

**Minutes
Workshop Meeting
Hummelstown Borough Council
Thursday, October 12, 2023
7:00 PM**

Call To Order

The Thursday, October 12, 2023, Workshop Meeting of the Hummelstown Borough Council was called to order by President Brian Foster at 7:00 PM. Members in attendance included Brian Foster, Robert Weber, Dee VanGavree, Chris Black, Chad Lister, Kelly Williamson, and Barbara Miller. Also in attendance were Mayor Dave Roeting; Theresa Eberly, Borough Manager; Justin Hess, Police Chief; Traci Eismann, Finance; Brett Flowers, Solicitor; and Isaac Underhill, HRG.

Presentations/Announcement

1. Water Resource Enhancement Program (WREP), Steve Deck, Executive Director, Tri County Planning Information was shared about WREP's regional project planning and the success of the first project. This opportunity is available to MS4 municipalities that meet the requirements and included 15 Dauphin County municipalities in 2023. For the year 2024, no major capital projects are scheduled but instead the planning of projects for 2025 and beyond. The different proposed levels were described and outlined in handouts. Mayor Roeting questioned if municipalities would be able to roll over credits they have earned so far towards the next permit cycle, and Mr. Deck indicated that as of now it is not an option. The intent is that the more municipalities participate, the lower the costs would be for participating municipalities for projects and plans that need completed by each municipality anyways. WREP is requesting that municipalities provide a decision by the end of 2023 to indicate their intentions for 2024's program.

Citizens Hearings

Resident Terry Gawlas inquired about the overhead signage that has been placed on Rt. 322 by railroad tracks. It was announced that this was mandated to bring the railroad crossings up to date. Chief Hess stated that he had been at several meetings where it was confirmed that there are currently no plans to increase crossings over Rt 322 for M & H Railroad.

Agenda Addition

Chief Hess requested discussion on an option to purchase a new police vehicle from Rapid 911 be added to New Business.

A Motion to **Add** and the discussion on the opportunity to purchase a new police vehicle through Rapid 911 was made by Bob Weber and seconded by Kelly Williamson.

Administration

1. Ordinance 2023-07: Vacant Properties

a. Discussion of the Draft Vacant Properties Ordinance

A draft Ordinance concerning vacant properties was reviewed. A lengthy discussion was held to discuss options and suggestions to improve the Ordinance as drafted. It was stated that the purpose of the Ordinance is to address the need to eliminate the number of vacant/abandoned properties in the Borough. Laura Miller pointed out the key factors found in the Ordinance, and it was modeled after the one that Lower Paxton adopted. The major change from the Lower Paxton Ordinance is that foreclosed properties were removed from the wording of the Ordinance and only vacant and abandoned properties were addressed. The Ordinance would include both residential and commercial properties. Chris Black pointed out several key points and suggestions that could be considered to improve the Ordinance, These included: the length of time given to homeowners before a property is deemed vacant, including both commercial vs residential, changing the focus to primarily abandoned not vacant properties, and noting that utility shut offs would deem a property to be vacant/abandoned. When asked why vacant properties should be pursued, Borough Manager Eberly pointed out these properties reduce EIT and Per Capita taxes collections for the borough. Solicitor Flower was present to answer legal questions and wording of ordinance. Barb Miller brought up key points about insurance

companies generally requiring a property to be occupied to get insurance coverage. It was pointed out by Council Woman VanGavree that Derry Township costs seems to be more reasonable and suggested staff look at other ordinances for comparison. It was decided that more discussion will be had about the addition of this ordinance and the details and exceptions that would be needed.

2. Short- Term and Long-Term Disability and Life Insurances

a. Review of proposed new rates for STD/LTD and Life Insurances

Manager Eberly presented Borough Council with a quote from Lincoln Financial to decrease the cost of STD, LTD and Life Insurances for employees at the Borough. The reduction in cost was 29%.

b. Motion to **Approve** Lincoln Financial as provider of STD/LTD and Life Insurances effective 11-1-2023 with a rate held for a period of three years was made by Bob Weber and seconded by Dee VanGavree.

3. Collection Agency Selection

a. Discussion of third-party collections for Sewer, Trash and Stom water.

Manager Eberly presented information introducing the idea of using Keystone Collection Agency to help with past due collections after 90 days. Staff will work to collect these funds for up to 90 days then the Collection Agency will step in. It stated at \$1,000 a lien would be placed, Borough Council agreed to increase this lien amount threshold to \$2,000. It was also decided that several forms of communication with residents would be required before we switch to this new process.

b. Motion to **Approve** the recovery of delinquent payments by Keystone Credit Services, LLC. was made by Bob Weber and seconded by Chris Black.

4. New Business

a. New Vehicle for Police Department through Rapid 911

Chief Hess reminded Borough Council that 2024 is the year a new police vehicle is scheduled to be purchased. While looking into vehicles Chief Hess found that the costs are around \$72,000 with an additional cost of about \$700 to have the vehicle lettered. There is a 2023 available now for \$65,945 if purchased by 12/31/2023. A letter of intent would be needed to hold this vehicle until the end of the year. President Foster asked which vehicle would be taken out of the fleet, which would be the charger. The charger would be taken to auction but there is no guarantee what it would sell for.

b. A Motion to **Add** the discussion of purchasing of a new police vehicle through Rapid 911 to October 19, 2023, was made by Bob Weber and seconded by Chris Black.

5. Engineer Update

a. Isaac Underhill will provide an update:

1. Quarry Road Sidewalk

Project is moving along nicely and there is a meeting next Wednesday at 2:00 which is a walk-through meeting at the project site. Several Council Members stated they would like to be present at the walk through. After this the project will be ready for the final stage.

2. Duke and High Streets Stormwater project

Isaac Underhill suggested there were three options to consider for this project. He stated we complete the work in the Borough right- of-way eliminated the improvement of the area along Duke Street. The project would continue as originally designed except for this area. Public Works would have to address any sediment that may build up during this time. As soon as we decide which option to select, the contractor is ready to start the work. President Foster inquired if there would be additional costs with this change and it was noted there would be but HRG is looking to offset some of these charges with the amount we are under budget with the Nature Trail. Mr. Underhill recommended that the borough selection Option #1. Borough Council supported the engineer's recommendation.

3. S John Street Pavement Project

Demo is starting next week to remove ramps. Project is guaranteed to be completed by no later than October 27, in time to avoid the Halloween Holiday Parade.

b. Isaac Underhill announced the addition of CoCo Packs in Derry Township which connects close to the Borough limits. This facility will be on E. Main Street and will be distributing food packages to families. The Borough Council had a few questions about where the access point would be, the amount of traffic it would produce and where the stormwater would flow. It was suggested that this discussion be taken in front of the Planning Commission in November.

Before the meeting was adjourned Dee VanGavree presented the Communications Outreach video's first draft for all to see. Positive feedback was given by all and everyone agreed it looked great!

Executive Session

Executive Session was held after meeting to discuss legal issues.

Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 8:25

Respectfully submitted,

Traci Eismann