

ROSE VALLEY BOROUGH
COUNCIL MEETING
August 13, 2025

The monthly meeting of the Rose Valley Borough Council was held on August 13, 2025 in the main room of the Old Mill, 9 Old Mill Lane. President of Council Matt Sullivan called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Other Council members present were Joe Hare, Cheryl Harner, Kathryn Mehan, Shannon Prown and Tony Orr. Mayor Bill Hale, Treasurer Chris Bourke, Controller John Neilson, Solicitor G. Guy Smith and Secretary Paula Healy were also present. Councilman Leonard Busby was absent.

Residents attending the meeting were Lin Finelli, Jim Flandreau, Ron Ploeg and Katie Rubin.

MINUTES

After the Pledge of Allegiance, the Minutes of the July 9, 2025 Council Meeting were approved on a motion made, seconded and unanimously passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was none.

ENVIRONMENT & EAC

In Mr. Busby's absence, Mr. Sullivan read the following report provided by Mr. Busby. After careful consideration of competing objectives, the EAC unanimously recommended that Borough Council authorize chemical treatment of the magnificent fringe tree in Pew Park to protect it from the emerald ash borer. Fringe trees are in the ash tree family and there is now evidence that they are also being killed by the emerald ash borer. The proposed treatment would be done by The Davey Tree Expert Company and last for two to three years. The \$400 cost would be paid from the EAC budget. The proposed treatment would involve injecting into the trunk of the tree a chemical in the neonicotinoid family of pesticides at a time when the tree is not in bloom and attracting pollinators. Neonics are recognized as environmentally problematic in their own right, but treatment by injection when the tree is not in bloom will minimize environmental dispersion of the chemical. Absent treatment, there appears to be a high probability that the Pew Park fringe tree will eventually be infected by the emerald ash borer, and if that happens it would be too late to save the tree. Council approved authorizing chemical treatment of the fringe tree in Pew Park on a motion made, seconded and unanimously passed

Ron Ploeg is making progress on his self-funded effort approved by the EAC, to introduce more native plants into some of the Borough property located below the Traymore Lane Bridge. Residents are requested not to disturb these new plantings. Ron's ongoing efforts are very much appreciated.

The EAC received an excellent and highly informative report from Katie Rubin and Ron Ploeg about ways to minimize environmental and infrastructure damage from salt used in connection with snow plowing. The chloride in salt is a serious source of environmental harm. Less salt equals less harm. Liquid salt, referred to as brine or brining in the snow plowing world, is now used by PennDOT when conditions permit to pretreat roads before a snowstorm in place of salt crystals. Brining requires less salt to melt snow or ice because it is already in liquid form. Brining now appears to be the pretreatment of choice to reduce environmental harm, to save money because less salt is needed, and to reduce physical damage to infrastructure because each ton of salt has been estimated to cause in the range of \$1,000 of property damage over time.

Katie and Ron reached out to private snow removal contractors to collect more information. The contractors indicated they rely primarily on word of mouth when submitting bids to municipalities, and said they had no knowledge about Rose Valley. Several expressed interest in bidding for the Rose Valley snow plowing contract if their schedule permits and if given notice of our request for bids. Katie has names and contact numbers for Paula whenever Rose Valley request bids. Katie also learned that it is important to ask for bids earlier than we have done in the past because contractors have limited capacity and have often committed that capacity before we previously requested bids. Katie also obtained copies of contracts used by two of the private contractors for snow plowing.

It turns out that there are many nuances regarding snow and ice management. Matt Houtman will be asked to provide advice based on his experience about possibly mandating brining in lieu of crystallized salt for pretreating roads and possibly using sand instead of cinders when salting. He will also be asked to prepare a revised bid request for snow plowing and provide copies of any bid requests used by other municipalities. The hope is that the EAC members can then give their environmental advice at the September Council meeting so that Council can decide on the substance to be included in this year's request for snow plowing bids to be issued promptly thereafter.

HIGHWAYS, INSURANCE & TECHNOLOGY

Mr. Orr reported that Aqua is replacing the water mains on North and South Longpoint Lanes. Engineer Matt Houtmann will be instructed to ask Aqua how much money it would contribute if the Borough were to perform the road restoration work in lieu of Aqua.

LIBRARY

Ms. Mehan reported that the Library will hold a "Well Red" fundraiser and auction on September 20, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. and encouraged everyone to attend. There is an Art Exhibit at the Library featuring the Strath Haven High School's Spring 2025 Digital Photography students which will continue until August 15. Joining the Library staff are Mary Holman as a part-time Library Associate and Amanda Patterson as a part-time Development Coordinator focusing on fundraising. The Buildings and Grounds Committee is getting quotes to replace the hinges on the front doors.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Harner reported that the July Police Report showed 4 responses to incidents including 1 motor vehicle crash, 1 theft, 1 act of vandalism and 1 false alarm. The Fire Report showed 3 responses to automatic fire alarms and one natural gas check. Typical speed device data was received, and Town Watch patrols are proceeding as usual.

Representatives from local municipalities, including among others Nether Providence Township and Rose Valley, Rutledge, and Swarthmore Boroughs, plan to meet to explore the possible creation of a regional Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Authority. To help support this effort, local municipalities have been asked to submit a Letter of Intent form to the Governor's Center for Local Government Services to request technical assistance regarding Emergency Medical Services. Ms. Harner made a motion that the Council President be authorized to sign this Letter of Intent form, which was seconded and unanimously approved.

PLANNING

Mrs. Prown reported that McCusker Landscaping is working with the Thomases and the Seiders to develop replacement landscaping plans, and that these owners have signed Temporary Construction Easements to enable the contractor to work on the walking path and install replacement landscaping on their properties. The Borough is working on scheduling landscaping meetings with McCusker and the Strines and Lindsays, and on obtaining 10-foot-wide Temporary Construction Easements to facilitate installation of the estate fence and other work on the Gruen-Bascope', Strine and Lindsay properties. Some residents who own the land on which the municipal right-of-way exists along Rose Valley Road are considering giving it to the Borough to eliminate liability associated with the walking path.

Mrs. Prown made a motion that the Borough formally adopt its Nondiscrimination and Sexual Harassment Policy which was seconded and unanimously passed. The Borough's agreement with the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) for the \$100,000 walking path grant requires that the Borough make its employees and contractors aware of this policy.

FINANCES

Mr. Bourke reported that he had reconciled the Borough's bank accounts as shown in the July Status of Funds. Mr. Hare went over the July Income Reports. Mr. Neilson reviewed the August Bills for Approval. The Bills for Approval in the amount of \$45,193.80 were approved on a motion made, seconded and unanimously passed.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Mrs. Healy reported that Mr. Audley will hold a workday in the Saul Wildlife Sanctuary on Saturday, August 16 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Volunteers would be greatly appreciated.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Hale reported that the Swarthmore Fire Company's Advanced Life Support Ambulance went into service on August 1st as scheduled in the local municipalities ALS Cost Sharing Agreement. A ribbon-cutting ceremony will be held on August 18 at 10:00 am at the Swarthmore Fire House to celebrate this accomplishment.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Mr. Smith distributed a written report noting that the Pennsylvania Legislature eliminated the 30-day waiting period for passing a final budget so there will be no special budget approval meeting in December this year, or in any future year. His report also discussed the difference between an Ordinance and a Resolution.

There being no further business, on a motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the meeting was adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

Paula W. Healy, Secretary