

**BOROUGH OF BROWNSVILLE  
FAYETTE COUNTY PENNSYLVANIA  
November 10, 2021**

The Regular meeting of the Council of the Borough of Brownsville was held this evening at the Sons of Italy in Brownsville. The meeting was called to order by Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich at 6:00 p.m. by reciting the Lord's Prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance.

The following members were present: Council President Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich, Council Vice President Paul Synuria, Jack Lawver, Lester Ward, Jackie Jackson, Barbara Pepper, Beth Bock, and Mayor Ross H. Swords, Jr.

**RECOGNITION OF VISITORS**

Nothing to report.

**MINUTES**

Motion by

**MAYOR'S REPORT**

The Mayor reported police fines in the amount of \$845.28.

Coca-Cola did the mural downtown. There will be a Coca-Cola day on November 21, from 4-9. They are sending a caravan, which is a trailer with 30,000 lights, and Santa Claus.

**FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION**

Lester Ward reported the total funds at this time are \$286,255.75, including General Fund \$61,301.24, Payroll \$15,731.03, Petty Cash \$234.52, Act 13 \$21,387.05, K-9 Fund \$4,249.37, Fire Escrow \$1.00, Parking Authority \$1,920.59, PLGIT \$54,039.52, ARPA Grant Fund \$116,392.16, and Comprehensive Plan Fund \$10,999.27.

The investment account balances were \$521,995.09, including \$436,964.94 in PSAB Police Pension and \$85,030.15 in BB&T.

Monthly bills paid were \$78,760.46. Bills that still need paid total \$30,255.53 from the General Fund and \$421.12 from PLGIT. Deposits this month totaled \$38,268.82.

Motion by Lester Ward to pay the remaining bills. Second by Jack Lawver. Roll call vote: Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich, yes; Paul Synuria, yes; Jack Lawver, yes; Lester Ward, yes; Beth Bock, yes; Barbara Pepper, yet. Jackie Jackson, yes. Votes are unanimous. Motion carries.

A tentative budget has been present to Council for review. Lester Ward makes a motion to consider the tentative budget for 2022. Revenue is tentatively set at \$3,109.959 and expenses are tentatively set at \$3,109,775. Second by Beth Bock.

Lester Ward noted that we went item by item against last year's budget and where we could, we maintained the budget where it was. If we were able to decrease things, we did. If we look at line item 301.100, it goes from \$256k to \$419k. This income increase has to come from somewhere. Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich noted this is a 4 mil tax increase, where 1 mil brings in a little more than \$40k. Lester Ward would like Council to consider whether they want to raise taxes or cut expenses. Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich noted we cut last year and are at the end of year now with minimal money. The other item is line item 359, PILOT taxes, and we are looking at any tax exempt properties who are willing to contribute to the Borough through a PILOT program. Jack Lawver asked what organizations we are talking about, which Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich noted the sewage authority and the park board are potentials. This is a tentative budget. If we do not want to raise taxes and the community does not want to raise taxes, then we cut expenses and continue to run on a low budget.

Under line item 350, these are grant funds. This money is restricted and has to be spent. On another note, some grants require matches, and we have not been able to do that. This budget does not show any significant increases in raises, expenses, etc. Beth Bock noted we do not necessarily want to increase, but look at the improvements and things we were able to do with the last increase. Jack Lawver asked what a 4 mil tax increase would cost taxpayers, which could potentially be around \$240. Jack Lawver also asked if this was to consider a budget, not adopt a budget. Beth Bock asked if anyone spoke to the two new councilmembers coming on

next year as to what they hope for next year. Jack Lawver noted we have to adopt a tentative budget as well as a final budget. Lester Ward noted he did not speak to anyone other than Council. Lester Ward asked if Council could take a grant writing course to write the grants in-house rather than pay McMillen to do so. This would save a large amount of money.

Lester Ward spoke with Mayor Ross H. Swords, Jr. regarding vending machines and agreed to have the police verify what machines each establishment in the Borough have. They also spoke about occupancy and code violations, agreeing that the police could assist with the code enforcement in the Borough. Beth Bock suggested it would be a better idea to have them contact the Code Officer, as it is his job to do the permits.

Paul Synuria asked about line item 387.110 and stated "the K9 donations have been at \$368 for two years and it has been said publicly that donations were given to the K9 fund. We need to make it clear that those donations were not given, because if someone looks at the budget, it is showing that we have not had an increase for the K9 Unit, even though it has been said that people were donating to the K9 unit, so we need to tell people that it is \$368 and it has not been increased for two years." Jackie Jackson asked "who collects the money for that?" Paul Synuria stated "the only thing I'm saying is the Borough needs to make it clear that we were not given any money for the K9 Fund to be put into the Borough." Beth Bock asked "do you remember what happened to the K9 Fund a couple years ago, Mr. Synuria?" Paul Synuria responded "yes, I do. Do we want to discuss that now? Yes. The K9 Fund was used to help fund the police department." Beth Bock said "misappropriation," and Paul Synuria stated "hold on, you asked me a question and I am going to answer it," Ms. Bock responded "okay." Paul Synuria stated "money was not being given to the police for any reason unless it was taken out of the K9 Fund, so as soon as the people that were on Council left, I said 'that money needed to be put back into the Police Fund, the K9 Fund' and it has been. So don't try using the word 'misappropriation' to me. Beth Bock responded "so you didn't vote to spend that money towards the police?" Paul Synuria stated "it's the money in the K9 Fund" and Beth Bock stated "that was a yes?" Paul Synuria responded "yes it is." Beth Bock stated "ok." Paul Synuria asked "Where is the K9 money?" Beth Bock responded "sitting in our account." Paul Synuria asked "who gave you the right to hold that money?" Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich attempted to interject, and Paul Synuria continued speaking, by asking "who gave you the right to hold the money?" Beth Bock responded "I had a conversation with the Mayor and I had a conversation with the President." Paul Synuria asked Mayor Ross H. Swords, Jr. "did you have a conversation over the last two years that the money is being held?" to which Mayor Ross H. Swords, Jr. responded "yes, but I think with Barb, I had it with you Barb, right," and Barbara Peffer responded "you did have one with me" and Paul Synuria asked when, to which Mayor Ross H. Swords, Jr. responded "before the last Policeman's Ball." Paul Synuria asked Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich when her conversation with Beth Bock was, to which she responded "I have no idea. I just know that it's a very small piece of the budget. It does tie everything together and again, the goal in that line item is to go out and to purchase a dog, a K9, we thought we were this close this year, as we move forward, and I don't know when and if there were conversations, I know that is a small piece of this budget." Paul Synuria stated "if it's \$2 it needs accounted for." Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich responded "okay." Paul Synuria continued "and all I'm saying is the last two years it's been said that money's been given to the K9 unit, not..." and Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich responded "and you've said that, you've made your point," "and Ross and I've both answered that. Do you have other questions about the budget?" Paul Synuria responded "no."

Lester Ward feels a tax increase should be for a purpose. There should be a project Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich noted the Keystone Communities Project is specific to certain roads in the Borough. The MultiModal Transportation Grant is specific to the Charles Street Bridge. Lester Ward noted this is grant money, but what will the tax money go towards. If the grant does not come through, we still have critical issues to deal with. The priorities will not change in this budget. If we fix a road and the drain collapses, we need that excess money. Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich would recommend looking line by line at the budget to see there are no significant changes. The grants are a wash in this budget. The TAP Loan is also available to us. Lester Ward noted two items were zeroed out of this budget, the rental inspections and the sweep program. Moving forward, these programs need a designated person in charge.

Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich reminds Council that any source of revenue in here needs a leader, and a committee, and action steps.

Roll call vote: Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich, yes; Paul Synuria, no; Jack Lawver, no; Lester Ward, yes; Beth Bock, yes; Barbara Peffer, yet. Jackie Jackson, yes. Votes are 5-2. Motion carries.

Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich recommends another meeting after advertising for 10 days

### **CODE ENFORCEMENT**

There were 26 total complaints this month, 2 home inspections, 5 court hearings, 64 citations, and 10 letters sent to residents. Fines and fees for this month totaled \$395.42. Paul Synuria noted there is no breakdown this month. Paul Synuria noted these reports would be more detailed next year.

### **BUILDINGS & GROUNDS – PAUL SYNURIA**

Paul Synuria noted there were complaints by the castle. At the end of the street past the castle, on the dead end road, there is no Dead End sign. He would like a sign there so people are aware and do not block the house there on Brashear Street. The Castle, the Borough, and the owner of the property on Brasher Street had an agreement for 2 parking spots there. Two “reserved parking” signs need put there. Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich feels the property owner is responsible for this. Paul Synuria will approach the owner and suggest the signs and possibly splitting costs.

We are still waiting on a letter from Fiddles.

The timer on Snowdon Square needs updated.

### **PUBLIC SAFETY – BETH BOCK**

There were 65 calls for service, 39 citations, 10 total incidents, 3 arrests and 1 transport. Car 1 ran 587 miles and Car 3 ran 759 miles, for a total of 1,346 miles.

### **STREETS – JACK LAWVER**

The department reports were not available at this time.

On the street openings, the gas company needs to come to an agreement on what they owe us.

Junk prices are anywhere from \$7-\$10 per 100 pounds. Red Vandivner gave a verbal price of \$750 to junk it and haul it away. For us to haul it, we would spend between \$300-\$500.

Jack Lawver makes a motion to accept VanDivner's proposal of \$750 to take the sweeper. Second by Paul Synuria. All in favor. Motion carries.

### **RECREATION – JACKIE JACKSON**

Jackie Jackson applied for the LSA and it was granted. This is match money to use towards the DCNR grant. Funding will consist of site excavation, park demo, and improvements. Parking lot, walkway, basketball court, chain-link fence.

Paul Synuria asked if there was a time limit to spend. Jackie Jackson said the money would be awarded in January but does not know the time limit to spend.

The pirate grant will be applied for next year.

We should hear more on the DCNR grant soon.

Our Rivers of Steel grant application was not approved.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – BARBARA PEFFER**

Barbara Pepper noted Cornerstone Care would be back tomorrow and again on December 7, from 9 am – 3 pm. They are providing CDL, school, and work physicals, women's health, medical, psychiatric, HIV testing, and COVID testing. It is a walk-up clinic and they accept all insurances. Costs are on a sliding scale based on income. The number is 267-799-1916 if anyone wants to make an appointment.

### **LIBRARY – PAUL SYNURIA**

The library awarded 3 prizes and an honorary mention for the best short story. Paul Synuria is proud to say all 3 prizes were Brownsville area 6<sup>th</sup> grade students. The newsletter is available at the library, which includes all 4 stories.

### **FIRE DEPARTMENTS – BETH BOCK**

Northside's total number of incidents for the month of October were 28, which includes 2 fires, 13 rescue and emergency medical services, 7 hazardous conditions, 2 service calls, and 4 false alarms.

South Brownsville's total number of incidents for the month of September were 32, which includes 5 fires, 12 rescue and emergency medical services, 3 hazardous conditions, 3 service calls, and 9 false alarms.

South Brownsville's total number of incidents for the month of October were 27, which includes 2 fires, 13 rescue and emergency medical services, 8 hazardous conditions, and 4 false alarms.

#### **TAX BUREAU**

Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich noted there is correspondence from the Assessment Office and the Zoning Board.

#### **SOLICITOR'S REPORT – HERB MITCHELL**

Mr. Mitchell had nothing to report.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich reported that the engineers involved with the Cast Iron Bridge will be in for the Coca-Cola day and will have information for public input and to see the design of the new bridge.

There were no applicants for the Civil Service Commission. Lester Ward asked how many people, to which Beth Bock replied a minimum of three, but five are preferred.

The comprehensive plan community meeting was held and there were nearly 100 participants, with a lot of interaction and discussion from several community members who were in attendance. It was a productive meeting.

Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich noted Fenwick Park has been taken care of, no laptop grants have been identified, the Market Street property transfer is done, but we do not have the deed yet, and that she is still working on the updated responsibility lists for chairpersons.

If Council members want to go paperless, let Melissa S. O'Brien know.

Beth Bock is still working on litter fees and the speed safety corridors. She noted she sent the video policy to everyone but did not receive any feedback. Jack Lawver asked if she could send again.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

Jack Lawver noted that we received a notice from SAI regarding the Charles Street Bridge, which included recommendations for safety. These recommendations were done. This bridge is on the repair list for 2022.

Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich suggested all members of Council look to the LSA grants for 2022 to see if they can be used for any projects in the Borough.

The audit is not finished, but our new auditor did not start yet. We are hopeful that it is completed next week. Nothing was noted regarding a bond for auditors.

A new pension fund is to be established for non-union staff. Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich will be setting up a meeting for next week to discuss this. A plan was offered to Melissa S. O'Brien when she was hired, and we want to get her into a plan before the end of the year. Jack Lawver expressed his interest in attending.

Health insurance has shown an increase of 24.9%, which is approximately \$25,000. A recommendation that we add a \$2,000 deductible, funded by the Borough, to our existing plan. This will increase the Borough costs by a maximum of \$12k, rather than the \$25k in the proposal received by UPMC. We will notify the unions of this change, so they are aware that the Borough is paying the deductible and it will not affect the out of pocket costs for any employee.

Jack Lawver noted we ordered tires nearly 7 months ago, and they finally arrived. Jack Lawver spoke with Paul Synuria regarding dump truck tires, which are also needed. He recommends ordering winter supplies soon, as there is no guarantee on delivery at this time. Lester Ward also brought up the fact that police car tires would be needed. Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich noted there is a new tire shop on the North Side.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

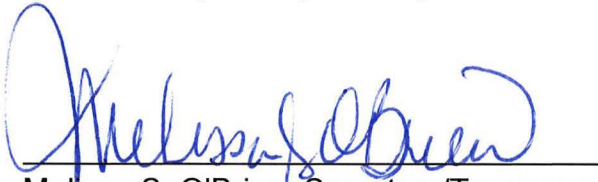
Please note that the Luzerne Park board minutes, showing they have \$64k in the bank, and they have another account which we do not have a report for.

The sewage authority did not submit a report this month, but they have approximately \$540k in their PLGIT account, while we only have \$54k. This is a considerable amount of money that they have and we should be working together.

Lester Ward asked what was required going forward on the budget. Tracy Sheehan Zivkovich noted the budget will be available at the Borough office, and we will put it on the website and social media sites. Jack Lawver noted Billy Price will be here tomorrow night.

**MEETING ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn by Paul Synuria. Second by Lester Ward. Meeting adjourned.

  
Melissa S. O'Brien, Secretary/Treasurer





## TREASURER'S REPORT

November 2021

### BANK ACCOUNTS (adjusted through October 31, 2021)

|                         |           |                   |
|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------|
| General Fund            | \$        | 61,301.24         |
| Payroll                 | \$        | 15,731.03         |
| Petty Cash              | \$        | 234.52            |
| Act 13                  | \$        | 21,387.05         |
| K-9 Fund                | \$        | 4,249.37          |
| Fire Escrow             | \$        | 1.00              |
| Parking Authority       | \$        | 1,920.59          |
| PLGIT                   | \$        | 54,039.52         |
| ARPA Grant Fund         | \$        | 116,392.16        |
| Comprehensive Plan Fund | \$        | 10,999.27         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>            | <b>\$</b> | <b>286,255.75</b> |

### INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS (adjusted through October 31, 2021)

|                                 |           |                   |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|
| BB&T                            | \$        | 85,030.15         |
| Mass Mutual                     | \$        | -                 |
| PSAB Municipal Retirement Trust | \$        | 436,964.94        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                    | <b>\$</b> | <b>521,995.09</b> |

### DEPOSITS (adjusted through November 10, 2021)

|                           |                               |           |                  |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------|------------------|
| Mayor Ross H. Swords, Jr. | Fines & Fees                  | \$        | 845.28           |
| Clerk of Courts           | Fines & Fees                  | \$        | 39.48            |
| Brownsville Township      | Police Protection             | \$        | 3,750.00         |
| MDJ                       | Code Fines & Fees             | \$        | 395.42           |
| Fayette County            | Delinquent Real Estate Taxes  | \$        | 5,044.00         |
| Fayette County            | Delinquent Fire Hydrant Taxes | \$        | 393.45           |
| Fayette County            | Delinquent Street Light Taxes | \$        | 1,178.77         |
| Commonwealth of PA        | Comprehensive Plan 1/3        | \$        | 13,433.00        |
| Tena Congelio             | Real Estate Taxes             | \$        | 2,330.92         |
| Tena Congelio             | Fire Hydrant Taxes            | \$        | 157.30           |
| Tena Congelio             | Per Capita Taxes              | \$        | 31.50            |
| Tena Congelio             | Street Light Taxes            | \$        | 484.90           |
| Recorder of Deeds         | Real Estate Transfer Tax      | \$        | 2,184.96         |
| SWRTB                     | Local Service Tax             | \$        | 50.25            |
| SWRTB                     | Earned Income Tax             | \$        | 7,870.51         |
| First National Bank       | Interest                      | \$        | 24.08            |
| Various                   | No Lien Letters               | \$        | 15.00            |
| Various                   | Occupancy Permits             | \$        | 40.00            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>              |                               | <b>\$</b> | <b>38,268.82</b> |

**BOROUGH OF BROWNSVILLE**  
**MONTHLY BILLS PAID - November 2021**

| DEPARTMENT | VENDOR                   | FOR                        | AMT.         | TOTAL               |
|------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Finance    | Atlantic Broadband       | Phone & Internet Services  | \$ 537.76    |                     |
|            | DeLage Landen Financial  | Copier Lease               | \$ 158.02    |                     |
|            | EMC Insurance            | Insurances                 | \$ 4,363.30  |                     |
|            | FayCo Assessment         | Tax Collector Supplies     | \$ 333.33    |                     |
|            | Guardian Life            | BEO Insurance              | \$ 42.16     |                     |
|            | IRS                      | Federal Income Tax         | \$ 4,219.35  |                     |
|            | Microsoft                | Office 365                 | \$ 37.50     |                     |
|            | PA Department of Revenue | PA Taxes                   | \$ 738.15    |                     |
|            | Quill                    | Office Supplies            | \$ 110.27    |                     |
|            | UPMC                     | Employee Insurance         | \$ 8,512.32  |                     |
|            |                          |                            |              | <b>\$ 19,052.16</b> |
| Buildings  | Brownsville Municipal    | Sewage                     | \$ 149.60    |                     |
|            | Columbia Gas             | Gas Bill                   | \$ 143.26    |                     |
|            | Kiss My Grass            | Lawn care                  | \$ 180.00    |                     |
|            | PA American Water        | Building                   | \$ 69.53     |                     |
|            | Terminix                 | Pest Control               | \$ 63.00     |                     |
|            | West Penn Power          | Building & Grounds         | \$ 766.93    |                     |
|            |                          |                            |              | <b>\$ 1,372.32</b>  |
| Police     | Bevard                   | Gas                        | \$ 476.08    |                     |
|            | Local 491                | Union Dues                 | \$ 160.00    |                     |
|            | PA Turnpike              | Tolls                      | \$ 3.90      |                     |
|            | PSAB                     | Police Pension             | \$ 1,145.86  |                     |
|            | Quill                    | Police Supplies            | \$ 38.24     |                     |
|            | SPJ                      | Uniform Reimbursement      | \$ 274.52    |                     |
|            | Verizon Wireless         | Police Phone               | \$ 40.01     |                     |
|            |                          |                            |              | <b>\$ 2,138.61</b>  |
| Streets    | Bevard                   | Gas                        | \$ 382.58    |                     |
|            | CAT Financial            | Street Equipment           | \$ 283.16    | PLGIT               |
|            | Coulson's                | Street Equipment & Repairs | \$ 1,109.95  | PLGIT               |
|            | Gebe & Skocik            | Tires                      | \$ 604.00    | PLGIT               |
|            | Local 373                | Union Dues                 | \$ 78.00     |                     |
|            | NAPA                     | Supplies                   | \$ 292.15    | PLGIT               |
|            | NAPA                     | Supplies                   | \$ 292.15    | PLGIT               |
|            | PA One Call              | Street Openings            | \$ 13.87     |                     |
|            | Redstone Excavating      | Street Paving              | \$ 46,686.75 | PLGIT               |
|            | West Penn Power          | Street Lights              | \$ 4,611.44  |                     |
|            | West Penn Power          | Traffic Lights             | \$ 133.90    |                     |
|            |                          |                            |              | <b>\$ 54,487.95</b> |
| Fire       | Center Independent       | Gas                        | \$ 533.25    |                     |
|            | PA American Water        | Hydrants                   | \$ 1,154.83  |                     |
|            | West Penn Power          | Fire Whistle               | \$ 21.34     |                     |
|            |                          |                            |              | <b>\$ 1,709.42</b>  |
|            | <b>TOTAL BILLS PAID</b>  |                            |              | <b>\$ 78,760.46</b> |

**BOROUGH OF BROWNSVILLE**  
**MONTHLY BILLS DUE - November 2021**

|                                                            |                                   |                           |                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Bills paid this month total</b>                         |                                   | <b>\$ 78,760.46</b>       |                     |
| <b>The following bills are due this month:</b>             |                                   |                           |                     |
|                                                            | <b>Comprehensive Plan</b>         | <b>Borough portion</b>    | <b>\$ 13,433.33</b> |
|                                                            | Giannetti Motors                  | Oil Change - Police Car   | \$ 46.98            |
|                                                            | JG Service                        | Gas                       | \$ 122.32           |
|                                                            | K2                                | Survey                    | \$ 750.00           |
|                                                            | LCFOWPA                           | Street Department Pension | \$ 2,353.12         |
|                                                            | PAWC                              | Fire Hydrants             | \$ 1,154.83         |
|                                                            | PAWC                              | Shed Water                | \$ 19.75            |
|                                                            | PAWC                              | Building Water            | \$ 62.88            |
|                                                            | S&D Calibration                   | Vascar Certification      | \$ 64.00            |
|                                                            | West Penn Power                   | Electric                  | \$ 11,218.32        |
|                                                            | Who Rescued Who                   | Animal Control            | \$ 1,030.00         |
|                                                            | <b>TOTAL BILLS DUE</b>            |                           | <b>\$ 30,255.53</b> |
| <b>The following bills are due from the PLGIT Account:</b> |                                   |                           |                     |
|                                                            | Coulson's                         | Oil                       | \$ 33.90            |
|                                                            | NAPA                              | Dump Truck Battery        | \$ 120.99           |
|                                                            | Sherwin Williams                  | Street Line Paint         | \$ 266.23           |
|                                                            |                                   |                           | <b>\$ 421.12</b>    |
|                                                            | <b>TOTAL BILLS DUE THIS MONTH</b> |                           | <b>\$ 30,676.65</b> |