

# TREMONT BOROUGH COUNCIL

## MEETING MINUTES

April 9, 2024

### CALL TO ORDER:

President Ochs called the meeting of the Tremont Borough Council to order at 6:30 p.m. at the Tremont Borough Building.

### ATTENDANCE:

**Council:** President William Ochs, Vice-President Brian Eisenacher, Council Members: James Scheibley, Melody Strickler and Roger Adams.

**Also attending:** Mayor Gerald Fasnacht, Solicitor Shane Hobbs and Secretary-Treasurer Shea Lucas.

*\* See attached sheet for a list of Citizens who were in attendance.*

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- Motion made by Adams, second by Strickler, approving the March 5, 2024 Workshop Minutes and the March 12, 2024 Meeting Minutes. All in favor, Minutes approved.

### SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

*Attorney Shane Hobbs*

- Problem Properties
  1. Solicitor Hobbs has been talking and working with Marty Sowers regarding unpaid citations.
  2. He used 29 Spring St. as an example:
    - No water, people living there, pulled postings off the door
    - He could file Action in Court of Common Pleas listing all costs including attorney fees (\$300-\$500)
    - Bench warrant issued if they don't show up for court
    - They can make payments
    - Wouldn't cost the Borough as much as Hobbs thought
  3. It would be cheaper to file action against multiple properties rather than one at a time.
  4. If a property is condemned or dangerous
    - No one is allowed in property at all
    - It is then a Police matter. They have to catch them in there.
  5. Strickler asked Hobbs if a property can be boarded up before the court order is filed.
    - Hobbs: No
  6. Mayor Fasnacht feels we need a health officer to deal with these matters.
  7. President Ochs recommends listing the top ten problem properties in the Borough and Hobbs file action on those properties. Marty Sowers is doing the best that he can, but he has so many other towns besides Tremont that he is dealing with. He is just stretched to thin to keep up with the tickets and citations.

### MAYOR'S REPORT:

*Mayor Gerald Fasnacht:*

- He wants three violations added to the Quality-of-Life Violation Tickets:
  1. Yellow curb parking
    - Hobbs said yes
  2. Campers & Trailers
    - Hobbs said yes
  3. Noise
    - The Mayor used the example of a car stereo playing loud music, and a car back firing.
      - Hobbs feels this is way too complex to enforce
- 138 Spring Street Fence
  - President Ochs spoke to Marty Sowers and Marty will waive the citations if the owner is willing to cut the corner of the fence making it easier for cars to see to pull out.

**PUBLIC UTILITY AND STREETS:**

- 2024 Inlet Replacement Project: 3 Bids were received:
  - Arthur Pat Aungst Inc - \$19,4763.00
  - Grosser Excavating Inc - \$12,600.00
  - Kessler & Company - \$22,500.00
- Motion made by Scheibley, second by Eisenacher to accept the bid submitted by Grosser Excavating Inc in the amount of \$12,600.00, pending Solicitor review. All in favor; Motion passed.

**PROPERTY:**

- Council received the following letter from the owner of 33 Spring St.:

*To whom it may concern;*

*My name is Samantha Howerton and I reside at 33 Spring Street Tremont PA in 2018, our home was destroyed due to the flood that we all have experienced. However, after the flood, my property was one of the worst experiences as the home is flush with the ground- The borough was extremely helpful in getting us some help with furniture and cannot put into words my gratitude for its kindness. However, we were also informed of creek renovations as well as yard renovations that the borough was going to offer us. I noticed that quite a few of my neighbors had their land leveled out, or some sort of help was given. In the meantime, my yard remains untouched by the borough- I am writing this letter because I'm curious to see if there's any funding available to the residents of this town and myself for yard renovations such as leveling the land? As it stands, the water from any rain flows towards my home and causes water damage. I was also concerned about the way my yard was left after the creek wall went up. The wall stops dead in the middle of my property exposing the creek and inviting ducks, snakes, and other creatures into my yard. Not to mention it exposes my pets, my children and my grandchildren directly to the creek. When the renovations occurred, it was brought to my attention that the shed on my property needed to be moved so I emptied it out and allowed the removal I also allowed the company to do the renovations to park their equipment on my property as a kindness. But I got a fine from the borough for not cutting my grass!! I was not comfortable cutting grass around expensive equipment out of fear something would kick up and damage the machinery! I just feel that my home and many others have been forgotten about, so I'm writing this letter in hopes that we can get some help. Thank you for your time, Samantha Howerton*

- Council is in agreement that the Borough is not responsible for fixing her yard.
- Aungst planted grass and removed her shed for free
- Sherry Huntzinger told Council that the former Mayor (Ricky Ney) and Amanda Cole went door to door telling people that they are going to get a crew in to fix yards.
  - They did that on their own. It was a personal offer; it was not on behalf of the Borough.
- Motion made by Scheibley, second by Strickler to waive the Q-O-L violation from July 2023 for high grass. All in favor; Motion passed.
- Mayor Fasnacht will reach out to her.

**PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY:**

» **FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT**

- Chief Eisenacher reported the Fire Company responded to 16 calls in March 2024

» **TREMONT AMBULANCE REPORT**

- Scheibley reported the Ambulance calls for:
  - January: 34 volunteer and 79 paid
  - February: 46 volunteer and 65 paid
  - March: 35 volunteer and 83 paid
- Motion made by Scheibley, second by Eisenacher to start getting reimbursement of share of Volunteer Ambulance Workers Comp premiums from surrounding Townships again. All in favor; Motion passes.

» **ENGINEER REPORT (PROPERTY MAINTENANCE)**

*Marty Sowers*

- President Ochs read the Submitted Report:
  - QOL citations for failure to pay – issued 19 citations – this is not necessarily for 19 different properties. There are several properties that have failed to pay multiple QOL tickets, so they received multiple citations.
  - QOL tickets – 7 QOL tickets issued on 3/26/24
  - 208 Clay St – met with Dave Barry – explained to him that he needs to continue to clean up property. If he can condense his mowers into a single area and I can't see them from a public way or a neighboring property then I can't really take any action against him.
  - IPMC violation notices – issued several notices for general dilapidation

**RECREATION & EDUCATION:**

*John Poff, Engineer Report: March 2024*

ENGINEERING STATUS REPORT-FLOOD

Pine Street and Union Street Bridges

Pine Street Bridge:

All work is complete. Close out paperwork has been filed with FEMA/PEMA.

Union Street Bridge:

All FEMA/PEMA work is complete. Close out paperwork has been filed with FEMA/PEMA.

Good Spring Creek Retaining Wall Project

All work is complete. Closeout paperwork has been filed with FEMA/PEMA.

FEMA BRIC-DTA GRANT

The next scheduled meeting between the Borough and FEMA DTA will occur virtually on April 22<sup>nd</sup> at 3:00 PM.

ENGINEERING STATUS REPORT-OTHER PROJECTS

DCED Grant from Commonwealth Financing Agency

On December 19, 2023, Tremont Borough has received a \$ 300,000.00 grant from the Commonwealth Financing Agency through the Department of Community and Economic Development. Please note, the grant application was for \$ 375,000.00. Therefore, the Borough will have to provide a 15 % match (\$ 56,250.00) plus the funding shortfall of \$ 18,750.00. This grant will provide funding to do the stormwater collection and conveyance projects as outlined in the Army Corp Study as well as replacing the storm pipe under Route 25.

DCED has sent the grant agreement electronically for Bill Ochs and Brian Eisenacher to execute the Agreement on behalf of the Borough.

Borough Playground

Keith Heigel is coordinating the next step in the process with DCNR. The grant will have to be managed through the new Grants Customer Service Portal. Grantees are encouraged to submit a Partial Payment Request for 50% of the grant award through the Grants Portal Payment Link. All partial payments must be deposited in a separate interest-bearing account.

The LHAI team is working on obtaining plan approval from DCNR. We cannot proceed with the project until DCNR approves the construction plans.

**TREASURER REPORT:** Treasurer Report for March 2024:

**GENERAL**

MID PENN BANK		2,288.71
SCMA		928.33
FRONTIER		209.20
PPL ELECTRIC UTILITIES		4,425.17
EMIL RARICK, Division of Tevis Energy, Inc.		2,054.48

COUNTY OF SCHUYLKILL	1,573.23	
COMMONWEALTH of PENNSYLVANIA	41,592.00	
ADOBE		42.38
COMMONWEALTH of PENNSYLVANIA	600.00	
LIGHT-HEIGEL & ASSOCIATES, INC		1,751.50
LIGHT-HEIGEL & ASSOCIATES, INC		1,133.11
TRANSFER	1,133.11	
Kathleen J. Krammes		397.03
GEORGE HOVEROCKER		139.91
MID PENN BANK		29.00
DEPOSIT	30,716.91	
POTTS & MONGER SANITATION		85.00
BERKHEIMER		551.50
SCHUYLKILL COUNTY TREASURER		271.36
AMAZON		97.81
WERNER LUMBER ACE HARDWARE		664.34
AMTRUST NORTH AMERICA		6,155.00
DEPOSIT	3,969.95	
PAYROLL		19,421.54
INTEREST	2.38	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 79,587.58</b>	<b>\$ 40,645.37</b>

***POOL***

PPL ELECTRIC UTILITIES		24.89
INTEREST	0.08	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 0.08</b>	<b>\$ 24.89</b>

***NEW EQUIPMENT FUND***

USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT		648.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 648.00</b>

***ARPA (COVID) FUND***

TRANSFER		1,133.11
INTEREST	2.28	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 2.28</b>	<b>\$ 1,133.11</b>

***PLGIT GENERAL ACCT***

BERKHEIMER	11435.28	
INTEREST	416.88	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 416.88</b>	<b>\$ -</b>

***FIRE DEPT. FUND***

MARS DIESEL		1,462.57
INTEREST	220.14	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 220.14</b>	<b>\$ 1,462.57</b>

**LIQUID FUELS ACCT**

TOBIN EXCAVATING		240.00
A&M AUTO PARTS		312.97
STORK'S AUTOMOTIVE INC		792.80
INTEREST	123.45	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 123.45</b>	<b>\$ 792.80</b>

- Motion made by Adams, second by Strickler, approving the Treasurer's Report. All in favor, Motion passed.

**FINANCE:**

- Our Safety Deposit Box was cleaned out – contents are in the Borough Office
- Bank Account was opened for the DCNR Grant Playground Project
- Motion made by Scheibley second by Adams to put FEMA money on bank loan. Roll call vote: Eisenacher – Yes, Scheibley-Yes, Strickler – Yes, Adams-Yes, President Ochs – Yes.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

- None

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- Motion made by Adams, second by Scheibley to host the Fall Clean up on September 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. All in favor; Motion passed.
- Starting January 2025, if the council meeting is cancelled it will be rescheduled for the following Tuesday. The secretary will include this in the 2025 Meeting Dates Ad.
- Motion made by Eisenacher, second by Scheibley to have the Fire Police assist at the Fireman's Convention in Pottsville on May 11<sup>th</sup>. All in favor; Motion passed.
- Mayor Fasnacht requested that cones be put out for the Auction at Delphine Zernhelt's house across the street on May 2<sup>nd</sup>
- Scheibley reported to Council that there is a sink hole on Coal Street.

**CITIZEN COMMUNICATION:**

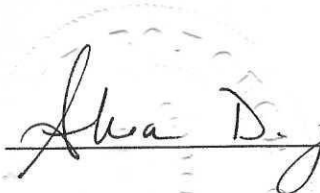
- Sherry Huntzinger
  - 1) The owner of 29 Spring St. is living at 58 Spring St. Her sons are now living at 29 Spring.
    - a. State police were there a few years back because there were animals left in the home.
  - 2) Historical Society is having an All Class Reunion in September, could the downstairs walls be repaired and floors painted before the event?
    - Scheibley will make sure it is done.
  - 3) Spring St. is in horrible condition. Plus, the noise and the speeding are a big concern. When is the State planning on paving that street?
    - a. Scheibley thinks it's 2025.
    - b. Scheibley did call the State about the Speed Limit signs and they are to be posted every .5 miles, so there is one at the bank and one at Pribilla's.
  - 4) Is the fire hydrant on Spring St. going to be fixed?
    - a. Eisenacher: No there is not enough pressure. The hydrant by Pribilla's and Dwight Miller's will be the main one for Spring Street.
  - 5) Is the sediment going to be removed from the Creek in the Spring?
    - a. Scheibley isn't sure because DEP says that the rains will just bring it all back.

- Resident at 128 E Main Street
  - 1) Is anything being done about the pigs at the house on Union Street? (Jim Becher's old house)
    - Hobbs; yes, it is.
  - 2) She is getting QOL violations for a property that isn't hers. The lot behind her house actually is 111 E. Line Street.
  - 3) Something needs to be done about the drug activity at the house next to her. The back alley has traffic all night long.
  
- Kathy Adams
  - 1) The gold car is parked in the yard again behind their house.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

- Motion made by Strickler, second by Adams, to adjourn the meeting at 7:47 p.m.; All in favor. Meeting Adjourned.

**ATTEST:**

  
Alva D. Luca

**PRESIDENT:**

William Oles