

RICE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
3000 Church Road
Mountaintop, PA 18707
MINUTES
September 5, 2023

The duly advertised regular meeting of the Rice Township Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, September 5, 2023, at the Rice Township Municipal Building, 3000 Church Road. 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. with the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. It was announced that the meeting would be 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: Pipech called for comment but there was none.

ENGINEER'S REPORT: Engineer Pasonick reported that the dam should be complete within about 8 weeks, weather permitting, that the 2023 Pave Project was complete and he was recommending payment of the first payment request, and that the Vista/Nuangola Drive Stormwater Management project had been re-scoped and will go out for bid with the bid openings on October 3, 2023. Pipech thanked Pasonick and H&K for the pave project, noting that he had received good feedback from residents of Woodland Estates.

BUSINESS MATTERS:

MOTION by Smith, second by Arnold, to approve the Minutes of the regular meeting held on August 1, 2023.

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

MOTION CARRIED.

Received the Treasurer's Report for August, 2023: Received the Treasurer's Report for August, 2023: Treasurer Beck referred to the General Fund Check Register noting the seasonal strength of Earned Income Tax receipts, and the two large payments to Snith's Paving and PIRMA for insurance. Beck referred to the General Fund Budget versus Actual through August noting that total tax receipts remain on target with budget and that year-to-date deficit is actually on target with the truck reimbursement. Beck concluded there was nothing remarkable with Liquid Fuels and the Recreation Fund. Beck reported that the General Fund balances totaled \$837,795.59 with \$57,743.52 restricted for K-9 donations. Liquid Fuels balances totaled \$118,159.21 and Recreation Fund balances totaled \$3,533.07, all for a total of \$959,487.87 cash on hand. Restricted balances include \$511.91 in the DCNR Grant Account and \$5,120.86 in the Developers' Escrow Account for a total of \$5,632.77 of restricted funds, all as of August 31, 2023.

MOTION by Arnold, 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.

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BUSINESS MATTERS (CONT)

Received the Roadmaster's Report for August, 2023: Roadmaster Pipech reported that the Public Works Crew were cutting weeds and patching when weather permits. Pipech concluded that the new truck will return from the recall repair and inspection.

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 August, 2023 as presented by Chief Ehret:

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

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

MOTION CARRIED.

Received the Zoning Report for August, 2023 as presented by Zoning Officer Mleczynski.

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

ROLL CALL: Arnold - Pipech - Smith -

MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Smith, second by Arnold, to approve the purchase, from existing K-9 funds, of one German shepherd police dog package from K9 Guardian, Inc. for \$18,500.00.

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

MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Arnold, second by Smith, to approve the first payment request from H&K Group Inc. for \$132,373.25 as recommended by the Township Engineer and authorize submission for the LSA grant to pay this bill.

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

MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Arnold, second by Smith, to authorize PennEastern to advertise the modified project for the 2023 Stormwater management project to open bids on Tuesday, October 3rd, 2023.

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

MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Smith, second by Arnold, to adopt Resolution 2023-8 authorizing the application for an LSA grant for \$541,000 for the 2024 Pave Project.

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

MOTION CARRIED.

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BUSINESS MATTERS (CONT)

MOTION by Smith, second by Arnold, to adopt Resolution 2023-9 authorizing the application for an LSA grant to support the repair of the Rice Elementary School parking lot not to exceed \$250,000, the \$100 application fee to be reimbursed by Crestwood School District.

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

MOTION CARRIED. In response to Smith's question, Beck noted that only municipalities can apply for the Luzerne County LSA grant and it is common for municipalities to apply on behalf of community organizations like school districts or water and sanitary authorities.

BUSINESS MATTERS (CONT)

MOTION by Arnold, second by Smith, to ratify the decision by poll to purchase reflectors for the guiderails on Henry drive at a cost of \$186.00 for Chemung supply and have the reflectors installed by the Public Works group.

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

MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Smith, second by Arnold, to renew the annual maintenance agreement for the Township phones with Guyette Communication for an annual fee of \$324.00.

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

MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION by Arnold, second by Smith, to set the date and time for the 2023 Halloween Extravaganza for Saturday, October 14, 2023 from 5:00 to 8:00 PM and to authorize costs not to exceed \$3,000 for the event.

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

MOTION CARRIED. Arnold thanked the Police and Fire Departments for their help last year and asked for volunteers to help with the event. Interested parties can call 570-868-6400, x1.

MOTION by Arnold, second by Smith, to send a letter to the Mountaintop Area Joint Sanitary Authority Board of Directors asking them to reverse their decision to no longer support grinder pump repairs and to request the Rice Township member of that Board to introduce such a Resolution and vote for the same.

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

MOTION CARRIED. Smith encouraged residents to attend the next MAJSA meeting at their office on 290 Morio Drive at 7pm on Wednesday, September 20, 2023.

MOTION by Smith, second by Pipech, to approve the attendance of the Secretary/Treasurer at the Luzerne County Boroughs & Townships Association meeting on September 28th at a cost of \$10.00.

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

MOTION CARRIED.

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Pipech reported that the Planning Commission met on August 23rd, 2023.

The Wright Township Volunteer Fire Company Report & Fire Police Incident Recap was presented by President Gary Price.

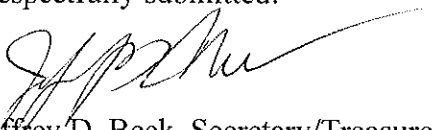
Pipech reported that Rice Township has received a stormwater – MS4 waiver from the Department of Environmental Protection with an expiration date of August 15, 2028. This is the second waiver received since the first waiver expired. The receipt of this waiver saves the taxpayers of Rice Township significant amounts of costs associated with MS4 stormwater management requirements. Thanks to Andy Pasonick, Township Engineer and PennEastern Engineers for the work to get this waiver. Pipech also reported that the County expects to begin mobilization and replacement of the Heslop Road bridge today, but just received word that the project was delayed until September 11, 2023.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT: The Solicitor had no report.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Resident Felicia Bierzynski reported that the Annual Blytheburn lake fish derby for children 12 and under will be held on Sunday, October 8 from 10-1 PM.. Blytheburn Lake will be stocked with fish this November at a cost of \$4,000 paid by the Lake Association. Planning Commission member Mark Manosky and Tom Romanyshyn , residents Mary Ann Keefe, Elvio Benzi, and James Perdoch all asked questions and offered comments regarding the 2023 pave project and progress on the Ice Lakes Dam retrofit project. Planning Commission member Bob Smith asked if a dry hydrant could be installed in the upper Ice Lake, Arnold noting that it requires a DEP permit. Benzi and Manosky also asked for street lighting at the Heslop Road bridge. Chief Ehret reported that the temporary bridge had been widened. EMC Bryan Brown reported that the update on the Ice Lakes Dam Emergency Action Plan was still in DEP's hands.

MOTION by Arnold, second by Smith, to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m..

Respectfully submitted:


Jeffrey D. Beck, Secretary/Treasurer