

Board of Supervisors

**MINUTES
 August 27, 2024**

IN-PERSON MEETING

Supervisors Present: Bill Ryker, Pete Kade, Jim Hopkins, Dave Long and Lorna Yearwood.

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

Mr. Ryker called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Ryker advised the Board will meet in executive session after this meeting to discuss potential litigation and personnel.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Steve Doncevic, Pleasant View Road, thanked the Public Works for installing the "Share the Road" signs on Pleasant View Road.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. Ryker stated the financial report and balances are posted. Motion made by Mr. Kade, seconded by Mr. Hopkins and unanimously approved to accept the financial report as presented.

Fund Balances as of July 31, 2024

General Fund	\$ 1,664,538	COVID Relief Fund	\$257,647
- CD General Fund Reserve	- \$237,000		
Open Space Fund	\$ 342,948	Liquid Fuels Fund	\$347,562
- CD Open Space	-\$237,000	- CD Liquid Fuels	- \$236,000
Escrow Fund	\$ 1,493,882	Street Light Fund	\$9,250
Capital Reserve Fund	\$ 90,900	Act 537 Escrow Fund	\$87,783
- CD Capital Reserve	- \$237,000		
Dedicated EMS	\$32,025	Dedicated Fire	\$93,252
General Fund Reserve	\$329,088		

Payment of Bills

(July 16, 2024 – August 15, 2024)

General Fund	\$142,009.82	Open Space Fund	\$0
Capital Reserve Fund	\$0	Liquid Fuels Fund	\$0
Escrows	\$4,660.99	Street Light Fund	\$538.55
PLGIT Credit Card	\$2,243.19	Dedicated EMS Fund	\$40,000
Dedicated Fire Fund	\$140,673		

Motion made by Mr. Hopkins, seconded by Mr. Kade, and unanimously approved the payment of bills from July 16, 2024 - August 15, 2024.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Mr. Hopkins, seconded by Ms. Yearwood and unanimously approved the July 23, 2024 minutes as amended.

BUSINESS ITEMS

Conditional Use Hearing – Dorris – Solicitor MacNair commenced the conditional use hearing regarding the Dorris property located on Bodder Road, TMP 42-017-117-002. The hearing was held in person at the Springfield Township Municipal Building for which there was a court reporter present to transcribe the hearing. Solicitor McNair explained the formality of the conditional use hearing and explained the difference between party status and giving public comment on the matter. The Board of Supervisors first addressed requests for party status. Ms. Cara Simonette, 2875 Bodder Road, was granted party status. Mr. Tyler Freed, Mease Engineering, was present and testified on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Tim Fulmer, Township Engineer, was present and testified also. Refer to hearing transcript for more details. The Board of Supervisors deliberations were in public. Motion made by Mr. Ryker, seconded by Mr. Kade and unanimously approved the application of James and Jennifer Dorris which requests conditional use approval to construct a driveway and stormwater management facility within a minimal disturbance zone of a watercourse margin is approved subject to compliance with the exhibits and testimony presented at the hearing. A written decision will be issued within 45 days and there is an additional 30 days after the decision for appeal.

Hiring Ofc. Greco from Part Time to Full Time – Chief McDonald advised Ofc. Greco had been working for Northampton County as a Sheriff and part time officer at Rosetto Borough and has since resigned to focus more time training at Springfield Township. The Chief said the goal is to have Ofc. Greco on his own shifts by November. Mr. Ryker commented that the community seems to have met Ofc. Greco as Mr. Ryker has heard some feedback from residents. Motion made by Mr. Hopkins, seconded by Mr. Long and unanimously approved to authorize the appointment of Stephen Greco as a full-time police officer with Springfield Township effective September 1, 2024. The board questioned if there will be a formal swearing ceremony in the future. The Chief said he would work on details for one.

Authorization of Knights of Columbus Jack-O-Lantern 5k & 10k – Application received July 30, 2024, for the use of Township Facilities. The Parks and Land Preservation Board approved the application at their August 12, 2024, meeting. This is a yearly event, and they utilize part of Springfield Township's Rail Trail. Motion made by Mr. Ryker, seconded by Mr. Long and unanimously approved to authorize the use of the Springfield Township Upper Bucks Rail Trail section for the 5k & 10k Jack-O-Lantern run sponsored by the Knights of Columbus-Quakertown scheduled for September 28, 2024, from 7:00am to 11:00am.

BCATO Youth Service Award – Mr. Hopkins suggested recommending Palisades STEM Club for this award regarding their work done at Peppermint Park. Manager Pursell has an email into BCATO to see if additional paperwork needs to be submitted. A motion was made by Mr. Hopkins, seconded by Mr. Long and unanimously approved to nominate the Palisades STEM Club for the BCATO Youth Service Award.

Donation Acceptance for Police – Springfield Township Police are in receipt of a \$2,000.00 donation from Robert & Susan Ross and a \$2,000.00 donation from George & Barbara Ross for the police department. The Board acknowledges and is grateful for the donation. Manager Pursell will send them a "thank you" letter.

Authorization to Advertise Budget Meeting – The Board will meet September 5, 2025, at 3 p.m. to work on the 2025 Budget. Motion made by Mr. Kade, seconded by Ms. Yearwood and unanimously approved to authorize the advertisement of the Budget meeting.

Appointment to Historic Commission – Application from Mr. Bruce Whitesell received on August 5, 2024. The Board interviewed him in executive session beforehand. Motion made by Mr. Hopkins, seconded by Mr. Kade and unanimously approved to appoint Mr. Bruce Whitesell to the Historic Commission for a term ending December 31, 2026.

Resolution 2024-16 – 2024-2025 Salt Bid Acceptance - The salt bid was advertised by the Bucks County Consortium. The lowest bidder was Morton Salt, Inc at \$60.95/ton. The price is down \$5.05/ton from last year. Motion made by Mr. Kale, seconded by Mr. Hopkins to adopt **Resolution 2024-16**, accepting the 2024-2025 Rock Salt Bid through the Bucks County Consortium, awarding Morton Salt, Inc for the 2024-2025 season, and further authorize the Township Manager to sign all paperwork necessary to complete the agreement.

Resolution 2024-17 – Kellers Rd, Cut Off Rd and Springfield St Speed Limit – Manager Pursell asked to table this item as he doesn't have the LTAP speed study results back yet.

Acceptance of 2024 Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) - This is a yearly requirement and needs to be authorized/accepted by the Board at a public meeting by September 30th. Manager Pursell will sign as the Pension Administrator. Motion made by Mr. Kade, seconded by Mr. Long and unanimously approved to accept the 2025 MMO's as presented by the Township Manager and authorize the Manager as Pension Administrator to sign the MMO's for the Police Pension Plan and Non-Uniform Pension Plan.

Authorization for Township Solicitor to Contact PPL – Solicitor MacNair stated the Parks and Land Preservation Board would like him to start reaching out to PPL regarding residents there with easements and the possibility of allowing the Township to put a trail through the properties. Mr. Ryker asked that Mr. Hollenbach, Chair to PLPB, be copied of the letter drafted to PPL. Motion made by Mr. Hopkins, seconded by Mr. Kade and unanimously approved to allow Solicitor MacNair to contact PPL regarding the properties located in Zion Hill for the possibility of using them for the Liberty Bell Trolley Trail.

Purchase of Tablets – This has been a topic of discussion with this board and previous boards. The use of tablets instead of printing out Board of Supervisors packets would save time and supplies ie. copier ink and paper. Manager Pursell got a quote from Systems Net for tablets that would meet our needs. Mr. Long suggested adding a security package and getting quotes for that. Motion made by Mr. Ryker, seconded by Mr. Kade and unanimously approved to authorize the purchase of (5) Apple iPads with cases through Systems Net for a total not to exceed \$3,500.00.

Consideration of a Property Maintenance Code – Manager Pursell stated he and Ms. Gerhart get complaints from residents about property maintenance issues. He deferred to Ms. Gerhart to discuss examples of complaints received. Ms. Gerhart stated residents complain about high grass, weeds, bamboo, thistle, cars and car parts in yards, piles of trash and dilapidated buildings. Ms. Gerhart acknowledged the BOS does not want to overregulate this or become a "HOA" of sorts but feels a minimal property maintenance code may help some residents. Solicitor MacNair stated there are different levels and you can adopt as much or as little of the International Property Maintenance code to suit Springfield's needs. Ms. Gerhart said it gets frustrating when there are buildings close to collapsing and residents call to complain, and she is unable to do much without a property maintenance code. The nuisance ordinance helps in some situations but not all. BOS advised Ms. Gerhart and Solicitor MacNair, along with input from Barry Isett's office, to come up some ideas that may work for Springfield Township.

Authorization to Proceed with The Thriving Earth Exchange Grant – Ms. Yearwood gave an update on the meeting she, Mr. Hopkins, Mr. Pursell and Mr. Carson (chair of the Planning Commission) attended. They seem to be focused on stormwater and flooding aspect however the scope of the project is not known yet. Springfield Township was accepted into the program. All supervisors agreed to keep pursuing the Thriving Earth Exchange Grant.

Hans Reimann Scholarship Thank You - Layna Transue, one of the Hans Reimann Scholarship Award recipients from this year, sent over a short "thank you" video. Video submission was shown. The Board of Supervisors wished her luck with her future studies.

REPORTS / COMMENTS

Zoning – A report was received and is on file.

Fire/EMS – Mr. Jeff Mease, PRFR, submitted a report for June and July 2024. He added mutual aid to the report as requested. Mr. Mease thanked the Board for the yearly funding. Mr. Mease stated there is a Bingo fundraiser coming up and breakfasts start back in October. He asked if he can come to the Budget meeting next week to which he was told it is a public meeting and all are welcome.

Mr. Robert Heitz, Richland Fire & Rescue (Shelly), wanted to make sure BOS was aware the fire tax was lifted to 10 mills without referendum. He stated they are close to receiving the refurbished fire truck they recently purchases. Mr. Ryker asked if it would be able to be present in the Springtown Halloween Parade.

Police – A report was received and is on file. Chief stated the DCED grant for speed boards is still in review. The Chief advised they received a DOJ grant and purchased a pop-up tent and folding tables to use for events. Ms. Yearwood asked if other Police Departments have Electric Vehicles. The Chief stated they do as community resources vehicles and not as actual operating vehicles because it voids warranty, and their equipment can't tie into the electrical panels.

Public Works – A report was received and is on file. Manager Pursell advised the garage door opening alteration, to fit the larger vehicles and equipment, was completed today.

Solicitor – A report was received and is on file. Solicitor MacNair stated Haycock Ministries appealed the Conditional Use decision and will discuss this further in executive session.

Engineer – A report was received and is on file.

Palisades Regional Fire Department – Report received and on file. Mr. Ryker noted that seeing the financials of other Fire Departments he was enlightened by how they operate on smaller budgets. He stated some departments are buying refurbished equipment, he felt it important to note PRFR is buying new.

Planning Commission – No report given. Member, Bruce Whitesell, stated the Planning Commission is working on tasks the Comprehensive Plan spelled out.

Parks & Land Preservation Board – No report given.

EAC – No report was given. Ms. Elinich, Chair, stated the Cooks Creek Watershed project is still moving forward but instead of walking the whole creek, they will just pick a select few properties.

CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence received from Ms. Gretchen Brown, asking for additional stop signs on Maple Road and School Road. Mr. Ryker stated he doesn't think the volume of traffic on the road warrants it. Mr. Hopkins said he would advise her to talk to her neighbors if they agree on the need and get them to endorse it as well. Manager Pursell said he would respond to her letter.

Correspondence received from Upper Bucks Senior Center in Ottsville with a donation request. Manager Pursell stated he was unable to locate any previous donations made in QuickBooks. Mr. Hopkins suggested reaching out to them to see if they can provide any information on whether Springfield Township residents utilize their center.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None given.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Ms. Yearwood stated there is no update with PennDOT regarding the Littering signs. She said Ms. Odle, BCATO intern, finished her internship. She needs to send her report to BCATO for payroll verification. She completed a lot of projects including a list of preserved properties in the Township, list of business in the Township and list of Short-Term rentals.

Mr. Long stated it was a pleasure working with Ms. Odle. Mr. Hopkins suggested doing a certificate of appreciation for her when she returns for Winter Break.

Mr. Kade stated the new Township website looks better but should list the Springtown Water Authority Meetings.

Mr. Hopkins stated he reached out to one of the County Commissioners about Knecht's Bridge, but they had been on vacation. He will follow up.

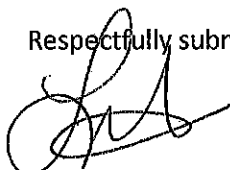
Mr. Ryker mentioned Palisades School District needs bus drivers.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Ryker noted there will be an executive session held after this meeting to discuss litigation matters. He advised the next BOS meeting is the Budget work session on September 5, 2024 at 3 p.m.

Motion by Mr. Ryker, seconded by Mr. Hopkins and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Lisa Gerhart
Secretary

