

Mayor  
Robert Mullen

Solicitor  
Atty. Matthew G. Boyd  
Ufberg & Associates

Chief of Police  
David Homschek

Interim Secretary  
Sandra Van Luvender

Treasurer  
Jennifer Davitt

Engineer  
PennEastern Engineers, LLC  
Paul Pasonick

# Borough of Avoca

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Jim Emlaw

Stanley Waleski

Bob Dommermuth

Dennis O'Brien

Alan Kiesinger

## AVOCA BOROUGH

### Thursday June 8, 2023 – Council Meeting

#### Meeting Minutes

The regular meeting of the Avoca Borough Council was held on Thursday June 8th, 2023, with Council Vice - President, Gary HALAGARDA, presiding. The work session began at 1840HRS. The regular meeting was called to order at 1856HRS, and Pledge of Allegiance was said by Alan KIESINGER.

Council Members in attendance: Mike FULLER, Gary HALAGARDA, Alan KIESINGER, Joseph SATKOWSKI, and Stanley WALESKI. Those absent included: Holly HOMSCHEK, Jim EMLAW, Dennis O'BRIEN and Bob DOMMERMUTH.

Also in attendance: Mayor Robert MULLEN, Attorney Matthew BOYD, Engineer Paul PASONICK and Interim Secretary, Sandra VAN LUVENDER. Police Chief Dave HOMSCHEK was absent.

Motion by Stanley WALESKI, second by Mike FULLER to accept the minutes from last month's meeting. Voice Vote: (5) Five Yes

Motion by Alan KIESINGER, second by Joseph SATKOWSKI to pay all bills presented with monies available. Voice Vote: (5) Five Yes

Motion by Mike FULLER, second by Stanley WALESKI to accept new correspondence as presented. Voice Vote: (5) Five Yes

Motion by Mike FULLER, second by Joseph SATKOWSKI to accept police report prepared by Chief HOMSCHEK and read by Mayor MULLEN. Voice Vote: (5) Five Yes

Motion by Alan KIESINGER, second by Joseph SATKOWSKI to send letter in support of BMX Bike Track in Pittston through DCED Grant. Voice Vote: (5) Five Yes

Motion by Alan KIESINGER, second by Mike FULLER to renew Geisinger Health Insurance Plan for effective dates of 08/01/23 through 07/31/24. Voice Vote: (5) Five Yes

Motion by Stanley WALESKI, second by Alan KIESINGER to hire Part-Time Police Officers, Edward SULIMA and Andrew LaBAR, pending MPOETC Re-Certification and background Investigation. Voice Vote: (5) Five Yes

Motion by Joseph SATKOWSKI, second by Mike FULLER to accept antivirus quote from Computer Visionaries for \$100.00. Voice Vote: (5) Five Yes

Motion by Joseph SATKOWSKI, second by Alan KIESINGER to direct Solicitor to advertise necessary Request for Proposal (RFP) for Engineering Services for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) - Calavari Street Improvements Project. Voice Vote: (5) Five Yes

Motion by Stanley WALESKI, second by Mike FULLER to schedule annual service for Street Department equipment (backhoe and skid steer) through Medico. Voice Vote: (5) Five Yes

Motion by Stanley WALESKI, second by Mike FULLER to issue 30-day notice of rent lease increase/terminate for Legion Apartment. Voice Vote: (5) Five Yes

#### **Council Additional Notes:**

Council member Stanley WALESKI reported that the most recent LandBank meeting had been cancelled but will be re-scheduled. Demolition for Lehigh Street house is scheduled to begin 06/12/23 and the Plane Street house to begin 06/19/2023. WALESKI also commented that sound barriers will be part of the new I81 expansion project at various locations in Avoca Borough.

Council member Mike FULLER commented on the Avoca Farmer's Market scheduled to begin 07/05/2023. It will run through September on Wednesdays from 10am to 2pm at the former St. Mary's School lot (742 Spring Street). There is no cost to vendors and Joyce Insurance needed to be contacted for a Certificate of Insurance for Queens of the Apostles.

Council Vice-President, Gary HALAGARDA, wanted to publicly thank all the first responders to the structure fire on Grove Street on June 6, 2023. A quick response saved the (2) two neighboring homes. HALAGARDA asked that all of council keep the talks of having a paid fireman in the station on the radar, because it does save lives and property.

#### **Street Department:**

Members Micky VOLCH and Stan SPAGNUOLO were present. SPAGNUOLO reported that he did contact Dr. Powers regarding the Power Grader and they are in stock with free shipping. The grader can be paid for through Liquid Fuels. There was talk of the drag screen attachment (for little league infields) and if ordered, that would come from the General Account – approximately \$200.00.

SPAGNUOLO also called about the status of the new Dump Truck (LSA grant) that had been ordered in December 2023. The truck remains on the scheduled status.

SPAGNUOLO asked if there was anyway to close off the upper section, where the road splits, in the 900 block of Grove (one-way). ATV and cars are racing down the upper section to pass the vehicles on the lower section. Council would not entertain closing that area, because emergency vehicles need to get through.

#### **Audience:**

- Ronald CASPER – South Street - complimented the paving job on Spruce/South Street. He again voiced his concerns and disappointment with the engineering of the McAlpine Street Storm Sewer Project. He questioned why there were changes to the inlet placement and commented that the water issue at the KOSTIAK property was not being addressed.
- Donald DIEHL – 848 Spring Street – reporting that the building at 911 Main Street is a mess and infested with rats. Rats are coming into his yard, and he wants to know what the Borough is doing about it. DIEHL has spoken with the property owner, who is out of state, and he promises to clean up, but nothing has been done. Council Vice- President HALAGARDA advised that the Borough will get an exterminator at the property ASAP and that the code enforcement had been notified. He advised DIEHL that these matters sometimes take time to correct.
- Diane MIERAU – Plane and William Street – reported trucks coming onto her property when making the right onto William Street from Plane. They are digging up the yard and she has repaired it numerous times. She asked if something (barrier, poles, large rocks) could be put there to prevent them from driving into

yard. Council advised Street Department to investigate matter and see what could be placed there to prevent further damage.

- Jane STERLING and Anthony VOLCH – representing the VFW – just checking for a status on the recent grant that the VFW had been awarded. Paul PASONICK took time to explain the procedure to them.
- Mike LAMPMAN – representing the Avoca Hose Company No. 1 – wanted to extend a huge THANK YOU to the Avoca Police and Street Department at the recent structure fire and crash in town.

**Engineer:**

Avoca Borough Engineer's Report (dated June 8, 2023) prepared and read by Paul PASONICK. (See attached)

Item #8 of the Engineer's Report - McAlpine Street Storm Sewer – Council member Alan KIESINGER asked about adding an additional inlet near KOSTIAK property and he questioned storm grates being so far away from curbs. Will the water issues be resolved with the current work that was done? PASONICK commented that the Borough only had so much money to work with. He could work on an estimate for another inlet and look at the storm grates.

Item #16 of Engineer's Report – 2022 LSA – VFW Renovations – Co-Op agreement had been drafted and forwarded to Attorney BOYD.

**Police:**

Police Report was prepared by Chief David HOMSCHEK and read by Mayor Robert MULLEN. (See attached)

Avoca Patrol Officer, Jonathon ALAIMO, was also present for the meeting. He asked if Council could re-visit the issue of changing the name of Grove Street by the truck stop to avoid issues with the tractor trailer turning onto the side streets in town. The issue had been addressed in the past, but there were complications with Dupont not wanting the name change and Luzerne County 911. Council advised that the matter would be investigated again.