

RICE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
3000 Church Road, Mountaintop, PA 18707
MINUTES
October 5, 2021

The duly advertised regular meeting of the Rice Township Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, October 5, 2021, at the Rice Township Municipal Building, 3000 Church Road, Mountaintop. Copies of the Agenda, draft minutes of the previous meeting and Treasurer Reports were available to the public. Chair Robert Pipech called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. It was announced that the meeting will be recorded for preparing the minutes. Interior cameras were also recording the meeting.

ROLL CALL: Arnold - here
 Pipech - here
 Smith - here

Also present are: Please see attached sign in sheet.

MOTION by Pipech, seconded by Arnold, to hire Christopher Tyler Dimmick as a Patrolman effective 10/6/2021 upon completing the Oath of Office, recognizing the requirement that Dimmick must move within 15 miles of the jurisdictional boundaries of the department within one (1) year of hiring.

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes Pipech - yes Smith - yes
MOTION CARRIED.

Dimmick Oath of Office was administered by Judge Webby.

ENGINEER'S REPORT: Engineer Pasonick reported that the dam project had been delayed by all the rain and tropical storm IDA. After the water ceases to overflow the spillway, FABCOR will work to remove the remaining formwork from the sluice from the downstream side of the dam, power wash the sluice and camera the interior to be sent to DEP. Pasonick is working with DEP and FABCOR to see if the dewatering of the lake can be kept to one more time rather than multiple dewaterings as envisioned by DEP. Pasonick also reported that the County bridge on Heslop road has been repaired but it remains limited to one lane.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Resident Karl Kaminski asked that two dead trees along Heslop Road be removed for safety reasons. While it is difficult to find tree contactors, developer Bruce Fine offered the name and phone number for one where he has had success. Planning Commission members Bob Smith and Tom Romanyshyn, Township EMC Bryan Brown, Pasonick and Supervisors Pipech and Arnold discussed the County bridge on Heslop Road and next steps. The conclusion was that it is a County bridge and it is under their control. In response to Kaminski's inquiry concerning secondary access to Heslop Road, Arnold responded that this road is scheduled in the final phase of construction of the Woodberry Manor PRD.

BUSINESS MATTERS:

MOTION by Pipech, second by Smith, to accept the Minutes of the meeting on September 7, 2021.

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes Pipech - yes Smith - yes
MOTION CARRIED.

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BUSINESS MATTERS (Cont):

Received the Treasurer's Report for September, 2021 from Beck who noted the \$100,000 transfer of funds from the General Fund Money Market account to cover bills, the receipt of \$19,047.90 from the State which is passed on to Wright Fire Company and the receipt of \$76,756.52 in state aid which funds the Minimum Municipal Obligation leaving about \$5,000 to be funded by the General Fund. Beck noted that tax receipts to date exceed the budget by almost \$80,000. Referring to the "Net Income" on page 5 of the General Fund budget report, Beck normalized the \$286,357.11 surplus by removing the \$185,000 ARPA funds and current expenses, suggesting that a surplus forecast of \$50,000 may be more appropriate at this time. Beck referred to the Liquid Fuels Budget versus Actual deficit that recognizes the road work expenditures this year funded by last year's surplus. Beck also noted that the deficit in the Recreation fund will be offset by \$8,000 from the soccer field grant yet to be received. Beck concluded with bank balances as of 9/30/2021; General Fund balances totaled \$527,104.94; Liquid Fuels balances totaled \$45,891.04; Recreation Fund balances totaled \$2,473.61 of which \$385 are restricted donations for a new pickleball court, all for a total of \$575,469.59 cash on hand. Restricted balances include \$500.10 in the DCNR grant account, \$5,002.52 in the Developers' Escrow Account and \$185,651.99 in the ARPA account for a total of \$191,154.61 of restricted funds.

MOTION by Pipech, second by Smith, to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented, and all bills to be paid.

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes Pipech - yes Smith - yes

MOTION CARRIED.

Received the Roadmaster's Report for September, 2021: Roadmaster Pipech noted all the work related to IDA, the evacuation of the section of the trailer park, closing Blytheburn road, flooding in Laurel Lakes and Henry Drive. Currently the Public Works crew is skin patching as winter approaches. In 2022 the over \$500,000 grant finds will allow significant road work to be done including tar and chip. In response to Kaminski's question about the roads breaking down, Pipech responded that there was no maintenance program for years back. Equipment now in place with the current crew is allowing for repairs but could only do so much in 2021.

MOTION by Arnold, second by Smith, to accept the Roadmaster's Report as presented.

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes Pipech - yes Smith - yes

MOTION CARRIED.

Received the Police Report for September, 2021 as presented by Acting Chief Ehret. Pipech thanked Harry and the Police Department for all their help during IDA.

MOTION by Smith, second by Arnold, to accept the Police Report as presented.

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes Pipech - yes Smith - yes

MOTION CARRIED.

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BUSINESS MATTERS (Cont):

Received the Zoning Report for September, 2021 as presented by Beck.

MOTION by Pipech, second by Smith, to accept the Zoning Report as presented.

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes Pipech - yes Smith - yes

MOTION CARRIED.

Received the SEO Report for September, 2021 as presented by Beck.

MOTION by Pipech, second by Arnold, to accept the SEO Report as presented.

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes Pipech - yes Smith - yes

MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Arnold, seconded by Smith, to amend the following motion by removing the comma in \$14,00 and replacing it with a period \$14.00 to correct the typographical error.

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes Pipech - yes Smith - yes

MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Pipech, seconded by Arnold, to hire Ronald Miller, Jr. as a part-time Public Works employee not to exceed 30 hours per week at \$14.00 per hour effective October 12, 2021.

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes Pipech - yes Smith - yes

MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Pipech, seconded by Arnold, to adopt the 2021 Police Manual.

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes Pipech - yes Smith - yes

MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Pipech, seconded by Arnold, to adopt the 2022-2025 Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Rice Township Police Benevolent Association.

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes Pipech - yes Smith - no

MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Pipech, seconded by Smith, to accept the Planning Commission's recommendation to conditionally approve the proposed alternative piping for storm water management for Jennifer's Way subject to addressing the Township Engineer's two comments.

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes Pipech - yes Smith - yes

MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Pipech, seconded by Smith, to approve request #8 from Bruce Fine Construction regarding the development known as Jennifer's Way to reduce the LC by \$2,613.17 including retainage based on the Township Engineer's recommendation, leaving a balance of \$117,885.25.

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes Pipech - yes Smith - yes

MOTION CARRIED.

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BUSINESS MATTERS (Cont):

MOTION by Pipech, seconded by Smith, to approve the request from Bruce Fine Construction regarding the development known as Jennifer's Way to reduce the LC by \$42,238.03 as excess retainage to leave an outstanding balance of \$75,647.22 as recommended by the Township Engineer.

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes Pipech - yes Smith - yes
MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Smith, seconded by Pipech, to approve the Recreation Committee's Halloween party to be held at the Township Park from 4:00 PM to 7 PM on Saturday, October 23rd and to provide up to \$2,000 from the Recreation Fund for this event.

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes Pipech - yes Smith - yes
MOTION CARRIED.

Arnold thanked Holly Guydish for her leadership for this event. Bruce Fine offered a donation for the event.

MOTION by Pipech, second by Smith, to adopt Resolution 2021-10A, which amends Resolution 2021-10 by replacing "not to exceed \$225,000" with "for \$190,715.66 " and adding "or two new Ford 550 trucks" immediately following "with two new General Motors 4500 trucks."

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes Pipech - yes Smith - yes
MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Pipech, second by Arnold, to approve the installation two LED with remote sensors by Diversified Electric as replacements to the existing parking lot night lamps not to exceed \$800.00

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes Pipech - yes Smith - yes
MOTION CARRIED.

Pipech announced that the bathrooms at the Ice Lake Park will be closed by October 29th for the winter; the fishing derby will be held at the Blytheburn Lake on October 10, 2021 from 10 am to 1 pm. and the Police will be on hand; Luzerne County is offering free tire collection on Saturday, October 9th, 2021 at the Hanover Area Jr/Sr/High School at 1600 Sans Souci Parkway. Flyers are available at the Township Office and is posted on our website. Smith added that Representative Mullery was sponsoring a paper shredding event at Crestwood High School on October 23 from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m.; the Planning Commission met on September 22, 2021 and draft minutes are available; budget preparation begins in October. Departments were asked to submit their budgetary needs for 2021; the Commonwealth's 2021 state aid allocation supporting the Volunteer Fire Relief Association of the Wright Township Fire Company in the amount of \$19,047.90 was received September 21, 2021, approximately \$2,000 less than last year. Funds will be distributed to Wright Township Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association in October in accordance with Act 205. Form 706-B will be completed and returned to the Department of the Auditor General; the Pension Plans' Minimum Municipal Obligation Reports for 2022 were completed and distributed to the Supervisors and filed on September 30, 2021; the 2021 Commonwealth allocation of GENERAL MUNICIPAL PENSION SYSTEM STATE AID funds in the amount of \$76,756.52 were received on September 28, 2021, a decrease of approximately \$2,000 below last year. As directed by the PA Auditor General, a check in the amount of \$64,625.85 will be directed to Principal Financial

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Group for deposit into Rice Township Police Pension Fund #4-50708; and \$17,315.44 will be distributed to PMRS for Rice Township Plan (40-168-5N). This satisfies the Minimum Municipal Obligation payment for 2021: leaf drop off will begin on Saturday, October 16th and concludes on Saturday, November 20th. Leaves can be left by the dumpster by the Township Building and must be in clear plastic bags. Branches cut to a length of 3 feet and no more than 1" in diameter may also be left. Holders of the Rice Township 2021-22 Recycle Permit will be allowed to leave their leaves. Cameras record the area; The Recreation Committee will host a Halloween event on Saturday, October 23 from 4:00PM to 7 PM. and Abe's Hot Dogs will be there; the Recreation Committee is announcing that they will hold a special community meeting at the Township Building Wednesday, October 20, 2021 at 6:30 PM to present their progress regarding the exciting potential uses of the property formerly occupied by the Rice Township Volunteer Fire Company. Arnold explained that the concept is an indoor recreation/senior/veterans center. An architect will be at the meeting. In response to Pat Rushton's question, Arnold noted that there are no hard commitments regarding funding the project but several sources are being pursued. The Supervisors will be in attendance and the Committee is seeking reaction and input regarding their ideas for this property. Recreation Committee Chair John Rogers and Vice-Chair of the Board of Supervisors Rick Arnold will present the Committee's ideas and answer questions.

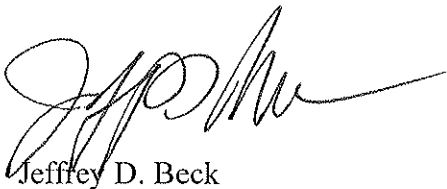
Wright Township Volunteer Fire Company Report & Fire Police Incident Recap was received. Arnold reported that they responded to 16 incidents and the Fire Police were out for 8 hours. He thanked them for their service.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT: The Solicitor noted that they were glad to conclude the 4-year police contract.

PUBLIC COMMENT. Kaminski asked why not pay Miller \$15.00 an hour. Pipech responded that this will be addressed at the reorganization meeting. Pipech reported that test pits had been dug for the soccer field project. EMC Brown reported that a damage list has been sent to the County and PEMA. He noted that Swift 911 had been replaced with Code Red and that emergency declarations now could only be made for 7 days at a time. Brown is beginning to update the EMA plan and asked for volunteers to help him. Brown thanked the Police and the Wright Fire Department for all their help during the emergencies caused by IDA. Pipech thanked Brown for all his work during IDA. Beck noted that the advertised November Supervisors meeting was Wednesday, November 3, to avoid election day.

MOTION by Smith, second by Arnold, to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:



Jeffrey D. Beck

Secretary/Treasurer