

Approved minutes – Regular Meeting _____

Approved minutes – Special Meeting 6/19/2025

Approved minutes – Special/Workshop Meeting _____

Special Meeting
June 19, 2025
7:00 PM

A Special Meeting of the Meyersdale Borough Council was called to order by President Irwin, June 19, 2025 at 7:00 PM.

Mr. Ackerman, Mr. Baer, Mrs. Gnagey, Mr. Irwin, Mr. Smith, Solicitor Valentine and Mayor Smith were present. Mr. Baer and Mrs. Knieriem were absent. Mr. Brion Reiber was present.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss hiring seasonal help and to discuss personnel and litigation matters.

GUESTS:

Mr. Robert Hufford was present to report that the Columbia Gas contractor milled about an inch of the pavement to try to correct a water issue. The contractors say that the drain is backed up and that is causing the problem. After some discussion, it was decided that the street crew would run a jetter machine in the drain in an attempt to open it. Council also discussed putting this area on the list for milling for an upcoming paving project.

Mr. Brian Witherite was present to report that the Meyersdale Municipal Authority does not have an alternate site for the public to dispose of grass clippings. After some discussion, Solicitor Valentine suggested that the Borough contact the Somerset County Commissioners.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no public comment

BUSINESS:

1. Hire Part-time seasonal help

Mr. Ackerman reported that there were six applicants, with three applicants dropping out for various reasons. The remaining applicants were: Mr. Benjamin Reiber, Mr. Dylan Teets and Mr. Nathaniel Swauger. Mr. Reiber reported that Benjamin is having health issues which will require surgery.

Mr. Ackerman made the motion to hire all three applicants for an eleven week period with Mr. Teets and Mr. Swauger starting on June 23, 2025 and Mr. Reiber to start the eleven week period as soon as he has been cleared from surgery by a physician. Mr. Smith seconded. Motion passed.

Mr. Ackerman made the motion to give all of the part-time seasonal workers 36 hours per week at \$12.00 per hour. Mrs. Gnagey seconded. Motion passed.

AMENDMENT TO AGENDA

Mr. Ackerman made the motion to amend the Agenda to add discussion about the Cooperation Agreement between The Department of the Army and the Borough with regard to rehabilitation of the Meyersdale Non-Federal Local Flood Control Protection erosion repairs.

President Irwin reported that the agreement was available for signing, but that there isn't any signed document indicating that DEP will sponsor the 20% matching funds needed for the estimated two million plus project. There are e-mails and meeting notes that indicate that the match would be covered by DEP, but there is not an executed document stating the same. After some discussion, Solicitor Valentine was asked to contact the USACE and PA DEP to make an attempt to acquire a signed document.

Mr. Irwin expressed his concerns of individuals making Facebook posts that were critical of Borough Council and the street crew regarding the flags and banners not being up for Memorial Day. He explained that the American flags were to be put up on the telephone poles before Memorial Day, however this did not get accomplished because of the May 13, 2025 flooding event. The American Legion Auxiliary banners were to be put up as well, however there was a delay in getting the banners printed and they were not ready until the morning of June 14, 2025. There was no fault or blame placed on anyone for the delay, it was just the result of circumstances beyond control and President Irwin felt compelled to defend the Borough Council and employees.

AMENDMENT TO AGENDA

Mrs. Gnagey made the motion to amend the Agenda to add discussion regarding correspondence received from the Department of Emergency Services. (See attached). Mr. Baer seconded. Motion passed.

Mrs. Gnagey reported that the attached letter was received. The letter indicates that there will be countywide changes to dispatching procedures in order to mitigate some of the effects of the EMS crisis. After some discussion, Mrs. Gnagey made the motion to write a letter to the Department of Emergency services with input from Mr. Tim Miller, Fire Chief and Mr. Ken Marteney, Meyersdale Ambulance in opposition of the changes. Mr. Ackerman seconded. Motion passed. Mrs. Gnagey was asked to have Mr. Miller and Mr. Marteney submit their concerns to the Borough Office. The letter will then be compiled and forwarded.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

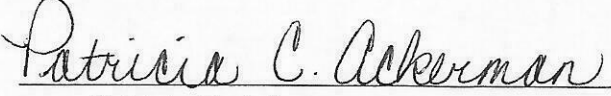
Mr. Smith made the motion to enter into executive session at 7:27 PM. Mr. Ackerman seconded. Motion passed.

Mrs. Gnagey made the motion to return to regular session at 8:02 PM. Mr. Ackerman seconded. Motion passed.

There were no actions or motions made as a result of the executive session.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Ackerman made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:03 PM. Mr. Baer seconded.
Motion passed.



Patricia C. Ackerman
Borough Secretary

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JUN 16 2025

SOMERSET COUNTY 9-1-1
FIRE-POLICE-EMS



MEYERSDALE BOROUGH
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

County of Somerset
100 East Union Street
Somerset, PA 15501

Phone: (814) 445-1525
Fax: (814) 443-1090

Thursday, June 5, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

As you are hopefully aware, Somerset County (like most jurisdictions across the country) is in the midst of an Emergency Medical Services (EMS) staffing crisis¹. Between 2013 and 2017, the number of licensed EMS agencies in Pennsylvania declined from 1,645 to 1,278. Over the same period, the number of Emergency Medical Technicians decreased by more than 6,000 and the number of Paramedics declined by more than 4,000. The number of active providers in the state was estimated to have been as high as 30,000 in recent years, but is now fewer than 17,000 and continues to plummet. In Somerset County specifically since 2012, the number of 24/7 paid EMS services has declined from 7 to 4 and our volunteer EMS services have dwindled from 5 to 1. The 5 remaining EMS agencies continue to operate at higher call volumes, each covering geographically larger areas of the county, but do not receive sufficient additional reimbursement commensurate with the increased workload. The average response time (time of dispatch to arrival at scene) for Somerset County EMS agencies has increased from 12 minutes, 24 seconds in 2018 to 14 minutes, 49 seconds so far in 2025.

Each volunteer fire department in Somerset County is responsible for developing "alarm cards" – documents which specify to the 911 center exactly which fire and EMS stations should be dispatched by us to specific call types in the areas that each department is responsible for protecting. Traditionally, almost all fire departments have requested that an ambulance be automatically dispatched with them to every call they answer due to the potential hazards that firefighters encounter in the course of their duties. However, tying up the few EMS units in Somerset County to stand by for a *potential* need creates a significant strain on the entire system with regard to *actual* need for EMS response to verified medical emergencies, and is an undue burden on individual EMS services during high-call volume situations such as adverse weather events.

Since PA statute states that individual townships are "...responsible for ensuring that fire and emergency medical services are provided within the township..."², and that boroughs are responsible to "...ensure that fire and emergency medical services are provided within the borough..."³, we have always required that any changes to fire department alarm cards be reviewed by and approved by individual municipalities before the changes are incorporated into our dispatching procedures. To that end, we are sending this letter to you to announce our intention for countywide changes to dispatching procedures in order to mitigate some of the effects of the EMS crisis. Specifically, we intend to discontinue automatic dispatch of EMS to the following fire call types, **only** when we have confirmed through our formal calltaking protocols that there is **no patient** on scene who requires medical attention:

(Automatic) Fire/Gas/CO Alarms	Utility (Water/Sewer) Problems	Vehicle/Building Lock-In/Out
Animal Rescue	Flooding	Traffic Control/Disabled Vehicle
Poles/Trees/Wires Down	Fuel Spill/Odor	Gas Leak/Odor
Lightning Strike (Investigation)	Smoke Investigation (Outside)	Suspicious Package/Item
Strange/Unusual Odor Investigation	Motor Vehicle Crash (confirmed no injuries, first party caller)	

We have identified that these few specific categories of calls represent situations where there is no expectation that someone at the scene will be injured or sick, with the explicit exception of when the caller has **confirmed** there is a patient on scene. This change does not mean that we will refuse to dispatch EMS if **specifically** requested by a fire department for a call they are responding to – we will continue to address those requests in the most equitable manner possible on a case-by-case basis. However, this will be with the understanding that the request be reasonable and that there is a circumstance at the scene of the incident which implies a true need for EMS presence. Our intention is to avoid unnecessarily tying up an EMS crew for potentially hours to merely stand by with no expectation that they will be required to utilize their skills.

This change will go into effect in your municipality 30 days from the date of receipt of this letter. If you have any objection to this change, we expect to receive your objection **in writing** within 30 days, and will also insist on thorough justification to explain your objection. You may submit this objection via postal mail, or via email to update911@co.somerset.pa.us. If we do not receive an objection from you, we will assume that you consent, and will make the change.

Respectfully,



Craig Hollis-Nicholson
911 Operations Manager



Shawn Ware
911 Coordinator

cc: All Somerset County fire departments, all Somerset County EMS services, Somerset County Commissioners

1. Senate Resolution 6 Committee. (2018). *SR 6 Final Report*. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, House of Representatives. <https://pfesi.org/ferebag/2020/05/SR-6-REPORT-FINAL.pdf>
2. Act of May 1, 1933, P.L. 103, No. 69 §1553. *The Second Class Township Code (Corporate Powers)*. <https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/LI/uconsCheck.cfm?txtType=HTM&yr=1933&sessInd=0&smthLwInd=0&act=69&chpt=15&scn=53&subscn=0>
3. 8 Pa C.S. §1202(56). *Boroughs and Incorporated Towns (Corporate Powers, Specific Powers)*. <https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/LI/consCheck.cfm?txtType=HTM&tll=08&div=0&chpt=12>

MEYERSDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL
 Regular Meeting _____ Special Meeting 6/19/2025

GUEST SIGN IN

PLEASE PRINT

	NAME	ADDRESS	TOPIC
1	Bob Hufford	412 TCH AVE	DRAINAGE
2	Brian Withers	230 SHUMAN ST	<u> </u>
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GUESTS MUST STAND WHILE SPEAKING