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| **Mayor**  Robert Mullen  **Solicitor**  Atty. Matthew G. Boyd  Ufberg & Associates  **Chief of Police**  David Homschek  **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**  Dennis O’Brien  Michael Fuller  Kyler Kovaleski  Jim Emlaw  Jonathan Gedrich  Bob Dommermuth  Gary Halagarda  Alan Kiesinger |

**AVOCA BOROUGH**

**Thursday, May 8, 2025 – Council Meeting**

**Meeting Minutes**

The regular meeting of the Avoca Borough Council was held on Thursday, May 8, 2025, with Council President, Holly HOMSCHECK, presiding. The work session began at 1845HRS. The regular meeting was called to order at 1858HRS, and Pledge of Allegiance was said by Bob DOMMERMUTH.

Council Members in attendance: Holly HOMSCHEK, Gary HALAGARDA, Jim EMLAW, Mike FULLER, Kyler KOVALESKI and Bob DOMERMUTH. Dennis O’BRIEN, Alan KIESINGER and Jonathan GEDRICH were absent.

Also in attendance: Mayor Robert MULLEN, Attorney Jordan DEMPSEY, Borough Engineer Paul PASONICK, Police Officer Jonathan ALAIMO, Street Department Michael VOLCH and Secretary Sandra VAN LUVENDER.

Motion by Jim EMLAW, second by Mike FULLER to accept the minutes from last month’s meeting. Voice Vote: (6) Six Yes

Motion by Kyler KOVALESKI, second by Gary HALAGARDA to pay all bills presented with monies available. Voice Vote: (6) Six Yes

Motion by Jim EMLAW, second by Kyler KOVALESKI to accept new correspondence as presented. Voice Vote: (6) Six Yes

Motion by Bob DOMMERMUTH, second by Kyler KOVALESKI to accept police report prepared by Chief HOMSCHEK and read by Mayor Robert MULLEN. Voice Vote: (6) Six Yes

Motion by Gary HALAGARDA, second by Bob DOMMERMUTH to decline Astound Internet proposal for internet/phone services at Borough Building, Garage and Little League. Roll Call Vote (6) Yes to decline

Motion by Kyler KOVALESKI, second by Mike FULLER to renew Service Contract with Mecadon Oil for Community Center. 2024 year $199.95, 2025 year $224.95 - $25.00 increase. Voice Vote (6) Six Yes

Motion by Bob DOMMERMUTH, second by Mike FULLER to hire Part-Time Police Officer, Christopher FARGIONE. MPOETC Certification and Background Investigation have been completed. Roll Call Vote: (5) Five Yes – President HOMSCHEK to abstain.

Motion by Jim EMLAW, second by Kyler KOVALESKI to enter contract with Joseph Jones to perform Property Maintenance Code Enforcement Duties on behalf of the Avoca Borough. Roll Call Vote: (6) Six Yes

Motion by Kyler KOVALESKI, second by Bob DOMMERMUTH to enter Resolution opposing federal legislation that would increase commercial truck size or weight limits. Roll Call Vote: (6) Six Yes

**Audience:**

Resident, Michael LAMPMAN asked for an update on the Waste Transfer Station. Attorney DEMPSEY advised that the STELL briefs were due (2) two weeks ago. The Borough and Luzerne County Zoning Briefs were due by May 31, 2025. There was a hearing scheduled for June 20, 2025, at 10am. The hearing was open to the public but only the Attorneys will speak, no witnesses will be called. The outcome of the hearing could be appealed to the Commonwealth Court by either side.

Fire Chief Tom MATTHEWS noted that there was finally progress on the ORLUK house and that was a good thing.

Chief MATTHEWS also asked about any further discussion to fund the Fire Department. President HOMSCHEK asked if the Fire House received the letter from the Borough about funding. Chief MATTHEWS and Secretary VAN LUVENDER advised that no letter had been received. Chief MATTHEWS advised that the fire department had nothing to hide and we were willing to provide financial information.

Chief MATTHEWS asked if the Borough would support the Fire Department in an LSA Grant request for projects at the fire house that would assist with cancer prevention. The project would include moving the current washer/dryer system closer to the gear room to avoid dragging contaminated clothing through the sitting room area. Senator FLYNNN was in support of the project. President HOMSCHEK related that council would assist with anything to help with cancer prevention.

Representatives from Greater Pittston Ambulance were also in attendance at the meeting. President HOMSCHEK asked that they attend the meeting to discuss response times to calls with in the Borough and the response times were good. Michael LOMBARDO related that he and President HOMSCHEK have spoken, and they don’t respond emergent to every call. Triage is based on priority. They are not new to the Avoca Borough as they have served as our Advance Life support for years. He advised that they have (4) four to (5) five units on at a time and they respond based on the dispatch. Michael commented they need staff to support the units, and they need calls to generate income. He mentioned the EMR training class now being given at the Avoca Hose Company and reported that they are mentoring a few of the students with hopes of them taking further training and joining the Greater Pittston Ambulance Crew.

President HOMSCHEK related that she hates that there have been some negative comments out there. She related that council feels Greater Pittston doing a great job. She was upset about Facebook slander posts, but the posts do not reflect the feelings of the council.

Ed SZAFRAN from Greater Pittston Ambulance also added that their response is based on how the incidents are coded by the County at the time of dispatch. As far as the Facebook post, the issue could have been resolved if just a few questions were asked. Again, President HOMSCHEK related that the post did not reflect the feelings of council or the Borough.

Chief MATTHEWS also added that the Greater Pittston Ambulance has been a good partner with the Avoca Hose Company. Their response times average about (8) eight minutes which is better than the neighboring Penn Ambulance with a (12) twelve-minute response time. Chief MATTHEWS stands up for the Greater Pittston Ambulance and has nothing negative to say about them.

Resident, Michaell LAMPMAN asked if there was any further consideration for an ambulance unit to be based out of the Avoca Station and were there any other avenues looked into?

Ed SZAFRAN explained that currently Avoca averages between 12 to 18 calls a month. In order to financially support an ambulance, approximately 1000 patient contacts were needed per year. At this time, the call volume doesn’t support that, but it could change. Currently the units are in centralized locations based on call volume for the area.

**Street Department**: Michael VOLCH was present. Nothing to report.

**Engineer:** Avoca Borough Engineer’s Report (dated May 8, 2025) prepared by Paul PASONICK. (See attached)

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

Council member Mike FULLER reported that longtime vendor from Farmer’s Market was bowing out this year. Looking for other vendors. FULLER asked that Borough still obtain a Certificate of Insurance for the dates.

Avoca Hose Company member, Collin HALAGARDA wanted to remind all about the Touch – A – Truck event at 824 McAlpine Street, Saturday, May 10, 2025 from 10am to 2pm.

Motion by Kyler KOVALESKI, second by Bob DOMMERMUTH to adjourn the meeting at 1930HRS.