

Summit Hill Borough Council
January 13, 6:00 p.m. Borough Hall

The regular scheduled meeting of the Summit Hill Borough Council was held at the above time and place with President David Wargo presiding.

Roll Call – President David Wargo, Vice President Joseph Weber, Sherri Buzik, Edward Kane, Marlene Basiago, Solicitor Robert Frycklund and Mayor Karen Ruzicka were in attendance. Lacey Gonzalez was absent

Letters of Interest for Council – President Wargo said three letter of interest were received. He stated that the letters are from George Ruzicka, David Hiles and Joan Morana and read the letters so that they can be entered into record. A copy of the letters will be attached to the minutes. **Motion was made by Edward Kane and seconded by Sherri Buzik to nominate Joan Morana to fill the vacant Council seat.** President Wargo asked if there were any other nominations for the seat. None were given. **Motion was made by Edward Kane and seconded by Joseph Weber to close the nominations for the open Council seat.**

President Wargo asked for a roll call vote.

Vice President Joseph Weber	Yes
President David Wargo	Yes
Sherri Buzik	Yes
Edward Kane	Yes
Marlene Basiago	Yes

Roll Call vote ended in 5-0 vote. Motion carries unanimously to appoint Joan Morana to the vacant seat on Council.

Joan Morana was sworn into office by Mayor Karen Ruzicka.

Floor –

1. Justin Priolo, 127 East Hazard Street, expressed his concern regarding the increase in the garbage fees. He lives by himself and does not generate a lot of garbage. He only puts it out every other week. He does not understand why he has to pay \$480.00 for the year. He is frustrated beyond belief, is tempted to take his trash to the landfill himself and they can sue him if they want because he is not paying for it. President Wargo explained that bids were excepted and only one hauler submitted a bid. The amount of garbage costs has doubled because the prices went up for everyone. They are not the only community that has been hit with a significant increase. All of Council has to pay the cost too and no one is happy about it. We are going to look into other routes to see if there is something else they can do to lower the costs in the future because they are afraid to see what the cost will be four years from now.

Minutes – **Motion was made by Edward Kane and seconded by Sherri Buzik to approve the meeting minutes from the December 9, December 22, 2025 and January 5, 2026 Council meetings.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Mayor's Report – Mayor Ruzicka read the Mayor's report. Total collected from the District Justice was \$833.55 and from Carbon County was \$96.58. **Motion was made by Joseph Weber and seconded by Marlene Basiago to accept the mayor's report for the month of December 2025.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Police Report – Chief Woodward read the monthly report. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Edward Kane to accept the Police report for the month of December 2025.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Planning and Zoning – Motion was made by Josph Weber and seconded by Sherri Buzik to accept the **Planning and Zoning report for the month of December 2025.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

UCC, Code Enforcement and Rental Inspection Reports – Motion was made by Edward Kane and seconded by Marlene Basiago to accept the **UCC, Code Enforcement and Rental Inspection reports for the month of December 2025.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Work Leader Report – Councilwoman Basiago questioned why the borough workers did not shovel the entire sidewalk at the borough building. The handicap corner is not open so if someone parks in the lot, they will have to walk down the street and try to get up the high curb. She also asked why the borough workers are fixing the tailgate latch on a brand-new truck. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Sherri Buzik to accept the Work Leader report for the month of December 2025.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Tax Collector Report – Nothing to report at this time.

Delinquent Real Estate Tax Report – Portnoff submitted their Delinquent Real Estate Tax Report for the month of December 2025. Total collected was \$4,681.47 in Delinquent Real Estate Taxes. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Edward Kane to accept the Delinquent Real Estate Tax Report for the month of December 2025.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Wage Tax Report – Berkheimer submitted their Wage Tax Report for the month of December 2025. Total EIT submitted was \$14,973.49 with a commission of \$259.04 and postage charges of \$19.96. Total LST submitted was \$4.34 with no commission, and postage charges of \$2.28. Total DLT submitted was \$279.99 in delinquent Occupation Assessment Tax and \$113.81 in Per Capita Tax. **Motion was made by Sherri Buzik and seconded by Marlene Basiago to accept the Wage Tax report for the month of December 2025.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Delinquent Garbage Collection Report – Creditech submitted their Delinquent Garbage Collection Report for the months of October, November, and December 2025. Total collections from the Borough for October 2025 were \$522.00 with a commission to Creditech of \$126.00. Total collections from the Borough for November 2025 were \$216.00 with a commission to Creditech of \$54.00. Total collections from the Borough for December 2025 were \$2,673.00 with a commission to Creditech of \$667.51. Mary Ann Szczecina, 221 West White Bear Drive, asked what happens to the people who do not pay their garbage bill. President Wargo explained that they get turned over to collections, which is the report that was just read. Starting this year, Portnoff will be collecting delinquent garbage bills. **Motion was made by Joseph Weber and seconded by Marlene Basiago to accept the Delinquent Garbage Collection report for the months of October, November, and December 2025.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Receipts – Total receipts received for the month of December 2025 were \$113,377.46. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Edward Kane to accept the Receipts for the month of December 2025.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Bills – General Fund \$107,289.28, Local Services Tax \$47.28, Community Center \$509.70, Street Lighting \$4,813.54, Sanitation Account \$29,072.97, Rental Property Account \$2,307.20 and Liquid Fuels Account

\$12,778.97. **Motion was made by Joseph Weber and seconded by Sherri Buzik to pay the bills from December 10, 2025 – January 13, 2026.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Committee Reports

President Wargo stated that he has been working on the Committee List but was waiting until they filled the vacancy on Council. He will have a finalized list sent out by the end of the week.

Street Committee – Councilman Kane mentioned a sinkhole that was reported at the intersection of Hazard and Oak Streets. The borough workers went out to look at it that night and the next day to find out the ground had settled a little, so they dug it out, filled the hole, and will follow up with it in Spring. President Wargo said it was reported on a Saturday night and the same issue that Sergeant Ohl responded too. Ms. Steber added that both borough workers were out looking at the sinkhole because they also got called out to take care of the roads due to the snowy conditions.

Recreation Committee – Councilwoman Basiago stated that they received several letters of interest for the Recreation Commission. Vice President Weber asked how many vacant seats there and how many people can sit on the commission. Ms. Steber said they currently have three open seats. President Wargo explained that there are two levels of membership. There are voting members and social members. You can have as many social members as you want but there can only be five voting members. Everyone who submitted a letter can participate in the commission but only three can be appointed to vote. He read the letters received from Melissa Crampsie, Millie Ashmore, Ruth Ann Christopher and Amber Zumber.

Councilwoman Basiago stated her concern is that there are currently two members, Kathy Gieniec and Cheryl Schoch. Kathy attends the meetings 100 percent of the time where Cheryl attends on occasion. To count on her as a board member with voting rights would it be more practical to appoint three as voting members and the rest as social members. Amber does not always make it either because of her work schedule. They should consider having someone more permanent as voting members. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Edward Kane to appoint Melissa Crampsie, Millie Ashmore and Ruth Ann Christopher as voting members and Amber Zuber as a social member of the Recreation Commission.** Motion opened for comment. Councilwoman Basiago stated that she would also like to see Cheryl as a social member. President Wargo said Cheryl does not count at this time because her term is not up and is already a member. No further comments were made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Kathy Gieniec notified Council that she received information from Kathy Crampsie stating that she made \$2,372.00 for Rec with her dance classes. She also mentioned that Justin will be taking down the decorations at the gazebo by the end of January and Rec will be keeping those decorations.

Emergency Services Committee – Sherri Buzik stated that the fire company will be having a dart tournament on January 24th and a Super Bowl wing and pizza sale on February 8th.

Sanitation Committee – President Wargo mentioned that the new garbage contract started as of January 1st, nothing has changed as far as the day of pickup, however, due to safety reasons and OSHA, they will no longer collect anything that is put into 50-gallon drums anymore. Residents are to have valid garbage cans. Mr. Priolo stated that he had a can destroyed by the hauler a while ago. What is the process if he has another can that is broken by the hauler. President Wargo said that it is a matter between the resident and the garbage company, but it would need to be reported to the borough office and they will address it.

Motion was made by Sherri Buzik and seconded by Edward Kane to accept the Committee Reports for the month of December 2025. Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Communications –

- Request from Susan Smith, Schuylkill County Planning, asking for a letter of support to apply for a Peer Grant Application to DCNR to help with the proposed Anthracite Connector Trail. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Sherri Buzik to write a letter of support to the Schuylkill County Planning to apply for a Peer Grant Application to DCNR to help with the proposed Anthracite Connector Trail.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.
- Email from Liz Shubeck regarding a continued issue with excessive water and ice build-up in front of her home and on the street. President Wargo stated that this is not the only location where this is an issue. There is a homeowner who is using a sump pump to pump water out of their basement into the street, the street is not draining which pools in the street due to an obstruction in the gutter and then freezes. They spoke to the engineer when this issue was brought up in the past, and the understanding is laws require homeowners to pump water out of basements into the street or onto their property. Unfortunately, there is not much that can be done to compel Council to block someone from pumping water onto the street as long as it is not going into the sanitary sewer. He recommended that once committees are set up, the new committee can look at this again and see if they can come up with any new ideas. He is going to refer it to ARRO to see if they have any updated information or if there are any other options besides the ones they have already given to them.

Motion was made by Sherri Buzik and seconded by Marlene Basiago to accept communications from December 10, 2025 – January 13, 2026. Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Old Business -

1. Kira Steber updated Council on an AED for the Community Center. She received information from Marlene and sent a formal letter and an email to the contact but still has not heard back from anyone. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Joseph Weber to table the discussion of an AED for the Community Center until further information is received.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.
2. President Wargo stated they discussed putting a Data Center ordinance in place. They do have a zoning ordinance that does address some of these things, but what they found out is that with both data centers and solar fields, there are additional regulations that do not normally apply to zoning. Solicitor Frycklund said he was asked to look into it and knows that East Penn Township is working on a data center ordinance. He will contact other municipalities to see if they have an ordinance for data centers and solar fields.

New Business –

1. **Motion was made by Joseph Weber and seconded by Edward Kane to advertise Ordinance No. 01-2026 Fixing the Various Tax Rates for the Fiscal Year 2026.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.
2. **Motion was made by Sherri Buzik and seconded by Joseph Weber to advertise Ordinance No. 02-2026 to amend Chapter 17, Article VI 17-40 of the Civil Service Commission to change the probationary period from twelve months to six months.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.
3. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Edward Kane to advertise Ordinance No. 03-2026 to amend Chapter 350 to adopt the 2024 International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC).** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

4. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Sherri Buzik to adopt Resolution No. 01-2026 Eliminating payment by members of the Summit Hill Police Pension Plan for the year 2026.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.
5. Kira Steber mentioned that she put together a resolution listing all fees for 2026, however she could not get it to Council before the meeting, so she suggested having everyone review it and discuss it at the next meeting. **Motion was made by Sherri Buzik and seconded by Joseph Weber to table the adoption of Resolution No. 02-2026, to give them time to review it.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.
6. President Wargo discussed the joint meeting with the Sewer Authority and the three Borough Councils that was held last week. They talked about the steps that they need to take to start dealing with the inactivity that has occurred over the last 25 years with the sewer infrastructure. The Sewer Authority has a grant that needs to be spent by the end of September 2026. Original they thought it could be used for a vortex separator but that was nixed by DEP. They looked at what they can do as a group to start moving forward to deal with the issues with DEP. One of the items is the grant money that was set aside, which needs matching money from the three boroughs. All three boroughs pointed out to the Sewer Authority that even though they do collect Sewer Transmission Fees and receive a 5% Safety Margin fee each year, which is meant to be used for the sewer infrastructure that is owned by the boroughs, if they pay the Sewer Authority \$350,000 up front, they will deplete their accounts. The Sewer Authority agreed to front the initial capital investment for the project and allow the boroughs to repay their portion over the next three years, and the authority provided a payment schedule for repayment. They would also need to pass a binding resolution covering its obligations under the intermunicipal agreement. This was also agreed upon so that if there was ever an emergency situation, they would have funds to fix the problem. Mr. Priolo asked if these fund are for a study project. Vice President Weber said he is correct and potentially some repairs as well. It just needs to be done by the end of September. He gave a brief explanation about the funds and the commitment to use the funds.

Additional items that are part of the agreement with the Sewer Authority or that each borough agrees to authorize the CLSH, its agents, employees, and contractors to access the borough's sewer lines for cleaning, cameraing, and lining. And each borough agrees that the CLSH may retain its future annual margin payment to the extent that the said borough defaults on the payment schedule.

Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Joseph Weber to preliminary agree to honor the terms of an Intermunicipal Agreement between the CLSH Sewer Authority, Coaldale, Lansford, and Summit Hill Boroughs. Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

7. President Wargo mentioned that PeneTeleData gave a proposal regarding their new Broadband Fiber Optic Network in our area and to see if the borough would be interested in switching at no cost to the borough. Councilman Kane stated that coax will eventually be going away so he does not see an issue with upgrading to fiber. **Motion was made by Joseph Weber and seconded by Sherri Buzik to update the current system to 100Mbps/100Mbps for 3 years at a cost of \$79.95 per month.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried by majority vote with Edward Kane abstaining due to his employment with Blue Ridge Cable.
8. Councilwoman Basiago gave an update on the Memorial Park Project. There were 10 people who attended the meeting. They chose a design that they liked for the park. She will be meeting with the Vo-Tech students to get further information on the design that was selected. They are also going to look into the Trex benches and possibly have them memorialized. The will look into using stones or pavers for the pathways and some lights. Another idea that was discussed was having a flower garden, as long as people take responsibility in taking care of it. Future ideas are tables and fix the wall. She plans to have fundraisers, will ask businesses for support and a possible grant. This will all be done through the

Community Foundation so that the Borough has no financial commitment. They also discussed the coal car that is located on the highway, and she will talk to the Vo-Tech to see if there are students that can fix it up so they can move it back to Memorial Park. There are different monuments in the park, and they are talking about placing plaques near them that give the history about each.

9. Kira Steber gave an update on the new billing system with Diversified. They were hoping to be live this week but ran into some minor glitches. Send the bills may be pushed back a week or so until they can get everything straightened out, but this will mean the due date will also be extended.
10. **Motion was made by Joseph Weber and seconded by Marlene Basiago to transfer \$100,000 from the Sewer Account to the General Fund for operating expenses until tax money is received in April.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council. Ms. Steber stated that even though comments have been made that they use the money but never put it back, she can assure everyone that she keeps record of what they have borrowed and returns the money as soon as tax dollars are received.

Motion was made by Sherri Buzik and seconded by Edward Kane to enter into an Executive Session to discuss personnel matters and policies at 7:49 p.m. Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Motion was made by Joseph Weber and seconded by Edward Kane to enter back into Regular Session at 8:22 p.m. Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Sherri Buzik to adjourn the meeting at 8:24 p.m. until the next meeting of the Summit Hill Borough on February 10, 2026. Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

David Wargo
Council President

Kira Steber
Secretary/Treasurer