The duly advertised regular meeting of the Rice Township Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, January 3, 2023, at the Rice Township Municipal Building, 3000 Church Road, Mountaintop immediately following the Reorganization Meeting. 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 7:04 p.m. It was announced that the meeting was being recorded for preparing the minutes. Interior cameras were also recording the meeting.

ROLL CALL: Arnold

- here

Pipech

- here

Smith

- here

Also present were: Please see sign-in sheet

PUBLIC COMMENT: Resident Karl Kaminski asked how the swearing in was legal without using the Bible. The Solicitor and Supervisor Smith assured him that swearing on a Bible was not required. In response to Kaminski's second question, Pipech replied that the dock at the Ice Lakes is never removed from the lake because its float system is designed for year-round placement.

ENGINEER'S REPORT: Township Engineer Pasonick reported that a meeting was held with Fabcor, the dam contractor, and DEP. Resumption of the retrofit of the sluice gate and dam repairs is expected to start in March, 2023 with completion expected in the summer. Fabcor has presented a change order in the amount of \$39,038.24 to install the catwalk. Pasonick explained that this cost will be offset by the cost savings of not boring a 24" hole through the dam. At the meeting, DEP requires that a 6 inch concrete wall be pored on the lake side of the dam in place of using shotcrete. Pasonick noted that this wall will provide the frame for the sluice gate and actually allow for a better seal. DEP also wants the exposed dam stone repointed as needed. Solicitor Arnold noted that this plan would result in a one-time lake water draw down and that the project will finally be done after 7 years.

BUSINESS MATTERS:

MOTION by Smith, second by Arnold, to accept the Minutes of the regular meeting on December 6, 2022.

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes

Pipech - yes

Smith - yes

MOTION CARRIED.

Treasurer Beck reviewed the General Fund Check Register and noted that all expenses are higher due to inflation and that the final payment for fire protection under the 2022 contract was made. Beck noted that tax receipts exceeded budget by just over \$85,000 due to strong EIT and real estate transfer tax receipts. Beck concluded that, while the report indicated a surplus of \$156,994.98, normalizing that surplus for ARPA receipts and road paving expenses leads to a more reasonable operating surplus between 66 and 70 thousand dollars. Liquid Fuels expenditures were made for truck repairs and snow storm supplies, while Recreation Fund expenditures were made for the tree lighting event. Beck reported that the General Fund balances totaled

BUSINESS MATTERS (Cont.):

\$770,719.07 with \$28,629.00 restricted for K-9 donations, Liquid Fuels balances totaled \$18,504.91 and Recreation Fund balances totaled \$4,325.61, all for a total of \$793,549.59 cash on hand. Restricted balances include \$503.13 in the DCNR Grant Account and \$5,032.92 in the Developers' Escrow Account for a total of \$5,536.05 of restricted funds, all as of December 31, 2022.

MOTION by Smith, second by Pipech, to accept the Treasurer's Report for December, 2022, as presented, and all bills to be paid.

ROLL CALL: . Arnold - yes

Pipech - yes

Smith - yes

MOTION CARRIED.

Roadmaster Pipech reported that the Public Works crew have been keeping the roads clear and cold patch when the weather allows and have kept the trucks running. Pipech noted that this is a good group of people. Pipech concluded that a new truck will be pursued soon but will like have to put the RFP out for bid.

MOTION by Smith, second by Arnold, to accept the Roadmaster's Report for December, 2022 as presented.

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes

Pipech - yes

Smith - yes

MOTION CARRIED

MOTION by Smith, second by Pipech, to accept the Police Report as presented by Chief Ehret. Chief noted that the new Bus Patrol camera system began on December 12 and three violations have occurred in Rice Township. Ehret also thank residents and business for their K-9 donations to date.

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes

Pipech - yes

Smith - yes

MOTION CARRIED,

There was no zoning report.

There was no SEO report.

MOTION by Smith, second by Pipech, to ratify the decision by poll to increase the annual bonus payable in December 2022 from \$50 to \$75.

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes

Pipech - yes

Smith - yes

MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Pipech, second by Smith, to authorize Engineer Pasonick to create the bid specifications for tar and chip up to \$200,000 known as 2023 Pave Project. and advertise the same.

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes

Pipech - yes

Smith - yes

MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Arnold, second by Smith, to submit a new Salt Contract Participation Agreement to DGS COSTARS for the August 2023-July 2024 Season. We requested 500 tons for the 2022-2023 Season.

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes

Pipech - yes

Smith - yes

MOTION CARRIED.

BUSINESS MATTERS (Cont.):

MOTION by Smith, second by Arnold, to adopt the 2023-2025 JOINT MUNICIPAL AGREEMENT FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES with the Borough of Nuangola.

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes

Pipech - yes

Smith - yes

MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Smith, second by Arnold, to adopt the proposed Geisinger health plan for 2/1/2023 to 1/31/2024 at an annual cost of \$171,283.80, an increase of 1.72%.

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes

Pipech - yes

Smith - yes

MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Smith, second by Pipech, to hire Pinnacle Cleaning Service for twice monthly service at a monthly rate of \$150.00. Pinnacle Cleaning Service is bonded and insured.

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes

Pipech - yes

Smith - yes

MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Smith, second by Arnold, to pay the Secretary/Treasurer's Health Care Expenses for 2023 as stated in the annual petition for coverage in accordance with the Township's Personnel Manual, not as compensation, saving the Township an estimated \$13,138 in health care expenses this year.

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes

Pipech - yes

Smith - yes

MOTION CARRIED

Pipech announced that the Auditors meeting will be 5:30 PM tomorrow, January 4, 2023 as advertised; that the Planning Commission met on December 14th, 2022 and draft minutes were available; that the Rice Township books were closed December 31, 2022 and an Audit of the Township books will be conducted; and with the snow season here, the Police Department asked that residents remove all portable basketball hoops and refrain from parking on Township roads or rights-of-way during storms for safe snow removal.

In consultation with Vice-Chair Arnold, Pipech noted that the Wright Township Volunteer Fire Company Fire Police Incident Recap had not yet been received and will be covered at the February meeting.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT: Solicitor Jeckell had no report but thanked the Supervisors for the reappointment for 2023.

PUBLIC COMMENT: In response to Manosky's question, the Solicitor explained that the court reporter was present as a notary to administer the oath of office. A notary or judge must administer the oath of office. In response to Manosky's second question, the Public Works crew will always make a second pass through the Township roads after the initial snow plowing to be sure that the roads remain clear and deal with any ice accumulation. In response to Kaminski's question, Pipech explained that since Carl Smith was not appointed as an officer, his name did not appear with the officer appointments on the first page of the reorganization agenda, but as an elected Supervisor was appointed to liaison positions along with the other Supervisors. Planning Commission member Bob Smith noted the flooding on Nuangola Road at the Ice Lakes. Pipech said that

beavers have taken up residence on the upstream side of the State road and are very busy. As a State road, the Township could not do anything about the issue. Pipech thanked Arnold for a highly successful tree lighting event, and Arnold thanked Harry and the Police Department as the drivers for the event. Kaminski commented that the Bible should be used when taking an oath of office.

MOTION by Smith, second by Arnold, to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 7:29 p.m..

Respectfully submitted:

Jeffrey D. Beck

Secretary/Treasurer