

DUBOISTOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING draft

General Council Meeting Minutes

Date: 07/09/2025

Time Called to Order: 6:00 PM

Called to Order By: Harry Rogers, Council President

Present:

- Harry Rogers
- Marc Drier
- Norman J. Cowden
- Dori Rankinen
- Richard Knecht
- Shawn Millard
- Kate Weaver, Assistant Treasurer
- Ann Marie Baker, Borough Manager

Absent:

- Patrick Melloy
- Mike Rodgers

Motion #1

Moved by: Norman Cowden

Seconded by: Dori Rankinen

Motion: To approve the minutes of the June 26th meeting.

Vote: Motion carried (5-0)

Name	Nomination	Motion	2 nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
John McCormick				X			
Patrick Melloy							X
Harry Rogers				X			
Dori Rankinen			X	X			
Mike Rodgers							X
Norman Cowden		X		X			
Shawn Millard				X			
Mayor Knecht							

Police Report was reviewed –

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No formal report was provided. However, Fire Department Treasurer Craig Kropp inquired about the status of checks believed to be missing from Armstrong for the years 2014 and 2016. The Borough Manager responded that, since these transactions occurred prior to her employment in 2019, she has contacted the bank for assistance in retrieving records to confirm whether the payments were made to the Fire Department before issuing any replacement checks.

Additionally, the Borough Manager noted that she would be sending an invoice to the Fire Department to recover an overpayment of \$1,171.60, which was mistakenly issued as a workers' compensation payment.

Sewer Report - The Borough Manager provided an update on the Riverside Drive project. The bid packet is scheduled to be released on **July 10th**, with **bid awards to be made at the August meeting** for LCWSA. Further updates will be provided as they are received.

Borough Manager Report – reviewed

The Borough Manager provided an update to Council regarding the roof leak and necessary repairs. The roofer has inspected the roof and submitted a proposal for immediate repairs.

Additionally, the roofer recommended considering a full **Membrane Roof Restoration System**, which would:

- Significantly extend the life of the existing roof
- Include a 20-year manufacturer's warranty
- Lead to substantial long-term cost savings
- It was recently discovered that the existing roof is approximately 30 years old, with **Versico** identified as the original manufacturer. Below is an excerpt from an email received from Versico:
“Do you think the owner may be interested in giving us an interview on how their roof has performed? Perhaps take some videos of the existing roof, collect a sample, and complete our standard ASTM testing as if it were a new membrane—to highlight the results?”
- Versico representatives have expressed that they are **very impressed with the current condition of the roof given its age**. They are interested in conducting a brief visit to document the roof, gather testing materials, and potentially feature it as a case study. I would be present during the visit as well.

Community Aid Box Update for Fire Department

The Community Aid donation box at the fire department was initially set to be removed. However, after a discussion with a Community Aid representative, it was decided that the box will remain in place.

To support the fire department and ensure the continued success of the program, we agreed to help them promote the donation box and share their **Community Aid Member ID** with the public. When community members use this ID during donations—

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whether at the box or other locations—the fire department receives credit, which translates into additional funding.

Important Details:

- The fire department earns **\$0.13 per pound** of donations.
- Each donation box can hold approximately **800 pounds**, providing a potential return of **\$104 per full box**.

We encourage the community to continue donating and to use the fire department's Member ID when doing so to help maximize the department's benefits.

Right-to-Know Requests Update

Council member Shawn Millard inquired about the two recent Right-to-Know (RTK) requests received by the Borough. The first RTK pertains to a property on Cochran Avenue and requested all permits issued for the property, which is currently listed for sale. That request has been granted, and the relevant documentation has been forwarded to Codes Inc. and the Keystone Central Council of Governments, who were responsible for issuing permits during the specified timeframe.

The second RTK request was submitted by a resident seeking financial records through the end of June. Once Council approves the current meeting's expenditure and related items, the financial report will be finalized and provided to the requestor.

Motion #2:

Moved by: Shawn Millard

Seconded by: Dori Rankinen

Motion: to approve June expenditure.

Vote: Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

Name	Nomination	Motion	2 nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
John McCormick				X			
Patrick Melloy							X
Harry Rogers				X			
Dori Rankinen			X	X			
Mike Rodgers							X
Norman Cowden				X			
Shawn Millard		X		X			
Mayor Knecht							

Property Maintenance & Building Codes Report – Reviewed

Recreation & Events Committee Report – We are continuing to rent the hall regularly. A big thank-you to our volunteers who have been helping with cleaning and maintenance. In addition, we're in the process of getting the benches restained and several other items painted and repaired to keep the space in great condition.

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The recent car wash fundraiser for the cheerleaders went well — thank you to everyone who came out to support!

Solicitor – Booklet for EMA that would be helpful for council Ann will forward to council for their review.

Tax Collector – Borough Manager gave update in tax collectors absence – 92.81% have paid and 40 bills remain unpaid. School bills have gone out.

President Harry Rogers – Reminder of the Ethics Training that is going to be hosted in Duboistown in September.

Mayor's Update

- The Mayor has requested that all Council members participate in a tour of the Fire Department at the next meeting. In coordination with the Borough Manager, it was also suggested that a tour of all Borough properties be conducted. This comprehensive tour is scheduled to take place during the **July 23rd meeting**.
- The Mayor is currently working on compiling a list of emergency items that the Borough would require in the event of a crisis. This list will be coordinated with our emergency services, the Borough Manager, and the EMA Coordinator to ensure preparedness and collaboration.
- During discussions, a question was raised regarding the former location of the Borough's base radio station, which was once used for emergency communications, as well as the radio previously installed in the Durango vehicle. The Borough Manager noted that since her start in 2019, no base station has been present in the building. Additionally, the Durango's radio was reportedly removed by a Public Works employee, but its current location is unknown. The Borough Manager will investigate further and provide an update to Council once more information is available.
- The Mayor also shared his thoughts on flash flooding concerns and proposed ideas for improving communication protocols to better assist residents and emergency personnel in the event of such emergencies.

Old Business

- Per Council discussion, the following items are to be **removed from the Old Business list:**
 - Borough Sign – The Mayor is currently working on this and will provide updates in his regular reports.
 - Zoning Issue – Commercial vehicles parked in residential areas.
 - Rental Inspections Fee Structure.

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- **Fire Department Door:**

The Borough Manager reported that there has been **no response** from the Fire Department Leadership team to her email dated **June 23rd**, which requested assistance in gaining access to the software and computer necessary for troubleshooting the door issue. The troubleshooting is required to determine whether the problem is related to the software, user settings, programming, or hardware. A locksmith is needed to conduct this process.

Due to the lack of communication, a follow-up email was sent to the same leadership contacts. The Borough Manager requested that fire department volunteers pick up a **key to the back door** for access until the troubleshooting can be completed.

Additionally, a procedure has been implemented for key distribution and a **backup lockbox** has been installed containing a key in the event that a volunteer does not have theirs on hand.

As of the date of this meeting, **only one individual** has picked up a key.

Council Discussion – Fire Department Door Lock System

A discussion was held regarding the ongoing issues with the Fire Department door lock system.

- **Councilmember Shawn Millard** expressed that he believes a better, more updated system may be available and worth considering.
- **Councilmember John McCormick** inquired whether the current system is outdated.
- The **Borough Manager** clarified that, while the system may not be the newest model on the market, it is **not outdated** and has no known issues. The system and locksmith are functioning properly. However, **without cooperation from the Fire Department** to provide access to the software and computer, the Borough is unable to perform the necessary troubleshooting to identify and resolve the issue.

The Borough Manager further explained:

- The **entire access control system** for the building was paid for by the Borough.
- The software is divided into three segments:
 - **Borough side** (managed by the Borough Manager)
 - **Fire Department side**
 - **Social Hall side**
- The **Fire Department's software administrator** controls access for both the Fire Department and Social Hall doors.
- Currently, the **only door experiencing issues is the back door** of the building.

In the opinion of the Borough Manager, **continuing to spend time or money** on addressing this issue without necessary access is **inefficient and impractical**. As a result, a **manual key system** was implemented as a temporary solution until the Fire Department responds and provides access for troubleshooting.

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Public Comment 2

Kathy Wither, 143 Valley Street, provided an update on the ongoing noise issues related to the VFW. She reported that after contacting the police again, an officer came to her home and stated that the noise ordinance was not enforceable. The officer also commented that the size of the crowd did not justify the volume of the music being played. In response, Kathy obtained a copy of the noise ordinance used by South Williamsport and offered it to council members. The **Borough Manager** noted that the council had already received a copy of the South Williamsport ordinance, along with those from other municipalities, when reviewing and revising the borough's previous ordinance.

Kathy also mentioned that she owns a decibel meter and had to leave her home due to the excessive noise. Although the responding officer reportedly asked the VFW to lower the volume, she felt that no meaningful reduction occurred. She has been documenting the incidents in a journal.

John McCormick asked the **Solicitor** to clarify whether the ordinance was truly unenforceable, as the officer allegedly suggested. The **Solicitor** confirmed that the ordinance is enforceable.

Council President Rogers acknowledged that the officer's comments may have been misinterpreted and, since the officer was not present to clarify, he requested the **Borough Manager** arrange a meeting with the **Police Chief, Mayor**, and himself to discuss enforcement of the ordinance and the concerns being reported by residents. **Shawn Millard** and the **Mayor** both commented that they have monitored the situation and driven around the area during events. They confirmed that while the music can be heard, it has consistently stopped by **9:00 PM**, in accordance with the current ordinance.

Dori Rankinen emphasized the importance of being good neighbors. She suggested that since the VFW was thinking of moving events indoors until a fence is installed, this could help in resolving the noise concerns. Borough Manager also stated that the VFW has a board that the commander works with and membership so he has to also run things past them. She did state that the pavilion is also rented out and not always is it the VFW.

Katie Caputo, 145 Valley Street, expressed continued frustration that nothing is being done to stop the disruptions. She stated that the council has not taken sufficient action to preserve residents' peace and that council members have a duty to serve the residents who elected them—not to show sympathy to the VFW, which she believes is not being a good neighbor. She intends to keep attending meetings until the issue is resolved but added that she believes the council does want to do what is right. The discussion concluded with a reminder that the council recently revised the ordinance in response to similar complaints last year, and further changes may not be the solution. The **Borough Manager** was asked to explore the possibility of an informal meeting between council and the VFW. The **Solicitor** advised that such a meeting

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could take place as long as no decisions are made during it and the council only listens to what the VFW is proposing to reduce disturbances.

Motion #3:

Moved by: Shawn Millard

Seconded by: Dori Rankinen

Motion: to adjourn the meeting

Vote: Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

Name	Nomination	Motion	2 nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
John McCormick				x			
Patrick Melloy							x
Harry Rogers				x			
Dori Rankinen			x	x			
Mike Rodgers							x
Norman Cowden				x			
Shawn Millard		x		x			
Mayor Knecht							

Approved: Don Marie Baker Date: 7/23/25
Motion: John McCormick Second: Dori Rankinen Date: 7/23/25