

Board of Supervisors

MINUTES

November 26, 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), & 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 met before the meeting in executive session and will meet again after to discuss litigation matters and personnel.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Ms. Melissa Eddy, Cut Off Road, stated she is grateful for the speed limit signs that were recently installed on Cut Off Road. She wanted to bring awareness of break retarder use on Cut Off, State and on Passer Rd. Mr. Ryker thanked her for bringing it to their attention. Chief McDonald stated the Township doesn't do the study regarding break retarders. He said we just purchase and post signage if PennDOT does an official study and if the road meets the list of criteria. There was further discussion regarding trucks on local roadways. Chief McDonald stated unfortunately GPS redirects some of these trucks into neighborhoods that cannot handle trucks. Mr. Ryker stated the Board would take their suggestion of pursuing another study by PennDOT under advisement.

Mr. Steve Doncevic, Pleasant View Road, mentioned previous discussion of new residents doing what they want without regard for zoning. He stated new residents should get a Township map, zoning ordinances and other useful information. Mr. Ryker stated they are working on a map. Mr. Hopkins stated the realtor should be giving some information on the area you are moving into. He stated he and Mr. Pursell are working on a map again but with the use of the internet the need for a physical map has gone away. Springfield is looking to bring it back for people who want it. Mr. Hopkins stated all the information is available online and not everyone can plead ignorance.

FINANCIAL REPORT

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

Fund Balances as of October 31, 2024

General Fund	\$1,473,460	COVID Relief Fund	\$187,067
- CD General Fund Reserve	- \$237,000		
Open Space Fund	\$635,861	Liquid Fuels Fund	\$160,258
- CD Open Space	-\$237,000	- CD Liquid Fuels	- \$236,00
Escrow Fund	\$1,553,549	Street Light Fund	\$4,223
Capital Reserve Fund	\$17,741	Act 537 Escrow Fund	\$88,090
- CD Capital Reserve	- \$237,000		
Dedicated EMS	\$1,795	Dedicated Fire	\$53,990
General Fund Reserve	\$323,571		

Payment of Bills

(October 16, 2024 –November 15, 2024)

General Fund	\$387,783.16	Open Space Fund	\$52,078.50
Capital Reserve Fund	\$0	Liquid Fuels Fund	\$0
Escrows	\$453,857.80	Street Light Fund	\$563.68
PLGIT Credit Card	\$5,052.46	Dedicated EMS Fund	\$0
Dedicated Fire Fund	\$0		

Motion made by Mr. Kade, seconded by Ms. Yearwood, and unanimously approved the payment of bills from October 16, 2024 - November 15, 2024.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Mr. Hopkins, seconded by Mr. Kade and unanimously to adopt the October 22, 2024, November 11, 2024, and November 12, 2024, minutes.

BUSINESS ITEMS

Walking Purchase Farms (Baker Tract) Subdivision – Mr. Tyler Freed, Mease Engineering, was present along with potential buyer, Mr. Zachary Liptak. Mr. Tim Fulmer, Township Engineer, gave background information that this plan was already approved in 2010. The plan was not fully executed and recorded. The plan is no longer under the 5-year protection period, so the plan must be reviewed under current ordinances. Mr. Fulmer’s review letter, November 4, 2024, was provided to the Board. Mr. Freed stated this is an 11–house subdivision with 12 lots – one lot in conservancy with Wildlands. Mr. Freed stated most items of Mr. Fulmer’s letter are “will comply” but he will discuss the items they are requesting waivers. Mr. Freed stated item #4, regarding a landscaped island at the cul-de-sac, which is not standard anymore. The BOS would be fine with the removal as the Public Works department feels it’s easier to plow without one. Mr. Freed stated item #8, regarding monitoring wells is no longer needed because of the ordinance change plus it is not necessary since there is no shared water system. These lots would have private wells so the monitoring well will be taken off the plan. Mr. Freed stated item #15, regarding tree replacement, is hard to tell how many replacement trees are needed exactly because the land was previously a tree farm and lots of undergrowth. Mr. Freed stated the rough estimate is 275 trees would need to be replaced and there is no space to do so. This will need to be submitted as a waiver request. There will be no motion tonight regarding this use. There may be a lieu of fee worked out. Both engineers will do a field visit to get realistic numbers on the trees and possible areas to put them. Mr. Freed discussed item #16, regarding a fee in lieu of regarding recreation. He stated there is already an agriculture lot and property preserved. Mr. Long and Ms. Yearwood were hopeful for a trail in the subdivision. It was discussed that a trail isn’t feasible for property or parking. They would be looking for a waiver and fee in lieu of that requirement. Mr. Freed brought up the interior road of the development. The size change would be a 2 ft shoulder and a shallow swale, the new requirements would need a 4-foot shoulder and steeper drop off into the swale. Mr. Freed stated the cartway would be the same width. The Board stated they had no issues with keeping the road as previously drawn. Mr. Freed discussed item #20, which is the decorative walls at the entrance and an island at the entrance. This becomes a maintenance issue since there is no HOA for the homes and would fall on the Road Department. Everyone seemed in agreement to remove those from the plans. Mr. Long questioned if Wildlands was notified of the possible sale,

to which Mr. Freed stated they were not. Ms. Yearwood questioned the proposed size of the homes, and Mr. Liptak stated 3,700sqft – 4,200sqft. She asked if they would have any “green” options, and he said they would meet all energy requirements. Mr. MacNair stated there seem to be two open issues yet, related to the trees which Mr. Fulmer and Mr. Freed will get a better accurate number on, and the recreation improvement issue will be discussed further. There is no MPC timeline needed to meet so this can go back on an agenda in the New Year to discuss the wavier requests.

Mr. Nilsen, Pleasant View, stated his wife is on the school board and questions if these homes will be priced to attract families since the school district has a low attendance. Mr. Liptak, Developer, stated they will most likely be priced at \$900,000.

Ms. Meredith Elinich, who resides in Quakertown, but parents reside at 2755 Rt 412, questioned light pollution from the development. She also questioned how they count trees which are multi-stemmed. She also stated she likes the idea of replanting 275 trees.

Mr. Travis Pantaleo, 2529 Rt 212, stated the size and price of the homes would not attract young families. He worries about the proximity of the subdivision to Cooks Creek tributary.

Ms. Arienne Elinich, 2755 Rt 212, stated she is concerned about the trees being removed. She stated the new streetlights will change their neighbor’s quality of life. She also has concerns about the impact on the development related to the gas line there. She also worries about the cost of the homes and the type of people they will attract.

Mr. Anastasios Arhontoulis, Cut Off Road, questioned if wetland studies and Bog Turtle studies were done. He stated he had to do one for his property. He questioned if a DEP permit was approved. He also asked if there will be septic on the parcels.

Ms. Melissa Eddy, Cut Off Road, stated planting new growth would be ideal.

Mr. Steve Doncevic, Pleasant View, said he thought AD required 3-acre parcels. Mr. Fulmer explained not when the subdivision is a farm plan subdivision. The parcels can be one acre.

Mr. Kyle Renz, 748 Passer Road, stated planting trees are not the best option help with erosion control for stream. He stated meadow grasses are better.

UBREMS Letter of Support – Mr. Jim Nilsen, UBREMS, was present. He stated they are asking for support letters from the Townships they service for an LSA grant that Nockamixon Township is assisting them with. Mr. Nilsen reminded everyone their payroll every two weeks is \$42,000 and they have two stations that are staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Hiring New Part-Time Road Crew Member – Mr. Pursell, Manager, stated there is a part time applicant for snow plowing. His name is Blake Eller. He stated they are down a man and need a replacement. Mr. Eller grew up here, he has a class A license and will be an asset to Springfield part-time. Mr. Long questioned if there is a limit on part-time hours, to which Mr. Pursell advised there is not. Motion made by Mr. Hopkins, seconded by Mr. Long and unanimously approved to hire Blake Eller for a part-time position with the Road Crew at the hourly rate of \$25.00/hour.

Auditing Service - MVA Tax & Advisors LLC bought Hutchinson Gillahan & Freeh, which has been the long-standing auditing firm for the Township. The 2023 audit was \$13,500.00 with Hutchison Gillahan & Freeh.

The new owners raised prices. Mr. Pursell stated because of the short window for the 2024 audit to be completed he recommends we use MVA Tax & Advisors LLC for this upcoming audit. In the Spring, he will reach out to other firms to receive pricing for the 2025 audit. Mr. Hopkins stated the agreement references a standard rate sheet not in the quote and requests that be added. Motion made Mr. Hopkins, seconded by Mr. Kade and unanimously approved to authorize the appointment of MVA Tax & Advisors LLC for the Township auditing services of 2024 in the amount of \$17,950.00.

DCED Map Grant – Mr. Hopkins stated after the Comprehensive Plan, Michael Baker associates found this grant opportunity for the villages and Rt 309 corridor. The Board already approved funds related to this grant previously, but Springfield has been accepted for the grant. Springfield Township would be responsible for the first \$50,000 and then the grant would match another \$50,000. Mr. Pursell pointed out the funds are in the 2025 Budget. Motion made by Mr. Hopkins, seconded by Ms. Yearwood, and unanimously approved to accept the DCED Municipal Assistance Grant for partial funding of the Villages and Corridor Studies.

Property Maintenance Code Discussion – Ms. Gerhart, Assistant Zoning Officer/Secretary, stated she and Mr. Long went through the 2018 International Property Maintenance Code and selected the parts we thought the Board would be in favor of. Mr. Hopkins stated he thought the document would be more in draft ordinance form. Ms. Gerhart stated she and Mr. Long can work on that for next time, but Ms. Gerhart still wasn't sure if the Board would be in favor of a property maintenance code yet or not. Solicitor MacNair stated he has townships that adopt very little of the International Property Maintenance Code and some that adopt the whole thing. Mr. Long noted he added a part about dead trees by the road at line-of-sight areas. Ms. Yearwood stated she had some notes she would send Ms. Gerhart to look at. This will be back on the agenda sometime in January or February.

Acceptance of Building Addition Bid Proposal – Mr. Pursell stated Mr. Jim Linske, from Phillips & Donovan Architects, has confirmed that all the low bidders have submitted and completed the documents as required regarding bid acceptance. Mr. Ryker stated he would like each Supervisor to have a chance to speak on this topic. Mr. Hopkins stated he thinks this addition and remodel needs to be done to address the Township's needs. He stated it has to do with security, space, bathrooms, etc and now is the time to do so since receiving the ARPA funds. He stated our facilities are outdated and need to be upgraded. Mr. Ryker stated he didn't take this decision lightly due to the price tag and doesn't expect it to be an unanimous decision but feels it needs to be done. He said the ARPA money is the chance to do this. Mr. Long mentioned some costs already paid out regarding this addition/renovation with the previous architect and new one. He stated the cost for the renovation would cover the Township's debt for the next few years so he can't justify spending that money. Mr. Kade stated he feels it is now or never. He said the money that has already been spent, like Mr. Long said is a great reason why the project needs to move forward. He stated there are safety concerns that the new building/addition addresses and he feels it needs to be done. Ms. Yearwood stated it needs to be done and the proposed layout would be better for the public. Mr. Hopkins made the motion for the addition and alterations to the Springfield Township Municipal Building in the amount of \$396,545.00 as per the bids received by the following contractors:

General Construction	Premier Builders Inc	\$301,000.00
Mechanical Construction	Hirschberg Mechanical	\$29,900.00
Electrical Construction	S&S Electrical Services, Inc	\$40,895.00
Plumbing Construction	AKC Mechanical LLC	\$24,750.00

Mr. Long requested a roll call vote. Mr. Hopkins, Mr. Kade, Mr. Ryker, Ms. Yearwood said "yes" with Mr. Long being a "no" vote for the addition and alterations. Motion passes 4-1.

REPORTS / COMMENTS

Zoning – A report was received and is on file. Ms. Gerhart and Solicitor MacNair discussed upcoming Magistrate Court dates regarding two properties with violations.

Fire/EMS – Reports from PRFR received. It was noted that the County burn ban was extended until Mid-December.

Police – A report was received and is on file. Chief McDonald stated the DEA drug take back netted 23 lbs of drugs and 5 lbs of sharps. Chief McDonald stated in the New Year, Officer Greco should be done with training and out on his own. Mr. Hopkins stated he didn't see much change in the police vehicle mileage since the last report. Chief McDonald stated there had been many vacation days and trainings the past month so that may account for it.

Public Works – A report was received and is on file. Manager Pursell stated the Township Building's new septic was installed and is completed. He said Peppermint Park was finally mowed with the new brush hog mower purchased by the Township. He stated the LSA grant for two new police vehicles has been sent to DCED for consideration.

Solicitor – A report was received and is on file Solicitor MacNair stated he hasn't heard of any additional appeals regarding H&K Quarry since last decision. He stated Haycock Conditional Use appeal conference brief schedule will come out soon. Solicitor MacNair stated the Dielly subdivision was recorded.

Engineer – A report was received and is on file.

Planning Commission – No report given. Mr. Long stated the Planning Commission members are still working on Accessory Dwelling Units. He said it is almost ready to go to the Board of Supervisors. He reminded the BOS, that Mr. Carson will need to be replaced and there were other applicants previously when there was a vacancy.

Parks & Land Preservation Board – No report given.

EAC – No report was given. Ms. Yearwood stated they are losing two members – Ms. Barb Scattergood and Ms. Kim Hirshman.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was a "thank you" from Passer Community Center for the Road Department for their help with parking lot and other improvements.

"Thank You" from the Upper Bucks Senior Center for the donation Springfield Township gave them.

A letter from a resident on Potters Lane about a complain of noise regarding Haycock Ministries. Ms. Gerhart stated she addressed the noise complaint with Mr. Stiansen at Haycock Ministries.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Travis Pantaleo, 2529 Rt 212, stated regarding the most recent Comprehensive Plan he questioned the legacy the board will be leaving. He stated subdivisions like the Baker one doesn't follow the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Ryker said there was a building stock problem in the Township. Mr. Hopkins stated MPC and zoning allows people to build where they are permitted.

Mr. Doncevic asked if these people in the Baker subdivision can have chickens. Ms. Gerhart said yes.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Jim Hopkins stated Millennium strategies grant list came out and there was one regarding a Trout Unlimited grant Cooks Creek Water shed may be able to get. Mr. Hopkins stated a light sign out front may be a good idea with the building remodel.

Mr. Bill Ryker thanked the public for coming to tonight's meeting.

Ms. Yearwood stated she is pursuing solar facilities on the municipal property and is working on getting a preliminary cost estimate.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Ryker noted there will be an executive session held after this meeting to discuss litigation and personnel matters.

Motion by Ms. Yearwood, seconded by Mr. Hopkins and carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Lisa Gerhart
Secretary