the General Account financial report and Motor License Fund report as these reports were written and read by the secretary-treasurer. The motion was carried unanimously upon voice vote.

Motion by Dumboski that borough council accept the Sewage Revenue Account financial report, the Sewage Operations & Maintenance Account financial report, and the and the Sewage Reserve Account financial report as these reports were written and read by Secretary-Treasurer Paul Snyder. Motion carried unanimously upon voice vote. Delinquent sewage accounts balance total is \$63,520.⁵⁵.

Council will hold a work session Tuesday, October 6th at 5:30 p.m. for a 2016 budget discussion, which will be duly advertised and open to the public, although no action will be taken at this meeting. Snyder reminded citizens and council that the next regular meeting of borough council is the second Tuesday of the month, October 13, 2015, at 7:00 p.m. in the Gordon Municipal Building.

Snyder read the current invoices for borough council approval. Council was also provided a line item budget of all accounts showing revenues and expenditures for the month and year to date against budget. Motion by Quick to pay all invoices presented for payment as read by the secretary-treasurer. The motion carried unanimously upon voice vote.

Borough Report/Communications: Schuylkill County Municipal Authority filed for a decrease in assessments. Their appeal hearing is set for 2 p.m. September 25th at the courthouse.

Snyder issued three road opening permits to Aqua Pennsylvania for a new water line on Hobart Street. After the required maintenance work, Aqua indicated to Snyder their intention to repair the street and existing potholes. Snyder replaced two stop signs knocked down by trucks recently.

The sewage bill drop-box was received and will be installed, with notices posted as discussed last month. Supplies purchased for the municipal building: C-fold towels, toilet paper, cleaning solutions. A leather loose-leaf meeting minutes book and acid-free pages were received for the typewritten record.

The annual sewage pump maintenance is due in September, and Snyder added and council agreed that it made sense to also do the grinder pump on Ridge Lane at the same time. Pothering, the former vendor for these projects, is no longer available, so another maintenance contractor is being sourced.

The fire company annual insurance premium statement for \$6025 was received and paid.

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Snyder reported to Butler Township police that teens have been going into the borough garage in the early hours. Snyder has keys to the bottom and top door, but one door has always been left unlocked for Snyder and other community organizations' access. Council President Rader suggested all doors should be locked on the borough garage going forward.

Snyder reported that another fallen tree in the park broke four sections of the chain link fence. It was cut and stacked for firewood use at the park. However, during the night, the wood was moved around the park, requiring re-stacking effort. No security cameras are in place to prevent these instances of mischief or vandalism.

Pennsylvania Association of Boroughs (PSAB), the borough's website host and designer, provided a total of six logo design mockups for final council approval. Councilman Quick stated his wish was that there was more time in which to allow the public to vote on their favorite design as well. Rader indicated that he had placed the logos on Facebook and had received numerous comments. PSAB will be notified that Design #6 was chosen as the borough's new logo. A borough tag line, or slogan, may be added in the future, where the public may also get involved.

Solicitor Christopher Riedlinger, Esq., was given pictures of the Dr. Weber property maintenance violations in order to proceed with a notice. Riedlinger said he would provide a letter for the borough within one week. The former Code Enforcement Officer's badge was returned, and the solicitor stated his intention to walk a proposed new candidate through the appropriate protocols.

A Winter Maintenance Plan meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 23rd at 6 p.m. in the council room. Road repairs will be completed; last month, council authorized using up to \$9,999 from the Motor License Fund. Snyder is in the process of identifying target areas requiring the most urgent need for maintenance.

Complaints were received from neighboring properties about the demolition work being done on the Catholic church on Biddle Street. An undisclosed amount of diesel fuel spilled when a line was broken. A DEP inspector was sent out earlier today to review the issue. The concerns were on the need for asbestos abatement, although unlikely. The inspector requested that a UCC permit should have been first applied for and granted along with the proper paperwork regarding asbestos findings. This process was begun immediately by the contractor involved once he was notified by the borough.

Mayor George Brocious read Butler Township Chief of Police Ed Tarantelli's report for August, with 28 calls and complaints in Gordon: 8 follow-up investigations, 4 non-reportable MVA, 1 request for assistance, 1 animal complaint, 1 breaking and entering, and 1 suspicious person report.

Mayor Brocious also stated Gordon Citizens' Fire Company #1 used its \$11,500 grant on upgrading lighting and a thermal imaging camera. He added that applications for new grants up to \$15,000 are open now. Thursday, October 8th is scheduled to be Fire Prevention Night at the community hall.

In Public Participation, Citizen Leo Rauber suggested that adjoining property owners may purchase the 322 Hobart Street property at tax claim sale with ordinance violations mentioned last month. Snyder reported that he had contacted owner Cindi Fetterolf, who still desires to deed this property over to the Borough of Gordon. Rader replied that the borough is not in the real estate acquisition business, has no budget for abandoned property maintenance, and would prefer the tax sale transfer of ownership option rather than have the owner deed the property over to the borough.

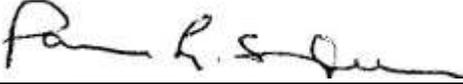
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Rauber also asked about blocked storm sewers on the southwest corner of West Biddle Street. Snyder responded that he believes trucks may have crimped the pipe underneath the road, which is a state highway. The state had been contacted previously about this issue, but do not appear to be interested in making the repair a priority.

Citizen Dominic Puglia, representing the local boy scout troop, asked for council permission to allow the group to paint the borough fire hydrants, with the borough paying for paint and wire brushes to do so. They have already sent a notice to Aqua Pennsylvania. Borough Manager Snyder indicated which new hydrants had been already been painted red and therefore would not need to be included in the project. Rader responded that since the animated character theme has not been decided upon, it would be best if the scout troop leader could pick up the paint colors and preparation materials needed and be reimbursed by the borough. The mayor added that the fire company could lend the traffic cones needed for safety by the following week so the project can begin.

Council discussion with citizens turned to the recurring truck accidents at the bottom of the mountain coming into town. Walmart had previously redesigned their sign for trucks and sent notices to their drivers. However, trucks using GPS navigation are routed through Gordon when listing the shortest distance, forcing large trucks to try and turn around where no room is available after missing the designated turn. Resident Lynn Korn said trucks trying to turn around in front of her house have knocked down a sign and bushes, missing an oak tree by inches. Citizen Susie Hocking added that the sound of jake brakes wake her at night. Mayor Brocius said the trucks slowing too late to the 35 mph speed limit sign may cause another accident. He suggested placing telephone poles or boulders to discourage turnarounds. Since it is a state route, Rader volunteered to contact Walmart, Wegmans, Highridge Industrial Park, and PennDOT as well as state representatives in order to help resolve the safety issue. Creating a mechanism to prevent this problem from continuing, such as engineering studies or weigh scales, is cost prohibitive; Gordon Borough and Butler Township haven't the resources. Snyder mentioned options include creating a jake brake restriction or posting the area to have all truck traffic over a specified weight coming down the mountain stopped. However, truck thoroughfare would have to be allowed for local company Universal Forest Products.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Dumboski that this meeting of the Gordon Borough Council be adjourned, carried unanimously upon voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Attest:  Paul L. Snyder, Secretary-Treasurer September 15, 2015