

Summit Hill Borough Council
August 27, 2026, 6:30 p.m. Borough Hall

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

Roll Call – President Joseph Weber, Vice President Sherri Buzik, Louis Mitchalk, Leigh Ann Kruslicky, Joan Morana, Edward Kane, Marlene Basiago, Solicitor Robert Frycklund and Mayor Karen Ruzicka were in attendance.

Floor –

1. Kevin O'Donnell, 316 West White Street, expressed his concern to Council about the issues he is having with his next-door neighbor. His current situation is that the neighbor made it so he cannot leave his deck because he put a fence across the bottom of his deck steps. Councilwoman Morana asked if the neighbor obtained a permit to install the fence. Mr. O'Donnell said it started about ten years ago when the neighbor had new sidewalks installed and started complaining about the water run off coming across his new sidewalks. The neighbor is claiming that the fence that was installed 50 plus years ago by Mr. O'Donnell's uncle is his, as well as the sidewalk along the property that was installed by his aunt 60 plus years ago. Mr. O'Donnell stated that where the fence is installed is his property and not the neighbors, but the neighbor just does whatever he wants. Last year he was taking the garbage out and the neighbor stepped in front of him and told him to get off his property. There have been a lot of other issues with this neighbor besides the fence and is asking for Council's help. Councilwoman Basiago asked if the property was ever surveyed. Mr. O'Donnell said the neighbor had it surveyed but he does not agree with the results. President Weber said he would like to look into further by seeing if a permit was issued, take a closer look at the fence to see where a tentative property line is and figure out who owns the sidewalk. Councilwoman Kruslicky asked when the fence was installed. Mr. O'Donnell stated it was about a year ago. The zoning officer at the time said there is nothing that can be done about it.

Councilwoman Morana thanked Kira Steber for the excellent job she did to get things done with the rodent issue at the property on Walter Street, for keeping Council updated the entire time and for following through on it.

Minutes – Motion was made by Leigh Ann Kruslicky and seconded by Louis Mitchalk to approve the meeting minutes from the July 14 and August 11, 2026 Council meetings. Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Mayor's Report – Mayor Ruzicka reported the total collected from the District Justice for July was \$722.93 and from Carbon County was \$54.88. She also addressed an issue that they are having with e-bikes, electric scooters, regular bicycles, and the law. It has become very chaotic in town. Electric Scooters are not to be on the roads at all. The rest of them in the category must follow the same laws as a car does. Drive in the same direction, stop at stop signs, stop at stop lights, and give pedestrians the right-of-way, which is not happening in town. There was an incident on Pine and Amidon Streets where a bicycle did not stop, continued through the intersection, and ran into a car. Vice President Buzik asked if the information could be put onto the borough's Facebook page and/or the website to get the information out to the public. Councilwoman Basiago added that the PA law states you must be 16 or older to operate an e-bike. President Weber said that they need to add information about 4-wheelers too. We must worry about safety, especially with school back in session and more kids being around town.

Mayor Ruzicka asked if Council took time to review the information she provided about the ICE program. Vice President Buzik stated that she started reviewing it and does have questions. She would like to reach out

to other departments that are already participating in the program to get more knowledge on it. Councilwoman Basiago expressed her concern about the program. They are a small community with a small police force, and they are offering major incentives to be part of the program. What will happen down the line when our president changes and the next president says they are not going to put as much emphasis on ICE. Our police officers need to get out into the community because the community does not know all the officers. The priority should be the community and not going after someone because ICE calls and says that they are wanted for whatever reason. Councilwoman Morana expressed that they are supposed to obey the law. If someone is here illegally that is a crime. Shouldn't we enforce it. Solicitor Frycklund stated that it is a complicated issue and it has a lot to do with liability. If this is something that the board is going to obtain, he would like to see the agreement because it deals with administrative warrants. President Weber asked if there is someone they could reach out to for a Q&A session. Mayor Ruzicka mentioned that Officer Strauss works in another department and deals with a little bit of it. Officer Strauss stated that Orwigsburg participates in the program and has obtained eleven individuals. To date they have not received the \$150,000 in free vehicles and equipment as it states on the flyers. The Sergeant in Orwigsburg explained that they obtained eleven people but ICE works with them to set up a raid. Three weeks ago, the Orwigsburg police, along with ICE, raided a place and they were at the property for most of the day. They got who they wanted but the officers were tied up for most of the day assisting ICE. About a month ago, she had someone at a traffic stop with the other department that she works for. They do not participate in the program, but they do have an 800 number they can call ICE and let them know they have an individual. She called ICE and they said they were tied up but could be to her in about 4 ½ hours and asked her to hold them. She could not because she had to go to her full-time job in Summit Hill. ICE told her to kick them lose and give them any information that they have on the person, and they will do things their own way. If it was a place like Allentown, where there was an abundance of people then ok. They cannot be tied up for 4 or more hours waiting for ICE to show up or they have to take them to the Leesport barracks. Who will cover Summit Hill when you are the only officer working. There is a lot more to the program and it is time consuming, plus you are not seeing the benefits and free things that are being offered. Her opinion is that there is a lot going on in their own town to worry about. She is not against the program, just that there are things to worry about in Summit Hill without having to worry about sitting around for hours waiting for ICE to come pick someone up. She added that not every officer is trained and certified to participate in the program. When the incident took place in Orwigsburg, they had to make sure the certified and trained officers were there to assist. Vice President Buzik noted that there are three different programs involved. Talking about the benefits, it states that you may receive the items. When you read the paperwork that the borough would have to sign before they would send a letter of interest to participate. You are signing up regardless of receiving anything. There are no guarantees with it and the Taskforce program is the only program that you can receive incentives. Solicitor Frycklund said he has seen the agreements and when there is a lawsuit for unlawful detention they will sue the federal government, but also the borough who is assisting and the borough will be responsible for the defense costs. Chief Woodward said they should talk to Jim Thorpe Borough because they were sued two years ago because of a similar thing. The ICE Program was not available at the time, but they helped ICE obtain a guy who was on a federal warrant. They lost a lot of money because of the incident. He personally pulled over people who were not here legally and called ICE. He was told that unless they are wanted or committed a criminal offense, they do not want them. It is still like that today unless you are part of the program. **Motion was made by Sherri Buzik and seconded by Marlene Basiago to accept the mayor's report for the month of July 2026.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Police Report – Chief Woodward read his monthly report. He asked to send Officer Strauss to a three-day Interview and Interrogation training class from August 30 – September 2, 2026 in Coplay at no cost to the borough. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Sherri Buzik to allow Officer Strauss to attend an Interview and Interrogation training class from August 30 – September 2, 2026 in Coplay at no cost to the borough.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council. **Motion was made by Sherri Buzik and seconded by Marlene Basiago to accept the Police Report for the month of July 2026.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Planning and Zoning – Vice President Buzik stated that they really need to look into livestock and poultry and do something about it. President Weber said that he reached out to a previous council member who stated that livestock and poultry was put into the ordinance back in the 80s when they had the issue with the pig that was living in a home along the highway. At the time they added it to ordinance to list all the animals that should not be in town but in an agricultural zone. He added that there have been multiple complaints from numerous neighbors about the ongoing issue that was brought to Council. If there is a list of 15 or so properties that have poultry, as was stated last month, he would like it turned over to the borough so they can address those as well. **Motion was made by Leigh Ann Kruslicky and seconded by Edward Kane to accept the Planning and Zoning report for the month of July 2026.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

UCC, Code Enforcement and Rental Inspection Reports – Vice President Buzik had questions about the rental inspection report. She noted that there are only a few properties that are marked as having tenants. Does this mean that all other properties are vacant. If a property failed inspection, it looks like no one is living there and would like to know why they are not marked. She would like to see that column updated for all properties. Number 131 has a note that on 7/1/26 they would not let them in to do the repairs. President Weber noted that if you are the property owner, you have the right to go into the property to make the repairs regardless if the tenant lets you in or not. Councilwoman Kruslicky asked if there is any way to put the properties that have passed inspection to another area of the report or shade them out because it is hard to decipher what is still open or an issue. Mayor Ruzicka asked when someone moves out are they making sure the property is being reinspected before someone else moves in. She reported two properties that are rentals across the street from her, but when she came to the office and questioned it, she was told that they do not know if someone moves out unless they get a moving permit. President Weber said they need to discuss a plan when a property has failed an inspection and is still on the list after six months. Technically they should not have a tenant, and the license needs to be revoked. Councilwoman Morana said she is noticing a lot of complaints about Blackrock. Ms. Steber explained that they are not the owners, they are the property managers, and they receive lots of complaints about them. A brief discussion took place about the process of rental inspections and Quality of Life issues. **Motion was made by Joan Morana and seconded by Joseph Weber to accept the UCC, Code Enforcement and Rental Inspection reports for the month of July 2026.** Motion opened for comment. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Work Leader Report – Vice President Buzik questioned the Shared Services report. On 7/2 and 7/27, did they have borough workers from Lansford helping or did they just borrow the bucket truck from Lansford. Ronnie Yuricheck said they borrowed the truck. A discussion took place about Shared Services and the lack of assistance from other boroughs. Ronnie's opinion is that they are equal manpower wise but not for equipment. Councilman Mitchalk stated that he does not want to see our work crew fall behind on our work because of being in other towns doing work. **Motion was made by Leigh Ann Kruslicky and seconded by Louis Mitchalk to accept the Work Leader report for the month of July 2026.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Tax Collector Report - Nathan Halenar, Tax Collector submitted his Tax Collector Report for the month of July 2026. Total collected was \$1,150.00 in Occupation Taxes, \$605.00 in Per Capita Taxes and \$46,943.40 in Real Estate Taxes with a commission of \$1,460.95. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Edward Kane to accept the Tax Collector Report for the month of July 2026.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Delinquent Real Estate Tax Report – Portnoff submitted their Delinquent Real Estate Tax Report for the month of July 2026. Total Delinquent Real Estate collected for July was \$2,185.19 and total Expense Reimbursement collected for the 2nd Qtr. 2026 was \$702.90. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Sherri Buzik to accept the Delinquent Real Estate Tax Report for the month of July 2026.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Wage Tax Report – Berkheimer submitted their Wage Tax Report for the month of July 2026. Total EIT submitted for July was \$17,163.67 with a commission of \$296.93 and postage charges of \$67.78. Total LST submitted for July was \$2,619.99 with a commission of \$53.71 and no postage charges. Total Delinquent Taxes collected for July were \$99.00 in Occupation Assessment and \$55.00 in Per Capita Tax. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Joan Morana to accept the Wage Tax report for the month of July 2026.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Receipts – Total receipts received for the month of July 2026 were \$166,835.99. **Motion was made by Sherri Buzik and seconded by Marlene Basiago to accept the Receipts for the month of July 2026.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Bills – General Fund \$284,019.98, Local Services Tax \$53.71, Community Center \$626.62, Street Lighting \$5,183.22, Sewer Account \$675.00, Sanitation Account \$50,124.00, Rental Property Account \$218.14, and Liquid Fuels Account \$10,411.22. Councilwoman Morana asked what the bank service fees are for. Ms. Steber explained that it is a credit card service fee that is charged to the consumer but then the next day the company takes it out of the borough's account. **Motion was made by Sherri Buzik and seconded by Marlene Basiago to pay the bills from July 15 – August 27, 2026.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Committee Reports

Street Committee – Councilman Kane explained that they are going to be installing a new drain at the corner of West Fell and North Poplar Streets. It will be done in fall, and Kira will be sending letters out to the three residents whose properties are located near where the work is going to be done.

Councilman Mitchalk complimented the borough crew for the fantastic job they did on the walking track in the Ginder Field. Ms. Steber added that she cannot believe the number of people who are using it again since they redid it.

Infrastructure Committee – Councilwoman Basiago stated that Mr. Rehab is going to be completing the sewer project in Summit Hill at the end of the month.

Recreation Committee – Councilwoman Morana stated that there was a Back-to-School event held, which went very well. Franklin Klock brought the eagle from the Environmental Center and the kids loved it. They started discussing the Christmas on the Hill event, holding a meat raffle in spring, and possibly having an end of summer cookout fundraiser in conjunction with the Back-to-School event.

Councilwoman Basiago thanked the borough crew for the fantastic job they did with the track in the Ginder. She also complimented the job they did with the playground in Ginder and in Bill Black Parks. She thanked the borough for applying for the Pocono Mountain Visitors Bureau grant on behalf of the Recreation Commission and the Summit Hill Park Committee. They were able to obtain four trash receptacles and the can liners for Memorial Park, the Recreation Commission purchased the mulch for the parks and the Harley Rake to do the track and pathways at the Ginder, as well as the play area in Bill Black Park.

Emergency Services Committee – Vice President Buzik stated that the annual mum sale will be held on September 12th and 13th at the fire company. She also presented an invoice from the Fire Co. for the floors that were cleaned and waxed in the training room. Every year it is done and the fire company pays for it, but it is used by the police, the recreation commission and other borough departments. They are asking if Council would consider reimbursing the department for the cost of \$950.00. Councilwoman Basiago asked where the money will come from to pay them and would like to know why they were not asked before the work was done. Ms. Steber said that it could be paid out of the Capital Improvement Fund. Vice President Buzik said the work has already been done; the bill has already been paid and if Council votes to not reimburse the fire company, then it is what it is. **Motion was made by Joan Morana and seconded by Leigh Ann Kruslicky**

to reimburse the Diligence Fire Co a total of \$950 for having the floors in the training room clean and waxed. Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried by majority vote with Marlene Basiago opposed.

Motion was made by Sherri Buzik and seconded by Joan Moran to accept the Committee Reports for the month of July 2026. Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Communications –

- Request from the Coaldale Borough to see if the borough would be interested in selling or donating the brackets from the Hometown Hero Banners. Ms. Steber said she will need to reach out to the Summit Hill Historical Society regarding this request because they are the ones who managed the project.
- Request from William E. Trumbore III regarding a global high-tech scavenger hunt game called Geocaching. Looking for permission to place a cache on the coal industry memorial located at Pine and East Ludlow Streets. Council discussed the fact that they do not own the property in question so they cannot give permission for the Geocaching. Ms. Steber said she will respond and inform Mr. Trumbore that the borough does not own the property in question.

Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and seconded by Louis Mitchalk to accept communications for the month of July 2026. Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Old Business -

1. Ms. Steber presented an updated fee schedule for Council's review. She explained that everything that is listed in red is what Council agreed on but it must be done by ordinance. She is working with Solicitor Frycklund on it and hopes to have it ready for the next meeting. Councilwoman Kruslicky mentioned that it is almost September 2026 and they are still talking about the fee schedule. She would like to know if the fees are going to have to be changed again in 2027. Ms. Steber said she does not see anything having to be changed unless something major comes up. The ones that are listed on the resolution for adoption can be changed at any time by resolution. The ones they are discussing now are items that need to be added by ordinance because they are not in the current ordinances.
2. President Weber said they have been discussing the possibility of selling a piece of land on Vernon Street that the borough owns. Ronnie Yuricheck said he does not recommend it because if it is sold and they decide to put a garage on the lot, they will not have anywhere to go with the snow.
3. Ms. Steber informed Council that she reached out to the Heritage Center regarding the possibility of moving the bus stop to the corner of the property they own on Chestnut and White Streets. They will need to discuss it with their board members at their next meeting on September 9th. Vice President Buzik stated that if the Heritage Center does not agree to the request, what are the thoughts of moving it around the corner and down the street on Hazard. There is plenty of parking on both sides of the street and it would not hinder the post office any longer because it would be down the street on Hazard towards the apartment building.

Ms. Steber stated that Items No. 4 and 5 are being worked on by Vice President Buzik but are being left on the agenda so they are not forgotten about.

New Business –

1. **Motion was made by Joan Morana and seconded by Leigh Ann Kruslicky to adopt Resolution No. 06-2026 amending the 2026 Fee Schedule.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.
2. Ms. Steber mentioned that there was a property in town that had a fire about a year ago and it is a mess right now trying to get it fixed. She was speaking with Ralph who recommended that a policy be put into place based on the fire escrow ordinance. It is her understanding that it can be done by resolution to put a procedure in place. After the fire, no one went in to evaluate the property to document the damage. The property has now sat for a year, but they do not know what the original damage was after the fire because they were not asked to evaluate the property. There should be steps that need to be followed from the time of fire until the property is repaired and inspected. The property that is in question, has had work done, however the investor who is looking to purchase the property said there are still beams that look charred in some areas, but they attached a new piece of beam to it. The current property owner had a new roof put on and is now requesting their escrow money. She explained to the owner that there is more to getting the escrow money back then just repairing the roof.
3. Councilwoman Basiago asked if Council would consider adding language to the Special Purpose Parking ordinance to state no more than two handicap parking spaces on each side of every block at any time. Councilwoman Kruslicky asked what they would do with the existing spots. Vice President Buzik stated that they would be grandfathered unless they fall off and would have to reapply, then it would fall under the new rules.
4. Item No. 4 was discussed earlier in the meeting.
5. Councilwoman Basiago mentioned that the work in Memorial Park will begin in October. Work to be done is digging up the walkway, laying down the stone, doing the landscaping, and placing the pavers into the walkway. Only half the park will be done this year because of the cold weather. She is requesting that the park be shut down during the construction for liability and safety reasons. The park will remain closed until the project is completed next year. **Motion was made by Sherri Buzik and seconded by Joan Morana to close Memorial Park during construction.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried by majority vote with Marlene Basiago abstaining due to being park of the Memorial Park Committee. Councilwoman Kruslicky asked who will police the park once it is closed. Councilwoman Basiago suggested that the first time you are caught in the park you get a warning and any time after that you should receive a fine. Chief Woodward said that they can be charged with trespassing and then the judge would set the fee.

Special Purpose Parking

1. The committee recommended approving application No. 1-10, 12, 15-16 and 18-21 for the 2026 handicap parking renewals. **Motion was made by Sherri Buzik and second by Joan Morana to approve the renewals for application No. 1-10, 12, 15-16 and 18-21.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Motion was made by Sherri Buzik and second by Leigh Ann Kruslicky to enter an Executive Session at 7:53 p.m. to discuss Special Purpose Parking. Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Motion was made by Sherri Buzik and second by Joan Morana to enter back into Regular Session at 8:41 p.m. Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

2. **Motion was made by Marlene Basiago and second by Joan Morana to approve the renewal of application No. 11.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.
3. **Motion was made by Joan Morana and second by Lehigh Ann Kruslicky to deny the renewal of application No. 14.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.
4. **Motion was made by Sherri Buzik and second by Leigh Ann Kruslicky to approve the renewal of application No. 17.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.
5. **Motion was made by Leigh Ann Kruslicky and second by Joan Morana to deny application No. 05-2026 that was submitted on August 10, 2026.** Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Motion was made by Sherri Buzik and seconded by Lehigh Ann Kruslicky to enter an Executive Session at 8:44 p.m. to discuss Police Contract Negotiations. Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Motion was made by Sherri Buzik and second by Joan Morana to enter back into Regular Session at 10:43 p.m. Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Motion was made by Edward Kane and second by Marlene Basiago to adjourn the meeting at 10:44 p.m. until the next regular meeting of the Summit Hill Borough on September 8, 2026. Motion opened for comment; none made. Motion carried unanimously by Council.

Joseph Weber
Council President

Kira Steber
Secretary/Treasurer