Hawley Borough Council Meeting

April 9, 2025, 7:00pm

94 Main Avenue

Prior to the meeting there was an executive session regarding litigation.

Present from Council were President Monaghan, Vice President Herzog, and Councilpersons Dougherty, Hawk, Mead, and Rojas. Councilperson Faubel was absent for medical reasons. Also present were Mayor Nichols, Chief Drake, Director of Public Works Mead, Solicitor Weed, and Secretary Racht. Present from the public were Bob and Michelle Myers, Duane Austin, Dean Johnson,BillMesseneti, and Peter Becker of TriCounty Independent. President Monaghan began the meeting with a salute to the flag.

Motion: made by Vice President Herzog, seconded by Councilperson Mead, and passed unanimously to accept the agenda with flexibility.

Brian Tully of Reilly Engineering spoke about retaining wall at 209 Bellemonte Avenue that the Council had asked to be assessed. He said that the wall is not stable, it has failed and that something needs to be done. If the wall were to collapse completely, the homes below could be impacted.

Motion: made by Vice President Herzog, seconded by Councilperson Mead to accept the minutes from the March 12, 2025, public meeting for Ordinance 1-2025 regarding parking meter tickets. Passed with one abstention by Councilperson Dougherty, who had been absent from the meeting.

Motion: made by Vice President Herzog and seconded by Councilperson Rojas to approve the amended minutes of the March 12, 2025. Motion passed with an abstention from Councilperson Dougherty, who had been absent.

Correspondence: Motion: made by Vice President Herzog, seconded by Councilperson Doughertyto approve use of the Borough building as a polling place for the May 20 Primary.

Other correspondence was a skate park commitment letter and information about the coalition against bigger trucks, on file.

Public Presentation: Duane Austin asked when her sidewalk was going to be repaired. She had just fallen on it. Solicitor Weed said that he needs to speak with Solicitor Bernathy on this matter.

Motion: made by Vice President Herzog, seconded by Councilperson Mead, and passed unanimously to ratify two phone votes: engineering work for the public hearing regarding paving Academy in place of Welwood and to engage the engineer for Academy Street paving.

Motion: made by Vice President Herzog, seconded by Councilperson Dougherty, and passed unanimously to pass Resolutions 2025-4 and 2025-5 for St. Paul’s Lutheran Church to hang a banner across Rt. 6 to advertise their Summer Concerts. Motion amended by Vice President Herzog and seconded by Councilperson Dougherty to say pending insurance. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion: made by Councilperson Dougherty, seconded by Vice President Herzog, and passed unanimously to accept the Treasurer’s report and to pay the bills as on the bills list.

Mayor’s Report: Mayor Nichols met with a movie producer.

Parks and Rec: Councilperson Dougherty reported that Park and Rec had approved two triaxles of fill for the dog park. Director of Public Works Mead noted that Little League was looking to getting more dirt and that the home plate for Riverside Park needs replaced.

Planning: Councilperson Mead reported that Planning had not met.

Rental Inspections: Councilperson Mead said that delinquent letters will go out.

Ambulance Report: on file from Vice President Herzog.

Fire Report: given by Fire Chief Mead, on file.

Hawley Area Authority: on file from President Monaghan.

Zoning Officer and Building Code Official: on file from Judy Acosta. She sent unsafe structure notices to 517 Spring and 209 Bellemonte.

Code Enforcement for Property Maintenance: on file from Ralph Bolinger.

Grants: Report on file from Councilperson Rojas.

Motion: made by Councilperson Rojas, seconded by Councilperson Hawk and passed unanimously to approve Church Street paving contract with the engineers. This grant is an LSA grant and is to pave 650 feet on Church Street west of the railroad tracks.

The County Block Grant that was going to be for paving on Welwood Street will be used for paving Academy Street instead. Advertising will be done by the county. A public hearing was held by county grant consultant Katie Blake and there is a ten day wait for public comment. After this, Blake will reach out to the Borough. She had advised to prioritize the older grant first with the Highland /Cedar to be taken care of next. Once she notifies the Borough, the engineer can be contacted.

Motion: made by Councilperson Rojas, seconded by Vice President Herzog, and passed unanimously to hold an executive session regarding legal issues.

The borough has received the reimbursement check for the cameras from the safety grant sponsor.

Councilperson Rojas spoke about a new grant that she had found: People, Parks, and Community foundation. No match is required. Council discussed possible projects. Motion: made by Councilperson Rojas, seconded by Vice President Herzog, and passed unanimously to prioritize the projects as follows:

1. Compacted modified for the Bingham Park parking lot.
2. The Park Place parking lot by 911 Memorial.
3. The path behind the stone buildings in Bingham Park.
4. The playground piece that broke. This was also used for the PVMB grant but Vice President Herzog thought that it could be used for a match.
5. The entire path on top of the dike.
6. A programmable message board.

Emergency Management: Councilperson Hawk had nothing to report.

Solicitor’s Report: Solicitor Weed is still trying to get in contact with solicitor Henry regarding the trail MOU. He is working on the Eminent Domain on the Welwood Avenue property.

Finance report: the auditor has put the audit on hold while finishing other work.

Police Committee Report: on file, from Vice President Herzog.

Police Chief Report; On file. Chief Drake reminded everyone about the Easter Egg Hunt on April 12 with a rain date of April 19. He is researching computer programs. Director Mead will get estimates for cross walk painting.

Motion: made Councilperson Dougherty, seconded by Vice President Herzog, and passed unanimously to approve renting a street sweeper at $1,224 for a week.

Unfinished business: Vice President Herzog inquired about a DEP violation in the Borough. it was resolved on March 18.

New Business: None.

Public comment: None.

Motion: made by Vice President Herzog, and seconded by Councilperson Dougherty, and passed unanimously to go into an executive session. The time was 7:50pm.

Council went back into session at 8:53pm.

Motion: made by Councilperson Rojas, seconded by Councilperson Dougherty, to pass a resolution for the skate park, numbers to be determined for Awareness Skate Park contingent on the numbers to be determined by the engineer. Motion: amended by Councilperson Rojas, seconded by Councilperson Dougherty, and passed unanimously to pass the Awareness Skate Park resolution pending confirmation on the numbers by the engineer and the Memo of Understanding as discussed at the executive session.

Motion: made by Councilperson Rojas, seconded by Vice President Herzog, and passed unanimously to authorize Racht to open a short term cd account under the name of Kyle T. Messeneti Foundation to deposit the matching funds of $20,000 and the balance to be put in an escrow account.

Motion: made by Councilperson Rojas, seconded by Councilperson Hawk, and passed unanimously to agree to accept the remaining escrow funds up until August 1, at which point they will be deposited into a separate escrow.

Motion: made by Councilperson Mead, seconded by Councilperson Hawk, and passed unanimously to engage the solicitor in contacting Douglas McCarthy with a cease and desist in response to his April 8, 2025 letter.

Motion: made by Councilperson Dougherty, seconded by Vice President Herzog, and passed unanimously for Solicitor Weed to reach out to the property owner of the unsafe fence.

The meeting adjourned at 9:02pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Racht