

Board of Supervisors

MINUTES

February 11, 2009

Jim Brownlow, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Supervisors Present: Karen Bedics, Jim Brownlow, Barbara Lindtner, Volker Oakey and Rob Zisko.

Also present: Sandy Everitt, Secretary/Treasurer; Mark Laudenslager, Police Chief; Terry Clemons, Township Solicitor and Rich Schilling, Township Manager.

Approval of Minutes - Minutes were not ready for approval.

Bills for Approval

There was discussion about the total approved for payment to Lombardo & Associates for completing the Act 537 revision. Rich Schilling did not have the exact figure, but the total, as approved by the Board, will be between \$220 – 230,000.00. Barbara Lindtner **moved** to approve the bills list from January 28, 2009, to February 11, 2009, totaling \$73,197.64. Volker Oakey **seconded**, the motion carried.

Reports

Road Department (posted) – Barbara Lindtner commended the road department for their hard work on road maintenance this winter.

Police Report– Chief Laudenslager reported that in January there were 125 incidents investigated, of which 19 were criminal offences. Property valued at \$710 was stolen, with \$550 recovered. 11 traffic accidents were investigated involving 19 vehicles with 7 injuries and no fatalities. The police department received a donation of \$4,700 to purchase tasers for each officer. Karen asked if the police could provide additional coverage on problem roads in the township, like Routes 212 and 412, Richlandtown Pike, especially near the problem intersection at State Road and Richlandtown Pike. Chief Laudenslager will look into placing additional police coverage at problem roads within the township.

Township Manager/ Zoning Report – On January 8, Rich Schilling met with CodeMasters (the independent inspection agency) and their staff to integrate procedures. Mr. Schilling also discussed the results of his site visits to European Auto Salvage. He noted that zoning activity has been extremely busy considering the economic situation. Barbara Lindtner asked that the 2008 zoning statistics be placed underneath the 2009 cumulative reporting section so that current year activity can be compared with last year’s activity. Rich noted that he met with Bob Wynn and the contractor who is interested in renovating a number of historic buildings in Springtown into appropriate commercial uses (i.e. a tea room, museum, printing shop with antique printing presses).

Barbara Lindtner asked for a progress report on the work scope of Ted Evans, Open Space consultant. Rich said Ted had contacted Dave Long, requesting a time to meet with him, but that Dave had not gotten back to Ted with a time for that meeting. Rich estimated that Ted Evans has completed about 65% of the Open Space revision, with the maps being the primary thing that still need to be completed. The Act 537 maps do not reference properties that have conservation easements or are deed restricted, both of which are needed for the Open Space Plan and the Parks & Recreation grants request.

Review of Finances – Volker Oakey asked if the Board could go through the budget in detail at the first meeting each month. Mr. Oakey explained the changes he would like to see made in the township’s reporting format. He proposed a budget format that would show the current month, that month’s portion of the budget and the percentage of difference, and then the year-to-date income/expense, the year-to-date budget and the percentage of difference. Jim said that at his place of employment, they review the past five years and then average those figures to come up with an average percentage for each month of their current budget. Barbara indicated that income is the primary area

that needs to be tracked over a five-year period, specifically the larger income sources, such as taxes, etc.. Sandy Everitt will gather income statistics over the past five years. She asked Jim Brownlow if he could provide some examples of how this is utilized in the reports produced at his work. Volker is concerned that the Board have a budget format that enables supervisors to clearly and easily see budget anomalies. There are also a number of questions that Barbara and Volker would like Hutchinson, Gillahan and Freeh to clarify, specifically on the balance sheet report, but that they do not have time to address until after the audit season.

Public Comments on Agenda Items

Willard Weierbach said he came for a Community Day meeting a week ago, parked his van in front of the township building, and one of Springfield's policemen came over to his vehicle and asked if he was having a problem of any kind. Willard felt it was good that the policeman checked on what could have been a suspicious vehicle in a kind way.

Old Business

1. Discussion of Administrative Law Judge's Decision on PPL's Transmission/Power Line PUC case – deferred until executive session at end of meeting.

2. Bank Loan – Terry Clemons presented the loan procedure followed. Three proposals were obtained for the \$100,000 bridge loan needed for cash flow purposes for 2009. The lowest proposal was from First Savings Bank of Perkasio at 2.65 % over a 5-year fixed term. Payments will be \$1,828.45 a month for 60 months with no prepayment penalty. The other two proposals were 3.96% interest and 3.65% interest. The anticipated closing costs are approximately \$1,000.

Barbara Lindtner **moved** to adopt Resolution #2009-005, placing the general obligation note with First Savings Bank of Perkasio Rob Zisko **seconded**. Jim Brownlow asked if the \$100,000 was actually needed at this time. Barbara stated that the plan was not to use the money, but to replenish the reserve fund. Volker feels the interest rate for obtaining loans will rise quickly. Jim called for the question. The motion **passed** unanimously.

3. Highlands Resolution – Karen Bedics **moved** to adopt Resolution #2009-006 to support the Highlands Conservation Act. Rob Zisko **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously.

4. Fee Schedule Update (New Resolution) – Rich Schilling presented Resolution #2009-007 containing a revised fee schedule. The section listing costs for performing inspections on commercial properties was inadvertently omitted from the fee schedule contained in Resolution #2009-003 which was adopted in January. He said the commercial inspection fees were actually lower in this proposed fee schedule than they were in the prior fee schedule.

Rich Schilling asked Terry Clemons if either the Zoning Officer or the Board could exercise discretion about tripling fees for a landowner who begins construction before obtaining a permit. Rich has a specific case where the roof fell in on an attached garage and the resident was replacing the roof without obtaining a permit. Rich placed a *Stop Work* order on the garage. The resident was not aware a permit was required in this situation. Rich had another case where someone obtained a permit for a garage, but in addition to the garage, that resident also put an addition on with a kitchen, bathroom and a deck without obtaining a permit. Rich charged that resident triple building fees as required in our fee schedule. However, he does not feel the other resident (where the garage roof collapsed) should have to pay triple fees. Terry feels that the only way a waiver should be granted is by the Board. Barbara Lindtner **moved** to waive tripling the building permit fees for the resident who replaced a fallen garage roof without first obtaining a permit. Rob Zisko **seconded**; the motion **passed**, unanimously.

Barbara Lindtner **moved** to adopt the revised fee schedule in Resolution #2009-007. Karen Bedics **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously.

5. Supervisor Suggested Projects – At the last meeting, all board members were asked to suggest projects to Jim Brownlow they felt should be addressed by the Board. Jim received lists from several Board members, but all their suggestions were already included in the list from Barbara Lindtner, so Jim provided Barbara's list to the Board.

Jim feels that first, the Board should go over this list and agree on the projects they wish to address this year. Second, the Board should set priorities for the jobs. Third, after priorities are established, he would like to organize this around committees of the Board, although he doesn't think all the committees would need to include Board members. The committees could have non-Board members, but would report to the Board on their progress on a regular basis. Finally, the committees may be asked to provide timelines for the project(s) they are responsible for. Personally, Jim feels the Board needs to be very careful that each committee be aware they are not empowered to take action; rather, they are fact-finding committees that would report to the Board.

There was good discussion among the Board about the various categories on the task list and the possible use of volunteers to assist with some of the projects. It was the consensus of the Board to move ahead with reviewing the list. Jim suggested that prior to the first meeting in March, each Supervisor should review the list. Jim will place the list on the March 11 agenda and the Board can prioritize the various tasks, determine who will head various committees and establish timelines for completion. Future agendas will need to include time for the various committees to give progress reports to the Board. Rich asked for clarification about what "monitoring in-house zoning issues" meant. Barbara explained that in the past, either Dave Taylor or Rich would attend Planning Commission meetings and share zoning ordinance sections that may not be working well and could need revision. Jim asked that further discussion be held when this is an agenda item on March 11.

New Business

1. Appointment to Open Space Committee – The Board received a letter of interest from Nevada Mease for the open position on the Open Space Committee. Rich Schilling heard that Grant Reed, a current member of the Open Space Committee, was interested in reappointment to the committee. Rich Schilling contacted Grant Reed today by email, but has not received a response yet. Since Grant Reed did not have adequate time to respond, the appointment was tabled until the next meeting.

2. Resolution in support of the Springtown Fire Department – Karen Bedics **moved** to adopt Resolution #2009-008 recognizing the fire department as an integral part of Springfield Township. Rob Zisko **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously. This will enable the Fire Department to obtain items at a lower cost from federal surplus programs.

Although not on the agenda, Jim Brownlow asked if the Board needed to act upon the properties applying for the Agricultural Security District. Rich said the properties were going to be reviewed by the Planning Commission at their work session on February 19, after which they will make a recommendation to the Board. Rob Zisko added that the Ag Security Commission and the Bucks County Planning Commission also need to review the properties. Terry Clemons pointed out that historically, the Planning Commission has stated they would like information from the Ag Security Commission about the properties so that they are properly prepared to make a recommendation. Rob Zisko asked for clarification on the procedure he should be following in gaining input from the Ag Security Committee. Rich Schilling will review the document where the Ag Security Committee was established. Jim Brownlow asked that someone check when the 45-day period expires so that this can be placed on the appropriate Board agenda for action.

Jim Brownlow announced that through June, the first meeting of the month will be on the second Wednesday, and the second meeting of the month will be held on the fourth Tuesday.

Public Comment - None

Supervisors Comments

Karen Bedics suggested that Rich Schilling send a letter to PennDOT requesting them to put reflectors on the existing stop signs at the intersection of State Road and Richlandtown Pike, and install either *Dangerous Intersection* or *High Crash Area* signs on either State Road or Richlandtown Pike, not just *Stop Ahead* or *Slow* signs, which PennDOT is planning to install. Terry feels the reflectors work well, but has some concern about liability issues related to the other signs Karen is suggesting. Chief Laudenslager feels a four-way stop sign is the best alternative for that intersection.

Rich suggested that he work with Chief Laudenslager to get statistics for that intersection and then use those statistics to again request PennDOT to put four-way stop signs with reflectors on the posts. Additionally, the township will request that PennDOT do what their own auditors have suggested on other dangerous township intersections.

At 9:50 p.m., the public meeting was adjourned. The Supervisors entered into an executive session.

Executive Session – To Discuss Litigation Issue

The Board reconvened. Karen Bedics **moved** to authorize the filing of exceptions to the administrative law judge's recommended decision in the PPL case at a cost not to exceed \$5,000. Barbara Lindtner **seconded**. Voting **Yes**: Karen Bedics, Jim Brownlow, Barbara Lindtner, Volker Oakey. Voting **No**: Rob Zisko. The motion **carried**.

Terry Clemons feels that Scott Rubin should be the attorney to handle the initial legal aspects related to this.

Adjournment

At 10:30 p.m., Rob Zisko **moved** to adjourn the meeting. Karen Bedics **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra L. Everitt
Secretary/Treasurer

Next meeting: February 24, 2009 – 7:30 p.m.

Approved: April 8, 2009