

The regular monthly meeting of the Ebensburg Borough Council was called to order on Monday, August 26, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Room of the Ebensburg Municipal Building by President, Doug Tusing.

Present: Doug Tusing, President  
Cecilia Houser, Vice President  
Dave Kuhar  
Mike Murphy  
Jeff Ball  
Theresa Jacoby  
Abe Remillard, Junior Councilor

Absent: Robert Miller  
Isaac Bradley, Junior Councilor

Others: Kelly Cook, Borough Manager  
Randy Datsko, Mayor  
Joseph Loughran, Chief of Police  
Danea Koss, Community Development Director  
Rebecca Williamson, Recreation Director  
Luke Byrne, Inframark  
Dwayne Lowry, Inframark  
Matt Gribler, Solicitor  
Mike Sheehan, Chief, Dauntless Fire Company  
Matt Churella, The Altoona Mirror  
Julie Pittman, Mainline Newspapers

Audience: 5

A. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

B. **Public Comments** – None.

C. **Consent Agenda**

Ms. Houser made a motion to approve the consent agenda containing the following items. (Kuhar)  
Motion passed unanimously.

1. Approve report of Inframark for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Operations.
2. Approve report of Inframark for the Water Treatment Plant Operations.
3. Approve the minutes of the July 22, 2024 regular monthly meeting.
4. Approve the financial statement for July.
5. Approve payment of bills for August.

D. **Appointments to Address Council** – Mr. Kevin Rosensteel and Ms. Donna Ragley presented their concerns with the noise and timing of trash collection within the borough pertaining to commercial pick-up at Laurel Medical Solutions on South West Street.

E. **Consideration of Any Motion(s) to Amend Agenda** – None.

F. **Mayor's Report** – None.

**G. Council President Comments** – None.

**H. Water/Wastewater Committee**

**1. Report from Inframark on Wastewater Treatment Plant Operations**

Inframark's written report was submitted regarding operations, projects and activities at the wastewater plant for Council review.

**2. Report from Inframark on Water Treatment Plant Operations**

Inframark's written report was submitted regarding operations, projects and activities at the water plant for Council review.

**3. Waterline Replacement Project**

Mr. Ball reported that this project is proceeding well and on schedule. Guyer Brothers has installed approximately 64% of the mainline and 30% of the service installations.

**4. Stormwater Project**

Mr. Ball reported that construction began by A. Liberoni Construction on August 12, 2024 with the razing of the house on North Julian Street. The area will be cleaned up prior to the installation of approximately 5,515 feet of 60", 30", 24", 18" and 15" storm sewer piping, inlets, manholes, headwalls and all necessary appurtenances. This project will take approximately seven months to complete.

**I. Recreation Committee**

- 1. Tennis Center** – Ms. Jacoby reported that the work at the Tennis Center to control the moisture problem was completed on August 14, 2024.

**J. Street Committee** – None.

**K. Administration Committee**

**1. Budget**

Ms. Jacoby reported that the department heads have begun their preparation on the 2025 budget.

**2. Employee Pension Plans**

Ms. Jacoby shared that there are several routine actions are required every year relative to the employee pension plans. The Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) is the amount calculated each year that is required to be deposited into each pension plan. Regulations require Council to formally approve that number by September 30th. The state aid unit value for 2025 has not yet been announced, but it is not necessary to adopt the actuarially determined MMO. The state aid listed below is approximated. Council must also establish the contribution rate, if any, for employees and determine how the State pension aid is to be distributed to the two pension plans.

Ms. Jacoby made the following motions. (Houser) Motions passed unanimously.

- Adopt the minimum municipal obligation (MMO) calculation for the non-uniformed pension plan in the amount of \$96,325.
- Adopt the minimum municipal obligation (MMO) calculation for the uniformed pension plan in the amount of \$40,430.
- Adopt the minimum municipal obligation (MMO) calculation for the defined contribution plan in the amount of \$10,244.
- Adopt Resolution #2024-07 establishing an employee contribution rate of 5% (unchanged) for the non-uniformed defined benefit pension plan for 2025.
- Adopt Resolution #2024-08 establishing an employee contribution rate of 5% for the uniformed pension plan for 2025.
- Adopt Resolution #2024-09 authorizing distribution of the State aid check to the respective employee pension plans.

**L. Human Relations & Diversity Committee – None.**

**M. General Business**

**1. Ordinance #670: Garbage Ordinance**

Ms. Cook reported that the current ordinance needs to be amended by adding language prohibiting garbage and/or recycle receptacles to be placed in public roadways.

Ms. Houser made a motion to grant tentative approval for Ordinance 670 amending provisions of the garbage ordinance. (Ball) Motion passed unanimously.

**2. Ordinance #671**

Ms. Cook reported that a proposed draft ordinance was provided to Council with regard to requiring installation of a Knox Box at certain commercial and multi-residential establishments within the borough to protect and promote health, safety and welfare of residents. Knox Boxes are a secure means for the Fire Department to gain access to buildings in an emergency. The Knox system is nationally known and uses a master key that is secured on Fire Department vehicles. The use of this will allow the firefighters to expedite entry into buildings and eliminate forced entries; therefore, avoiding costly and time-consuming efforts of gaining access to locked buildings during emergencies. The proposed ordinance submitted by Dauntless Fire Company requires Knox Boxes to be installed on all new commercial buildings and multi-family dwellings that have a common corridor for access to the living units, and existing commercial buildings and multi-family structures, when improvements are made that require a building permit.

Ms. Jacoby asked if there might be any grant money available for this.

The consensus of Council was to table this item until the next meeting so that staff and Council have more time to review and research the matter.

N. **Department Report**

1. **Police Department** – Chief Loughran reported on department activity for the month. He noted that there were no issues at Downtown Shutdown or Homecoming. He thanked borough staff for their efforts towards the community events.
2. **Public Works Department** – Public Works Director Josh Surkovich provided a written report on department activity for the month. It was confirmed that the street sweeper is in working order.
3. **Community Development** – Community Development Director Danae Koss reported on recent activities including a ribbon cutting at new business Artistry from Scratch on Sunday, September 15<sup>th</sup> from noon to 5 pm. She also shared that WorkLink Staffing would be hosting a 25-year celebration at their office in the Ebensburg Mini Mall on Thursday, September 19<sup>th</sup> at noon. She noted that Volunteer Night would be October 17<sup>th</sup> and the Ghost Town Trail Fall Foliage Ride would be October 6<sup>th</sup>.
4. **Recreation Department** – Recreation Director Rebecca Williamson gave an update on the recent activity for the month including Bingo to be held on September 13<sup>th</sup>, the Pooch Pool Party on 9/7, and a Blood Drive on September 20<sup>th</sup>. She also discussed the YPCC floor refinishing project, pool renovation project and a potential upcoming project to address drainage at the Memorial Fields.
5. **Ebensburg Planning Commission**  
Mr. Kuhar reported that 1st Summit Bank applied for a final land development to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission recommends the bank's final land development plan which razed the structure on 516 W. High and constructed additional parking.  
  
Mr. Kuhar made a motion to approve the Final Land Development Plan for 1st Summit Bank. (Ball) Motion passed unanimously.
6. **Ebensburg Zoning Hearing Board** – None.
7. **PA Municipal League Voting Delegate / Resolutions Committee Appointment**  
Each year the PA Municipal League asks that members designate a Voting Delegate / Resolutions Committee Appointment to participate in the Resolutions Committee Meeting and Annual Business Meeting which are held during the fall PML Leadership Summit.  
  
Council President Doug Tusing sits on the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee of the PML and is currently the Legislative Committee Co-Chair. Therefore, Staff recommends that Council President Tusing be designated as the Delegate for Ebensburg Borough.  
  
Ms. Houser made a motion to appoint Doug Tusing as Ebensburg's Voting Delegate for 2024. (Murphy) Motion passed unanimously.

- O. **Media Comments/Questions** – Matt Churella, The Altoona Mirror, asked for clarification on whether or not the garbage ordinance would get final approval at a future meeting.
- P. **Public Comments** – Mr. Bob Horvath, 709 E. Sample Street, spoke in regard to concerns about the poor condition of a vacant neighboring property at 704 E. Sample Street. He cited stairs falling down, black mold, previous sightings of rats, etc. He also asked where residents can take yard clippings now that they are not accepted at the yard waste dumpster and for clarification regarding the waterline project and what was being replaced.
- Q. **Executive Session** – Council entered into Executive Session at 7:32 to discuss a personnel issue and litigation and exited at 7:47.
- R. **Adjournment** – There being no further business, Ms. Jacoby made a motion to adjourn. (Houser) Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned 7:48 PM

Minutes Recorded by:  
Danea Koss, Community Development Director