

# PRE-MEETING BADEN BOROUGH COUNCIL AUGUST 14<sup>TH</sup>, 2024

Council President Dave Trzcianka called the Pre-Meeting of Council to order at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of the Baden Municipal Building, 149 State Street, to conduct business of general purposes.

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

## ROLL CALL

**PRESENT:** Joe Bosh, Becky Gallagher, Doug Miller, John Shelkons, Dawn Singleton, Michael Stuban and Dave Trzcianka

**NOT PRESENT:** Mayor Judi Montell

**ALSO PRESENT:** Foreman Rodney Keenan

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF OTHER RECORDING DEVICES

## AGENDA (Changes and/or Deletions)

## VISITORS

Beverly Kotys, a resident asked for an update on the charging fees and having the buildings inspected. Joe Bosh stated that the program is in progress and being done by the Code Enforcement Officer. Michael Stuban commented that the CEO is fifty percent done and is sending letters out to the remaining businesses that did not respond to the initial letter to set up an inspection.

## DEPARTMENT REPORTS

### Manager

1. **Tevebaugh Road Speed Limit Signs**

25 mph speed limit signs have been posted.

2. **2023 Audit**

A draft of the 2023 audit has been given to each councilmember

3. **Water Shut-Off**

24 hour waiting period to be turned back on once shut off

After discussion council agreed to start this in 2025 so we could notify the residents of the change in the shut-off procedure.

4. **Duquesne Light Project**

Still taking place. Brackets have been removed from the poles. Rodney is handling the Christmas light wiring with DQL.

5. **Phillips Street Sink Hole**

Council has been given a copy of an email from PennDot for consideration.

6. **Subdivision and Lot Consolidation for Vilella properties**

The Beaver County Planning Board reviewed the plans. Motion is needed next week for council to approve the plans.

7. **PennVest / Paving Project Loans**

Finalizing documentation for closing.

**8. Ordinances**

Street Opening Ordinance – given to council for review at last month’s meeting  
Solicitation Ordinance – revisiting the ordinance. (Mr. Bosh will address)  
Parking Ordinance – Section 180-3 needs to include the word trailers.

**9. PennDOT Brake Retarder Route 65**

Tabled last month.

**10. 2025 Calendar**

December 26<sup>th</sup> is on a Friday  
Employees are asking if they save a vacation day if everyone could take the day off.  
Council had no issue with the request.

**11. Wall – Corner of Lincoln Avenue and Phillips Street**

No Update

**12. Municipal Management Employment Law Workshop**

Very informative regarding, employment laws, wages, overtime, hiring/firing process and record keeping.

**13. Newsletter**

Currently at the printer.

**14. WesBanco**

The Northern Lights branch office is closing October 11, 2024

**15. Schiller Street Slide**

No Update

**16. Storm Damage**

Submitted costs to the insurance company. No update at this time.

**17. USDA Water Project**

Possible requisition for payment next week.

**18. Theater**

No update

**19. Utility Billing Ordinance Update**

No Update

**Public Works – Written Report**

**7/1/24-7/7/24**

- Pumps and one calls
- Re-check houses that have been shut off at curb
- Work on Harmony building
- Cut grass
- Water samples
- Repair Harmony Rd catch basin

**7/8/24-7/14/24**

- Pumps and one calls
- Cut grass
- Repair State St catch basin by park
- Work on Harmony building
- Repair water break on Camilla St
- Mark water boxes and sewer lids for Youngblood paving
- Water work orders for meter replacements

## **7/15/24-7/21/24**

- Pumps and one calls
- Water samples
- Meeting with Youngblood paving
- Cut grass
- Work on Harmony buildings
- DEP paperwork
- Clean pumphouses for DEP inspection
- Fix library flag

## **7/22/24-7/31/24**

- Pumps and one calls
- Work on Harmony building
- Repair Berry St catch basin
- Paint pumphouse floors
- Measure Columbia Gas open road cuts
- Curbside chipping
- Cut grass
- Begin removing flag brackets from telephone poles
- Cold patch
- Begin cleaning yellow curbs for paint

### Notes:

Youngblood paving has completed the paving. Curbs still need backfilled.

Harmony mixer and chlorination system has been installed. We are waiting for a DEP inspection before we can run the system.

Painting streets and curbs has begun.

Both summer help will be done at the end of August

Foreman, Rodney Keenan asked about looking into getting the storm sewers located and mapped out on GIS. He know it will take time but another storm sewer that we didn't know existed was found on Athalia that comes off of Neely Street after Duquesne Light hit it while digging. Rodney Keenan also asked how long he could keep the summer help. After discussion council determined he could stay until the end of summer.

The cost to replace all of the rusted panels on the pole building is \$13,500. Dave Trzcianka commented that the original panels were nailed down and water is getting into the building because the nails are popping up. 1,900 square feet of panels need to be replaced.

Bucket Truck is running. Joel Chalupiak was able to fix it.

Michael Stuban addressed all of the updates that did not take place and need to be done regarding the last water tank inspection. He asked Rodney Keenan to go over the list and update what has and has not been done.

Michael Stuban asked Rodney Keenan for an update on the Phillips Street sinkhole. Rodney Keenan stated that another hole has opened up further down the road side. Michael Stuban explained that the borough does not have the money to fix the problem. It is a drainage issue on a state road that PennDOT states by law the borough is responsible for the repair. Council does not think it is the boroughs responsibility but in the end PennDOT law says differently. Michael Stuban's opinion is that if the road gets undermined and PennDOT has to come in and fix it, the state will withhold money from our Liquid Fuel Funding to cover the cost. PennDOT met with the borough and they will fix 50- 60 feet of pipe at a cost to PennDOT of \$50,000 to \$60,000. We do not have the money so PennDOT put in a proposal that we can do an agility agreement where the borough would do winter maintenance on State Street and Phillips Street for the next four years. Dave Trzcianka stated that this is not the boroughs responsibility and wanted to see the law. Discussion followed.

## **FIRE CHIEF – Written Report**

### **Incidents / Training:**

26 Incidents (June)  
164 Incidents (Year to Date)  
104 Training / Staffing Hours / 17 firefighters (June)  
639 Training / Staffing Hours (Year to Date)  
2 Smoke detector installs in June

### **Grants:**

The 2023 FEMA AFG Grant Application Period has closed. We submitted two grant applications for two different projects. One was a microgrant for equipment totaling \$69,497.00. If awarded, the fire department would be required to fund \$3,309.38 towards the project. The second application is for funding to replace our rescue truck, totaling \$1,445,000.00. If awarded, the fire department would be required to fund \$68,809.52 toward the project. **(No Update as of the date of this report)**

The Local Share Account Statewide Program (gaming funds) Update: This grant was submitted on behalf of the borough for funding to replace our Fire Engine (Pumper Truck). Applications are in the review process. Received email confirmation that this application made it through the initial review process and is now in the second step of the review process. The only change to the application was that we submitted the application for the maximum amount of \$1,000,000.00. However, the cost estimate for the Fire Engine came in at \$961,000.00, so they adjusted the figure, stating that they could not provide additional funding based on expected cost increases. **(No Update as of the date of this report)**

Norfolk Southern Grant - The application has been Submitted **(Awarded \$10,000 towards rescue equipment upgrade project)**

We are in the process of obtaining quotes for the addition to the fire station, which will be funded by a grant obtained through Representative Matzie's office.  
Quick Response (QRS) medical recertification site inspection through the Department of Health was completed on Rescue 47 and Squad 47, along with our personnel files regarding medical certification. We have successfully met the recertification requirements. This certification is good through 2027.

We are in the process of equipping Squad 47-2 with the necessary medical equipment needed to meet QRS certification in order to utilize this vehicle for medical calls as well.

Voluntary Rescue Service Recognition (VRSR) recertification is underway.

### **CODE ENFORCEMENT**

Commercial Fire & Property Maintenance Inspections / Reinspection: 41 (Year to date)  
General Code Issues Addressed: 55 (Year to date)  
General Code Issues Abated: 30 (Year to date)

Preparing to issue citations on 4-5 property issues that property owners are not responding to Violation Notices that have been mailed.

In the process of sending out reminder notices to Commercial Property Owners that still need Inspections completed for 2024. (Approx. 40)

*423 Moore Ave* - The property was Condemned due to Hoarding / Sanitation and Fire Safety Concerns. The property owners are in the process of cleaning out the building.

Michael Stuban asked that a meeting be set up with the Fire Chief / Code Enforcement Officer to go over what the Fire Department is doing and implementing (i.e. ambulance service, membership levels, staffing, out of town calls to Aliquippa...). Council needs more insight into what the fire department is doing and if there will be more costs related to uniform allowance and the borough.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Finance (John Shelkons)**

General Fund Balance	\$213,030	Expenses	\$171,579
Water Fund Balance	\$376,475	Expenses	\$136,910

### **Public Works (Doug Miller)**

Nothing to Report

### **Technology / Public Relations / Liaison (Library, Parks & Rec., M/A) (Joe Bosh)**

**Library** – Joe Bosh stated that the state approved the State Aid Library Subsidy Application which means that the state funding is approved and should be received in January/February of next year. The amount is not known at this time. The library bank balance is \$9,600. The Ambridge Area School District representative has been absent from the library meetings and the library board is concerned. The school district has also changed their budget for the year which removed the \$6,000 funding to the Baden Library. They are looking into the reason for not receiving the funding.

**Solicitation Ordinance** - Mr. Bosh went over the changes that were discussed last month.

Council was given the most current version of the solicitation ordinance to be given to the solicitor. Joe Bosh removed the language and provisions that council agreed to take out and left a few comments in the document wherever he thought needed to be clarified and improved.

The big points/changes that were covered are:

- Removal of the no-knock list
- Confirmation that people exempted from the permit requirement (girl/boy scouts, minors selling stuff for school, etc.) are still required to abide by the other rules of conduct (only knocking doors during approved hours, etc.) wherever possible.
- Inclusion of a requirement of all applicants to provide a PA criminal history check as well as any other comparable reports for any other states they've recently worked in
- Confirmation that a separate application process and fee must be collected from each person applying. Permits are not issued to groups or businesses but to individuals.

### **Administration / Personnel (Becky Gallagher)**

**America250 Resolution** - Becky Gallagher stated that there will be a resolution next week for council to adopt.

**Employment Law Workshop** – Mrs. Gallagher stated that the workshop she attended with the borough manager was amazing. She presented a brief outline which included the borough needing to have an employee handbook, doing employee evaluations (praised employees and correct when needed), job descriptions, department meetings and hiring process. Discussion followed.

## **Public Safety (Dawn Singleton)**

Nothing to report

## **Building / Grounds / Equipment (Michael Stuban)**

**2025 Calendar** – Deadline for calendar event dates by August 26th. The goal is to have the calendar info ready for September 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Street Opening Ordinance** - Michael Stuban commended Joe Bosh for his excellent work on the solicitation ordinance. The street opening ordinance needs to be updated too so he asked Joe Bosh to review the sample ordinance that was presented to council.

**BVRPD** – Michael Stuban addressed council in regards to the recent BVRPD meeting where the regional police chief asked for a \$91,000 incentive so he could retire (a packet of information was provided to the council). In July the \$91,000 was approved, but after Baden sending a letter, and the solicitor getting involved the July motion was illegal because it was not on the agenda. At the recent meeting the solicitor went over everything. When the \$91,000 was brought up for discussion, no one wanted to make the motion to grant the police chiefs request. Since no motion was made, the request is denied. At this time the chief withdrew his request. Since that time an email was received that the chief is requesting to go into negotiation for his contract and he has picked Jimmy Essek as his representative. Michael Stuban stated that he chaired the meeting and there were a lot of accusations made regarding why he didn't tell the board it was going to cost this much. Michael Stuban went over the timeline from when the chief made his initial request in March of 2024. He ended his comments with going over the costs/expenses that the BVRPD was not considering in their decision process.

Becky Gallagher researched the demographics of the municipalities who are a part of the BVRPD. Conway has 2,135 people and their mean income is \$37,000. Baden has 3,825 people with a mean income of \$62,000. Freedom has a population of 1,471 with a mean income of \$60,000. Rochester Township has 2,646 people with a mean income of \$40,000. She asked how could you give someone \$90,000 in a community where their mean income is less than half that.

Michael Stuban stated that the two members from Conway were pushing the pay incentive. He stated that the pension company estimated the \$600,000 cost because the commission wouldn't authorize the study until after the fact (the motion was made). Michael Stuban also expressed his concern about not having the solicitor attend all the meetings. The solicitor the BVRPD has is one of the top two firms in the state regarding labor relations. Further discussion took place regarding the figures that the BVRPD had presented not being accurate. Michael Stuban stated that he doesn't like to question the Chairman's figures because it looks like he is trying to be a know it all. He also commented that because our councilmembers attended the last BVRPD meeting we (Baden) was accused of stacking the meeting. Joe Bosh felt that the residents need to be aware of what is transpiring. He also stated that if the Chief wants to retire, he can retire right now; there is no math that can justify such a large expense outside the approved budget. (*Multiple conversations were taking place at one time.*) Michael Stuban stated that he presented this information to council so that they can check the figures and ask questions on their own.

## **MAYORS REPORT**

Not Present

## **Old Business Not on the Agenda, New Business or Unfinished Business**

Wine & Cheese event will be on October 12<sup>th</sup> at the Lion's Club.

## **PRESIDENTS REPORT**

Dave Trzcianka thanked Joe Bosh for putting his time into doing the soliciting ordinance.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** by Dawn Singleton, second by Becky Gallagher, carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 PM.

Respectfully submitted for approval,

Elaine K. Rakovan  
Borough Manager  
09/11/2024