

# APRIL 2, 2018 6:30 PM

## REGULAR MEETING OF SWOYERSVILLE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Council President Alunni calls the meeting to order.

Council President Alunni read a statement concerning his condition at the MARCH meeting. He was sick, on medication and under doctor's care for several days. He apologized if he said or did anything to offend anyone. He did not want to miss the meeting as several important issues were being discussed and voted on.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call was taken, those present: Mr. Christian, Mr. Cwalina, Mr. Keating, Mr. Olejnick, Mr. Onzik and Mr. Alunni. Also present was Mayor Concert and Atty. Yeager, Borough Solicitor

A motion to accept the minutes of the March 5, 2018 meeting was made by Mr. Olejnick and seconded by Mr. Onzik. The vote was 5-0 in favor. Mr. Cwalina abstained.

Monthly bills totaling \$25,342.89 were paid on a motion made by Mr. Christian and seconded Mr. Onzik. The vote was 6-0 in favor.

### BOROUGH COORDINATOR'S REPORT

- Code Enforcement report for March 2018: \$3,196.25 in fees was taken in.
- Received a \$150,000 LSA (Local Share Account) grant; (Casino grant). We will combine this grant with the Borough's \$150,000 to use as a match for a Multimodal grant. The state multimodal grant is a 70-30% match. The borough plans to pave \$1 million worth of streets using our money and the casino grant and the 70% coming from the state. The application is due by July 31 and meetings with Sen. Yudichak and Rep. Kaufer will be arranged to get their support for the grant.
- The Roosevelt Field bathroom renovations will begin by the end of the month. Bathrooms will be done separately so at least one bathroom is functional during renovations. The balance of the grant, approximately \$40,000, will be used to fix up the exterior of the buildings, as much as can be done with the remaining money.
- The Storm water Management program is ongoing. The MS4 is being handled by the Wyoming valley Sanitary Authority with good reason as the borough cannot handle a project like this. There are handouts available for residents who want to know a little more about the program and why it is needed. The borough will be one of the first towns to have their town mapped with GPS. More updates will follow.
- There is a proposed resolution presented to council for a Fair Redistricting of legislative districts. Atty. Yeager has a copy to review and advise council as to whether or not passing a resolution is needed. Atty. Yeager commented that the court systems will ultimately decide the legislative districts.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Finance:** Mr. Olejnick: Read the February 2018 financial reports: **General Fund:** beginning checkbook balance: \$50,681.72; transfers and revenue for the month: \$150,572.13; expenses and transfers for the month: \$86,735.13; ending checkbook balance: \$114,518.72. **Liquid Fuels:** beginning checkbook balance: \$377.87; transfers and revenue for the month: \$20,000.33; expenses and transfers for the month \$20,311.37; ending checkbook balance: \$66.83. **Refuse Fund:** beginning checkbook balance: \$56,467.59; transfers and revenue for the month: \$23,149.08; expenses and transfers for the month \$9,695.18; ending checkbook balance: \$69,921.49. **Sanitary/Storm Sewer Assessment Fund:** beginning checkbook balance: \$530.31;

transfers and revenue for the month: \$17,792.32; expenses and transfers for the month \$17,504.26; ending checkbook balance: \$818.37.

**Liaison Officer:** Mr. Christian: No report.

**Street Department:** Mr. Onzik: Mr. Onzik hoped that winter is over. He explained how Mr. Breznay is trying to take the \$150,000 casino grant the borough received, add its own \$150,000 and apply for a Multimodal grant for about \$1 million. If all goes well then the borough will be paving 10-11 roads.

**Police Department:** Mr. Keating: The Police report for March 2018 was read; Crossing Guard's times were read. Fines totaling \$574.90 received for the month were placed in the proper fund on a motion made by Mr. Keating and seconded by Mr. Cwalina. A letter from Chief Latoski was read requesting another full time police officer citing his part time officers are leaving. It was mentioned that a full time officer was not included in the 2018 budget and if there are only full time officers how will holidays, vacation times, etc. be handled without amassing overtime. Chief Latoski wanted to hire some part time officers after the full time was put in. Council asked why not try for the part time officers first which is the cheaper option. Chief Latoski said part time offices are unreliable and difficult to schedule. It was decided that council try for the part time officers first, also raising the hourly rate to \$18.00 and then if that is not successful the full time officer will be looked into. A motion was made by Mr. Keating and seconded by Mr. Olejnick to advertise for part time police officers at the rate of \$18.00 per hour. The vote was 6-0 in favor.

**Fire Department:** Mr. Cwalina: The West Side Council of Governments had received a \$126,000 grant for fire hydrant adapters. A letter from the West Side Mutual Aid was sent out stating that the balance due from each fire department, because the full grant amount was not received, will be \$1,800.00. There was never any mention of having the fire department pay \$1,800.00 for the difference and does not know how that rumor got started. The grant was not even officially discussed with the WSCOG. He advised the fire departments to let the WSCOG work out the details and they will advise the towns what is happening.

**Mayor Concert:** The mayor wanted to recognize certain people and groups for outstanding work in the town and presented them with Certificates of Appreciations:

1. Grace Connor constructed the Swoyersville Free Library and placed it in the rear of the parking lot at the Swoyersville Borough Building. The project was a Girl Scout project and since Grace loves to read she thought this was an ideal way to share that. She raised \$1,000 and has stocked the library with over 500 books.
2. Parker Diffenbach put up a few "Welcome to Swoyersville" signs. Mr. Onzik said Scout Troop 193 designed the signs to recognize the Armed Forces. This was an Eagle Scout project.
3. Riley Diffenbach also put up "Welcome to Swoyersville" signs. This also was an Eagle Scout project. Riley attained the rank of Eagle Scout at age 15; the average age is 17 and maximum age is 18. His theme was local heroes: Andrew Lawrence (The Swoyersville American Legion is named after him) and Raymond DaSilva (1st Swoyersville resident killed in Viet Nam). He put up 2 more signs and designed them himself.
4. The Swoyersville Kiwanis Club has been active in the community since 1951. Their fundraisers each year help generate funds to help the communities in a variety of ways: High School senior scholarships; street signs; Adopt a Highway; St. Joseph's Center; Feed a Friend and many more.

Atty. Yeager: No report.

## MEETING OPENED TO THE PUBLIC

Dave Latoski, Swoyersville Chief of Police- He addressed council and the mayor. He wanted council to hire another full time officer since his staff has been depleted, 1 part time officer is gone and another going to work full time for Plymouth PD in the next couple of weeks. Chief Latoski said he has no part time officers. Also, a full time officer may be leaving too. Wants council to be aware that full time officers are working 16 hours; and this was because council did not vote to hire a full time officer. The part time officers have left and the present staff is straining to cover the town. Atty. Yeager replied that hiring a full time officer is not out of the question and council and the mayor would like to see what response they receive from the part time applications. The wait would be about 30 days, not that unreasonable of a request. Atty. Yeager said there was a question of why there are 2 officers on one shift - daytime. Chief Latoski said there is not and said he is administrative and filling out paperwork. Chief Latoski said money was taken out of the budget for a full time officer for 2018; when Chief DiMaria and Sgt. Christian left the money for their salaries was to be used for a full time officer. The Borough has always had part time police so council would like to see that continue, they cost much less than a full time officer who cannot be removed once hired. Atty. Yeager continued that if the part time officers came to the chief toward the end of 2017 and said they had plans of leaving then council might have made some plans in the 2018 budget; Atty. Yeager said it is not a closed deal with a full time officer. It's difficult to approach council 3-4 months into the budget year asking for another full time officer who would cost, with benefits, approximately \$45,000. Chief Latoski clarified that a new hire full time officer's salary is \$32,000 not \$42,000 as he has heard.

Suzanne Koch, 160 Owen Street- Complained about the vegetation in the creek and how long it takes to get it cut each year. Waited over 2 months to get the creek cut, cannot enjoy the outdoors because of the bugs. Even when the weeds are cut, it is left in the creek, would be nice if it can be cleaned up. Mr. Breznay said the borough has plans to cut the creeks twice this year, once in mid-late May and once in August. However, with the second cutting, done by the work release program from Luzerne County Prison, the borough is at their mercy so if the work release personnel cannot come for whatever reason there is nothing the borough can do about it, we just have to wait.

Dave Prehaska, Trans Med- He wanted to report to council that an ambulance personnel responding on a call was not qualified. A driver responded to a call and was not qualified to drive it. Wendy Specht from the Swoyersville Ambulance responded by saying the person was trained properly.

Wendy Specht, Swoyersville Ambulance- What was Trans Med saying? Trans Med said the driver for the Swoyersville Ambulance was not qualified. Prehaska mentioned that Swoyersville Ambulance is cancelling the paramedics on some calls which can result in a very serious problem. Atty. Yeager said that if something like this comes up again Trans Med should contact the ambulance first rather than come to council with it. Prehaska said he could have filed a complaint about this but didn't want to do that, they had some issues with former ambulance employees. He will contact them first before coming to council. Specht had some issues with former chief and co-captain and those issues were taken care of and contact them before TransMed said they are not aware of officers.

Wendy Specht, Swoyersville Ambulance- The ambulance is having bazaar in June and car show in July and asked if they can use the grassy area for the events. Any grants for the little alley leading to their building? Mr. Breznay said it was checked into and the program for possibly getting funding for paving the alley requires income surveys for the whole town since the ambulance services the whole town.

Dave Owens, Grandville Drive- Sent a letter for Mr. Alunni complaining about the commercial shipping container in the property below his. He's afraid the container will devalue property values. People try and keep up their properties. Mr. Breznay said it is a temporary storage unit and there is no ordinance against it, it is basically a shed. Mr. Onzik said if it permanent should be secured to the ground. Mr. Breznay suggested talking with the zoning officer about it and he will.

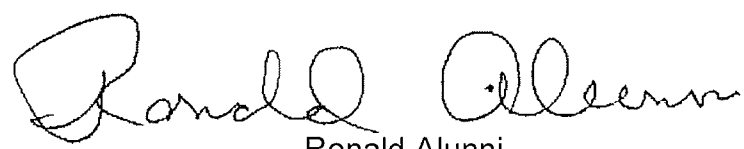
Diane Sobolchick- The area across from her house is not cut, why not? 6 years ago she complained about the dirt road and was told that would be paved when a house was built on the dirt road; the new house also has a business. If the dirt road is not a street why should she pay taxes or any other fees or bills since it is not considered a street? Mr. Onzik said they will check on it. Why doesn't council know about the business since there was a meeting about it? There was a zoning hearing about the in home occupation at the time the house was being built and it was approved by the zoning board. Also, the culm bank removal project area does not include White Street, why? The project area is determined by DEP not Swoyersville Borough.

Ann Marie Saunders- The St. Dept. did a good job with the snow this morning. There was a meeting last week with Forty Fort about the culm bank but Swoyersville was not told about it, why? Rep. Kaufer's office said there was no meeting about the bank; the meeting was not a meeting about the culm bank, Channel 28 just happened to stop at the Forty Fort Borough Building and started to ask questions about the bank. A question and answer meeting is being planned very shortly.

Jim Nawrocki, 24 Valley View Drive- He asked council to consider passing a fair district resolution about the congressional lines that were redrawn. U.S. Congressional representative is now Matt Cartwright. Letters of support are attached from Sen. Yudichak and Rep. Kaufer; he urged council pass this resolution.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Christian and seconded by Mr. Onzik. The vote was 6-0 in favor. Next meeting will be held on May 7, 2018.

  
Gene Breznay  
Borough Secretary-Treasurer-Manager

  
Ronald Alunni  
Council President