

Palmyra Borough Council Meeting  
Tuesday August 8, 2023  
7:00 PM

President 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 Don Barry, Anthony Catalani, William Garber, James Tesche and Jane Quairola. Also, in attendance were Mayor Fred Carpenter, Police Chief Andy Winters, Borough Manager Roger Powl, and Assistant Borough Manager Brenda Pera. Tom Miller was absent from the meeting.

Special Visitors

Scott Henry & Brian Marchuck from Brown, Schultz, Sheridan, & Fritz were in attendance to discuss the 2022 Audit Report.

Public Comment Period #1

There were no public comments.

Consent Calendar

- a. Approve the minutes of the July 25, 2023, Borough Council meeting.

*Motion: To approve the consent calendar. Motion by Jane Quairola, second by William Garber. Motion passed.*

Action & Discussion Items:

- a. Ordinance #825 – Amend Chapter 305 (Solid Waste):

*Motion: To authorize the Borough Solicitor to advertise Ordinance #825, to revise Chapter 305 (Solid Waste) to revise regulations governing the storage of solid waste and recyclable materials on properties within the Borough. Motion by Jane Quairola, second by James Tesche. Motion passed.*

- b. Ordinance #826 – Amend Chapter 277 (Rental Property):

*Motion: To authorize the Borough Solicitor advertise Ordinance #826, to revise Chapter 277 (Rental Property) to revise the time periods for registering vacant properties, and to add a new Section 277-14 concerning registration of short-term rental units. Motion by William Garber, second by Don Barry. Motion passed with a 5-1 vote with Jane Quairola voting against the motion.*

Reports:

- a. President's Report: President Shearer did not have a report.
- b. Financial Report: All financial reports will be available at the August 22, 2023 meeting.
- c. Fire Department: There was no report.
- d. Police Department: Chief Winters began addressing the expenditures report Mr. Powl provided to Council outlining the actual police expenditures from 2019 through to the budget projections of 2024. The Police Department have increased their budget by 40.6% during this time span. He started with the 10.2% increase in 2020 by explaining that the officers received a 2.5% pay raise and two additional officers were hired that year. The rest of the increase was used to bring the department up to date with software.

In 2021, the increase was 2.9%, which was mostly the 2.5% contractual pay raise for the officers. The rest was used to purchase body cameras, riot gear and training. The 2022 increase of 7.9% included a 4.6% pay increase as well as the purchase of a new in-car camera system and budgeting for potential costs with the County radio system. In 2023, the 9.6% budget increase for the police department comprised of a 5% salary increase and additional funds for the radio system.

The budget in 2024 for the Western Lebanon County Regional Police Department is projecting a 10% increase which includes higher costs for fringe benefits and insurance. Chief Winters believes he can get grants to pay the Chief's salary for a couple of years and he also stated that the Borough will receive \$50,000 each year in rent for the department space.

Councilor Catalani inquired if there is any way to reduce the proposed budget change of 10% for 2024. Chief Winters replied that the only way to make that cut is to not hire another officer.

Chief Winters stated that if the Borough does not participate in the regional department, the police budget will still grow from \$1.89 million to \$1.9 million. Mr. Powl confirmed that this increase will include hiring another officer to replace an officer that left.

Council asked for this item to be placed on the next meeting agenda for discussion.

- e. Planning Commission: The Commission did not meet in July.
- f. Public Works Department:
  - 1. Superintendent's Monthly Report: Mr. Powl provided a copy of the July 2023 report.
  - 2. Borough Properties:
    - a. Municipal Building – 325 S. Railroad Street:
      - Building Renovations Update: Mr. Powl reported that the building renovations are set to begin in September or early October and finish by February 2024.
    - b. Public Works Department – 910 E. Broad Street:
      - Cell Tower Update: The lease agreement has been sent to the Borough Solicitor for review.
    - c. Town Square:
    - 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)
    - a. Heritage Park Basketball Court: (Councilor Tesche)
    - b. Southeast Park Loop Trail: (Councilor Tesche)
      - Councilor Tesche asked for these two items to be placed on the agenda because he needed clarification from the last meeting. He thought that the basketball court would be renovated this year and the paving of the loop trail would be in the 2024 budget. Council responded that the loop trail is not to be paved but use millings only and the basketball court is to be added to the 2024 budget.

5. Refuse & Recycling: Mr. Powl reported that GLRA had their compliance officer following the Waste Management (WM) refuse trucks on the route and learned that the

WM employees are throwing contaminated recycling into the recycling truck instead of letting it sit. WM agreed to provide more training to their employees and use the stickers that the Borough supplies. In trade for this step, WM stated that they will only come back to collect the corrected recycling can the next week during the regular schedule. They will no longer circle back to pick up the recycling the next day.

6. Sewer System:

7. Sinkholes:

- a. New: None

- b. Old:

1. 800 Block E. Main Street: (Center turn lane of US422 in front of Sheetz)
2. 223 S. Locust Street: (PASD failed injection well)
3. N. Green Street (east side) just north of E. Main Street

8. Stormwater Management:

- a. Phase A Stormwater Management System: (north of railroad tracks - west of N. Grant St.): Mr. Powl stated that the Borough Engineer is requesting a permit extension from Norfolk Southern to delay paying the permit fee before bidding the stormwater project. The delay would be to ascertain the overall costs of the project to determine if the Borough should move forward with the plan.

- b. MS4 Bio-Swale Project Update (west of S. Lingle Ave): A meeting of the property owners affected by the project is scheduled for August 10, 2023 at 6 PM.

9. Street & Alley Maintenance:

10. Traffic Signals:

11. Other:

- g. Solicitor's Report:

1. 743 E. Main Street (Wendy's) – Lighting Violation: The Solicitor provided a couple of options to address the non-compliance of the lighting violation. 1) File a Civil enforcement action against the owner with the magisterial district judge, or 2) file a complaint in equity at the Lebanon County Court of Common Pleas.

*Motion: To authorize the Solicitor to file a complaint in equity at the Lebanon County Court of Common Pleas. Motion by Don Barry, second by Beth Shearer. Motion passed.*

2. Other:

- h. Zoning & Codes Enforcement: Mr. Powl provided a copy of the July 2023 report. There were no hearings schedule for August.

1. Code Enforcement Software: Mr. Powl commented that the current software program being used for codes enforcement does not meet the needs of the Borough. The software is not user friendly, difficult to manage from field inspections, and does not provide quick information to the rest of the office on outstanding complaints or permit applications. The Codes Officer did some investigation into other options and determined that CloudPermit software meets the needs of staff much better than the current program. The monthly cost of the new program will remain the same, but an implementation fee of \$4,000 will be required to move into the new program. Mr. Powl stated that the new

codes officer has not been hired yet and the funds earmarked for that salary could be used to pay the implementation fee with no impact to the budget.

*Motion: To authorize the Borough Treasurer to transfer \$4,000 from Budget Line Item# 01.401.117 (Wages – Zoning & Codes) to Budget Line Item #01.413.420 (Codes Enforcement - Software Subscription) to pay the*

*implementation fee to enable the switch from MuniLogic Software to CloudPermit software. Motion by Jane Quairolì, second by James Tesche. Motion passed with a 5-1 vote with Anthony Catalani voting against the motion.*

i. Borough Manager's Report:

1. Cherry Street & Railroad Street Traffic Signal Warrant Study Update: Mr. Powl shared the report from RETTEW regarding the installation of a traffic signal at Cherry & Railroad Streets. The study warrants a signal, but the unanswered question that Council had was how it integrates into the traffic signal system on Main Street. Mr. Powl stated that a new traffic light at this location could cost approximately \$400,000.

Other Business

- Mayor Carpenter encouraged Council to drive by the Shoe Factory Apartments on North Chestnut Street at night to see the upgrades they added around the building.

Public Comment Period #2

- Chris McElwee, 612 E. Maple Street, mentioned that the utility company replaced a pole on Spruce Street at Memorial Park and never fixed the concrete sidewalk. He also mentioned a pot hole located in the road in the 300 block of E. Maple Street.
- Todd Gottshall, 511 E. Cherry Street, stated he would rather have more police officers than codes officers. He also suggested that Council fix the basketball court at Heritage Park.

Announcement

President Shearer announced that Borough Council will conduct its next public meetings on Tuesday, August 22, 2023, and Tuesday, September 12, 2023 beginning at 7:00 PM.

Motion to Adjourn

*Motion to adjourn the meeting by Jane Quairolì, second by Don Barry. The meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.*

Respectfully submitted,

Roger E. Powl  
Borough Manager