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| **Mayor**  Robert Mullen  **Solicitor**  Elliott, Greenleaf & Dean  Atty. Matthew Boyd  **Chief of Police**  David Homschek  **Secretary**  Kelly O’Brien  **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  Bob Dommermuth  Vice President  Gary Halagarda  Michael Fuller  Joe Satkowski Jr.  John D. Boone  John Vols  Frank Marriggi  Stanley J. Waleski  Jim Emlaw |

**AVOCA BOROUGH**

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 9TH, 2021 – COUNCIL MEETING**

**MEETING MINUTES**

The regular monthly meeting of Avoca Borough Council was held on Thursday, September 9th, 2021 with Council President, Bob Dommermuth, presiding. The work session began at 6:30p.m. The regular monthly meeting was called to order at 6:48p.m. and Pledge of Allegiance was said by Gary Halagarda.

Council members in attendance: Mike Fuller, Gary Halagarda, John Vols, Stanley Waleski, Jim Emlaw and Bob Dommermuth. John Boone, Frank Marriggi and Joe Satkowski were absent.

Also in attendance: Mayor Robert Mullen, Atty. Matthew Boyd, Chief Dave Homschek, Engineer Paul Pasonick and Secretary Kelly O’Brien.

At the beginning of the meeting, President Dommermuth asked for a moment of silence in remembrance of all 9/11 victims, families and first responders.

Motion by Stan Waleski, second by Mike Fuller to accept the minutes of the special September 7th, 2021 meeting as presented. Voice Vote: Five ( 5 ) YES, One ( 1 ) ABSTAIN – Emlaw MOTION PASSED

Motion by Gary Halagarda, second by John Vols to accept the minutes of the August 12th, 2021 Council meeting as presented. Voice Vote: Five ( 5 ) YES, One ( 1 ) ABTSTAIN – Emlaw MOTION PASSED

Motion by Mike Fuller, second by Stan Waleski to pay all bills presented with monies available. Voice Vote: Six ( 6 ) YES

Motion by Gary Halagarda, second by John Vols to accept new correspondence as presented. Voice Vote: Six ( 6 ) YES

Motion by Stan Waleski, second by Mike Fuller to accept the August 2021 police report prepared by Chief Homschek and read aloud by Mayor Mullen. Voice Vote: Six ( 6 ) YES

**AVOCA BOROUGH**

**THURS. SEPT. 9TH, 2021**

**MEETING MINUTES – PAGE 2**

Motion by Gary Halagarda, second by John Vols to hire Kevin Santos and John Kozich Jr. as part time police officers contingent upon acquiring all PA State certifications. Voice Vote: Six ( 6 ) YES

Motion by John Vols, second by Jim Emlaw – Resolution 8 of 2021, Applying for a LSA Grant in the amount of $269,926.25 for Avoca Borough’s Street Improvements Project. Voice Vote: Six ( 6 ) YES

Motion by Gary Halagarda, second by Jim Emlaw – Resolution 9 of 2021, Applying for a LSA Grant in the amount of $138,590.00 for the Gedding Street Sanitary Sewer Improvements Project. Six ( 6 ) YES

Motion by Jim Emlaw, second by John Vols – Resolution 10 of 2021, Applying for a LSA Grant in the amount of $103,155.76 for a new street department dump truck. Voice Vote: Six ( 6 ) YES

Motion by Stan Waleski, second by Mike Fuller to obtain quotes to clean out a debris basin in Mill Creek near the MacKarey property. Voice Vote: Six ( 6 ) YES

Engineers report was prepared and presented by Paul Pasonick. See attached.

Police report was prepared by Chief Homschek and read aloud by Mayor Mullen. See attached.

In other Borough matters:

John Vols, Bob Dommermuth and Stan Waleski all commended the Sesquicentennial Committee for a successful town wide celebration and thanked them for their hard work and dedication.

John Vols advised Council that a fire hydrant in the 700 block of Main Street near the Hose Company was replaced and restored by PA American Water Company. Mr. Vols would also like to know what the Borough pays Johnny Jadus Grass Cutting annually and would like to review the most recent Pave Cut Ordinance that is in effect.

Stan Waleski asked the street department if there were every any pricing obtained to cut the tree in the 700 block of Wood Street. Micky Volch responded that they did make contact with a company but never received any follow up from them. Stan also advised Council of a conversation he has been having with Atty. Boyd, about $6000 being held in the Luzerne County Prothonotary that belongs to Avoca Borough. Atty. Boyd advised they will release the funds to Avoca and he will follow up on the procedure to get it released. Mr. Waleski then suggested we use those funds to redo the basketball court at the community center. Audience member and resident Holly Homschek asked Mr. Waleski, in regard to the community center, what happened to the money he fundraised years ago to get AED machines put into the community center. She stated that she remembers Mr. Waleski selling raffle tickets to help raise money and to date there are still no AED machines in the community center and it is concerning to her being a parent. After a bit of discussion, Mr. Waleski advised fundraising brought in about half of what is needed to purchase the AED machines and the money is being held in account until all funds are raised.

Mr. Ron Casper, audience member and resident, asked Council if the H.A.R.I.E. safety grant is obtained, which was submitted for AED machines and road equipment, where will the AED machines go. Council advised they will decide which public buildings they will be placed in, depending on how many we are able to get. Mr. Casper also thanked Mayor Mullen and Bob Dommermuth for being present and helping with recent flooding issues due to Hurricane Ida.

Mike Fuller thanked the street department to their swift attention to the wash out on Russell & Main Streets and asked if they can look at a wash out on Winans Court. Mr. Fuller also advised some lettering on various signs needs to be replaced. The street department will follow up.

Gary Halagarda thanked the street department, fire department and police departments for a good job done during Hurricane Ida. Gary stated we have a strong fire department and in combination with a group of volunteers,

they were able to save a lot of properties from potential water damage. Mr. Halagarda also advised everyone should support our farmers market each week as often as possible.

Luzerne County Council member Stephen J. Urban addressed Council about the agreement between the Scranton Wilkes Barre Airport and the Avoca Police Department. Per the most recent agreement Mr. Urban was able to obtain dating back to 2014, the agreement states that if either party wanted to end the agreement it would have to be done in writing 30 days prior. He was not able to located anything in writing from either Avoca Borough or the Airport to confirm why the agreement was terminated. He cited a recent newspaper article where it was stated Avoca terminated the agreement. After a bit of discussion, Mayor Mullen, Council and Atty. Boyd all advised Mr. Urban that it was not in fact Avoca that terminated any contract or agreement. Mr. Urban is trying to gain clarity with all of this, as he feels he is potentially being lied to by County officials and being pressured into making a quick county decision on having the District Attorney’s office take over the patrols at the airport.

Motion by Gary Halagarda, second by Stan Waleski to adjourn meeting at 7:25p.m. Voice Vote: Six ( 6 ) YES