

LEET TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
February 14, 2022
Minutes of the Board of Commissioner's Regular Meeting

The Regular Meeting of the Leet Township Board of Commissioners was brought to order at 6:30 p.m. by President McDaniel, at the Leet Township Municipal Building, 194 Ambridge Ave., Fair Oaks, PA 15003. Roll Call: Commissioners present were Martin McDaniel, Rody Nash, Dan Peluso, Carolyn Verszyla, and John Stephansky.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. McDaniel stated that the Board would go into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters regarding the police department.

MOTION: Mr. Peluso made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss police personnel matters at 6:34 p.m. Mrs. Verszyla seconded the motion, with all in favor.

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to go into Regular Session after discussing police personnel matters at 7:01 p.m. Mr. Nash seconded the motion, with all in favor.

The meeting was called to order and started with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Also present:

Betsy Rengers, Manager	Stephen Chesney, Solicitor
Bob Gulish, Resident	Bob Nuhall, Resident
William Bubb, Resident	Charlie Frederick, Resident
Chuck Soman, Resident	Rick Hite, Resident
Joann and Tom Weber, Residents	Don Birnie, Resident
Donna Adipietro, Resident	Deb Cheddar, Resident
Katherine Longwell, Resident	Wayne Hyjek, Resident
Patrick Yetsick, Resident	Michele Antonelli, Resident
Marty Zimmel, Resident	

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Patrick Yetsick, a resident, owns the house at 45 Plum Street. He stated that his basement flooded three times. He felt it was due to a storm drainage pipe that he thought was clogged. Each time he called to complain, the Public Works Department went to check on the pipe and they cleaned it out with a shovel. He showed the Board pictures of the pipe and asked why it was not getting cleaned out regularly. Ms. Rengers explained that the Sewer Authority had purchased backflow preventers for the residents that had basement flooding issues. Mr. Yetsick thinks that the storm drain is causing the issue. The Township brings in a vactor truck every year to jet the drains. Mr. Yetsick installed a backflow preventer, and he had a plumber do the work. Since he has installed the preventer, the basement has not flooded. The Township will have the Engineer investigate the issue and possibly TV the line.

Rick Hite, a resident, complained that the convex traffic mirrors that were installed at Eckert, Willow, and Neely are too small. Mr. McDaniel agreed. The Township will investigate the installation of larger mirrors.

Kurt Bubb, a resident, told the Board about the War Memorial Committee Meeting. He contacted different agencies to find out the names of the war veterans, but he has not had any luck. The names of veterans who served during wartime will go on the wall. The names of veterans that served during peacetime will go on the pavers. The Committee will research donations for flag poles. The memorial will be in the grassy area in front of the parking lot at 198 Ambridge Ave.

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Deb Cheddar, a resident, updated the Board on the garage that was built next door to her with no permit. Several surveys have been submitted for the property. We are waiting for the fourth survey. Mr. Chesney received the survey and forwarded it to the Township Engineer for review.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes Corrections:

November 8 2022, Meeting Minutes: Mrs. Verszyla asked about the motion on page 3 where the entire board voted no regarding a survey. Ms. Rengers explained that the Board did not want to pay for a survey. Page 5 at the bottom regarding the police payroll audit. The wording will be changed to say, "Mr. McDaniel explained that the audit was not done as approved by the Board of Commissioners." Page 7, Manager was misspelled on all the sets of minutes and the place for Mr. McDaniel to sign should say "Commissioner."

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to approve November 8, 2021, Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes with corrections, seconded by Mr. Peluso, with Mr. Nash, Mr. McDaniel, Mr. Peluso, and Mrs. Verszyla in favor of the motion. Mr. Stephansky abstained from the vote because he did not attend the meeting.

December 13, 2021, Meeting Minutes: Mrs. Verszyla pointed out that on Page 5 the word "Kenney" and on the last page "Manager" was spelled wrong.

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to approve December 13, 2022, Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes with corrections, seconded by Mr. Peluso, with Mr. Nash, Mr. McDaniel, Mr. Peluso, and Mrs. Verszyla in favor of the motion. Mr. Stephansky abstained from the vote because he did not attend the meeting.

January 3, 2022, Meeting Minutes: Mrs. Verszyla pointed out that it was a reorganization meeting and not a regular meeting. Dan Volk should be changed to Dave Volk. On page 4, the motion to appoint Jessica Leety should include that she submitted a letter of interest. Mr. McDaniel explained that Ms. Leety did not submit a letter and that Ms. Leety has passed the Tax Collector test and has been bonded for the position. Page 4 should say "bills approved by the Board of Commissioners before payment." On the last page, add Mr. McDaniel's middle initial to the signature line.

MOTION: Mr. Nash made a motion to approve January 3, 2022, Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes with corrections, seconded by Mr. Peluso, with all in favor.

January 17, 2022, Meeting Minutes: Mrs. Verszyla pointed out that on page 1, the motion about the appointment of John Stephansky should say "vacated by Erika Oslick". The motion goes on to talk about the roll call and the motion should say "for the remaining term of Erika Oslick's seat ending in January 2024."

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to approve January 17, 2022, Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes with corrections, seconded by Mr. Nash, with all in favor.

January 10, 2022, Meeting Minutes

Mrs. Verszyla stated that on the first page it should say the meeting was "at" 194 Ambridge Ave instead of "in." The Rotary Club acknowledged that they received the thank you card from the Board of Commissioners for the grant for Plum Street Park improvements. On page 5, the word "received" was spelled wrong.

MOTION: Mr. Nash made a motion to approve January 10, 2022, Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes with corrections, seconded by Mr. Peluso, with all in favor.

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APPROVAL OF BILLS PAYABLE

The department reports have been passed around to the audience for review. Mr. McDaniel thanked Chief Molinaro for his work to obtain grants for the police department.

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to approve the invoices, checks, and check detail for payment as presented, seconded by Mr. Stephansky. Roll call was taken with all in favor.

Engineers Report:

The Township received grants to pay for a four-phase sidewalk project through the Quaker Valley COG. Phase I, II, and II-A will complete Neely, Willow, Eckert, and Ambridge Ave. with new sidewalks. The Township received a small grant to replace the sidewalks on Orchard, Beech, and Plum Street.

MOTION: Mr. Nash made a motion to approve Estimate Number 3, in the amount of \$49,597.39, payable to El Grande Enterprises from the ACDD, seconded by Mr. Peluso. Roll call was taken with all in favor of the motion.

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to accept the grant for \$31,592.00 from QVCOG for the Orchard, Beech, and Plum Street ADA Sidewalk Replacement Project, seconded by Mr. Nash. Roll call was taken with all in favor of the motion.

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to award the Ambridge Avenue Phase II-A Project to the low bidder Independent Enterprises, for \$65,050.00. The motion was seconded by Mr. Nash. Roll call was taken with all in favor of the motion.

Managers' Report: Ms. Rengers reported:

The following reports have been filed:

- DCED Appointed and Elected Officials,
- DCED Statement of Financial Condition,
- AG-385 for Pension and Fire,
- Liquid Fuels MS-965,
- and the Pension Survey.

We sent out the Landlord/Tenant Registration Forms and Occupancy Permit letters to approximately 25 landlords. We have done a handful of occupancy inspections so far.

NEW BUSINESS

The Civil Service Board has open seats with terms that will expire in December 2023 and one in December 2027. Mr. McDaniel called for nominations for the Civil Service Board.

MOTION: Mr. Nash made a motion to nominate Tom Weber to the Civil Service Board for a 6-year term ending in December 2027, seconded by Mrs. Verszyla. Roll call was taken with all in favor of the motion.

MOTION: Mr. Nash made a motion to nominate Michele Antonelli to the Civil Service Board for a term ending in December 2023, seconded by Mrs. Verszyla.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mr. Stephansky spoke with FNB and Dollar Bank about interest rates. Mr. McDaniel explained that the Board looked at Township services to see if changes are needed. The Township had already hired a new Auditor and is looking at changing building inspection services. Mr. Stephansky reviewed our investments and FNB guaranteed a rate of .33% and Dollar Bank was .11%.

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MOTION: Mr. Stephansky made a motion to appoint First National Bank as the Leet Township Bank Depository, seconded by Mr. Nash. Roll call was taken with all in favor.

Recommendation to Transfer Monies from PLGIT Credit Card to FNB

MOTION: Mr. Stephansky made a motion to move 29,000.00 from the PLGIT Credit Card Account to the General Fund Checking Account to obtain a higher interest rate, seconded by Mrs. Verszyla. Roll call was taken with all in favor of the motion.

We will keep the PLGIT Credit Card Account active with a minimum amount in the account.

Recommendation to Move American Rescue Plan Act Monies from PLGIT to FNB

MOTION: Mr. Stephansky made a motion to move the PLGIT American Rescue Act Funds account to a new account, in the amount of \$83,007.51, with First National Bank, seconded by Mr. Nash. Roll call was taken with all in favor of the motion.

Recommendation to Open an FNB Real Estate Tax Account for Tax Revenue from Jordan

MOTION: Mr. Stephansky made a motion to open a real estate tax account with First National Bank for use by Jordan Tax Services, seconded by Mr. Nash. Roll call was taken with all in favor of the motion.

IT/Computer Support Update

Mr. Stephansky met with three different IT companies. There are three issues we need to look at:

A firewall to separate the Township from the Police Department, external backup hard drives, and to move to Office 365. We will continue to look into this project.

Review of Code Enforcement and Building Inspector

Mr. Nash explained that the Township is reviewing the Code Enforcement Officer and the Building Inspector. Two companies have come forward and Mr. Nash will have a recommendation for the next meeting.

Property Committee

QVCOG Glass Recycling Center

Mr. Peluso explained that the Quaker Valley COG is looking for municipalities that are interested in hosting a glass recycling center location. The COG wants multiple locations. Mr. Peluso would like for the Board to consider it. This would cost the Township about \$1.00 per resident.

Watson Institute Polling Place

There was an issue with the lighting at the Watson Institute polling place in November. Watson will work with the Township to ensure the lighting is working properly. Watson is concerned with the safety of its students during the election process and will consider closing the school on election day if notified far enough in advance. Watson has an issue with residents walking their dogs on the property during school hours because it distracts the students. They would like for the Township to put a notice in the newsletter about it.

Building Signage/ Plum Street Park Improvements

The Township will put signs at the entrance drive-through and has added speed bumps. We will use portable signs. Plum Street Park improvements: Mr. Peluso and Mr. Stephansky would like to see drawings of the grill cover. Mr. Hyjek will speak with Andy Wanto about this.

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Mr. Peluso is working on getting quotes for signage for the front of the Township building. The Township is seeking a "change of use" occupancy permit for the Township building. There is a temporary occupancy permit that has been issued by BIU, but they need new drawings of the building to send into the state for approval for permanent occupancy. Architect Denny Campbell has been recommended to draw the building. Mr. Campbell gave the Township a proposal to do the drawings for \$700.00.

MOTION: Mr. Peluso made a motion to engage Architect Denny Campbell for technical drawings of 194 Ambridge Ave for \$700.00. The motion was seconded by Mr. Stephansky. Roll call was taken with all in favor of the motion.

Emergency Management Report

Mr. Nash reported that Emergency Management Coordinator Dave Volk submitted the following report:

- In November Mr. Volk attended a 2-day public information officer course at the Allegheny Emergency Services headquarters. This course taught him how to respond to the public and media in the event of a disaster.
- In January, Mr. Volk met with Encompass Health, and this resulted in a mutual aid agreement. Encompass could provide shelter, food, and beds in case of an emergency. Mr. Volk was also able to assist them with active shooter training courses.
- Mr. Volk met with Watson Institute. They are interested in a mutual aid agreement with Leet Township. While their ability to provide food and beds is limited, they can provide temporary shelter during an emergency. Their biggest concern is icy roads making it hard for school busses to get the kids to school.
- Mr. Volk would like to know the date for the public safety meeting with the Fire Chief, Police Chief, Manager, and the Public Safety Commissioner. Ms. Rengers and Mr. Nash will coordinate this meeting.

Solicitor's Report

Wernicki Zoning Hearing

Mr. Chesney received a copy of the fourth survey for the Wernicki Property and is waiting for the engineer to review it.

Oak/Hill Street Traffic Study

The Township had a traffic study conducted at the intersection of Oak and Hill Street. Mr. Chesney recommended that the Township follow the traffic study recommendations.

Firearms Ordinance Update: Chapter 16

PA Preemption Law says that municipalities cannot regulate firearms. Leet had two ordinances that attempt to regulate firearms at Plum Street Park. It restricts the carrying of firearms whether you have a permit to carry them or not. There is a challenge in court to overturn the preemption law and give the ability to regulate firearms. The sections of the ordinance that should be amended are sections 16-206 J. and T. There was a short discussion about the issue.

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to have the Solicitor draft an ordinance to amend the regulation of firearms, seconded by Mr. Nash. Roll call was taken with all in favor of the motion.

Truck Traffic on Ambridge Ave.

Mr. Stephansky had a concern about truck traffic on Ambridge Ave. There were weight limit signs on the road, but they were removed. Mr. Chesney researched the law and is looking for a copy of the case law for an exemption to the weight limit.

Fence and Zoning Wording Ordinance

Mr. Chesney is preparing the fence ordinance and the wording for trailers for the next meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Bubb sent Mr. McDaniel an L-TAP flyer regarding stop signs with a highlighted section: 212.106 (c) (2) speaks to sight distances. Mr. McDaniel spoke with the traffic engineer, and he feels there is an embankment that prevents

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site distance from Oak to Hill. Mr. McDaniel went on to read the L-TAP Flyer: Improper Use of Stop Signs, Unfortunately, stop signs are commonly placed to control speed on local streets, even though the MUTCD states that Stop signs should not be used for speed control. Many people believe that forcing motorists to stop at each intersection will decrease overall speed on the road. However, studies show that Stop signs only reduce speed immediately adjacent to the sign. Many drivers accelerate between intersections to make up for time lost at the Stop sign. Engineering studies indicate that the inappropriate installation of extra Stop signs may cause additional problems, such as more rear-end collisions, a redistribution of traffic onto side streets, wasted fuel, and drivers ignoring the inappropriate Stop signs.

Mr. Bubb gave the Board suggestions on how to solve the stop sign issue at Oak and Hill by restricting and enforcing parking regulations on Mound, Hill, and Oak Streets. Mr. McDaniel would like to have the Public Safety Committee go to the site and review the issues. The discussion continued.

Councilman Brock Meanor from Bell Acres Borough responded to the Board's concern about redistricting and their requests to stay with the Quaker Valley district. Mr. McDaniel explained the current redistricting proposal. The issue will go before the Supreme Court, and if approved we will be in Representative Valerie Gaydos's district.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

There were no comments from the audience regarding the department reports.

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to accept the department reports as presented, seconded by Mr. Peluso, with all in favor.

Civil Service Provisional Appointment

The Board had a meeting with Chief Molinaro regarding the hiring of police personnel. First-Class Township Code does not distinguish part-time from full-time hiring of officers, and officers must be hired through the Civil Service Commission. We are faced with a situation where a part-time officer resigned, and the Chief hired someone without going through the Civil Service testing procedure.

Mr. Chesney stated that there is a way to appoint this police officer right away and it is called a provisional appointment. The Board of Commissioners will nominate this person and the Civil Service will have to meet and certify the nominee as qualified after the candidate is given a non-competitive exam. At that point, the person is provisionally appointed. Then the Civil Service Board will have to conduct a competitive exam within 90 days. Once that is held there will be a certified eligibility list and the Board would have to make a regular appointment under 638 of the First-Class Township Code. The Board needs to nominate the officer as a provisional appointee to the Civil Service Commission and at that point, they will need to meet and administer a non-competitive exam.

Mr. Chesney believes the officer was hired unlawfully. Mr. McDaniel explained that is the problem that someone was hired and cannot work anymore until we give the non-competitive exam.

Mr. Chesney explained that under First Class Township Code if there are three officers or more in the department the Township must hire part-time or full-time under the Civil Service. That is the issue with officers not hired through the first-class code. Mr. Chesney suggested to err on the side of caution but nominate him now.

MOTION: Mr. Nash made a motion to amend the agenda to add the nomination of Sam Holden to be tested by the Civil Service Commission for a provisional appointment, seconded by Dan Peluso, with all in favor.

MOTION: Mr. Nash made a motion to provisionally nominate officer Sam Holden to the Police Department subject to non-competitive testing by the Civil Service Board as required under Section 641 First Class Township Code, seconded by Mr. Stephansky.

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Roll call was taken with the vote as follows: Mr. Stephansky yes, Mrs. Verszyla no, Mr. Peluso no, Mr. McDaniel yes, Mr. Nash yes. The motion carried.

Testimonial Proclamation in Honor of Anna Lee Oswald

Mrs. Verszyla read the testimonial proclamation in honor of Anna Lee Oswald the former Manager/Secretary for Leet Township. Mr. Stephansky had many good words for Anna Lee. Mr. McDaniel expressed condolences from the Board of Commissioners to Anna Lee's family.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Mr. Nash made a motion to adjourn at 8:57 p.m., seconded by Mrs. Verszyla with all in favor of adjournment.

Betsy Rengers, Manager

Martin C. McDaniel, President

Date