

The Borough Council of Shiremanstown, Pennsylvania reconvened its regular monthly meeting on December 23, 2024, at 7:00 P.M. at Borough Hall, One Park Lane, Shiremanstown, Pennsylvania.

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT**

John Getz  
Lucy Getz  
Anna Harris  
Bryan Homer  
Stevie Krpata  
Carol Mullen-O’Leary  
Cindy Watson

**BOROUGH OFFICIALS PRESENT**

Andrew Sheely, Solicitor  
George W. Lane, Treasurer  
Tammie Dailey, Mayor

Dr. Mullen-O’Leary participated via facetime. The Secretary was absent due to a prior commitment.

**CITIZEN’S REPORT**

CITIZENS PRESENT

ADDRESS

Mark Rosnick	203 East Main Street
Dian Tedesco	309 West Courtland Avenue
Daniel D. Tedesco	309 West Courtland Avenue
Tom McCutcheon	Shiremanstown Fire Department
Cora O’Dell	17 West Main Street
Rachel DeShong	10 Railroad Avenue
Dave Dyson	Bible Baptist Church

Mrs. Tedesco stated she had come to observe and had no comments to add to the meeting.

Mr. Tedesco question if the budget had been advertised, and Mr. Getz responded that there had been an issue with the original advertisement in The Sentinel, which caused the regular meeting of the Council to be reconvened from December 9, 2024, until this evening to review and adopt the budget, which was advertised as well as posted in the atrium of the Borough Hall. Another question Mr. Tedesco brought up was about failure to remove the ice and snow in the inlets, He stated when he previously questioned this, he had been told the Borough budgets only \$100 per year for snow removal. Mr. Getz replied that the Borough purchases salt through surrounding municipalities due to the lack of storage for any appreciable supply; however, the Borough purchases as needed and has not set a cap on the amount the road crew may purchase through this agreement. Mr. Tedesco also questioned why the street sweeping schedule is set up so that the entire street must be cleared on the day of cleaning. His recommendation was to have one side of the street swept on one day and the alternate side the next allowing citizens to move their vehicles and park on the opposite side of the street. Mr. Tedesco was asked to provide his phone number to Mr. Rosnick, as the road crew supervisor, and instructed Mr. Rosnick to contact Lower Allen Township and inquire if this could be done in 2025, and if not an explanation for the current method.

Mr. McCutcheon deferred any comments until later in the meeting.

Ms. O'Dell expressed concerns about traffic on Main Street. Mr. Getz and Mr. Homer each gave updates regarding efforts by the Borough to correct the traffic flow on Main Street, including better highlighting of the pedestrian crossings and working with the Cumberland County Planning Commission as they approach PennDOT to slow the speed limit (an effort just recently rejected again by PennDOT) and other creative methods to control traffic on Main Street, including the recent agreement between the Shiremanstown Borough Police Department and the Mechanicsburg School District for the installation and enforcement of drivers disregarding school bus regulations.

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Mr. Getz explained that the purpose of the meeting was for the Council to approve a budget and adopt the tax rate for 2025. Per earlier discussion on December 9, 2024, two budgets were provided by the Treasurer for the Council's review and comparison. The difference between the two was the amount under consideration as a donation to the Shiremanstown Fire Department. One where the amount was increased from \$8,500 to \$10,000 an increase of over 17% from earlier budgets, and another increasing funding from \$8,500 to \$ 18,500. For those who were not in attendance at earlier meetings, he explained that there have been some trust issues and that funding from the State Auditor General's Office had been withheld until restoration to the Firefighters' Relief Fund had been satisfied. The Borough Council, not wishing to be the Council that shut the SFD down had released the 2024 allocation to the Department to satisfy the findings. He advised that when he had moved into the Borough there was a fire engine and now there is the fire engine, the mini pumper, and a traffic vehicle, while the Borough has not geographically grown. When a nest egg had been discovered, the \$35,000 was used to purchase the mini pumper and not on necessities, yet the fire chief has stated without the increase to \$18,500 in assistance from the Borough, the fire department will have to shut its doors by mid-year. It is his opinion that the Borough taxpayers, through the Borough Council, should not be expected to do for the fire company what they will not do for themselves; therefore, it is his recommendation to pay the SFD \$10,000 quarterly provided they continue to show complete accounting records. He then explained he would give each Council member an opportunity to summarize their opinion.

Dr. Mullen-O'Leary, as the fire company liaison, opened discussion highlighting her support for the revised budget allocation of \$18,500 to the fire company stating that the Borough Council has provided only \$8,500 for the past several years, effectively nickel and diming their ability to provide fire service. Further, she addressed that each member is a volunteer and expecting volunteers to plan and host fundraisers to meet needs for training and necessities is outdated particularly as little is raised for the time involved. She said the \$18,500 was a fair amount with fundraisers being used for any additional monies needed. She warned that the Council should consider the options carefully as she had spoken from representatives from both Lower Allen Township and Hampden Township and learned that fire coverage provided through those municipalities would cost over \$100,000 annually.

Mrs. Harris reminded the Council that when the Recreation Department prepares for its annual events, a budget is given to the Treasurer for the anticipated needs as he prepares the

budget. For the Christmas tree lighting and holiday party, costs for the payment of Santa, pizza, etc. were determined ahead of time. She also reminded the Council that when park improvements are needed, research is done and multiple suppliers are presented for the Council's consideration and depending on the quality and cost, it is determined which vendor to engage. She stated her conviction the Borough does need to support its fire department, and an increase has been included in the budget; however, there is a pattern of behavior that is worrisome. Therefore, she is leaning toward the \$10,000 amount with any additional needs following the status quo of approaching the Council for extraordinary expenses.

Ms. Watson concurred with Mrs. Harris and questioned if Dr. Mullen-O'Leary had seen the receipts that had been recorded in the QuickBooks reports created following the Treasurer's recommendation of its use at the November meeting. Dr. Mullen-O'Leary confirmed she had reviewed the receipts, and that QuickBooks had been used in the past by the fire company providing historical data. Ms. Watson thanked her and noted that in her time as liaison, she had observed that there was a tendency for the Chief to purchase without a vote by the fire company members. She found this troubling. She questioned Dr. Mullen-O'Leary's statement saying that both Lower Allen and Hampden Township had quoted over \$100,000 for fire coverage asking who she had spoken to at the Townships. Dr. Mullen-O'Leary replied she did not feel she needed to reveal her sources of information.

Mrs. Getz stated that she feels the Council has been put in the hot seat by the fire company due to their overspending. She reminded the others that the Council had provided funding earlier to provide funding to rectify the findings of the Auditor General's Department. She feels that \$10,000 along with fire company fundraising would be sufficient.

Mr. Homer expressed his belief that responsibility is the bigger problem rather than the dollar amount and addressing the deficit of \$50,000 requires mindful spending. He believes the fire company should be allocated the \$18,500 which would not cover all their expenses as provided by Chief McCutcheon, while raising the difference would give them the opportunity to redeem themselves.

Mrs. Krpata stated that with the additional increase in taxes, an additional \$10,000 which she understands was earmarked for the fire company, then it should be increased from the \$8,500 to \$18,500 and not just the \$10,000 with quarterly reports on fire company finances being provided to the Council for review. She further expressed there are areas within the budget that could be reduced or eliminated before underfunding the fire company.

A group discussion followed with Mrs. Harris reiterating it is a matter of checks and balances particularly as this is an issue of trust. Ms. Watson concurred, stating that providing allocations was desirable over being the sole provider of funding stating that this in no way reflects Dr. Mullen-O'Leary's capability as the liaison as she feels she is highly capable. Mr. Homer again stated that he would prefer the funds to be included as part of the line item and not a portion retained in the general fund. Dr. Mullen-O-Leary said that as the liaison she has already set up with the fire company reports will be provided monthly, not quarterly, for the Council's inspection and that anything less than providing the entire \$18,500 will prove harmful. She reiterated the Borough Council has nicked and dimed the fire department over

the years, and volunteers should not have to approach them hat in hand when funds run short.

Fire Chief McCutcheon speaking for the fire company denied that he had ever said diminished funding would cause him to close the doors of the fire department. However, he feels that the Council is holding the fire company responsible for errors prior to his tenure as Chief. Citing three vital points, the first being the wear and tear on the fire engine which needs major repairs. If the repairs are not addressed, the engine will be out of service. The second point he stressed is the Borough should not be dependent on mutual aid from other fire departments, and the third point being that construction done at the fire house was often done out of pocket.

Mr. Getz again reminded Mr. McCutcheon that it is well-recognized that Shiremanstown is a small community, and the purchase of added vehicles led to added expenses. Mr. McCutcheon defended the purchase of the vehicles saying the traffic unit is often called upon in other communities from the Susquehanna River west to Silver Spring Township and, at times, further west in the County.

With discussion closed, Mr. Getz called for a roll call vote on each version of the presented budgets. Ms. Watson made a motion to adopt the original budget presented providing the Shiremanstown Fire Department with an allocation of \$10,000. With a second from Mrs. Harris, the vote was taken:

Aye

Ms. Watson  
Mrs. Harris  
Mrs. Getz  
Mr. Getz

Opposed

Mr. Homer  
Mrs. Krpata  
Dr. Mullen-O'Leary

Mr. Getz called for a roll call vote on the revised budget distributing \$18,500 to the Shiremanstown Fire Department. Mrs. Krpata made a motion to adopt the revised budget presented providing the fire company with an allocation of \$18,500. With a second from Dr. Mullen-O'Leary, the vote was taken:

Aye

Mrs. Krpata  
Dr. Mullen-O'Leary  
Mr. Homer

Opposed

Mrs. Getz  
Mrs. Harris  
Ms. Watson  
Mr. Getz

With a vote of 4-3, the motion to adopt the original budget providing the Shiremanstown Fire Department \$10,000 was approved.

Mr. Getz encouraged Chief McCutcheon to come to the Council directly or through Dr. Mullen-O'Leary for emergency funding if needed for necessities, which, if approved, be

provided through the General Fund. Chief McCutcheon replied that he would be meeting with his members in January and then return to the Council with an official answer.

Mr. Getz read Ordinance 423 establishing the 2025 tax rate of 2.85 mills. Mrs. Harris made a motion to adopt the Ordinance as read. With a second from Mr. Homer, the motion was approved.

Ms. Watson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 PM. With a second from Mrs. Krpata, the motion was unanimously approved.

SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL,

Janna E. Colechio  
Borough Secretary