

Board of Supervisors

MINUTES

JANUARY 24, 2023

IN-PERSON/VIRTUAL MEETING

Supervisors Present: Jim Hopkins, Tony Matzura, James Nilsen, and Bill Ryker.

Also present: Rich Pursell (Township Manager/Public Works Director), Lisa Gerhart (Secretary), Michael McDonald (Chief of Police), Tim Fulmer (Township Engineer) and Scott MacNair, Esq. (Township Solicitor).

Mr. Matzura called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. William Kunze and Mr. Jim Drennan of Heritage Conservancy were present to discuss the trees down at the Fuller – Pursell Preserve on Slifer Valley Road. Mr. Kunze read a letter he had sent to the Board of Supervisors the day before. He acknowledged there is a large amount of trees felled. He admits they dropped the ball with communicating to the Township about taking down the trees. He advised they had been preparing for this as having planted many trees there over the last ten years. He said there are 3,000 or so Ash trees that need to be taken down and approximately 1,000 were felled and those were ones close to the road or trails. He discussed meeting with the EAC and Parks and Land Preservation Board to talk about the situation. Mr. Bill McCarthy was present, who owns the farm adjoining the preserve. He said there was a lot of collateral damage such as healthy beech, walnut and so forth that was taken down as well. Ms. Rosie Macilvain, Pleasant View, also said she was devastated by the trees and that it was an “absolute disaster.” Ms. Lorna Yearwood, EAC Chair, wanted to know why so many healthy trees were taken down as well. She said it seems they took way more than necessary. Mr. Scott Mullen, Lehnberg Road, asked about removing dead Ash trees that are adjacent to roads. It was discussed that property owners are legally responsible for trees in the right of way, not the township. It was mentioned the need to perhaps put a note to that effect in the Township Newsletter. Mr. Frank Hollenbach, Parks & Land Preservation Board, said Heritage needs to reach out to EAC and they need to work together. He said they should have known about the tree felling that was happening. It was discussed that this may be added as a possible agenda item for February 28, 2023 meeting but as Mr. Matzura mentioned, the trees cannot be put back standing.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. Pursell discussed financials. The consensus of the Board was to postpone accepting the report and fund balances as presented.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

(November 19, 2022 – December 22, 2022)

General Fund	\$33,514.22	Open Space Fund	\$5,025.41
Capital Reserve Fund	\$2,950	Liquid Fuels Fund	\$5,867
Escrows	\$1,288.40	Street Light Fund	\$661.27

Motion by Mr. Hopkins, seconded by Mr. Nilsen and unanimously carried approving payment of bills from December 23, 2022 – January 20, 2023.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Mr. Hopkins, seconded by Mr. Nilsen and unanimously carried approving the December 15, 2022 minutes as presented. Motion by Mr. Nilsen, seconded by Mr. Ryker and unanimously carried approving the December 27, 2022 minutes as presented. Motion by Mr. Nilsen, seconded by Mr. Ryker and unanimously carried approving the minutes for January 3, 2023 as presented.

BUSINESS ITEMS

Burke Subdivision Financial Security Agreement - Solicitor MacNair advised in February 2022 the Burke subdivision was approved for the property next to the Township Building. The applicant requests deferral of financial security. Solicitor MacNair advised this has been done before in the past and in other cases. Mr. Burke advised he would like to put this off as the plans with his children living on the lots changed a bit. Mr. Fulmer discussed some of the options listed in the MPC as far as recording the subdivision plan and noting on the record that financial security must be provided in advance of escrow. Motion made by Mr. Nilsen, seconded by Mr. Hopkins and unanimously carried allowing the subdivision plan to be recorded without the financial security upfront. Solicitor MacNair said he would amend the approval letter and send it to the involved parties.

Traffic Consultant – A RFP went out for Traffic Engineering Consultant for the intersection of Route 309 at Springfield Street and Hilltop Road. It was decided Wynn & Associates will execute the contract with the chosen consultant. Mr. Nilsen made a motion seconded by Mr. Hopkins and unanimously carried to appoint Heinrich & Klein as the traffic consultant for the Route 309 and Springfield Street/Hilltop Road Intersection set forth in the proposal not to exceed \$7,850.00.

Appointment of Public Works Equipment Operator/Laborer/Driver - After many interviews, an offer was made to David Kelly at the hourly rate of \$23 an hour. Mr. Kelly has previously worked at PA Site Contractors, Coopersburg Borough and Coopersburg Materials. Mr. Hopkins moved to ratify the job offer to David Kelly as the Public Works Equipment Operator/Laborer/Driver at the hourly rate of \$23 an hour with the start date of January 23, 2023, motion seconded by Mr. Ryker and unanimously carried.

Appointment to Historical Commission – Mr. Taliaferro, of Woodbyne Road, volunteered for Historic Commission on 1/9/23. Motion made by Mr. Hopkins, seconded by Mr. Matzura and unanimously appointing Mr. Michael Taliaferro to the Historic Commission for a term ending 12/31/2025.

Request for Fire Police – Plumstead Township – Motion made by Mr. Nilsen, seconded by Mr. Hopkins and unanimously carried, authorizing the use of the Springtown Fire Company Police (a division of Palisades Regional Fire Company) at the Plumstead Township Fire Company Blaze of Glory 5K run event on Saturday, March 25, 2023.

Authorization to sell Cannon Copier on Municibid – Motion by Mr. Hopkins, seconded by Mr. Nilsen and unanimously carried authorizing the sale of the Cannon Copier via Municibid at the minimum bid price of \$175.00.

Iworqs Discussion – Iworqs contract is renewed automatically in February. Mr. Pursell stated the program costs \$5,000 per year. He feels they would be able to track signs and pipes better and more cost effective with excel if the board would agree. Motion made by Mr. Matzura to discontinue the use of the Iworqs program, seconded by Mr. Ryker with no additional votes. Mr. Hopkins stated perhaps reaching out to BCATO, the township can get an intern to help use the system.

Mink Road Petition – The Township received a petition from Rodger Scheetz, 3136 Mink Road. He and his neighbors are concerned with the increased traffic traveling at unsafe speeds. He asked the township to install speed bumps the next time Mink Road is paved. Mr. Ryker said he feels it sets a bad precedent if that is allowed. The Board agreed. Mr. Pursell will respond to Mr. Scheetz.

Approval for Advertisement of Alternative Energy Ordinance & Approval for Advertisement of Warehouse Ordinance – Both ordinances were reviewed again and minor revisions from the last draft were discussed. Mr. Hopkins made a motion to advertise both ordinances, seconded by Mr. Matzura and unanimously carried.

REPORTS / COMMENTS

Zoning – A report was received and is on file.

Police – A report was received and is on file. Mr. Hopkins mentioned he expects Chief McDonald to include a State Police Report breakdown in his reports submitted to the Board. Chief advised he was going to begin that next month for the new year statistics.

Public Works – A report was received and is on file.

Solicitor – A report was received and is on file.

Engineer – A report was received and is on file.

Planning Commission – No report was given.

Parks & Land Preservation Board – No report was given. Mr. Frank Hollenbach, of Rocky Valley Road, discussed the Rail Trail cleanup that was done and thanked the Township Public Works department for their help with the tires. He presented the Board with the Upper Tohickon Watershed sign that was donated to the Rail Trail.

EAC – No report was given.

Historic Commission – No report was given.

CORRESPONDENCE

Board Correspondence was accepted as presented. An email from Ms. Sierra Horn requesting the Board support a Trap Neuter Release program for cats was discussed. Mr. Ryker advised that is not something the Township can fund.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Dave Long, Drifting Drive, said the Zoom link posted on the agenda didn't work correctly.

Mr. Steve Doncevic, Pleasant View, thanked the Board for all the do and their service to the community.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Bill Ryker mentioned the missing juvenile from Palisades and that the Springfield Township Police were at the forefront of the investigation. He said our services are used by a lot of people and many people notice that.

Mr. James Hopkins mentioned that Mr. Doncevic should come back to a board or volunteer commission.

Mr. James Nilsen discussed the Heritage Conservancy tree issue again and about communication between them, the EAC and Parks and Land Preservation Board.

Mr. Tony Matzura thanked everyone for attending and participating in the meeting. He thanked everyone for their patience.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. Hopkins, seconded by Mr. Ryker, and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Lisa Gerhart
Secretary