

**Board of Supervisors**

**MINUTES**

September 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 Rob Zisko **Absent:** Volker Oakey  
**Also present:** Sandy Everitt, Secretary/Treasurer and Rich Schilling, Township Manager.

**Presentation of Waste Watcher Award**

Karen Bedics introduced Art Feltes, Vice President of the Professional Recyclers of Pennsylvania and the Bucks County Recycling Coordinator. Karen acknowledged EAC members and those who helped with the 2008 Tire Recycling project who were present: Cindy and Jerry McCurdy, Hans Reimann, EAC Vice Chairman; Scott Douglas, EAC Chairman; Rich Schilling, Township Manager; and Karen Bedics. Mr. Feltes said this award was begun 10 years ago to recognize programs that went beyond the “bare minimum” and noted that the tire recycling program definitely met that criteria, in that old tires represent a particular problem. He noted that the “road less traveled” is a prime place for people to dump old tires, but that our township found a way to recycle over 900 old tires into energy. On behalf of the Professional Recyclers of PA (PROP), Keystone Chapter of the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) and PA Waste Industries Association (PWIA), he presented the EAC with the *2009 Recognition for Outstanding Achievement in Recycling* award. Scott Douglas, EAC Chairman, gave special recognition to Cindy McCurdy, who originated the idea for this event and did all of the preparation work. Cindy thanked the Board for permitting the EAC to hold this event, and thanked all those who helped make the first event so successful. The EAC used the funds earned from this event to buy supplies for the annual roadside cleanup, cover costs for the natural gardens at the township, cover expenses related to dedication of the Veterans’ Memorial Garden around the flagpole, and to print in color the Sewage Maintenance brochure designed by Kristy Aller of the EAC. This year’s tire recycling event will take place on Saturday, September 19. In addition to tires, they will also be accepting non-leaking car and truck batteries. Scott Douglas invited people to help with this event by bringing their old tires or by volunteering to help on September 19.

**Approval of Minutes**

Rob Zisko **moved** to accept the August 25, 2009, minutes as presented. Barbara Lindtner **seconded**; the motion **passed**.

**Bills for Approval**

Barbara Lindtner **moved** to approve the following bills paid from August 26 through September 8, 2009:

- |                         |              |                   |             |
|-------------------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------|
| 1. General Fund         | \$ 23,197.66 | 4. Open Space     | \$ 8,000.00 |
| 2. Subdivision & Escrow | \$ 7,433.13  | 5. Farmers Market | \$ 442.28   |
| 3. Payroll              | \$ 25,547.47 |                   |             |

Karen Bedics **seconded**; the motion **passed**.

**Reports**

**Road Department** – Posted. Rob Zisko commented that the stabilization of the Freeh Lane stream bank was very well done by the Road Department. Barbara Lindtner said the work held up well during the last very heavy rain event.

**Police** – Rich Schilling reported for Chief Laudenslager. In August 2009, the police handled 173 incidents, including 12 criminal offenses. Property valued at \$4,562.00 was stolen with \$15 recovered. There were 4 accidents involving 6 vehicles, 15 people and 6 injuries. For August 2008, 46 incidents were handled by the police (with 2 officers on staff last year; 4 officers in 2009). The police department is attempting to obtain monthly statistics from the State Police. Karen Bedics asked that the log of where officers have patrolled be included in future monthly reports.

**Township Manager / Zoning Report**

The Act 537 revision is now being reviewed by the DEP. The Board was given a breakdown of costs for producing the Act 537 revision, as requested at the last meeting. Rich noted that the first two vouchers paid in 2009 were actually carryover expenses from 2008. There were billing discrepancies that were not resolved in time to pay the invoices in 2008. The amount authorized by the Board for 2009 will not be exceeded. Barbara Lindtner asked that a note be added to the year-end budget stating a total of \$76,802.98 were 2008 expenses paid in 2009.

Rich submitted the CDBG Grant paperwork to Bucks County on August 28. The police contract is in the final stages of preparation and a meeting will be scheduled with Officer McDonald, police union representative, this month. A summary of police minor equipment expenditures (requested by Karen Bedics) was provided. Rich noted that the \$4,017.55 cost for 4 taser guns put this category over the budgeted amount. This cost was actually donated by a township resident, with the donation recorded in the income section. Barbara asked that this also be noted on the year-end budget report.

The hardware was purchased to implement the GIS system and the software purchase is being coordinated with Bill Brokaw, the GIS consultant.

Rich noted that there is a voting location change for residents in the West section of the township for the September 29 special election to replace Senator Wonderling. Residents will vote at the Springtown Church of the Brethren on Passer Road instead of the Zion Hill Lutheran Church.

Rich gave a report on zoning activity for August, which included doing 2 Use & Occupancy inspections and processing 17 zoning and 6 building permits. In the future, "Miscellaneous" permits will have an "m" beside the Zoning designation on the chart provided to the supervisors to identify "Miscellaneous" zoning permits. Rich Schilling will continue copying the permits, at least for the short term.

### **Public Comment on Agenda Items**

**Steve Doncevic** asked how many burglaries occurred in the township in August. Rich noted there were 2 burglaries with another unsuccessful attempt. There is no breakdown of the number of residents from whom the \$4,562 worth of property was stolen.

### **Old Business**

**Budget Update** – Barbara Lindtner had several questions about real estate and EIT taxes yet to come in. Rich noted that Real Estate Transfer Tax receipts seem to come to the township far behind when property sales actually take place. Resale Use & Occupancy inspections have slowed down dramatically over the past month (which are required before homes are sold), and unless home sales pick up considerably, Rich does not anticipate high revenue from Real Estate Transfer tax. The township will be over budget on revenue for permits issued. Karen Bedics commented on the high computer repair costs. She provided a printout of the total paid for computer repairs and asked Sandy Everitt to provide copies of the bills showing the breakdown of what repairs were actually done for the September 22 Board meeting. Jim Brownlow asked Sandy to try to categorize the problems represented on the bills. Rich noted that Paul Kiesel inherited a computer system that was poorly set up. Rich gave examples, which included the fact that he could access police information on his computer upstairs, and police could access information on administrative computers.

### **New Business**

- 1. Request for Supplemental Funding of \$1,500 per acre for a 130-acre Agricultural Easement on Jeffrey, Cheyenne & Nevada Mease Properties – 2655 & 2546 Slifer Valley Road** – (deferred until later in the meeting)
- 2. Open Space Committee Request to Fund Soft Costs for Steve & Denise Sandy's Donated Easement of 21 acres (3550 Haupts Bridge Road)** - David Long, Open Space Chairman, visited this property along with two other members of the Committee. During that evaluation visit, Mr. Sandy indicated he was willing to "donate" the conservation easement on their property. The Committee reviewed this request against the approved process for handling such donations and is recommending that the township cover the soft costs (between \$21,000 - \$25,000) associated with acquiring the easement. Rob Zisko **moved** to authorize the Open Space Committee to proceed with the approved process for securing a donated easement on TMP 42-17-46-1, owned by Steve & Denise Sandy. Barbara Lindtner **seconded**; the motion **passed**.

**3. Resolution 2009-015 Thanking Bucks County for Work Done on Knecht's Bridge** – Barbara Lindtner moved that Resolution 2009-015 commending Bucks County for the work they did on Knecht's Bridge to reduce the potential for future damage to the bridge and requesting the county to help acquire additional deterrence safeguards for this historic bridge be adopted. Rob Zisko seconded; the motion passed.

**4. Acknowledgement of 2010 Minimum Municipal Pension Obligation (MMO)** – The MMO amount for the non-uniform pension plan for 2010 is \$57,196. The 2009 MMO for the non-uniform plan was \$49,570.) The 2010 MMO for the police pension plan is \$64,506. (The 2009 MMO for the police plan was \$21,729.) The higher 2010 figure for the police pension is in part due to the addition of 2 full-time police officers. Further, the increases in both plans were exacerbated by the poor investment year, specifically, the valuation that was done at the close of the market December 31, 2008. Barbara Lindtner indicated that the breakdown of the township's pension investments is roughly 55% equity and 45% fixed income, with low international exposure—a balanced portfolio. The township is required by Act 149 to provide defined benefit pension plans for the police.

Jim Brownlow thanked Barbara Lindtner for her assistance in helping the Board understand the pension plans.

Steve Doncevic asked if the taxpayers actually fund the pension plans and was told that they do fund the plans.

Rob Zisko moved to acknowledge and approve the 2010 Minimum Municipal Obligation contribution of \$64,506 for the police pension plan and \$57,196 for the non-uniformed pension plan. Karen Bedics seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

#### **New Business (continued)**

**1. Request for Supplemental Funding of \$1,500 per acre for a 130-acre Agricultural Easement on Jeffrey, Cheyenne & Nevada Mease Properties – 2655 & 2546 Slifer Valley Road** – The county historically has been giving \$12,000 an acre for easements. The Mease properties ranked second on the County list, and because of budgetary issues, the County has offered only \$10,000 per acre for the Mease's properties. The Meases are requesting additional funding of \$1,500 per acre for 130 acres.

The Open Space Committee reviewed the request at their September 1 meeting and based upon current rules, submitted a recommendation for the Board's review. A Board member requested that the Board discuss this request in Executive Session (permitted when discussing purchase of real estate rights or real estate itself).

Cheyenne and Nevada Mease shared their personal reasons for needing to obtain additional funding before the Board and the Open Space Committee went into Executive Session. Primarily, with the addition of the combined Mease properties (totaling 130 acres), there will be a total of 406 acres of Slifer Valley Road properties in conservation. Of these 406 acres, the Mease property will comprise about 32% of preserved property in this valuable, scenic portion of the township. The Meases have until September 13 to respond to the County's offer (yes, no or a request for an extension).

#### **Recess for Executive Session - 8:40 p.m. – 9:12 p.m.**

Jim Brownlow expressed the Board's desire to preserve the scenic Slifer Valley corridor. A lot of time and money has already been expended to preserve a number of properties. The Board wants to do whatever they can to preserve this additional 130 acres. Both the Board and the County have established rules. Because the County changed their rules this year, the situation that now exists has been created. If the township pays the additional money requested for the Mease properties, it would be breaking the township's rules. However, since this corridor is so important to preserve, the Board asked that the Mease families request a 30-day extension from Bucks County. The Board will task the Open Space Committee with approaching Heritage Conservancy to determine if they will put up some of the remaining funds needed. When that information is available, Springfield Township may also put up some of the needed funds. Jim expressed the Board's appreciation to the Meases for being willing to go forward with preservation of their properties. Mrs. Mease will be given a copy of the minutes of this meeting should they be needed for any of the personal situations involved with their properties. The Board will attempt to get an update on progress on this situation for their next meeting on September 22. Cheyenne Mease thanked the Board for the time they spent reviewing their situation.

#### **Correspondence**

Barbara Lindtner asked for an update on the Estates at Cooks Creek. Rich Schilling said that there was a problem with erosion/sediment control issues on the site. The township posted a *Stop Work* order and the developer has worked with the township's engineer and the Bucks County Conservation District to come into compliance. They are now in compliance and the *Stop Work* order has been lifted. There was discussion about what would happen if the stormwater facilities on the site failed after the 18-month period is over during which we retain escrow funds to guarantee the improvements. Barbara Lindtner said that this is one of the decisions the Board needs to work with the Planning Commission to resolve: who will monitor stormwater facilities on approved subdivisions. Because there were a number of engineering questions, Rich Schilling was asked to tell Bob Wynn that the Board has questions about monitoring stormwater facilities, especially those in high risk areas such as Bodder Road.

### **Public Comments - None**

### **Supervisors Comments**

**Karen Bedics** reminded those present about the Veterans Memorial Garden Dedication scheduled for Sunday, September 13 at 2:00 p.m.

SbULU is planning a fundraiser to help with the PPL litigation costs. They are considering a spaghetti dinner for this purpose.

Karen asked whether a fall Board meeting is scheduled in Zion Hill. Rich Schilling will check on this and report to the Board.

Karen circulated a sign-up sheet for Board members to work at the township booth at Community Day, September 26.

A resident approached Karen about having a mobile, low-cost pet vaccination in the township. Karen asked if the township parking lot could be used, with the small meeting room bathroom available should someone need it. It was the consensus of the Board that this event could be scheduled if the provider had adequate liability insurance and if those who attended would sign a waiver exempting the township from liability if their pet(s) had a reaction to the vaccination. Karen will check into these issues before scheduling this event.

Finally, the fall 2009 newsletter will be mailed tomorrow.

### **Adjournment**

At 9:27 p.m., Karen Bedics **moved** to adjourn the meeting. Rob Zisko **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra L. Everitt  
Secretary/Treasurer

Next meeting: September 22, 2009  
Approved: September 22, 2009