

**WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
MINUTES
MAY 28, 2020**

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson David Moyer called the regularly scheduled meeting of the Washington Township Board of Supervisors to order at 7:00 p.m., at the Washington Township Municipal Building. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

The following members were present: Supervisors, James Roma; David Moyer, Thomas Powanda, Solicitor, Joan London, Esquire; Tom Unger, Systems Design Engineering, John Weber representing LTL Consultants, Township Manager, Richard Sichler, and two (2) residents in attendance.

Absent:

TAPING OF MEETING

The meeting was recorded as an aid in the preparation of the minutes. It was noted no one was taping the meeting this evening other than the Township Manager.

SPECIAL REQUEST

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES OF APRIL 23, 2020

A motion was made by Thomas Powanda and seconded by James Roma to approve the minutes of April 23, 2020 as prepared.

No comments received.

All ayes

TOWNSHIP REPORTS

A motion was made by David Moyer and seconded by James Roma to approve the payment of all bills for the General Fund, Highway Aid Fund, Recreation Fund, Street Light Fund, Traffic Impact Fund, Sewer Fund and Building Escrow Funds up to and inclusive of May 28, 2020, and to file the treasurer's report for audit. **No comments received.**

All ayes

TAX COLLECTOR

Tax Collectors Report for the month of April 2020 presented by Rich Sichler:

Real Estate Tax	\$472,508.75
Interim Tax	\$ 6.68

Light Tax	\$ 2,565.64
Hydrant Tax	\$ 2,152.83
Per Capita Tax	\$ 22.00
Total	\$477,255.90

Mr. Sichler also asked on behalf of the Tax Collector if there was any more consideration given to matching the County’s Plan on extending the flat rate period to pay taxes. A motion was made by James Roma to extend the township flat rate period to pay taxes to September 30, 2020 to match Berks County, seconded by Thomas Powanda. **No comments received.**

All ayes

FIRE CHIEF’S REPORT

A copy of the Eastern Berks Fire Department Report is in the binders.

ZONING/SEO REPORT

Reports are in the binders

SEWER ENGINEER’S REPORT

A copy of the Engineer’s Monthly Report is enclosed.

A copy of the EEMA O & M Report is enclosed

- Mr. Unger reported he continues to investigate the location of alum used for phosphate removal. Working on cost analysis.
- The DEP has verbally approved an extension for the NUVODA testing and test data.
- Obtaining costs to upgrade pumps to rail system.
- Corrective Action Plan- collecting Swamp Creek flow data

Rich reported a motor issue with the decant arms. Both decant units were rebuilt about 2 years ago; parts and labor should be about \$2,500.

A motion was made by David Moyer and seconded by Thomas Powanda to install soft start for the decanters, not to exceed \$2,500. **No comments received.**

All ayes

TOWNSHIP ENGINEER

A copy of the Township Engineer’s Report is enclosed.

- Mr. Weber reported the Planning Commission will be reviewing a Plan submitted by R & T Development at their June meeting.
- Clover Hill stone base was put on the road about two weeks ago and on Monday the road will be paved.
- 2020 Road project core samples have been done and preconstruction meeting will take place next week.
- Clover Hill Street Light – The Township has received a request from the developer to relocate the street light at the intersection of County Line Road and

Natalie Circle required by the Clover Hill Subdivision plan. As a result of the County Line Road bridge replacement project, a new utility pole was installed on the north side of County Line Road across from the intersection with Natalie Circle. The developer has requested that the required street light at the intersection of County Line Road and Natalie Circle be placed on this new utility pole. The Board also discussed the matter of a concrete property monument at the corner of the Clover Hill and Weinsteiger properties that was removed from the ground during construction. The Board stated that the developer must properly reset this monument. A motion was made by Thomas Powanda and seconded by James Roma to allow the relocation of the street light to the new utility pole on the north side of County Line Road across from the intersection with Natalie Circle conditioned upon the developer agreeing to reset the concrete property monument at the corner of the Clover Hill and Weinsteiger properties. **No comments received.**

All ayes

- MS4 Permit requires screening of outfalls on a periodic basis. For this permit cycle screening needs to be completed by June 30th. LTL will be out doing a number of outfall samplings this month.

Chairman Moyer announced an Executive Session was held this evening regarding real estate and potential litigation.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Ms. London reported Martin Stone Quarry forwarded a request to the Township asking for a waiver from a 1993 agreement settling a zoning matter. Requesting of a waiver of a requirement of an extraction of 25,000 tons of stone this year. It is recommended granting this waiver due to business reasons related to economic conditions this year. A motion was made by David Moyer and seconded by Thomas Powanda granting Martin Stone Quarry waiver request of a requirement of extracting 25,000 tons of stone in 2020. **No comments received.**

All ayes

Office of Open Records Appeal by Thomas Palmer – Mr. Palmer appealed a document production by the Township under the Right to Know Law. Mr. Palmer asked for a property file, the documents were produced with some exceptions, Mr. Palmer appealed to the Office of Open Records and they have denied the appeal. Mr. Palmer has asked for reconsideration and Ms. London will keep the Board posted of any further developments.

Diamond Disposal Remand Hearing has been rescheduled for June 29, 2020 at the Township Building.

Water System Sale – there is an anticipated closing date of August 1, 2020. Additional information is being provided to Bally Borough by Township Manager Sichler. An inspection will take place later this summer.

SUPERVISORS

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- **PADOT Ebst Road/Route 100 stormwater issue**-there is no new information.
- **WWTP Pilot Test update** – already addressed
- **Natural Gas conversion** – no interest in pursuing
- **Park Land Acquisition, Hoffmansville Road** – Mr. Sichler reported he explained the process of purchasing of land by a municipality; the property owner was not interested in continuing talks.
- **Tree removal-Gehringer Road open space** – the crew was out creating access to the area to tag trees. Mr. Sichler provided information regarding Met-Ed land use within utility right of way.
- **Township Treasurer Search Process** – Mr. Sichler placed ads with PSATS and did not get any response so also placed ad in the Reading Eagle and Monster. It was also posted on Indeed and so far, has received about 20 applications.
- **Barto Road Straightening** – there is nothing to report at this time. Mr. Weber asked if the Board wants LTL to do some preliminary layouts or is that something they will ask the Developer to do as part of the development. Supervisor Powanda stated it would be good to see what it may look like and to get an idea of the parking area. Mr. Weber said they will do a simple layout.
- **Surplus equipment sale** – Swamp Creek generator was advertised on Municibid and also in the Reading Eagle. Biding ended Tuesday with 44 bids and the high bid was Jean Lewis from Brooklyn New York with a bid of \$1,500. A motion was made by Thomas Powanda and seconded by James Roma approving the sale of the Swamp Creek generator to the high bidder, Jean Lewis for the bid price of \$1,500. **No comments received.**

All ayes

- **PMRS Retirement Plan** – Mr. Sichler provided some options last month and the Board expressed interest in two of the options. One was in-service distribution which would allow an employee to retire while still remaining on the job and after doing some further investigation the current plan does allow this already. The other option was purchasing permissive service credits, specifically military and under our current plan we are required by law to offer pension buy in to former military veterans. So again, this is under our current plan Other options that could be added are military service within other branches of the government which is pretty specific. We can add that people can buy back service from state employment. Other municipalities withing PA is another group to consider, other municipalities outside of PA; so, there are many options to choose from. Supervisor Roma stated in the past there was no pension for someone who worked part-time 20 hours. Mr. Sichler asked the Supervisors to go through the packet and get back to him with any questions.
- **Township COVID-19 response** – Rich indicated he looked at the Township five-year projection and took DCED recommendations on what percentage of decrease in revenues you may see. The DCED recommended we consider a 15% loss in real estate tax this year however 90% has already been collected. Per Capita Tax 6% decrease was recommended, a loss of \$11,750, real estate transfer tax 6% loss for a \$75,000 loss, earned income tax would go from \$575,000 to \$540,500, admissions tax reduced by 66% from \$32,000 to \$10,000 and Ordinance and

Statute violations went from \$500 to \$375. So, all together the projected revenue loss for this year \$111,000. When you go out 5 years, we are kind of at a tipping point with the tax rate vs the expenses. The reserves in 2024 will be just under \$1 million. Mr. Sichler said he doesn't think any immediate action needs to be taken but the Board may want to look at the spending. Chairman Moyer stated the Board of Supervisors will be accountable and responsible for spending the taxpayer money. Mr. Roma stated \$824,000 was spent on the traffic light at Barto Road, taken out of the general fund. Over time money has been transferred from traffic impact funds to the general fund to help pay for the traffic light. A motion was made by David Moyer, seconded by James Roma to transfer traffic impact fees in the amount of \$42,301.38 to the general fund to help cover the cost of the traffic light. **No comments received.**

All ayes

As we move into the yellow phase it is still recommended to minimize contact as much as possible. It was suggested to keep the office closed to the public and make appointments as necessary. It was decided to keep the office closed to the public through the end of June. Chairman Moyer expressed his feelings and said these are his thoughts and not the thoughts of the other two Supervisors, but if you have a business in Washington Township and you need to open your business, go ahead and open your business. Solicitor London stated the State Officials hold certain permits and have certain authority so seek legal advice. Mr. Moyer feels his constitutional rights have been violated.

- **Speed Signs** – the signs were purchased and received and both units were defective. Mr. Sichler has since obtained pricing on other signs. For a single sign from All Traffic Solutions \$4,665 and Garden State Products \$3,441. Both are battery powered and batteries last about 7 to 10 days before recharging. Mr. Sichler stated the sign would be added to the insurance policy in case of vandalism. Mr. Sichler also stated the sign does data log speeds and times. A motion was made by Thomas Powanda to purchase one speed sign from Garden State Products for \$3,441, seconded by David Moyer. **No comments received.**

David Moyer – aye

Thomas Powanda – aye

James Roma – opposed

- **JK Memorial Field sponsor signs** – Mr. Sichler was asked to look into sponsorship signs. The contract with the township does not speak to signs and the revised drawings do not depict sponsorship locations. The initial drawings did show the sponsorship wall. Mr. Sichler feels the club fully anticipated they were going to be able to have sponsorship logos and signs within the field area. Mr. Moyer feels the sign issue was discussed at a prior meeting. Mr. Sichler will check prior meeting minutes and report back. It was suggested 33 1/3% of the sponsorship money should be given to the township since it is township property.
- **Paver Payment** – A motion was made by Thomas Powanda, seconded by James Roma approving the payment of the 2015 LeeBoy paving unit to Stephenson Equipment in the amount of \$78,300. **No comments received.**

All ayes

NEW BUSINESS

- **Statements of Financial Interest** – Mr. Sichler requested the shredding of all Statement of Financial Interest Forms from to free up some filing space. A motion was made by David Moyer and seconded by Thomas Powanda authorizing the shredding of Statement of Financial Interest Forms from 2009 through 2014. **No comments received.**

All ayes

- **Conditional Use Application** – Mr. Sichler reported a Conditional Use Application was received by the Township from Kelly Group Builders and Shadeland Development. The application will be forwarded to the Planning Commission for comment with the Hearing to be scheduled for the July Board of Supervisors meeting. A motion was made by David Moyer and seconded by James Roma authorizing the Conditional Use Application be forwarded to the Planning Commission for review. **No comments received.**

All ayes

- **Community Development Block Grant Program** – Documentation received from Berks County giving municipalities the option of opting out of the Block Grant Program for three years. There was no action taken on this item.
- **Boyertown Soccer Club Field Lease Agreement** – A motion was made by Thomas Powanda and seconded by James Roma approving a five-year Field Use Lease Agreement with the Boyertown Soccer Club. **No comments received.**

All ayes

- **Public Works summer hours** – The Public Works Dept. would like to go to summer hours from 6:00 am to 2:30 pm. Supervisor Roma asked if they were productive and Mr. Sichler stated they were productive. Supervisor Powanda asked to change the hours to four, nine-hour days and four hours on Fridays which would match with some other townships that we work with. Supervisor Roma questioned if they are productive and if they even get out on time in the morning and get an early start. After some discussion it was decided to stay with the usual summer hours. Supervisor Powanda stated he would like summer hours to go from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend. A motion was made by David Moyer and seconded by James Roma to allow summer hours to begin this Monday through Labor Day weekend from 6:00 am to 2:30 pm and to discuss this further in a meeting with employees. **No comments received.**

David Moyer – aye

James Roma - aye

Thomas Powanda – opposed

Shorts – Supervisors also discussed wearing shorts by Public Works employees. In past years this topic was discussed and the grass mower was the only person allowed to wear shorts however not during weed-whacking. It was decided, as in the past, shorts will only be allowed during grass mowing.

SUBDIVISION/PLANNING

None

SUBDIVISION EXTENSION

A motion was made by David Moyer and seconded by Thomas Powanda to grant the following Subdivision Extension:

R & T Development, LLC Minor Plan

06/15/2020 to 07/19/2020

No comments received.

All ayes

COMMUNICATIONS

Copy of the ARB Delinquent Account Report is enclosed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next board of Supervisors meeting will be held on Thursday, June 25, 2020 at 7:00 pm.

Chairman Moyer stated summer is here be careful with fireworks. Kids are out of school, keep your eyes open for kids.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by James Roma and seconded by Thomas Powanda to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:20 p.m. **No public comment received.**

All ayes

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Sichler
Manager/Secretary