

Palmyra Borough Council Meeting
Tuesday, February 11, 2025
7:00 PM

President Beth Shearer called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM in Council Chambers of the Palmyra Municipal Center, located at 325 S. Railroad St. Other Council members in attendance included Anthony Catalani, Nancy Fleegle, Jane Quairola, and Marcus Riddell. Also in attendance were Borough Manager Roger Powl, Assistant Borough Manager Brenda Pera, Western Lebanon County Regional Police Chief Andrew Winters, and Mayor Tom Miller. Matthew Andrews and James Tesche were absent from the meeting.

Public Comment Period #1

- Dave McCloskey, 212 E. Ridge Road, asked Council not to pursue a grant for the stormwater fix on E. Ridge Road because it will delay the project too long.
- Bill Zeiders, 333 E. Main Street, complained about the following:
 1. Do not apply for the grant for stormwater.
 2. Streetlights are out all over the Borough and contributing to crime.
 3. Utility contractors are crossing private property without permission.
 4. Casella employees are weak and afraid of bad weather.
 5. Main Street parking on the inside of the curb is blocking sight distance.
 6. The Borough does not need a second codes officer.
 7. Regional Police are always seen in Annville but not in Palmyra.
- Rebecca Zalit, 411 E. Main Street, also commented on streetlights not working.

Consent Calendar

- a. Approve the minutes of the January 28, 2025, Borough Council meeting.

Motion: To approve the consent calendar. Motion by Jane Quairola, second by Nancy Fleegle. Motion passed.

Action & Discussion Items

- a. Road Closure Request – 2025 Memorial Day Parade:

Motion: To authorize the closure of the roads necessary to assemble and conduct the Palmyra Memorial Day Parade on Monday May 26, 2025, from 8:30 AM (staging areas) 10:00 AM (parade route) to 12:30 PM utilizing the following parade route:

- *Beginning at the intersection of W. Cherry Street and South Mark Street for the parade to line up, continuing in front of the Palmyra Area Middle School on West Cherry Street; continue east on E. Cherry Street; north on South Green Street; west on East Main Street; south on S. Locust Street and disbanding at the Palmyra Area Middle School.*

Motion by Jane Quairola, second by Marcus Riddell. Motion passed.

- b. DCED PA Small Water and Sewer Program Grant Opportunity – E. Ridge Road – Melrose Off-Site Stormwater System: Mr. Powl outlined issues for Council's consideration in applying for this grant.

1. The grant is through the Commonwealth Financing Authority (CFA), which is very political, and requires significant project support to be successful.
2. Grant award will not occur until about 1-year after submission (so, February - April 2026).

3. Our current project is a cooperative private/public partnership with the developer of E. Ridge Road Melrose. This grant would require a pure public bidding process for the full amount of the project. The developer's park & rec fee money would have to remain as park & rec fee money. Preparing bid documents would cost 1/2 to 3/4 of the cost that Borough Council has already approved (\$25,000 - approximately.)
4. Project would be required to be paid with PA Prevailing Wage Rates since it is over \$25,000 in total cost.
5. \$100 application fee.
6. The grant application would require the Borough Engineer to prepare hydrologic studies showing 2-yr, 5-yr, 10-yr, 25-yr, 50-yr, 100-yr, and 500-yr flood events impact to the project, and a discussion on why the particular hydrologic methods were chosen.
7. There will be additional costs due to the required grant administration, accounting, etc.
8. The project does not check many of the boxes for the grant evaluation criteria. It would probably not be viewed as a high priority project as it does not benefit the community at large or provide any economic development.

Council considered all the options and decided against applying for the grant to keep the process moving. Mr. Powl commented that the project will require PennDOT to approve an amendment to the existing Highway Occupancy permit, which could take 3-4 weeks. The contractor agrees with the time period and is ready to begin when approved to do so since the contractor will still be on site.

Motion: To request a PA Small Water and Sewer Program grant from the Commonwealth Financing Authority for installation of a stormwater infiltration trench system for the off-site stormwater being released from the E. Ridge Road – Melrose land development, and to designate the Council President or Vice-President as the official(s) to execute all documents and agreements between the Borough of Palmyra and the Commonwealth Financing Authority.

The motion did not receive a first or second for a vote.

Reports

- a. President's Report: President Shearer did not have a report.
- b. Mayor's Report: Mayor Miller thanked the audience for attending the meeting on a bad weather night. He is working to make improvements in the community by meeting with elected officials at the state level. He also wants to meet with various community organizations to discuss improvement ideas for the town. He also recommended viewing the "Travel Awaits You" channel on YouTube that has content about Pennsylvania's lost towns. He does not want Palmyra to become one of those lost towns.
- c. Financial Report:
 1. Delinquent Sewer & Refuse Account Report: Ms. Pera provided a copy of the January 2025 report.
- d. Fire Department / EMS Report:
 1. January – Citizens Fire Co. No. 1 monthly & 2024 Year-End report was e-mailed to Council on February 3rd.
 2. December – Life Lion Monthly EMS Report was provided for December 2024. A special staffing level report was also available as requested by Council at a previous meeting.

- e. Western Lebanon County Regional Police Department: Chief Winters reported on all the accreditation efforts that are currently underway.
- f. Planning Commission: The Commission did not meet in January.
- g. Public Works Department:
 - 1. Superintendent's Monthly Report: Mr. Powl provided a copy of the January 2025 report.
 - 2. Borough Properties:
 - a. Municipal Building – 325 S. Railroad Street:
 - b. Public Works Department – 910 E. Broad Street:
 - Mr. Powl reported that the Oil furnace/boiler is being replaced with an on-demand propane furnace/boiler. The oil furnace currently uses a ¼ of a tank of fuel each week, so the change will be more cost efficient.
 - c. Town Square: The clock has been running but has been losing time for an unknown reason, but the Public Works crew is working to fix it. The manufacturer may need to be called in to troubleshoot the issue if it continues.
 - d. Vacant Lot – 40 E. Front Street:
 - e. Vacant Lot – Northeast corner of the intersection of N. Lingle Ave and W. Main Street:
 - f. Vacant Lot (Shaffer-Erb Tract) – south side 900 Block East Cherry Street:
 - 3. Cemetery:
 - 4. Parks: (Heritage Park, Palmyra Memorial Park, and Southeast Park)
 - 5. Refuse & Recycling:
 - 6. Sewer System:
 - a. Pump Station #3 (located west of W. Broad St & N. Locust St):
 - Design progress update: Mr. Powl reported that the cost estimates for the project should be available soon. Some of the sewer piping will need to be 20-25 feet deep, so that will add costs to the project.
 - 7. Sinkholes:
 - a. New:
 - 1. 900 Block E. Cherry St detention basin: Custer Excavating was delayed in beginning the repair project due to weather conditions.
 - 2. North Grant Street & High Street: ARM, Inc. was finishing a geophysical study in this area to determine the extent of the repairs needed for the sinkholes forming on the south side of the bridge. Mr. Powl is waiting for the finished report.
 - b. Old:
 - 1. Southeast Park detention basin
 - 2. 156 N. Railroad Street (PennDOT)
 - 3. 528 S. Franklin St (NE corner of S. Franklin St & E. Birch St)
 - 8. Stormwater Management:
 - a. East Ridge Road – Melrose (Phase #1) – Off-Site Stormwater Update:
 - 9. Street & Alley Maintenance: Public Works is filling potholes as time permits.
 - 10. Traffic Signals:
 - 11. Other: Mr. Powl reported that a new Public Works employee has been hired and is projected to start on February 24th or sooner. Interviews are continuing to find a fifth member for the crew.
- h. Solicitor's Report: There was no report.

- i. Zoning & Codes Enforcement: Mr. Powl provided a copy of the January 2025 report. Council expressed their thanks for the improved report. Mr. Powl explained that additional improvements will be made to the report as the year progresses. There was no zoning hearings conducted February 10th.
- j. Borough Manager's Report:
 1. Vehicle #4 & #11 Replacement (10-ton Dump/Plow Trucks): Mr. Powl mentioned that one truck is due for replacement in 2026 and the other in 2027. However, if the Borough orders these trucks in 2025, they can save \$20,000 per truck because it will be in the current model year. The trucks should be delivered in December but would need to be upfitted with the dump beds, hydraulics, plow hitches, spreaders, etc. so, they would not be available for final delivery until 2026. The Borough would pay for them at that time. Council deliberated the benefit of buying both trucks at once with the potential cost savings.

Motion: To authorize the order for two 10-ton dump trucks for delivery in 2026. Motion by Marcus Riddell, second by Jane Quairola. Motion passed.
 2. Little Library request – Mr. Powl reported a request he received for installation of a little library in one of the Borough's parks. Vienna Carly Savino, from Holmdel, NJ, died in 2017 from Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood (SUDC) at the age of two. The request has been made to install a little library in her honor. Council did not have any issue with this request provided it did not cost the Borough any money.

Other Business

- Councilor Riddell cautioned residents that have chicken coops to get their chickens vaccinated against the bird flu. Council stated that chicken coops are not allowed in the Borough.

Public Comment Period #2

- Don Barry, 711 N. Grant St, recommended the little library be placed in Memorial Park where there are security cameras.
- Bill Zeiders, 333 E. Main St, stated the Borough needs to put rubber shears on the plows.

Announcement

President Shearer announced that Borough Council will conduct its next public meetings on Tuesday, February 25, 2025, and Tuesday, March 11, 2025, beginning at 7:00 PM.

Motion to Adjourn

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Marcus Riddell, second by Nancy Fleegle. The meeting adjourned at 7:46 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Roger E. Powl
Borough Manager