

# BOROUGH OF GORDON

329

## Meeting Minutes September 12, 2017

The regular monthly meeting of Gordon Borough Council was held Tuesday, September 12, 2017, at 7:00 p.m. in the Gordon Municipal Building. Councilpersons Present: Richard Babb, Shannon Dumboski, Todd Houser, Richard Korn, Jason Quick, and Michael Rader. Also Present: Solicitor Christopher Riedlinger, Mayor George Brocious, and Secretary-Treasurer Linda Gately. Citizens: Barb Liem, Ramon Soto, Carol Fetterolf, Tracy Hughes, Lynn Korn, Jessica Slotcavage, and Leo Rauber, Jr. Absent: Councilman Jeffrey Hoffman.

Council President Rader called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance. Motion by Shannon Dumboski for council to accept minutes from the August 8<sup>th</sup> regular meeting as presented by Secretary-Treasurer Linda Gately carried unanimously.

General Account 8709 (MPB) Opening Balance August 1st: \$49,078.16, Receipts: \$15,831.56, Expenses: \$23,592.45, Bal. 8/31: \$41,317.27. MPB Gen. Acct. Muni Fund 3430 balance unchanged 8/31: \$2,181.16. MPB General Acct. CD 0830 bal. 8/31: \$14,460.31. BB&T Gen. Acct. CD 8835 bal. 8/31: \$5,105.29.

Community Hall Fund (BB&T Checking 3014 balance transfer to MPB Savings 2966): \$1,665.86.

Motor License Fund 9509 (MPB) Balance 8/1: \$54,720.83, \$20.81 Interest, Expenses: \$1,499.77, (salt, painting, traffic signs), Balance 8/31: \$53,241.87, MLF CD 20018 (BB&T) Balance 8/31: \$84,079.63.

Sewage Reserve MPB CD 6530 Balance 8/31/17: \$70,371.72; MPB CD 0431 Balance 8/31/17: \$86,427.62.

Sewage Revenue Acct. MPB Opening Balance 8/1/17: \$238,272.59, \$5k Transfer to Swg. Op./Maint. Acct.; Receipts of \$99.52 interest and \$799 deposit of late July postmarks; Balance 8/31/17: \$258,149.03.

Sewage Op./Maint. Acct. (MPB) Balance 8/1: \$7,242.43, Expenses: \$7,673.05, Receipt of \$2.43 interest and \$5k Transfer from Sewage Revenue Acct. to meet obligations, Balance 8/31/17: \$4,571.81.

Motion by Dumboski for council to accept all accounts' August finance reports as read carried unanimously.

Reading and Payment of Invoices: General Account-Advantage Plumbing (\$78), Aqua PA (\$418), Berkheimer EIT/LST (\$259.<sup>80</sup>), BIU-Engr. (\$98), Butler Twp. Police (\$2,750), Commonwealth Of PA Federal Surplus (\$315), Ennis-CEO (\$234.<sup>63</sup>), GameTime (\$345), Gene's Supply (\$50.<sup>10</sup>), Entech (\$465), Lavas-tax coll. (\$47), Lindenmuth (\$97.<sup>15</sup>), MPB roof loan (\$802.<sup>78</sup>), POCS (\$1.<sup>64</sup>), PPL (\$858.<sup>10</sup> LED, \$331.<sup>65</sup> HSV St. Lts.), PTD internet (\$99.<sup>95</sup>), Rader cable reimb. (\$110.<sup>22</sup>), Riedlinger (\$785), SWIF workmen's comp. ins. (\$1,438). Sewage Account-Entech-SCMA (\$155). Dumboski's motion to pay all account invoices carried unanimously.

Mayor George Brocious read Butler Township Police Chief Ed Tarantelli's monthly reports, with 27 July and 48 August calls and complaints within Gordon Borough. Brocious, Rader, and Quick will meet with Tarantelli regarding coverage after determining the type/level of police coverage increase needed and acceptable costs the borough agrees to incur. Code Enforcement Officer Robin Ennis' report showed 20 hours' activity in July and August, with numerous phone calls, pictures taken, and citations issued: 304 E. Biddle, 514 McKnight, 516 McKnight (x2), 214 E. Plane St.(via phone), 501 Hobart, 200 Hobart, 226 E. Biddle, with properties at 508 McKnight, 312 McKnight, and 300 Elm St. receiving condemnation notices. Citizens' Fire Company No. 1 will host the annual Towey Scholarship Chinese auction fundraiser October 28<sup>th</sup> with a shop and drop on Friday the 27<sup>th</sup>. The fire company will apply for a state grant at [www.osfc.gov](http://www.osfc.gov) by the October 20<sup>th</sup> deadline. The mayor will perform two wedding ceremonies in September (16<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>) with another scheduled for October 14<sup>th</sup>. Brocious asked for help getting the freezer in the kitchen, requesting also that borough manager Quick ensure the community hall was clean and facilities stocked for these events; fire company members will tend bar and clean up afterward. Fire Prevention Night is set for October 10<sup>th</sup>.

Solicitor Christopher Riedlinger, Esq., represented the borough Monday, September 11<sup>th</sup> at the Tax Claim Bureau Repository Sale of the 209 East Biddle (old school) property. The minimum bid was \$1,029 at the upset sale September 8<sup>th</sup> (with no bidders). CDBG demolition money may be requested via Resolution 09122017 once the deed is obtained through the repository if the borough's \$103 bid is accepted.

Meeting Minutes  
September 12, 2017

Motion by Dumboski to pass Resolution 09122017 carried unanimously, approving submission of demolition request to the County of Schuylkill for 209 East Biddle Street Tax Parcel 46-4-103. County Demolition Application is complete, with estimated \$55k-\$60k quote by Northeast Industrial Services Corp. Rader would like to utilize SEDCO or other entities to rehabilitate the property or turn it into a community center, citing its historic value and concerns of citizens. Resident Barb Liem asked to preserve the cornerstone. Jason Quick thought the property is too far gone; it would cost more to rehab than to demolish and rebuild.

Approval of our exemption petition was granted for North Schuylkill School District's tax bill as a result of the real estate assessment appeals board hearing for the Biddle/Plane parcel 46.1-9.3 the borough purchased from Mummery. The 2017 bill (\$70.49) was paid by the borough due to the timing of the property transfer.

Ordinance 2017-03, One-Way Traffic on Oak Street between Hobart and Park, was filed at the courthouse.

Riedlinger researched a Gordon Borough-County Waste Refuse and Recyclables Contract issue reported by residents. \$17 per residential unit including recycling was approved by council, listed in the borough's two-year agreement (effective August 1, 2016 through July 31, 2018) with County Waste, who started invoicing \$21/mo. with no prior notice given to the borough or residents, based on increased landfill costs incurred. County Waste will honor the contract, refund overcharged customers who paid \$21 and adjust future bills.

Riedlinger will follow-up with abandoned and dilapidated Tye and Wolfgang properties, where CEO Ennis posted condemnation notices and the 20 days' time period has expired. A notice of the October 6<sup>th</sup> sheriff sale was also received for the Bixler property, 508 McKnight. Ennis added that Butler Township Police will assist in eviction of the Bixler property if not vacated this week. Angela Toomey at the tax claim office was consulted about 300 Elm (46-2-106, Wolfgang) and 312 McKnight (46-4-25, Tye-deceased). The Elm property owners live in Missouri. 300 Elm is not subject to upset sale until the second year's taxes are delinquent on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2018, so a private sale is currently the only viable option. It is \$1k/yr. to join the land bank, reserved for boroughs with a lot more blight than Gordon. They bid on properties before judicial sale using state demolition grants, rehab/resell them with school district five-year tax break going back into the land bank. A conservatorship option would take 9 months, cost a few thousand, requiring the borough to pay for a title search and our engineer to testify at a court appearance to be approved. Quick noted that the sister is trying to get her sibling to sign the property over to his niece. Council authorized Riedlinger to direct Toomey to pull the 312 McKnight (Tye) property for the 2018 judicial sale, which is currently in commissioners' status, with the county doing the title search for liens and encumbrances.

Borough Reports/Communications/Committee Reports: Jason Quick responded to 5 PA One Call notices, completed the line painting project at budget, erected a Walmart directional sign, replaced 2 coil springs for playground equipment purchased through GameTime/Billings Recreation, posted September ballfield schedule and placed wood chips around playground equipment (DCNR grant to be investigated to replace structures deemed unsafe by suppliers/insurers 1993 standard). Quick removed (3) dead trees at the Plane and Otto intersection, one at Hobart & Royer; tree trimming around town is in progress. Quick received his EMC acceptance letter from Governor Wolf, started FEMA I.S. training (11 courses approx. 8 hrs. ea.), and also attended core pipeline training in Hazleton and a county assessment hearing on the garage property with solicitor Riedlinger. Quick is registered for POCS "excavation safety" training November 16<sup>th</sup> in Schuylkill County and will attend North Schuylkill COG's Meeting September 27<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. in Girardville.

Footprint Zero's quote for LED light replacement in municipal building is \$8,895 net project cost after PPL incentives of \$2,436. Operating loss with existing lighting is \$227/mo. The quote was tabled for review. Quick asked Rader for help in gaining access ID/password to the Gordon Borough Facebook page. Peifer's Fire Protection inspected 13 extinguishers and the fire suppression system August 15<sup>th</sup>. The Home Depot Foundation Grant gift card was used for repair supplies; balance is \$330.<sup>10</sup> The card has no expiration date, but a ledger must be created to track purchases and be submitted before another grant request can be accepted.

Meeting Minutes  
September 12, 2017

Quick provided an update on 3 building permits and a UCC Permit issued to Dando (416 W. Biddle new construction). An Aqua PA Street Opening permit was issued for a 506 Hobart water line connection dig. Liquid Fuels audit conducted at the borough Monday, September 11<sup>th</sup> with the state's independent auditor Earl Helbing and PennDOT's John Davis. 2018 Estimated Allocation: \$27,323.<sup>10</sup> A 2014 street sign campaign forces borough to list each street sign, location, and a plan for replacement at the end of its life cycle (approx. every 7 years). Quick suggested the borough procure their own skid loader (\$38k, COSTARS), adding that 20% of liquid fuels money may be used to purchase equipment. Rental of skid loader is \$1,525/mo. + \$245RT, box broom is \$380/wk., and milling head is \$1,125/wk. Chipper rental (Vought's in Elysburg) \$180/day; skid steer w/brush cutter \$1200/wk. + \$150 delivery; Babb's motion not to exceed \$2k for rental equipment passed unanimously. Quick will also price new drywall and upgrading to low-flow tank toilets.

Older ordinances being reviewed for updates include the Rental Permit Ordinance (Girardville draft from Riedlinger) to be modified adding code enforcement officer inspections and Pottsville's section requiring landlords to be current on all bills to obtain permits, plus increasing the current Street Excavation Ordinance base fee to \$100 (needs resolution only) and stipulating reconstruction conditions (ordinance required) as verified with borough engineer Cuff. Another ordinance to draft for adoption was Handicapped Parking Sign requirements (Riedlinger's Rush Twp. Draft or Hazleton version to be reviewed).

A State Surplus Equipment account was set up, with Mike Rader purchasing speakers/amps (\$315), and cables (\$110.<sup>22</sup>) for the Community Hall with reimbursement from the savings account to the general checking account. The Gordon Parents Park Association Fund (\$2,634.<sup>59</sup>) was transferred to a MPB borough savings account. Rader approved Gately's request to attend Schuylkill Chamber's \$25 Excel 2.0 course October 10<sup>th</sup>, 9-12 at LCCC in Tamaqua. Motion by Babb to increase the secretary-treasurer pay rate to \$16.50/hr. was approved unanimously. Ashland Public Library asked for their annual donation. Rader stated Gordon Borough does not fulfill these requests. A letter was received from the county DA's office offering a drug pamphlet for distribution upon request. The borough was notified it may pick up supplies at Heizenroth Funeral Home in Ashland before the SKIP Fall Cleanup September 18-23<sup>rd</sup>.

Public Participation: Citizen Leo Rauber, Jr. suggested advertising the fire company's community hall. The fire company's Facebook page also lists events. Lynn Korn noted that many speed limit signs are missing, adding that UFP trucks have slowed down in the area. Rauber added the Walmart sign led to truck traffic improvement. Quick will order new street signs based on state input. It is the borough's responsibility to replace speed limit signs less than 35 mph, and also to replace the drain pipe and a small culvert at the West Biddle and West Plane Streets intersection which is crushed and blocked due to lack of maintenance and truck crashes throughout the years. Resident Barb Liem wanted clarification of the proposed handicap parking sign ordinance, and was assured that other than the minimal annual renewal fee and proof of disability, pre-existing signs will not incur installation fees. Quick will respond to resident Miller's complaint about water running; he will grade the shoulder and cut brush back. Carol Fetterolf informed the borough that FOG will have pumpkin glow night on October 28<sup>th</sup> with no rain date. On a motion by Dumboski and approved unanimously, Trick or Treat Night was set for Tuesday, October 31<sup>st</sup>. Jess Slotcavage restated her request from earlier this spring to have a handicap ramp for the next fishing rodeo. Rader responded to Tracy Hughes' inquiry about mileage reimbursement as a legitimate business expense, and Hughes also questioned the secretary-treasurer's increased hours on the ledger report. Rader replied that the need to increase work hours during the transition of the former borough manager and sewage clerk's retirements along with the sewage system transfer to SCMA will be adjusted back to 30 hours shortly as the demand settles down. Dumboski added that we changed from handwritten to electronic accounting and scanning capabilities and an updated website.

The next regular Borough Council meeting is Tuesday, October 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in the Gordon Municipal Building. There being no further general business, a motion made by Shannon Dumboski at 8:50 p.m. to adjourn the regular meeting of Gordon Borough Council carried unanimously.

Attest:  Linda S. Gately, Secretary-Treasurer September 12, 2017