

A special planning meeting of the Myerstown Borough Council was held on Monday, January 7, 2019, at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Room at the Myerstown Community Center, the President being in the chair and the Secretary being present.

Present were: President Bryan L. Rittle, Vice President Michael D. Behm, Councilmembers Eric L. Powell, Jeffrey L. Thomas, Ronald L. Ream, and Dana Reich, Mayor Gloria R. Ebling, Assistant Manager Barry A. Ludwig, and Manager Michael R. McKenna. Absent was President Pro Tem Park W. Haverstick, II

The Chair opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

The Chair opened the floor for citizens' and visitors' comments.

Seeing none, he moved to the first and only order of business, a presentation by Borough Engineer Michael Knouse on a stormwater management program for the borough.

Mr. Knouse explained that he has been working with Borough staff to gather information to develop an outline for a stormwater management program that would involve a stormwater fee for all property owners in the Borough. The purpose of the program is to manage stormwater system assets and projects while being fiscally responsible.

The Borough has 16,094 linear feet of stormwater piping, 148 inlets, 1 manhole, 4 endwalls, and 23 outlets. This is a lot of infrastructure underground that people do not see on a daily basis. There are also 10.27 miles of Borough roads and 1.97 miles of State roads that generate stormwater runoff.

Myerstown is a Municipal Separate Storm System (MS-4) permit holder. This is a permit for the discharges from the Borough's storm sewer system that eventually reach the Tulpehocken Creek. Under that permit there are annual reporting and compliance requirements that must be met. With the last renewal, a Pollution Reduction Plan (PRP) was completed in accordance with EPA and DEP guidelines. In order to meet the goals of the PRP there are physical projects that must be completed over the next five years. Challenges brought about by these requirements include funding for the maintenance of the MS-4 system and for the physical projects that must be completed under the PRP. The forecasted cost of projects for the next five years is \$73,455.33. This creates budgetary constraints in the general fund, from where these costs are currently being funded.

Mr. Knouse is recommending that the Borough develop a dedicated revenue source in the form of an annual stormwater fee from property owners to fund the stormwater management system. Advantages of a dedicated revenue source are that it allows revenue to be collected from tax exempt entities; the assessment is fair because it is based upon the property's impervious area; funds that are currently in the general fund being used for stormwater can be re-allocated for other purposes; it provides a roadmap for asset management; it provides public engagement in the stormwater management process; it encourages BMP implementation; and it provides long-term funding for addressing local stormwater issues, operation, maintenance, and regulatory compliance.

Currently the Borough Code, unlike the Second Class Township Code, does not provide for the assessment of a stormwater fee. It does, however, provide for Special Improvement Districts that can charge an assessment for infrastructure features including stormwater. This has been implemented in other Pennsylvania municipalities, and the Borough solicitor is comfortable with this mechanism for charging the fee. The boundaries of the district would be the same boundaries as the MS4 permit, which are the boundaries of the Borough.

The development of the stormwater fee would include the creation of a capital improvement plan and regulatory compliance plan that includes 5-year budget projections. A billing analysis would determine how the program is billed. An implementation plan would be completed, and public outreach and engagement would take place in order to present the plan. There will be an ordinance for implementation of the plan. This ordinance can include opportunities for credits, and also an appeals policy. This will be developed with the help of the Borough solicitor.

There is a preliminary budget that has been created that considers the salary of staff, advertising and printing, engineering fees, PRP projects, legal fees, etc. The budget shows fluctuating annual costs between \$150,000 and \$250,000 annually depending upon infrastructure projects and the permit cycle.

Determining the fee involved taking the budgetary costs and dividing by a measurement of the impervious area of the borough. Standardizing the fee by property requires developing a measuring unit. The typical Single-Family Residential (SFR) property, whose impervious area includes sidewalks, driveways and roofs, comes out to an average of approximately 3,382 square feet of impervious area. This number would be used to constitute one (1) Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU). There are about 1,100 parcels in the borough. All properties that are not classified by the County as SFR properties would have their assessment calculated based upon measured impervious area, where SFR properties would have their assessment calculated based upon 1 ERU. All SFR properties would have the same fee. 1 ERU would be a monthly fee of \$8.20, which is generally less than other Lebanon County municipalities that have implemented a stormwater assessment/fee.

Mr. Knouse opened up the floor to questions and a discussion from Council. The PRP project was discussed. Stormwater system assets were discussed. EPA and DEP regulations, fines and credits were discussed. Street sweeping was discussed. Billing was discussed. Staffing needs and requirements were discussed. Public meetings and community outreach were discussed.

The Chair asked if there were any additional comments for the good of the borough. Seeing none, he asked for a motion to adjourn.

Jeffrey Thomas moved and Dana Reich seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael R. McKenna, MPA  
Borough Manager/Secretary