

**LOWER HEIDELBERG TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 16, 2019**

The Lower Heidelberg Township Board of Supervisors held their monthly meeting at the Township Building, 720 Brownsville Road, on the above date. Present were Chairman Michael Keltz, Vice-Chairwoman Deborah P. Scull, member Cheryl L. Johnson, Township Solicitor Andy Bellwoar, Chief Thomas Deiterich, Township Engineer Ryan Rhode (KE), Code Officer Glenn Kraft, and Township Manager/Secretary/Treasurer Pamela J. Stevens. Also present were the Tax Collector, Sharon Boyer, and the Library Director, Leigh-Anne Yacovelli.

Chairman Keltz called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m., and led the pledge to the flag.

Executive Session: Mr. Keltz stated that the Board held Executive Sessions on December 11, 2019 and prior to tonight's meeting concerning personnel, potential litigation and collective bargaining matters.

BOS Approval of Minutes: The minutes from the November 18, 2019 Regular Meeting were distributed for review prior to the meeting. Mr. Prutzman raised a question on the minutes concerning the healthcare matter and Ms. Stevens noted that the approved minutes were the October minutes and not the November minutes. On Motion by Mr. Keltz, seconded by Mrs. Johnson, approved the minutes for the meeting as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment – Open to Public:

Leigh-Anne Yacovelli requested a correction to the October Meeting minutes "in memory" of instead of "a donation". Ms. Stevens noted that she will make that correction. Mrs. Yacovelli thanked the Board about allowing a page devoted to the **Wernersville Public Library** in the Township's Newsletter. Mrs. Yacovelli summarized the Trains and Chocolate Program and the attendance at this program was 33 adults and 32 children. There will be a February Valentines Party and more Chocolate will be available.

Tax Collector – Mrs. Boyer was present and she reported the taxes collected for the Month of November were in the amount of \$7,619.83. As of today there are 73 outstanding regular tax bills which is an increase from last year for the same time period.

Fire Commissioner – Ms. Stevens presented the November Fire Department Report and there were a total of 76 calls for the Month of November, and there were 299 hours of training for the month. Fire personnel participated in fire prevention events, the Department met with Spring Township and PA American for community relations, there was fire extinguisher training, the staff attended Career Day, and Mr. Renshaw attended an annual Conference. Mrs. Johnson stated that there will be no change from 2019 to 2020 in the Western Berks Regional Fire Department's budget and Ms. Stevens' has a copy. Chief Deiterich asked about the status of the Engine that was towed and Mrs. Johnson will ask about the status of the Engine.

EMC – Ms. Stevens presented the EMC Report for the month of November, where no incidents or training occurred, and the only action was Mr. Schlottman continues to work on the required certifications and the Emergency Operations Plans.

Ambulance – Ms. Stevens presented the Western Berks Ambulance Report and for the month of November there were 19 incidents with 17 transports and the busiest time was 9:00 p.m.

Ms. Stevens noted that the annual **Western Berks Ambulance Agreement** for the provision of Ambulance Services for year 2020 should be approved. The number of parcels is 2219, so the 2020 total fee would be \$66,570.00 and would be split into two (2) equal payments in July and December. No questions. **On Motion** by Mrs. Johnson, seconded by Mrs. Scull, approve the Township Manager to execute the 2020 Western Berks Ambulance Services Agreement. Motion passed unanimously.

Planning Commission

Ms. Stevens noted that the Planning Commission Meeting was cancelled as there was no planning business. Mr. Nevitt was not present.

Building/Zoning – Mr. Glenn Kraft presented the KCS Report summarizing that KCS issued 6 permits for a construction value of \$45,469.47. His office worked on 5 open property maintenance issues and 7 zoning issues and the Hearing for the property at 333 N. Church was held and at the hearing the judge gave the property owner to the middle of January 2020 to cleanup. Mrs. Johnson stated that this has been going on for years and is not fair to the neighbors to have the cleanup deadline extended again.

Engineers - Mr. Rhode presented his report and the escrow releases are mostly for sidewalk and various improvements.

The Township Engineer reviewed the requested **Escrow Releases from Grande Construction** for the Cacoosing Crossing North (CCN) Phase 1 and Green Valley Estates West (GVEW) Phases 1 and 2 and has the following recommendations for the BOS: Approve Release No. 9 for CCN in the amount of \$40,897.20, approve Release No. 7 for GVEW Phase 1 in the amount of \$16,000.00; and approve Release No. 7 in the amount of \$34,503.75.

Escrow Releases from Grande Construction. No questions. **On Motion** by Mrs. Scull, seconded by Mr. Keltz approved Escrow Release No. 9 for Cacoosing Crossing North in the amount of \$40,897.20, approved Escrow Release No. 7 for Green Valley Estates West Phase 1 in the amount of \$16,000.00; and approved Escrow Release No. 7 for Green Valley Estates West Phase 2 in the amount of \$34,503.75. Motion passed unanimously

Mr. Rhode summarized that the Annual Emergency Services Request for Proposals was issued but only one Contractor responded and that was AH Moyer. Mr. Rhode stated that they are very qualified and requests that the Board make a motion to approve the award of the **Annual 2020 Emergency and Routine Maintenance Contract** to A.H. Moyer. **On Motion** by Mrs. Johnson, seconded by Mrs. Scull, approved the Emergency Contract to AH Moyer for the calendar year 2020. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Rhode stated that there had been an ongoing drainage easement encroachment dispute on Heffner Road and the property owner has committed in writing their willingness to resolve the encroachment issue and the letter is in the Board's packet.

LTAP Investigations: LTAP provided Reports on the speeding and safety investigations for Connecticut and Stitzer and the intersection of Sabrina and Leslie. Mr. Rhode summarized that on Connecticut there was 1400 vehicles counted and the 85% of the speeds was 36 mph. LTAP memo has various traffic calming suggestions. Connecticut is a concern and LTAP does have some recommendations.

LTAP Continued: Mr. Rhode asked the Board review the LTAP Reports and have a discussion on any of the suggestions from LTAP potentially being implemented. Speeding on Stitzer was not a concern as no vehicles were tracked over the speed limit. LTAP did investigate the Sabrina and Leslie multi-way Stop Sign and this intersection does not meet the warrant but LTAP has suggestions to improve the sight distance.

Recreation Board: Mrs. Scull stated that the children's Christmas Party was held on December 7, 2019, and we had about half of the number of children we typically have, so we moved the date closer to Christmas and the next years will be 12.12.20.

Police Chief: Chief Deiterich presented his monthly Report for November, and there were a total of 1,897.75 service hours, 120 incidents/calls with 11 criminal incidents and 8 motor vehicle incidents for the month.

Police Department Hiring: The Board of Supervisors are pleased to announce that they are considering the hiring of two (2) new Police Officers. **On Motion** by Mr. Keltz, seconded by Mrs. Scull, authorize the Chief of Police conditionally offer employment to the two (2) candidate(s) recommended in tonight's executive session, subject to satisfaction of the required conditions. Mrs. Johnson abstained. Motion passed.

The Manager requested that the Board make a motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding concerning carryover of personal time off for various Officers in the Police Department due to short staffing this year. **On Motion** by Mrs. Scull, seconded by Mrs. Johnson, approved the Memorandum of Understanding concerning personal paid time off as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

The Manager requested that the Board make a motion to approve Resolution 2019-033 which will adopt the Police Department's Field Training Program Policy 19-032. **On Motion** by Mrs. Johnson, seconded by Mrs. Scull, approved Resolution 2019-33 adopting the Field Training Program Policy as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Road Foreman: Mr. Clay presented his report for November. The 2005 dump truck was fixed, started installing snow fence throughout Township, tree cutting on Starr Road, started the leaf collection and serviced and painted the leaf collector, started installing the Keep Kids Alive, abandoned Old West Penn storm pipe, and for information, the Road Crew spent this year 67 Man Hours cleaning up trees and tree limbs on State Roads.

Manager/Secretary/Treasurer/Sewer Engineer

Penn Werner Sewer Rehabilitation Project: The Contractor has submitted their Final Payment No. 4 request along with some of their closeout paperwork. The project came in under budget and was \$45,272.50 less than the approved Contract. The Final Payment to Wexcon will be in the amount of \$18,421.47. The Contractor must still submit the completed certificate of substantial completion, corrected payment supporting data, and all certified payrolls from both Wexcon and the Subcontractors. **On Motion** by Mr. Keltz, seconded by Mrs. Scull approved Wexcon's Final Payment Application No. 4 in the amount of \$18,421.47 with the condition that all of the contract paperwork is received and found acceptable to the Engineer and Solicitor. Motion passed unanimously.

2020 Budget: As previously presented to the Public, there is a proposed change of 0.50 mills increase to the general millage to provide for the budget increases in public safety and Township services including the hiring of two (2) new Patrol Officers. The new general millage will be 3.5 mills. All of the other taxes will remain the same as in Year 2019 as follows: Street Light Tax at 0.24 mills, Fire Tax at 0.87 mills, Fire Hydrant Tax at 0.079 mills, Ambulance Tax at 0.234 mills, and Debt Service at 1.113 mills. The Trash and Recycling amount for 2020 will be \$242.00 for the year. The Supervisors need to approve of the Final Budget for 2020.

Mr. Prutzman asked questions about contract negotiations and impacts to the budgets. Mr. Bellwoar responded that the Township makes a best guess on the budget numbers if the contracts are not executed. Mr. Prutzman also inquired about employees that are also Supervisors and do they have a contract, or how does their wage get determined. Mr. Bellwoar stated that there is not a contract and the Board of Auditors determines the wages of a working Supervisor.

Ms. Stevens stated that the Balanced Budget includes the General Fund amount of \$5,350,308, the Sewer Fund amount of \$799,435, and the Liquid Fuels Fund of \$213,800. **On Motion** by Mr. Keltz, seconded by Mrs. Johnson approved the 2020 Budget for adoption at tonight's Meeting along with Resolution 2019-34 establishing the 2020 Real Estate Tax and assessments. Motion passed unanimously.

Health Insurance: At the November 18, 2019 Board meeting, the issue of providing Healthcare coverage to a Supervisor was discussed, and a Motion was made to have the Manager contact the Plan Provider to amend the plan to allow the Supervisor to have healthcare coverage. Mr. Prutzman asked about the cost and the impact to the budget adding a Supervisor to the healthcare. Mr. Prutzman asked why is the motion specific to Mrs. Johnson. Mr. Kurtz noted that a specific letter was submitted by Mrs. Johnson and the motion last month was to have the plan amended, and now at this month's meeting the Board is approving for Mrs. Johnson to be added. Mr. Bellwoar stated that the Supervisor, Cheryl Johnson, presented the correct letter requesting this consideration for her and her husband which is permitted by the Second Class Township Code. Mr. Bellwoar stated that Mrs. Johnson does not have a contract and is considered one of the non-uniform employees. Mrs. Scull asked Mr. Prutzman if he wanted Mrs. Johnson to pay more? Mr. Prutzman asked if there was a motion and Mr. Bellwoar stated that the motion has not been made yet. Mr. Bellwoar stated that the Benecon plan does not have different contributions and she will participate just like other employees. Mrs. Johnson stated that since she is starting a new term as a Supervisor, she is permitted to be on the healthcare plan while the other Supervisors are not permitted since they are in mid-term. Mr. Bellwoar stated that the Board is staying transparent by amending the plan and then responding to Mrs. Johnson's letter. **On Motion** by Mr. Keltz, seconded by Mrs. Scull, approve Supervisor Cheryl Johnson and her husband being added to the Township's Healthcare Plan starting January 1, 2020 and that she contribute the same amount towards the premium as all other employees. Motion passed with Mr. Keltz and Mrs. Scull voting yes and Mrs. Johnson Abstained.

City of Reading Sewer Update: Ms. Stevens stated that the City forwarded a letter dated November 19, 2020 to the Township advising them that the sewage Local Limits were being modified for Industrial Users. The only area that discharges sewer to the City of Reading is the Legacy at the Paper Mill. The sewer users in this Development are Domestic users and not Industrial. The City is requesting that these new Local Limits be adopted. The Manager will write the City a letter concerning the sewer users at the Legacy at the Paper Mill, and research the proper adoption of these new sewage discharge limits. No action required.

Robesonia-Wernersville Municipal Authority Sewer Rate Increase: Ms. Stevens stated that the Authority forwarded a letter dated November 22, 2019 advising the Township that the Authority was proposing to increase the sewage rates from \$3.50 per thousand gallons to \$4.00 per thousand gallons. Using recent metered flows, this increase may result in approximately \$20,000.00 more in sewer fees per year. Township staff should be finalizing a sewer rate study for the four main sewer districts which will include this new rate increase. No action required

Bill List and Treasurers Report: On Motion by Mrs. Johnson, seconded by Mrs. Scull, approve the Treasurer's Report and file for Audit. Motion passed unanimously.

Solicitor's Report: Mr. Bellwoar noted that he had nothing further and all of his items were covered in the issues that were discussed in Executive Session.

Old Business – None

New Business – None

Public Comment: Mr. Melson brought up the health insurance issue and in his opinion it was legal, consistent, and transparent and was satisfied that the Board made very clear motions on the healthcare matter.

Mr. Bellwoar stated that the Board needs to reorganize the first Monday of 2020, January 6, 2020, and Ms. Stevens will advertise. Ms. Stevens requested confirmation of the time. Mr. Keltz asked what time and Mr. Bellwoar stated 10:00 a.m. would be good.

Adjournment: On Motion by Mrs. Scull and seconded by Mrs. Johnson. Motion passed unanimously, and Mr. Keltz stated then we are adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

Next Resolution Number 2019 – 35

Next Ordinance Number 2019 – 361

Respectfully Submitted,

Pamela J. Stevens

Manager/Secretary/Treasurer

Approved: 1.20.2020

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