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| **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  950 Main St.  Avoca, Pa 18641  [Secretary@AvocaBorough.com](mailto:Secretary@AvocaBorough.com)  Telephones  Secretary: 570-457-4947  Fax: 570-451-1750  Police Department: 570-457-4011 Street Department: 570-451-0625 | **Council**  **President**  Holly Homschek  **Vice President**  Gary Halagarda  Michael Fuller  Joe Satkowski Jr.  Jim Emlaw  Stanley Waleski  Bob Dommermuth  Dennis O’Brien  Alan Kiesinger |

**AVOCA BOROUGH**

**Thursday July 13, 2023 – Council Meeting**

**Meeting Minutes**

The regular meeting of the Avoca Borough Council was held on Thursday July 13th, 2023, with Council President, Holly HOMSCHECK, presiding. The work session began at 1902HRS. The regular meeting was called to order at 1924HRS, and Pledge of Allegiance was said by Alan KIESINGER.

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

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

Motion by Mike FULLER, second by Allen KIESINGER to accept the minutes from last month’s meeting. Voice Vote: (7) Seven Yes

Motion by Stan WALESKI, second by Dennis O’BRIEN to pay all bills presented with monies available. Voice Vote: (7) Seven Yes

Motion by Gary HALAGARDA, second by Holly HOMSCHEK to accept new correspondence as presented. Voice Vote: (7) Seven Yes

Motion by Bob DOMMERMUTH, second by Dennis O’BRIEN to accept police report prepared by Chief HOMSCHEK and read by Mayor MULLEN. Voice Vote: (7) Seven Yes

Motion by Bob DOMMERMUTH, second by Mike FULLER to rehire part time police officers: Mario SCOTTI, Sheri SALVO, Charles YARICK, Angel BRAZDZIONIS, Robert MARMO, Kenneth SALVO, Ryan KACHINSKY, Jeremy J. JONES, Andrew LABAR and Edward SULIMA. Voice Vote: (7) Seven Yes

Motion by Stanley WALESKI, second by Holly HOMSCHEK to donate $100 to the annual Avoca Ancient Order of Hibernians Golf Tournament. Voice Vote: (7) Seven Yes

Motion by Alan KIESINGER, second by Stanley WALESKI to pay Stafursky Paving Company Inc. for Pay Application #2 in the amount of $139,108.15. Roll Call Vote: (7) Seven Yes

Motion by Dennis O’Brien, second by Alan KIESINGER to direct the Solicitor to amend Civil Service Ordinance to allow persons in Act 120 certification program to sit for the Civil Service test for the full-time police officer position. Voice Vote: (7) Seven Yes

Motion by Mike FULLER, second by Alan KIESINGER to re-join the Pittston Chamber of Commerce. Voice Vote: (6) Six Yes – Bob DOMMERMUTH abstain.

Motion by Holly HOMSCHEK, second by Alan KIESINGER to rent a roller to assist with alley repairs. Voice Vote: (7) Seven Yes

Motion by Gary Halagarda, second by Holly HOMSCHEK to research and purchase an additional lawn mower, not to exceed $5000.00. Roll Call Vote: (7) Seven Yes

Motion by Bob Dommermuth, second by Dennis O’BRIEN to adjourn the meeting at 2004HRS.

**Council Additional Notes**:

Council member Stanley WALESKI reported that Landbank properties in town have been demolished. Council President, Holly HOMSCHEK advised that she did contact the Landbank about the conditions left at the Lehigh Street property. The contractor was to return and do a better clean up job at the lot.

Stanley WALESKI also reported that the free and clear tax sale for Luzerne County was scheduled for August 10, 2023. There were no Avoca properties listed on the sale.

Council member Mike FULLER wanted to extend his thanks to Queen of the Apostles Parish for the use of the lot and their assistance at the Farmer’s Market.

Council member, Dennis O’BRIEN commented about the number of large logs and trees at the debris basin of Mill Creek at the south end of town. O’BRIEN also questioned as to who the gentleman doing work on South Street was. He was advised that the gentleman was Mike FORD, and he was using a camera in the lines and cutting the tree roots in the line.

**Street Department**:

Members Micky VOLCH and Stan SPAGNUOLO were present. SPAGNUOLO reported that the Street Department had put down (4) four tons of hot patch around town and took (14) fourteen truck loads of yard waste to the Compost Site.

**Audience:**

* Fire Chief, Thomas MATTHEWS asked what was the status of the 737 Main Street property that had been condemned earlier this year. A recent fire was reported in the building and there were people staying in there. The building has holes in the floor and other unsafe conditions that could injure or kill someone.

Chief MATTHEWS also reported that Dupont and Hughestown Boroughs have worked together to have a paid fireman on duty starting in November 2023. Funding will come from rental inspections and currently Dupont resident JONES doing the inspections. Chief MATTHEWS asked where talks were with the Avoca Borough and neighboring towns. He was advised that Duryea Borough did reach out to set up a meeting and dates were provided, but nothing was scheduled at this time.

Chief MATTHEWS also commented about Astound Cable leaving old cable lines lying around town. Attorney BOYD advised that he would send a letter and have the matter addressed.

* Dr. Richard STANIS asked where the McAlpine Street project was at and what was the hold up. He was advised that the contractor was waiting on the pipe.

Dr. STANIS also commented again about the Bennett Street alley. If money allowed, he asked if the alley could get millings or be tar and chipped. He reported that Representative HADDOCK was willing to assist with grant money to pave the alley. Mrs. STANIS commented about the dust/dirt and water run-off from the alley.

* Pennsylvania State Representative, James HADDOCK was also present for the meeting. He advised that he was touring through the (19) nineteen counties that he represents and stated that is always good to come home. He reported that he has assisted with getting the Avoca Borough more than $860,000 in Grant Funding and that there is another $300,000 pending to assist with Gedding Street repairs.

Representative HADDOCK reported that he is willing to assist with additional funding for the Main and McAlpine project. He commented that returning grant funding often influences future grant projects.

Representative HADDOCK is working with legislators on train traffic regulations through the small towns. Liquid Nitrogen will be coming across the rails, and they are working to reduce the number of cars for each train.

Council member Stanley WALESKI reminded Representative HADDOCK about the water issues and sound issues needing to be addressed with the Interstate 81 pending expansion.

**Engineer:**

Avoca Borough Engineer’s Report (dated July 13, 2023) prepared and read by Paul PASONICK. (See attached)

Item #7 Main/McAlpine project – council member Stanley WALESKI asked where things are at. Borough has to make a final decision about project – additional funding needed (approx. $150,000) and Borough does not have it in the budget. Several council members commented about Avoca Borough not putting a dime toward the project, as it does not benefit the Borough – more truck traffic and damage to our roads. A final decision on extension of project due 08/25/23.

Item #18 Engineer’s Report – 2023 LSA – New Rescue Truck – Co-Op agreement needed.

Item #20 Engineer’s Report – 2024 LSA Grants – if any projects – let Paul know

**Police:**

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

Avoca Patrol Officer, Jonathon ALAIMO, was also present at the meeting.