

Board of Supervisors

MINUTES

March 27, 2012

Supervisors Present: Barbara Lindtner, John Oehler, Volker Oakey, Dave Long and Rob Zisko

Also present: Terry Clemons, Township Solicitor (exited at 9:13); Officer-In-Charge Mike McDonald; Bob Wynn, Township Engineer (exited at 9:13); Rich Schilling, Township Manager and Jason Wager, Secretary/Treasurer

Barbara Lindtner, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m. and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. The Board held an Executive Sessions on March 7, March 13 and prior to this meeting to discuss litigation and personnel.

Approval of Minutes

Rob Zisko **moved** to adopt the February 28, 2012, minutes as presented. Volker Oakey **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously.

Bills for Approval

John Oehler **moved** to approve the following bills paid from January 21 – February 23, 2012:

1. General Fund	\$ 20,294.58	4. Subdivision & Escrow	\$ 3,631.62
2. Liquid Fuels	\$ 15,303.17	5. Special Fees	\$ 11,643.81
3. Open Space	\$ 17,398.59		

Dave Long **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously.

Reports

Road Department (posted) – The 2/15/2012 thru 3/20/2012 report was reviewed. The Road Department performed pothole-patching, road sweeping with a contractor and equipment maintenance. They also graded and re-stoned three roads and hauled approximately five hundred ton of 2A stone to the Township yard. A guardrail section was replaced on Passer Road. A memorandum request from Rich Pursell, Township Roadmaster, to authorize the Township Engineer to draft the bid specifications and move forward to oil and chip 4.4 miles in 2012 was reviewed. Rob Zisko **moved** to approve the 2012 seal coat work as presented by Rich Pursell. Barbara Lindtner **seconded** and the motion **passed** unanimously. Dave Long inquired when the project would start and Rich stated that the work would not start until around August 1, 2012.

Police Report – Officer-in-Charge McDonald reported for February and March that there were 151 total calls for service, ten of those being handled by the State Police. There were eight reportable crashes. The value of property stolen in the Township was \$17,279, \$10,000 of that being stolen motor vehicles. \$3,489 of stolen property was recovered.

Officer-in-Charge McDonald stated that the Springfield Township Police Department now has access to the new Bucks County SPCA on Reservoir Road 24 hours a day for recovered animals. A Glock Armorer was brought in to clean the department's guns and replace worn parts. He also discussed the increased use and the dedication of "bath salts" as a controlled substance making them illegal. The department has ordered individual test kits that the Officers will be able to add to their inclusive drug testing equipment so they can test on-site instead of sending the drugs out for testing.

Officer-in-Charge McDonald provided training to the Haycock Volunteer Fire Company for Crime Scene Preservation. OIC McDonald also attended the Bucks County Fire Police Association award ceremony with Butch Helm of the Springtown Volunteer Fire Company and the Bucks County Chief's of Police meeting with former Springfield Township Police Chief Robert Bell.

Patrols have been increased in the area around the Township Road bridge closure. OIC McDonald is looking into obtaining portable scales in order to enforce weight limits on the roadways affected by the detours.

Treasurer Report – The Board reviewed the current budget and balance sheets for the different funds. Jason Wager highlighted some key points within the reports. The Township received \$55,032.05 in EIT in the month of February for a total of \$94,237.24 revenue generated in 2012. The Township was \$9,029.54 under the budgeted amount through February. Real Estate revenue was \$15,556.42 under budget. The Township was \$8,910.27 under budget for expense items in February. Our Year-To-Date total for expenses was \$4,523.60 under budget. Revenue is currently \$21,545.88 under the budgeted number.

The Reserve was at \$106,981.74 at the end of February and has not changed through March 23. The 2011 financial audit was received in March and the General Fund had a deficit of only \$956.92. There will be a report done by our auditor at one of the upcoming BOS meetings to discuss the 2011 financials.

Township Manager – Rich Schilling received the Governor's appointment of our new Emergency Management Coordinator, Curtis Reiss. Rich also stated that he would be asking the Board for compensation for Mr. Reiss due to the expected training and time involved for the position.

Rich and Jason Wager attended the Pennsylvania Municipal Health Insurance Cooperative (PMHIC) meeting on March 6. It was reported that the Township would be receiving back \$38,781 of the \$75,967 paid in 2011 due to our usage and the overall benefit of the pool. It was stated to Rich and Jason that the PMHIC group considers us their model, as our performance was outstanding.

A total of 29 zoning permits were issued for February equaling \$5,215.50 in revenue. Rich performed five Use & Occupancy inspections for resale. Zoning revenue was \$4,542.15 higher than 2011 and \$1,624.90 over budget for 2012 through the end of February. Rich expects zoning to remain strong in 2012 based on the activity so far.

Barbara Lindtner inquired about the meeting with the Lower Saucon resident from the last meeting. Rich Pursell and Rich Schilling met with Joseph Szakos concerning the trucks on Drifting Drive and Banko Lane. Rich Pursell stated that he felt putting "No Truck" signs would not be a good idea due to the traffic flow in this area. Since these roads are shared with Lower Saucon Township, there is little Springfield Township can do without the cooperation of Lower Saucon.

Public Comments on Agenda Items

Township resident **Bruce Strook** inquired about any drug programs in the Township. Officer-In-Charge McDonald commented that this is handled primarily by the school district now and resident **Ken Haas**, a retired Palisades school teacher, confirmed that there were anti-drug programs in the schools 3 ½ years ago. He suggested contacting the school district to see what is being done now.

Township resident **Bill McCarthy** talked about the increased traffic on the Knecht's Road Covered Bridge. He saw a pickup truck pulling a dual axle trailer with another pickup truck on the back that was waiting to cross the bridge. He stopped his car and informed the driver about the weight limit on the bridge and the driver backed up and went another way. Mr. McCarthy was wondering if a bar could be put on the bridge limiting the height of vehicles crossing the bridge. Township resident Judy Miller asked about putting cameras on the bridge and if the police could use them to enforce violations. Officer-In-Charge McDonald stated that scales would be the only way to enforce the weight limit restriction. She also asked about detour signs being put on Slifer Valley Road to let drivers know about the detour before they turn onto the bridge. Barbara Lindtner asked Officer-In-Charge McDonald and Rich Schilling to look into costs for scales.

Township resident **Jim Nilsen** commented about Mr. Strock's inquiry about an anti-drug program in the community. He talked about the Just Community organization, which serves the Pennridge, Palisades and Quakertown School Districts. They are a nationally certified organization who trains teachers on how to deal with and to identify children with drug addictions. They have been servicing these districts for over ten years. Mr. Nilsen suggested if there were any questions or more thought to getting Springfield Township more involved that we should contact the director. OIC McDonald noted that Just Community donated a third of the cost towards Township Prescription Drug Return Box.

New Business

1. Township Road Bridge Closure – Township Manager Rich Schilling went over the information received on March 19 from Carroll Engineering Corporation. They are the group PennDot contracted to do the bridge closure and detour plan. It was sent out to the local EMS, Board of Supervisors, Police Department and Fire Department. Rich sent the feedback to Joe Bush, who is the Director of Special Projects in Bucks County. Mr. Bush notified the Township on March 15, one day before the bridge was to be closed. The recent inspection by PennDot deemed the bridge unsafe. The County was attempting to leave one lane of traffic open, but PennDot and County engineers would not certify the bridge as usable. At this time, the bridge will be closed indefinitely and the Township is still waiting for the official detour route. Mr. Bush confirmed that there was funding available for this bridge, but the bid specifications for the bridge repair had still not been released. Barbara Lindtner stated that the county is willing to work with our Township departments to create the best detour route. The Road and Police Departments secured signs to post since it would be probably two weeks before the county would have something available.

Township resident **John Miller** suggested signage keeping traffic off Knecht's Bridge and inquired about the use of PA Rte 412 through Springtown being used instead of Slifer Valley and Bursonville Roads. He stated the huge disservice that has been done to the community. Resident **Judy Miller** talked about a three way stop at Bursonville due to the speed of traffic coming through. Township Engineer Bob Wynn explained that this would not warrant a three way stop and went through the requirements. These warrants would be number of accidents, volume of traffic and the same amount of traffic coming from every direction. The Board asked Bob Wynn to verify the requirements.

Township resident **Alice Freeh**, resident of Freeh Lane located by the bridge, had concerns over emergency vehicles getting to properties by the bridge. Adam Maziuk, Upper Bucks Regional EMS Executive Director and Will Helm, Fire Chief of the Springtown Volunteer Fire Company, agreed they will adapt and overcome the obstacle and they have already looked into alternative routes to those residents.

Governmental Matters

1. Authorization for DCNR Resolution – Terry Clemons discussed a joint project between Lower Saucon Township and Springfield Township involving a property on Springtown Hill Road consisting of fourteen acres where there is an opportunity to submit an application for a grant funding this conservation easement. Heritage Conservancy performed a preliminary investigation and confirmed that due to the endangered species of plant life on the property it would likely qualify for a grant through the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and National Resources and the County of Bucks that would fund 100% of the actual cost of the conservation easement. Lower Saucon Township had already adopted a resolution to cover 40% of the soft costs (ie. survey costs, legal, appraisals, title insurance, etc) if the process would move forward. Terry stated that DCNR would want Springfield Township to adopt a precise resolution where the Township would be acting as the lead agency since approximately 8.6 acres are in the Springfield Township. Rob Zisko **moved** to adopt a conditional resolution, **Resolution 2012-06**, pending the agreement of sale signed by the property owners Hans Reimann and Marie Smith where Springfield Township would apply for a DCNR grant and agree to cover the 60% of the soft costs (approximately \$11,000) leading to the acquisition of the conservation easement located at TMP #42-006-033. The Secretary/Treasurer would be authorized to sign and certify that this resolution was adopted. Dave Long **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously.

2. Prevailing Wage Resolution - Rob Zisko **moved** to adopt **Resolution 2012-07** urging the Pennsylvania General Assembly to eliminate or amend the state prevailing wage act (Act 442 of 1961). Volker Oakey **seconded**. The motion **passed** unanimously.

Planning Matters

1. Springtown Knolls – Request from developer – Robin Reshetar, developer of Springtown Knoll, presented to the Board the option to dedicate the roadway in the Springtown Knoll Subdivision. The three main items that need to be considered are leaving or removing the existing cul-de-sac, top coat the roadway with binder and treat remaining lots as individual builds, and the detention basin, which would need approval from the BCCD (Bucks County Conservation District) and need to have the capacity verified. After much discussion, the consensus of the Board was for the cul-de-sac to be removed by spring and for the roadway to be top coated with binder. The discussion on the detention basin will be tabled until Mr. Reshetar has a 2012 “As Built” plan created to ensure it will properly function for the properties in the subdivision.

2. Estates at State Road Subdivision – Revised Final Plan Request – Bob Wynn explained there was a change to the original record plan that would place the responsibility of building permits and escrows on the future lot owners in the Estates at State Road Subdivision. Rich Schilling has had concern with Ordinance 138 “Disclosure Ordinance for New Construction” because of how complex and difficult to follow the ordinance is. He wanted the Board to review this ordinance and it was the decision of the Board to discuss at a later meeting. Rob Zisko **moved** to accept the March 6 letter as reviewed by the Board from Bob Wynn’s office outlining the items that are to be resolved prior to the final plan recordation. John Oehler **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously.

Old Business

1. PPL Litigation – Terry Clemons gave a brief synopsis of the most current legal filings and where things stood in regards to the PPL litigation. The Board authorized Mr. Clemons to negotiate a settlement with PPL over the few weeks prior to this Board meeting. He described some of the keys points in the settlement agreement. The Township would withdraw its Appeal to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court and be paid the sum of \$325,000. John Oehler and Volker Oakey recused themselves from the litigation conversation since they have business dealings with PPL. Township resident **Bruce Strook** commented that he though compromise is not always a bad thing and that a settlement would be good for the Township. Rob Zisko and Dave Long stated that they were for settling because of the low probability of winning the case and the concern for starting the legal process over again. They both agreed that continuing with the litigation would add a significant burden financially to the Township and a settlement would allow the Township to replenish the reserve. Barbara Lindtner was in agreement with Dave and Rob. She stated that it was a very valiant effort put forth by the Township, but she felt at some point the Township would eventually lose. However, because of the litigation, there will be significant environmental stipulations put in place and she felt the settlement was a win-win for both the Township and the environment. Township resident **Jim Nilsen** stated that the settlement helps make the Township whole again financially. Township resident Steve Doncevic appreciated what the Board of Supervisors did and thought it was a great effort for a small Township. Barbara Lindtner **moved** to authorize the Township Solicitor to execute the mutual settlement agreement and general lease between the Board of Supervisor of Springfield Township and PPL. Rob Zisko **seconded**; Voting **Yes**: Barbara Lindtner, Dave Long & Rob Zisko **Abstaining**: John Oehler & Volker Oakey. The motion **passed**.

2. Fire Department Discussion - Steve Hohenstein, president of the Springtown Volunteer Fire Company, presented the fire company’s operating budget, report from their marketing research on their last mailing and a capital improvement list of items that are of an immediate concern. The Board reviewed the information. The fire company is applying for four grants, totaling approximately over \$200,000 if all money would be received, that they hope to receive to help with their capital costs, which is excess of \$800,000 if everything was fixed or replaced. The Board agreed to allow Rich Pursell and the Road Department to help with a sinkhole that has developed in the fire company’s parking lot.

3. Solution on Open Space Funding – Rob Zisko **moved** to adopt **Resolution 2012-08** urging the Governor of Pennsylvania to restore open space funding to the State budget. John Oehler **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously.

New Business

2. Historic Commission Vacancy – Rob Zisko moved to appoint Township resident Michelle Horvath to the open position in the Historic Commission. John Oehler seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

Correspondence

The Board reviewed all current correspondence.

It was the consensus of the Board to allow Rich Schilling to give permission to the Bucks County Department of Health to treat municipal properties for mosquito control to help reduce the spread of the West Nile Virus. Volker Oahey asked Rich to let him know what treatment the BCDH will be using.

Public Comments

Township resident **Bill Ryker** appreciated the time spent by the Board in regards to Flint Hill Farm and the Ebert and Nemeth road residents. He did question the level of consideration given to this situation by the Board and hoped that the Board might reconsider the issue. Rob Zisko explained that it has not been the policy of the Board to get involved in these types of issues. Rich Schilling stated he had been in discussion with Mr. Reiss, a property owner off Nemeth Road, about possibly expanding his detention basins to capture more water. Rich stated that Mr. Reiss has been very receptive to the idea.

Supervisor Comments

Dave Long stated that the Open Space signs are going up for the preserved properties within the Township.

Adjournment

At 11:05 p.m., Rob Zisko moved to adjourn the meeting. Barbara Lindtner seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Jason A. Wager
Township Secretary/Treasurer

Next meeting: April 10, 2012

Approved: May 22, 2012