

Board of Supervisors

MINUTES

April 8, 2009

Jim Brownlow, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Supervisors Present: Karen Bedics, Jim Brownlow, Barbara Lindtner, and Volker Oakey **Absent:** Rob Zisko
Also present: Scott MacNair, Township Co-Solicitor; Sandy Everitt, Secretary/Treasurer; Mark Laudenslager, Police Chief; and Rich Schilling, Township Manager.

Approval of Minutes

Barbara Lindtner **moved** to adopt the minutes of the January 5, 2009, regular meeting (followed the Re-Organization Meeting) as amended. Volker Oakey **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously.

Volker Oakey **moved** to adopt the January 27, 2009, minutes as presented. Karen Bedics **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously.

Karen Bedics **moved** to adopt the February 11, 2009, meeting minutes as amended. Barbara Lindtner **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously.

Barbara Lindtner **moved** to adopt the February 24, 2009, meeting minutes as presented. Volker Oakey **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously.

Volker Oakey **moved** to adopt the March 24, 2009, meeting minutes as amended. Jim Brownlow **seconded**; the motion passed unanimously.

Bills for Approval

Karen Bedics **moved** to approve the following bills paid from March 25 – April 8, 2009.

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|------------|
| 1. General Fund: | \$32,973.19 | 4. Liquid Fuels Fund: | \$ 794.90 |
| 2. Subdivision & Escrow: | \$ 9,632.37 | 5. Springtown Farmers Market: | \$1,352.39 |
| 3. Open Space Fund: | \$ 2,813.40 | | |

Volker Oakey **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously. Karen noted that the General Fund payments included the first quarter donation of \$6,250 to UBREMS.

Reports

Road Department (posted) – Karen Bedics asked that the township contact PennDOT about a sign that is down on Richlandtown Pike near the State Road intersection. Chief Laudenslager will report this to PennDOT.

Police (available on the website) – The police investigated 156 incidents in March, which included 19 criminal offenses, and 15 accidents involving 19 vehicles with 2 injuries and no fatalities. \$8,357 worth of property was stolen with recovery of \$350. As requested by the Board, a log documenting the roads the department provided traffic enforcement on since the February 11 meeting was provided in the report. Officers are required to spend 2 hours daily on heavily traveled roads unless unable to because of more pressing needs. Karen commended the police department and Rich Schilling for their help on April 4 with the Cooks Creek Watershed Roadside Cleanup. Jim Brownlow commented that the police provided this support without any overtime pay. Chief Laudenslager will contact PennDOT about placing reflectors on the Richlandtown Pike/State Road stop sign poles. If PennDOT will not install the reflectors, Chief Laudenslager will determine the cost involved for the township to purchase the reflectors and advise the Board by email before the work is done.

Township Manager / Zoning Report - (Zoning Report is posted) – Rich Schilling met with Jeff Lindtner, Rich Pursell and a representative from Bucks County Conservation District on the Dirt & Gravel Program. Subsequently, he and Rich Pursell submitted a grant application to Bucks County on April 7 to assist with needed drainage repairs. Rich learned today that a grant for \$16,000+ would likely be approved. The Road Department will install stone along a tributary to Cooks Creek after they obtain DEP permits. Rich received a request from the Open Space Committee to

ask for Board authorization to dismiss Ted Evans from further service on rewriting the Open Space Plan. They are dissatisfied with the work he performed thus far on revising the Plan and updating the associated maps. The Committee wants to continue the task, utilizing a sub-committee to evaluate what still needs to be done. They may request additional funds to have the plan completed by Heritage Conservancy after that review. Barbara Lindtner pointed out that funding for Open Space projects is dependent upon a timely completion of this Plan. Hans Reimann said the Open Space subcommittee will meet tomorrow night. They plan to have a report ready to present to the full OSC by the second May meeting. Karen Bedics **moved** to release Ted Evans from his contract to complete the Open Space Plan revision and delegate the project to the Open Space Committee to come up with an outline to present to the Board along with any costs associated with the plan. Volker Oakey **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously.

On zoning issues, Rich stated he conducted 2 Use & Occupancy Resale inspections as well as processing and issuing 19 zoning permits in March. He processed 3 ZHB applications that will be heard by the ZHB on April 20.

Public Comments on Agenda Items

Hans Reimann thanked the township and the police for their support during the Cooks Creek Watershed Cleanup event. He also thanked the Water Authority for turning the historic water system into something of which the township can be proud.

Recognition of Springtown Water Authority

Jim Brownlow congratulated Ken Simmons and Dick Cernok, representing the Springtown Water Authority, for winning the 2009 Water System of the Year Award. The PA Rural Water Association presented the award at their annual banquet held on Monday, April 6. This was a significant honor in that there are 900+ water authorities in Pennsylvania that were eligible for this award. Jim personally thanked the all-volunteer Board who worked countless hours to turn the system around to what it is today. Following a standing ovation from those present, Ken Simmons gave a brief history of the Water Authority since the current Board took over in September 2006. Ken expressed special thanks to the PA Rural Water Association for their help to the Authority since its inception. Dick Cernok was one of three nominated for the Decision Maker of the Year. Ken said this award represented the work of 10 people, all volunteers except one who does the water testing 5 days a week:

Dick Cernok presented the Board with a framed plaque of the award to be displayed in the Township building. Dick commented that he has worked on many Boards, but the Water Authority Board is most impressive because all Board members are volunteers who are passionate about what they do and are willing to do whatever it takes to get the job done. Jim Brownlow noted that it was an honor for Dick Cernok to even be one of three nominated for Decision Maker of the Year, in that he was selected from at least 9,000 candidates.

Ken Simmons closed by stating the Authority spent approximately \$650,000 to bring the system to where it is now. The new storage tank is in place. The next goal is to replace old, small water lines. They have applied for a \$500,000 grant in three different categories. They will learn by May 15 about one of the grants. If they receive one of these grants, they will complete their 5-year plan within 3 years.

Conditional Use Hearing

Scott MacNair, Township Co-Solicitor, opened the Conditional Use Hearing to consider the application of Metro PCS for a conditional use approval to extend an existing monopole and co-locate telecommunications antennas on the extension. The monopole exists on a property zoned Planned Industrial that is owned by Naceville Materials (TMP 42-4-69) at 483 Springfield Street, Coopersburg, PA 18036.

Barbara Lindtner **moved** to approve the application of Metro PCS Communications, subject to the conditions stipulated by the solicitor and revised by applicant's counsel as contained within the written Hearing decision, for Conditional Use approval to install wireless communications antennae and related equipment cabinets on the existing monopole located at the site. Karen Bedics **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously. Scott MacNair noted that a written decision will be issued within 45 days of this hearing. If anyone wishes to appeal the decision, they will have 30 days from the issuance of the written decision to do so. (Appended to these minutes is an approved copy of the written hearing decision.)

Old Business

1. Budget Review – The Board received the March budget in a new format that shows the monthly and year-to-date income and expenses. Jim noted that approximately \$277,635 of budgeted income was received compared to a projected budget income of \$360,402, so income is running behind. Jim noted that actual income received was higher for the first quarter, because of \$130,000 non-budgeted extraordinary income that was received. The expenses for the same period were approximately \$57,000 over the budgeted amount for the period. Jim pointed out that real estate tax revenues do not begin coming to the Township until April.

Volker Oakey asked a number of questions about different budget categories. The treasurer will redistribute the pension payments into the months where payment of those funds takes place. Although the income portion of the budget has been redesigned to reflect income projections based on the past five years, the expenses have not yet been completed in the new format, but will be in the future as time permits.

2. Stone Bids – No award was made for stone bids at the March 24, 2009, Board meeting because neither bidder submitted a bid on all the stones listed in the bid documents. Since that meeting, Bob Wynn, Township Engineer, contacted both bidders to determine if they would permit the Township to choose the lowest bidder for each kind of stone. Bob contacted both companies and they agreed to permit the Township to do that. At Bob Wynn’s recommendation in his April 2 letter to the Board, Jim Brownlow **moved** to award the stone bids as follows:

- Hanson Aggregates – screenings, 2A stone, R-5 rock and R-6 rock for the approximate total FOB price of \$12,830, conditional upon receiving a performance bond.
- Plumstead Materials - #4 ballast (4” clean), R-4 rock and surge, for the approximate total FOB price of \$2,950 with no need of a performance bond because bid amount is under \$5,000.

Barbara Lindtner **seconded**. The bid was based upon the original bid documents submitted to the Board at the March 24, 2009, meeting. Jim called for the question. The motion **passed** unanimously.

3. Policy for waiving permit fees – At the request of a supervisor, discussion about establishing a potential policy for waiving permit fees was tabled until the April 28 meeting.

New Business

1. GIS Implementation – Bill Brokaw, Mine Spring GIS, submitted an outline of possible GIS (Geographic Information System) implementation steps for Springfield Township to take. Bill headed the GIS department for Heritage Conservancy until the department was phased out. He now provides service to Heritage as needed as an independent contractor. Bill discussed both what GIS is as well as how various organizations implement its use. GIS is a layering system, with each layer containing different data and/or attributes. The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission currently has the most accurate source data. The software permits the data to be pulled up and displayed. ESRI makes the most popular software—ArcGIS—that most agencies use.

The most common ways in which organizations implement GIS use are:

- Farm it out to someone to implement for them
- Hire an employee and institute an in-house GIS department (grants may be available to do this)
- Train someone on staff, providing assistance for that person from an outside specialist

Most townships choose the third option, and he has provided the specialized assistance required for a number of townships. His proposed a three-phase approach for Springfield Township:

1. Obtain the software and learn how the software works. A textbook entitled *Getting to Know ArcGIS Desktop: Updated for ArcGIS 9.3*, comes with a temporary 6-month software package. ESRI also provides an excellent online community, which is an important resource.
2. Data acquisition and management (organization). Bucks County Tax Map Parcel information can be purchased for \$2,000. Bob Keough, Senior GIS Planner for the Bucks County Planning Commission’s County GIS system, provides on site support as part of the purchase price.
3. Implement a project

Rich Schilling shared Bill Brokaw’s proposal with Bobb Carson, who felt it was a good plan for Springfield Township. Following the steps above, Bill recommends 8 two-hour basic training sessions at the Township building.

Hardware will be required in addition to software. Bill Brokaw said a lot of data is available free of charge. Bill suggested that the Township request “Meta Data” from Lombardo & Associates, which is a professional standard.

Barbara Lindtner **moved** to authorize Rich Schilling to proceed with acquisition of GIS software, hardware, required data and related training within the budgeted amount, utilizing Bill Brokaw as needed. Volker Oakey **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously.

2. Acknowledgement of Agricultural Security Applications – The Board acknowledged receipt of the following three applications for addition to the Agricultural Security Area:

- Nevada Mease – TMPs 42-12-112-1 and 42-12-91 (53.35 acres)
- Harriet & Rober Ciccone – TMPs 42-12-110-1; 42-12-110-2-1; 42-12-154-1; 42-12-92 (43.57 acres)
- Jay and Joshua Geissinger – TMP 42-1-4-1 (22.848 acres)

Scott MacNair will advertise these applications in The Morning Call, after which there will be a 15-day period for public comment. The applications will then go to the various Planning Commissions for their recommendations.

3. Grant for Police Officers – Rich Schilling said he and Chief Laudenslager just became aware of federal grant money available as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 for police departments. Chief Laudenslager reported on the COPS Hiring Recovery Program (CHRP), which provides grant money to rehire officers who were laid off due to budgetary constraints, maintain officers slated for layoff, or to expand existing police departments. Funding is for entry-level officers for three years—both salary and benefits—with provision for salary increases that are part of a contract. The only expense during the first three years to the township would be for their training, uniforms, equipment, etc. The municipality must agree to keep the officers for at least one year after the three-year period. The grant application must be submitted by Tuesday, April 14. There is no limit on the number of new officers a township can request. Chief Laudenslager would like to submit an application for two new entry-level officers.

Because of the late hour (11 p.m.), there was not time to discuss if the township should expand the police department. Jim pointed out, however, that this unusual opportunity would not likely ever be available again. Rich Schilling said this was the first time he was aware of a fully funded grant for three years. Normally, a grant is for 100% the first year, 75% (or less) the second year, and 50% the third year for salary only, with no coverage for benefits. Due to the need to submit the application next Tuesday, Jim Brownlow felt the township should submit a grant application, with the understanding that the Board will have time later to discuss whether they want to expand the police department.

It was the consensus of the Board that the application should be for two officers. Jim Brownlow also asked that additional information be obtained about the details of the grant, for example, if it will cover contract salary increases over the three-year period. Barbara Lindtner **moved** to authorize Rich Schilling and Mark Laudenslager to proceed with a grant application for two entry-level police officers. Karen Bedics **seconded** the motion. Volker Oakey is concerned about moving ahead with programs like this without a plan in place. He will back this motion with the condition that the Board can back off if the grant is approved, and that a plan must be put in place before the staff increase is implemented. If there is any language that commits the township to move ahead if the grant is awarded, Rich will not proceed with the application. Karen requested that Chief Laudenslager come up with a basic plan for development of the department for the Board to review, which he agreed to do. Jim Brownlow called for the question. The motion **passed** unanimously.

Public Comment – None

Supervisors Comments

Volker Oakey obtained information about grant money available for energy management and alternative energy at a conference he attended recently. Of particular interest to Volker is funding that municipalities can apply for that will be available in June or July this year. The money can be used for energy management and/or for alternative energy. Volker would like to look into obtaining this funding. The first step for energy saving would be to have an energy audit of the township building. The findings from that audit would be prioritized into 6 or 7 items that would take care of about 90% of the buildings energy loss. In addition to saving money for the township, Volker thinks it is important as a way to educate township residents about energy saving procedures, what the benefits are to them for conserving energy, where to go for funding, etc. He thinks the municipal building should provide a good example for township residents of what can be done.

Barbara Lindtner **moved** to authorize Volker to investigate grant opportunities for energy savings and alternative energy. Jim Brownlow **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously.

Karen Bedics asked Rich Schilling to thank Rich Pursell, Jim Hoferica and the police officers for their help in assisting in the roadside cleanup on April 4.

Second, she suggested that the township send a letter of commendation and perhaps a gift certificate (or individual gift certificates) to the board members of the Springtown Water Authority in recognition of their achievement of earning the 2009 Water System of the Year Award. Karen Bedics **moved** to authorize Rich Schilling to send a letter of commendation to the Springtown Water Authority along with \$50 gift card per couple (to be used at a restaurant or place of their choice) to give them an opportunity to celebrate their achievement. Barbara Lindtner **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously.

Karen asked Bob Wynn to provide a copy of his summary of the Storm Water Ordinance to each Board member so they can be prepared to discuss it at the next meeting.

Barbara Lindtner is concerned about the decision the Board made to appoint UBREMS as the township's first responder. She feels that until support data is available for a meeting with the County, we should return to the way it originally was handled when a 911 call came in, which is to have the County dispatch the closest available responder. Chief Laudenslager said that certain calls dictate a response according to what the injury or illness is, not necessarily the time it takes to respond to a non-significant 911 call. He thinks the township should designate that the County should contact the ambulance that can get to an emergency call the quickest. He does not think UBREMS can service the western end of the township as quickly as St. Luke's can. After a period of discussion, Barbara Lindtner **moved** that the township rescind the designation of UBREMS as first responder and permit the County to handle call assignments. Volker Oakey **seconded**. Voting **Yes**: Jim Brownlow, Barbara Lindtner, Volker Oakey. Voting **No**: Karen Bedics. The motion **carried**. Jim qualified that this change was made until the township obtains adequate information to support a single (or multiple) first responder designations.

Barbara asked Scott MacNair if he had any update on the status of the PPL situation. Scott said the PUC is meeting on April 16 and April 30; however, they do not release the agenda until the day before the meetings, so he does not know when Springfield Township will be on the agenda. Whenever the PUC does make a decision, they will issue a written decision within 3 or 4 days to Scott Rubin. Scott MacNair will keep the Board informed of any information he receives about this situation.

Rich Schilling reminded the Board that the Act 537 public meeting will taken place on Thursday, April 23, at the Springtown Fire Department, at 7 p.m.

Adjournment

At 11:30 p.m., Jim Brownlow **moved** to adjourn the meeting. Karen Bedics **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra L. Everitt
Secretary/Treasurer

Next meetings: Act 537 Public Meeting - April 23, 2009, 7:00 p.m.; Regular Board Meeting - April 28, 7:00 p.m.
Approved: April 28, 2009