

RICE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
3000 Church Road
Mountaintop, PA 18707
MINUTES
March 7, 2023

The duly advertised regular meeting of the Rice Township Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, March 7, 2023, at the Rice Township Municipal Building, 3000 Church Road, Mountaintop, PA. 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 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 attached sign in sheet.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Ray and Susan Walton of 1024 Aspen Drive and Jamie Vonderlinn of 1025 Deer Rack Drive engaged the Supervisors in their dispute. The Waltons raised concern that the car driven by the Vonderlinn's carrying their school-aged children to the school bus stop at the corner of Aspen and Deer Rack was damaging the Township right-of-way (ROW). Neither the Township Engineer Pasonick nor Chief Ehret could discern damage from the presented pictures. Walton noted that they have consulted an attorney. Pipech said that cones would be set out and grass seed sown in the spring. Jamie Vonderlinn explained that she is just dropping off their children at the bus stop and parking in the ROW. Solicitor Jeckell and Pasonick both noted that the ROW is part of the Township road. Vonderlinn noted that she is in touch with an attorney. Supervisor Smith noted that this is a civil issue.

Laurel Lakes residents Steve Garrett and Danielle Patroski complained about the conditions of the roads including Church Road and Blytheburn Road, Van Avenue and the entrance to Aspen Drive. Pipech explained that Church Road was a State Road and Blytheburn was a County Road and the Township could not make any repairs to those roads. Pipech suggesting calling our state representative and senator. Pipech also explained that he has discussed Van Ave and the entrance to Aspen with third-party contractors but will likely have our Public Works crew make those repairs in the spring when hot patch is available. Arnold noted that the Township has spent approximately \$1 million in the last few years on roads including work on roads in Laurel Lakes. All agreed that the Public Works crew did a fine job plowing the roads.

Heslop Road resident Richard Stofko inquired about the status of the Heslop Road bridge. Pipech referenced the letter that the Supervisors wrote to DEP last month requesting focus on the replacement of the bridge which is owned by the County.

ENGINEER'S REPORT: Pasonick reported that the sluice gate for the Ice Lakes dam has been secured by Fabcor and that he is working though issues relating to the location of the gate stem. Pasonick agreed that this year is the one, only and final water drawdown of the lake to complete that project and that he will schedule a meeting with Fabcor and the Supervisors to get a hard start date. Pasonick reported that H&K Group were the low bidders for the 2023 Pave Project and that bids for the Vista Drive and Nuangola Ave stormwater projects

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would be available for the April meeting.

BUSINESS MATTERS:

MOTION by Smith, second by Arnold, to accept the Minutes of the regular meeting held on February 7, 2023.

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes

Pipech - yes

Smith - yes

MOTION CARRIED.

Received the Treasurer's Report for February, 2023: Treasurer Beck reviewed the General Fund Check Register and noted that Earned Income Tax receipts were up, resulting in a transfer of \$100,000 to the Money Market Account to increase interest on the funds. The budget report showed that the tax receipts in the General Fund through February were below budget but the General Fund still showed a small surplus through the two months. Beck noted the receipt of the Liquid Fuels allocation which was immediately transferred to the Money Market account to maximize the interest return. Beck reported that the General Fund balances totaled \$785,334.54 with \$43,022.75 restricted for K-9 donations, Liquid Fuels balances totaled \$4,967.58 and Recreation Fund balances totaled \$3,460.61, all for a total of \$793,762.73 cash on hand. Restricted balances include \$505.07 in the DCNR Grant Account and \$5,052.33 in the Developers' Escrow Account for a total of \$5,557.40 of restricted funds, all as of February 28, 2023.

MOTION by Smith, second by Pipech, 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 February, 2023: Roadmaster Pipech reported that the Public Works crew has been plowing through the snow storms, that we received our Liquid Fuels allocation for the year and that we were on target for our minimum salt order requirement. Pipech commented that we were searching for new trucks and explained that grants were use-specific.

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 February, 2023 as presented by Chief Ehret.

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

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes

Pipech - yes

Smith - yes

MOTION CARRIED.

Received the Zoning Report for February, 2023 as presented by Beck.

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

ROLL CALL: Arnold - yes

Pipech - yes

Smith - yes

MOTION CARRIED.

Beck reported that there was no SEO Report for February, 2023.

The motion to authorize Pasonick to seek bids for the 2023 Pave project was included on the agenda in error.

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BUSINESS MATTERS (Cont):

MOTION by Arnold, second by Pipech, to accept the 2022 Planning Commission Annual Report as approved by the Planning Commission at the February 22, 2023 meeting.

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

MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Arnold, second by Pipech, to ratify the decision by poll to build out the police garage as office space at a cost not to exceed \$8,000.

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

MOTION CARRIED.

Pipech thanked Smith and Arnold for their support. Smith added that having some additional space that is heated where they can change makes sense.

MOTION by Smith, second by Pipech, to authorize the Secretary/Treasurer to advertise for bids for a new 2022 or 2023 Ford 550 truck or a new 2022 or 2023 Chev. 5500 truck.

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

MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Arnold, second by Pipech, to ratify the decision by poll to support and assist the American Legion Post 781 to install veteran banners on PPL poles within Rice Township.

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

MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Smith, second by Pipech, to award the 2023 Base Repair and Pave Project to H & K Group as the low bidder for a total cost of \$257,167.23 including Alternate A at a cost of \$52,074.21 and including Alternate B at a cost of \$72,062.81.

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

MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Arnold, second by Smith, to authorize the expenditure of not more than \$3,000 for the Easter Egg Hunt to be held at the park on Saturday, April 1, 2023 at 10:00AM.

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

MOTION CARRIED.

Arnold welcomed everyone to come to the Easter Egg hunt for a good time. Pipech thanked Arnold for his work on all of the events at the park.

Pipech reported that the Township received its Liquid Fuels allotment of \$134,136.23 on March 1st, 2023. This is \$3,775.77 over last year's allotment; that the Planning Commission met on February 22nd, 2023 and draft minutes were available; and that with the snow season here, the Police Department asks that residents remove all

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portable basketball hoops and refrain from parking on township roads or rights-of-way during storms for safe snow removal.

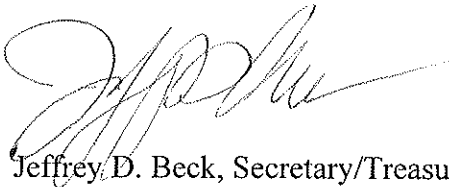
Fire Company President Gary Price reported on the Wright Township Volunteer Fire Company Report & Fire Police Incident Recap. They continue to work through radio issues with the County and ask for conversations with the Supervisors regarding the expiring contract.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT: The Solicitor had no report but called for a short Executive session following the meeting regarding litigation.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Arnold thanked the Police Department for initiating the Holiday Tree Lighting event, noting that one attendee called it a "Hallmark moment". He also thanked the Supervisors and staff for their support and for First Light Fiber for decorating the tree and taking down the decorations with their staff and bucket trucks.

MOTION by Smith, second by Arnold, to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m..

Respectfully submitted:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Beck', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jeffrey D. Beck, Secretary/Treasurer