

ROSE VALLEY BOROUGH
COUNCIL MEETING
September 10, 2025

The monthly meeting of the Rose Valley Borough Council was held on September 10, 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 Leonard Busby, Joe Hare, Cheryl Harner, Tony Orr and Shannon Prown. Mayor Bill Hale, Treasurer Chris Bourke, Controller John Neilson, Solicitor G. Guy Smith and Secretary Paula Healy were also present. Councilperson Kathryn Mehan was absent.

Residents attending the meeting were Fritz Blanchett, Carl Breithaupt, Jim Kaufman, Katie Rubin and Bill Thomas. Marty Spiegel, Mayor of Swarthmore Borough, attended as a guest.

MINUTES

After the Pledge of Allegiance, the Minutes of the August 13, 2025 Council Meeting were reviewed. Shannon Prown asked that she be referred to as “Ms.” instead of “Mrs.”. With this change, the Minutes were approved on a motion made, seconded and unanimously passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Swarthmore Mayor Marty Spiegel thanked Rose Valley Borough Council for their support of the multi-municipal Advanced Life Support (ALS) Ambulance Cost Sharing Agreement noting Swarthmore Fire Company succeeded in upgrading its Basic Life Support ambulance to ALS capability in the short time available. He highlighted Conlen Booth, Swarthmore Fire Chief, and Max Cooper, ER doctor and Nether Providence Township Commissioner, for their leadership roles in educating the four municipalities about the importance of this effort in light of the emergency created when Crozer-Chester Medical Center closed along with its ALS ambulance services. Council President Sullivan asked Mayor Spiegel to take our thanks back to Swarthmore Borough Council for all their hard work on the ambulance agreement.

Katie Rubin expressed her disappointment that the proposed bid request for snow & ice management services does not include the EAC recommendation that brining be required instead of salting for the pretreatment for roads for snow and ice when weather conditions permit. While recognizing that other municipalities in our area do not use brining, she advocated that Rose Valley adopt this method to reduce the environmental effects of road salt and asked that it at least be included as an option. She also offered to provide the names and addresses of other contractors who might be interested in submitting bids.

ENVIRONMENT & EAC

Discussion of the snow & ice management bid request continued with Katie noting that R.C. Marland, our snowplowing contractor for many years, has the necessary equipment to do brining but would need to shorten his spreader bar to fit our roads. Mr. Hale reported that he had talked

with Brian Tipping, Swarthmore Borough's director of public works, and Nick Dedominico, Nether Providence Township's director of public works, and both said their municipality does not use brining for pretreatment. Nick said NPT had tried brining pretreatment in the past but concluded it was not the best approach for its roads. He also said he did not know of any municipality in the local salt purchasing consortium that uses brine for pretreatment. Mr. Hale said he also talked with engineer Matt Houtmann who recommended we do not pretreat with brine. Mr. Sullivan noted that this is not as much a municipal engineer question as it is a public works department or snow removal contractor question since they are the ones who have the expertise. It was noted that PennDOT uses brine to pretreat all its roads when conditions permit, and that brining works well in parking lots where the curbing contains the brine and prevents run off. Brine can only be used as a pretreatment before it starts to snow when the roads are dry. Road salt must be used after the snow or sleet starts to fall and for pretreatment if the roads are already wet. Mr. Sullivan indicated there should be an option for brining as a road pretreatment with contractors asked to provide their cost to pretreat the Borough's roads with brine. Mr. Busby thanked EAC members Katie Rubin and Ron Ploeg for doing a tremendous amount of work this year investigating snow & ice management methods. Further discussion of this topic was postponed until the Highways report.

Mr. Busby reported that eels were observed in Minquas Run, a good indication for the environment, and noted that eels were the dominant native fish species in precolonial times. He also said the knotweed management project in the Chadwick preserve has made huge progress with no plants now more than knee high. Unfortunately, knotweed cannot be completely eradicated, only contained by ongoing efforts through targeted glyphosate treatment and stalk removal. Stilt weed management was not as successful this year, but this effort is still evolving. Volunteer Jim Audley is organizing another workday on October 19th to improve trails in the Saul Preserve.

HIGHWAYS

Mr. Orr made a motion which was duly seconded, that Council authorize the advertisement of the snow & ice management services bid request with contractors asked to provide their per-event cost to pretreat the Borough's roads with brine. A contractor who does not have the ability to pretreat with brine can state so and their bid will still be considered. The contractor will notify the Borough Manager prior to pretreatment of roads before a snow/ice event, however when and how to pretreat the roads will be left to the contractors discretion. Mr. Sullivan noted that Nether Providence Township indicated it does not have the manpower or equipment to provide snow & ice management services to Rose Valley Borough this winter. By unanimous vote, Mrs. Healy was authorized to advertise for bids for snow & ice management services as outlined above.

Aqua is in the process of replacing the water main on Longpoint Lane. Aqua has offered to contribute \$143,980 for mill and overlay, and \$246,625 for all restoration work including trench restoration, mill and overlay, if the Borough wants to perform the work itself. The Borough engineer estimates based on last year's unit costs that the Borough would save about \$50,000 if it did all the restoration work itself. Houtmann will ask Aqua when it plans to do the work to see if there is time to obtain bids for the work before deciding whether to accept Aqua's contribution. Mr. Orr made a motion that the Borough engineer be authorized to prepare the bid request for the

trench restoration, mill and overlay of Longpoint Lane, with the work to be done early next year to give the trench time to settle. This motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

LIBRARY

The Library will hold its next “Well Red” fundraising event on Saturday, September 20 at 7:00 p.m. Everyone is encouraged to purchase tickets to attend.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Ms. Harner reported the speed device data showed a large decrease in the number of vehicles traveling over 40 miles per hour. This improvement is likely a result of PennDOT’s May reduction in the speed limit from 35 to 30 mph as well as an additional State Police speed trap. She noted that a 30-mph speed limit sign needs to be installed at the Borough parking lot speed device location and that some road signage is blocked by overgrown vegetation. Mrs. Healy is working on the new sign and will have this vegetation cut back. The August Police Report showed 6 responses to incidents including 1 referral to another agency, 2 false alarms, 2 patrol checks, and 1 removal of animal debris on road. The Fire Report showed 4 responses including 3 automatic fire alarms and 1 for downed wires in the area of the School in Rose Valley.

The Town Watch patrols are proceeding as usual. Mrs. Harner plans to hold a Town Watch Appreciation Night in January of 2026, including a celebration of longtime central Rose Valley captain Pat Edmondson, who recently stepped down. The new Police Liaison for Rose Valley will be invited to attend.

PLANNING

Ms. Prown provided an update on the Rose Valley Road Pathway Project noting that Jamie Lindsay signed a Temporary Construction Easement Agreement to enable the contractor to work on the walking path and install replacement landscaping on her property. The Strines and Gruen-Bascope’ are reviewing their Temporary Construction Easement Agreements. Matt McCusker met with Jamie Lindsay and the Strines to discuss their replacement landscaping. McCusker is having his landscape architect develop replacement landscaping plans for the Thomas, Seider, Strine and Lindsay properties.

Ms. Prown also noted that the Borough previously indicated that it would be responsible for the construction, maintenance and repair of the walking path and that homeowners would not be required to remove snow and ice. Some homeowners have requested that the Borough put this in writing in a letter and have also asked about liability. Solicitor Smith has advised that homeowners who own the land in the municipal right-of-way along Rose Valley Road may want to give this land to the Borough to eliminate potential liability. Council reached consensus that the Borough will send a letter to the homeowners along the pathway memorializing the points mentioned above.

Discussion turned to Resolution 7 – 2025 authorizing the Council President to sign the Twelfth Addendum to the Lease Agreement between the Rose Valley Folk and the Borough. This

addendum states that the Folk will rent office space to the Borough for an annual nominal dollar for as long as the Lease shall remain in effect, in conjunction with the Borough repealing the Rose Valley Borough Amusement Tax Ordinance. This addendum also states that the rental shall include heat and electricity, that the Borough shall permit the Folk to use the stone-walled garage on the Gate House property for storage, that the Borough shall provide street lighting along Old Mill Lane and the Old Mill parking lot, and that the Borough may use the Folk Hall up to three times a month for Borough related meetings. After some discussion it was agreed that the Addendum should be revised to state that the initial term of the lease shall be for ten years, with subsequent ten-year terms thereafter.

Mr. Orr said he was in favor of providing some relief to the Folk, possibly by exempting them from the collection of the amusement tax for a number of years, but that he was opposed to repeal of the tax altogether. It was noted that Hedgerow Theatre was exempted from the tax when it became a 501.c.3 non-profit organization, and that Rose Valley Swimming Pool Corporation was exempted last year, leaving the Rose Valley Folk as the only organization paying the tax. The Folk has asked that it be exempted from the amusement tax similar to the Pool, noting projected high expenses for maintaining the Old Mill building and grounds and making improvements to remain competitive with other wedding venues. Mr. Smith indicated that the Folk is well aware that exempting the Pool but not the Folk appears to be an unequal application of a tax which could be challenged. Mr. Hale noted that while the Folk has been profitable in recent years, it is projecting a substantial loss this fiscal year due to the costs of replacing the carpet and dance floor in the main hall. The Folk paid \$12,484.50 in amusement tax in 2024 and \$10,526 in 2025. Ms. Prown made a motion that Council approve Resolution 7 – 2025 authorizing the Council President to execute the Twelfth Addendum to the Agreement of Lease dated January 1, 1975 between the Rose Valley Folk and the Borough of Rose Valley with the change regarding term discussed above. This motion was seconded and approved by a vote of 5-1, with Mr. Orr voting nay.

Ms. Prown then made a motion that Council authorize the advertisement of Ordinance 360 repealing Ordinances 198, 335 and 356, thereby abolishing the Rose Valley Borough Amusement Tax, for consideration at the October Council meeting. The motion was seconded and approved by a vote of 5-1, with Mr. Orr voting nay.

FINANCES

Mr. Bourke reported that he had reconciled the Borough's bank accounts shown in the August Status of Funds. Mr. Hare went over the August Income Reports. Mr. Neilson reviewed the September Bills for Approval. The Bills in the amount of \$16,512.54 from the General Fund were approved on a motion made, seconded and unanimously passed.

PennDOT performed its annual audit of the Borough's Liquid Fuels Tax Fund, which the Borough refers to as its Highway Aid Fund. The auditor did not approve of the expenditure of \$22,606.12 for the replacement of the pole and arm supporting the yellow flashing warning lights for the Hedgerow curve which blew down last year because the work was not put out for bid. PennDOT requested that the Borough reimburse the Highway Aid Fund in this amount. On a motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund (Highway Aid

Fund) was reimbursed \$22,606.12 from the Borough's Road Improvement Fund. Mr. Sullivan noted that while funds are moving from one Borough account to another, no money is leaving the Borough to go back to the State.

There being no further business, on a motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the meeting was adjourned at 9:44 p.m.

Paula W. Healy, Secretary