

**WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
MINUTES  
DECEMBER 21, 2023**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Powanda 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, Thomas Powanda, Romnie Long, David Moyer, Solicitor, Joan London, Esquire; John Weber representing LTL Consultants, Tom Unger, Systems Design Engineering, Township Manager, Richard Sichler, Township Secretary, Susan Brown, and twenty (20) residents in attendance.

Absent: None

**TAPING OF MEETING**

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

Chairman Powanda announced an Executive Session was held this evening concerning a personnel matter.

**SPECIAL REQUEST**

**Camp Camino-low pressure sewer system** – Ms. Bernadette Kearney was present this evening representing Camp Camino. Ms. Kearney stated they are working with the Sewer Engineer, Tom Unger and they are getting closer to satisfying all the technical comments. Mr. Unger stated he does not feel there is a viable engineered solution on the table yet. Ms. Kearney said at this point they will need to meet with Mr. Unger again and go over what requirements still need to be met in order to satisfy the Township. Ms. London stated an additional extension of time will be needed. Ms. Kearney said an additional extension would be submitted to the township.

Mr. Keating explained all he wants to do is build this camp for special needs children and at this point it has taken months and months and things are getting more expensive to build every day. Mr. Keating requested a working session with Tom and take their lead from him to move things along. Chairman Powanda stated he is in favor of the camp and does not wish to hold things up.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Dan Stauffer**, asked to reserve his time to speak after hearing the discussion with respect to the proposed solar ordinance.

Ms. London explained there will not be technical discussion but are mainly looking at solar farm type development. This ordinance would be regulating the placement of the projects and their use on farm land and also stormwater implications.

Zack Schwab, 90 Crow Hill Road, spoke about icing conditions from spring water crossing the roadway at his driveway. Mr. Schwab has been in contact with the Roadmaster to work together to address the issue.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF NOVEMBER 16, 2023**

A motion was made by David Moyer and seconded by Rommie Long to approve the meeting minutes of the November 16, 2023 meeting as prepared.

**All ayes**

**TOWNSHIP REPORTS**

A motion was made by Rommie Long and seconded by Thomas Powanda 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 December 21, 2023, and to file the treasurer’s report for audit.

**All ayes**

**TAX COLLECTOR**

Tax Collectors Report for the month of November 2023 presented by Township Manager, Rich Sichler:

Real Estate Tax	\$ 609.44
Per Capita Tax	<u>\$ 407.00</u>
Total	\$ 1,016.44

**FIRE CHIEF’S REPORT**

A copy of the Eastern Berks Fire Department & Bally EMS Reports are enclosed.

**ZONING/SEO REPORT**

Reports are in the binders.

**SEWER ENGINEER'S REPORT**

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

- **Edison View, update on progress with municipal improvements including sewage lift station and sewer lines**– Mr. Unger reported the televising of the sewer lines has been completed and the lines appear to be in relatively good shape. There was one fracture detected and will be repaired in spring.
- **Approval of invoice, new bar screen** – A new bar screen was installed at the WWTP and approval to pay the invoice will be needed.

A motion was made by David Moyer, seconded by Romnie Long authorizing payment to Levan Machine & Truck Equipment for the replacement of a bar screen in the amount of \$3,669.93.

**All ayes**

- **Purchase approval, spill containment** – Gary is requesting the purchase of a polyethylene spill containment berm for under the aluminum chloride tanks to provide protection in the event of a spill or leak. A motion was made by David Moyer, seconded by Romnie Long authorizing the purchase of a spill containment berm from Grainger in the amount of \$511.98.

**All ayes**

- **Camp Camino, sewer review** – *already addressed*
- **DRB Annual Report** – A motion was made by Thomas Powanda and seconded by Romnie Long authorizing the Sewer Engineer to prepare the Delaware River Basin Commission Annual Monitoring Report and submit by the 1/31/24 due date.

**All ayes**

### **TOWNSHIP ENGINEER**

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

- **Barto Road straightening project, update** – Mr. Weber reported progress has been made with Windstream, the project has been assigned to a different engineer and a meeting was held and locations for new poles were marked out.
- **Edison View, update on progress with municipal improvements including pavement, curbs and stormwater** – It was reported the concrete repairs have been completed however the paving will not get completed this year and are now looking at spring for paving completion.
- **Stauffer Road widening** – The Developer will make a contribution to the Township in the amount of \$36,837.58 and the remainder of the improvements will be completed in spring.

### **SOLICITOR'S REPORT**

- **Consideration of possible solar energy system ordinance** – There is a sample ordinance before the Board this evening. The thought is to have a solar energy ordinance on alternative energy systems that brings things up to current standards. Solar energy systems need to be considered and need to be regulated as to location because there are a number of solar farm applications and this is a case of the law needing to catch up to technology.

### **Public Comment:**

**Dan Stauffer**, asked if the Board has read the proposed ordinance and are the Supervisors inclined to move forward with a solar ordinance. Chairman Powanda stated the Board most likely would proceed with a solar ordinance for the protection of the township. Mr. Stauffer questioned the proposed set backs and stated the set backs may be okay for Tilden Township where there is more open space than in Washington Township. Mr. Weber said to remember that is for a principal solar energy system, that's not an accessory use for a residential property which is a

different section of the ordinance. Ms. London explained the set backs for a solar farm type use isn't so much a safety issue as much as it is a concern over property values. Ms. London said she would take a look at the study Mr. Stauffer obtained and stated the sample ordinance is not in form for Washington Township.

- **Ordinance update, setting of 25 mph speed limit/inclusion of existing stop signs** – The proposed ordinance for setting of 25 mph speed limit is for the following roads: Apple Street, Audrey Drive, Avalon Circle, Back Country Road, Chase Circle, Christi Drive, Compton Way, Docwill Drive, Gehringer Road, Jenna Drive, Joy Circle, Natalie Circle, O'Donoghue Way, Tiffany Circle and Westfield Drive and also setting stop intersections for the same streets advertised in the Reading Eagle on December 12, 2023. A motion was made by Rommie Long, seconded by Thomas Powanda adopting Ordinance No. 2023-2 setting of 25 mph speed limit and inclusion of existing stop signs.

**All ayes**

- **PennDOT Route 100 Contribution Agreement** – *ongoing*
- **Bally Borough Intergovernmental Sewage Agreement** – There is one item that still needs to be resolved. Ms. London has spoken with Bally's Solicitor and the agreement should be ready for next month's meeting.
- **Township review of ordinances and codification project** – *ongoing*
- **Public Works garage project** – The MOU has been executed and the steel is on order with possible delivery date in eight to ten weeks.

## **SUPERVISORS**

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- **2024 Budget approval and setting of tax and sewer rates** – At this time there are no revisions to the 2024 proposed budget.
  - Motion made by Rommie Long, seconded by David Moyer approving the 2024 Budget.

**All ayes**

- Motion made by David Moyer, seconded by Rommie Long setting the township real estate tax rate at 2.45 mils, a 9.26% decrease.

**All ayes**

- Motion made by David Moyer, seconded by Rommie Long setting the sewer rate at \$290 per quarter, a \$10 per quarter decrease.

**All ayes**

- **Gehringer Road and Christi Drive/Joy Circle LTAP meeting** – A preliminary report was received from LTAP however additional information was requested from PennDOT which was provided to them yesterday. Rich will have more information next month.
- **Pressure washing of Township building** – *ongoing*
- **Township building rock scaping** – *ongoing*
- **Salt shed wall repair** – *ongoing*

Supervisor Moyer said he was asked about the street light at Cubbler Court and Weinsteiger Road. The light has been going off and on for quite some time and it needs to be fixed. Rich will address this.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- **Recreation Advisory Committee recommendations and possible action items:**
  - Request for Township to pursue individual park plans, including seeking grants to produce the plans: Rec Advisory Chairman, Mark Bedle, was present this evening and explained the committee has just completed their first review of the draft Comprehensive Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan for the township. The document should hopefully be finalized in February 2024. One of the recommendations in the document is to move forward with developing master plans for the three main parks, which include Barto Community Park, Washington Township Park and a new park with the land acquired at Reserve at Bally Springs. There would be three master plans all done at the same time which will hopefully save some money and then get a 10-year plan together to develop and revitalize the parks. The Board of Supervisors are in favor of Mr. Bedle looking into grant money.
  - Recommendation to use a single park name for the Edison View and Bally Springs open space parcels and to consolidate the various park names utilized for Washington Township Park. The name the committee has come up with is the Middle Creek Nature Preserve and the Woodlands. Supervisor Moyer suggested Nagle Park. Chairman Powanda said he thought there may be a Middle Creek Park in Douglass Township and will check into this.
  - Recommendation to update Township Ordinance 76-5 that identifies prohibited activities in the parks and to update park signage. Mr. Schwab stated the FAA offers free signs regarding the use of drones. Mr. Bedle will work with Rich on updating the ordinance and signage.
  - Recommendation for the Committee to be included on the distribution of new Subdivision and Land Development plans so they can provide input on open space and recreational aspects. This was done in the past but was stopped when there was no activity with the Recreation Committee.
- Administration Building remodel – consolidation of Land Development files into the current main office area – purchase of hanging file holders/outfitting former WTMA reception area as a temporary reception area. Supervisor Moyer said he knows of a place that is eliminating their hanging racks and will check into this. A motion was made by Rommie Long and seconded by Thomas Powanda authorizing \$1,250 for the purchase of hanging file holders and to run a new phone line.

**All ayes**

- Appointment of volunteer for the EAC – A motion was made by Thomas Powanda, seconded by Rommie Long appointing Jerry Silberman to the Environmental Advisory Council.

**All ayes**

## **SUBDIVISION/PLANNING**

**Camp Camino** – Preliminary plan approval request – *already addressed*



**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Romnie Long, seconded by Thomas Powanda to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:09 p.m.

**All ayes**

Respectfully submitted,

Susan J. Brown  
Township Secretary