

LEET TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
April 11, 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 6:00 p.m. by President Martin C. McDaniel at the Leet Township Municipal Building, 194 Ambridge Ave., Fair Oaks, PA 15003. Roll Call: Commissioners present were Martin C. McDaniel, Rody Nash, Dan Peluso, Carolyn Verszyla, and John Stephansky.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no Executive Session.

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

Also present:

Betsy Rengers, Manager	Stephen Chesney, Solicitor
Katherine Longwell, Resident	Joe Ferrang, Planning Commission Chair
Chuck Soman, Resident	Bob Gulish, Resident
Curt Bubb, Resident	Susann Hyjek, Resident
Pete Pucci, Resident	Tom Weber, Resident
John Bunce, Resident	Jordan Garber, Resident
Jeff Besong, Resident	Charlie Frederick, Resident
Deb Cheddar, Resident	Katie Cheddar, Resident
Stacy Ford, Resident	

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr. McDaniel explained that the reports were printed and circulated in the room. The reports will be added to the website.

Curt Bubb, a resident, updated the Board on the War Memorial Project. There will be a committee meeting on Thursday at 7 pm. The site has been staked off on the property located at 198 Ambridge Avenue next to the parking lot. Rome Monument has given quotes on the price of the granite. There should be some fundraising.

Civil Service: Mr. Bubb explained that the Commission is moving forward with the bylaws/rules. The Commission voted to hire their own solicitor and will begin interviewing for the position. There is a civil service training coming up and some Commission members may attend. Tom Weber is the chairman of the Commission and Don Birnie is the secretary.

John Bunce, a resident, asked if he could get copies of the transcripts from the zoning hearings for the proposed new high school. Mr. Chesney asked that he file a Right to Know request for the transcripts because it could lower the cost for each page. A short discussion was had about the issue.

Jordan Garber, a resident, stated that Ms. Rengers had the transcripts available throughout the hearings. He asked for the transcripts to be put on the website. Mr. Chesney explained that the transcripts are the work product of the transcriptionist. Anyone may come to the Township building to review the transcripts.

Katie Meladini, a resident, saw her neighbor pull a car into the garage he built without a permit, but he does not have a valid occupancy permit. Ms. Rengers spoke with the building inspector and because the issue is going to a variance hearing, no action can be taken. The variance hearing may remedy the issue with the garage. Ms. Rengers also researched Township ordinances and could not find an ordinance that spoke to occupancy permits on a garage. Ms. Cheddar went on to explain her situation with Mr. Wernicki. Ms. Rengers explained that Mr. Wernicki has filed for lot consolidation, and this will help remedy part of the situation with the garage. The lot consolidation will come to the April Planning Commission meeting. The discussion continued.

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APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. McDaniel made the following corrections to the March 14, 2022, meeting minutes:

Page 2: War Memorial Park should be changed to River Front Park. Mrs. Verszyla corrected page 7 regarding the line that says the rules of the civil service were not in place. Mr. McDaniel would like the last four paragraphs on page 7 to be removed because they are trying to condense a conversation without giving the entire story. The motions will remain as is on page 7.

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to remove the last four paragraphs on page seven, seconded by Mr. Peluso, with all in favor.

Mr. McDaniel researched the police mutual aid agreements, and the Township does not have one. There was an agreement signed in 1993 and Leet Township was a part of this agreement. In 2007 the QVCOG expanded the agreement to include Bellevue and Ohio Township, however, Leet did not sign this agreement. Ms. Rengers explained that the agreement was going to be redone several years ago, but no agreement was reached. The COG will work on a new agreement.

Mrs. Verszyla stated that the minutes were well done, and she would like to see them presented at the subsequent meeting sealed and ready for signatures.

MOTION: Mr. Nash made a motion to approve the March 14, 2022, Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting Minutes with corrections, seconded by Mr. Peluso, with all in favor.

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to approve the March 28, 2022, Board of Commissioners Workshop Meeting Minutes as submitted, seconded by Mr. Peluso, with all in favor.

APPROVAL OF BILLS PAYABLE

The Board will receive a list of bills in the future along with the invoices.

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to approve the bills as presented, seconded by Mr. Stephansky. Roll call was taken with all in favor of the motion.

Reports are circulating in the room.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

**Public Works Committee
Proposals/Appointment of Engineer**

Mrs. Verszyla reviewed the engineering candidates and recommended that the Township hire LSSE (Lennon Smith Souleret) and that they work with Mr. Slagle to close out pending issues. Mr. McDaniel explained that the Township is reviewing services and five engineering firms were interviewed. The Board discussed the candidates and what they had to offer. Mr. Stephansky worked with Mr. Slagle for many years and was in favor of keeping him. Mr. Slagle has lower rates than the other vendors and will hold them for the next three years. Mr. Slagle's knowledge and expertise over the years are valuable and he may have not gone after every grant because he would not pursue a grant that we had no chance of getting. Another engineering firm will charge for everything that Dan has already done, such as plans.

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to appoint Lennon, Smith, and Souleret, seconded by Mr. Nash. Roll call was taken with the vote as follows: Mr. Stephansky, no, Mrs. Verszyla, yes, Mr. McDaniel, yes, Mr. Nash, yes, and Mr. Peluso, yes. The motion carried.

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Public Works Paving Issues/Proposals

There is an issue with some minor street paving work. Mrs. Verszyla spoke with Mr. Wanto and let him know that this is routine maintenance that is budgeted for, and it must be addressed.

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to have Mr. Wanto get proposals for repair work for the maintenance program, seconded by Mr. Nash, with all in favor of the motion.

Mrs. Verszyla stated that the truck had passed inspection.

Finance Committee

IT/Computer Support Update

Mr. Stephansky has been working on the IT proposals and would like for the vendors to attend the workshop meeting.

PA Act 172 of 2016 Volunteer Service Tax Credit

Mr. Stephansky researched PA Act 172 at the behest of the council and investigated the adoption of the Act that would afford the Fair Oaks Volunteer Fire Department to offer an incentive to their volunteers. He spoke to Chief Nate Turner, regarding Leet moving forward and adopting an ordinance. Chief Turner was in favor of it and said they currently have all the reporting software necessary, and it would not be burdensome for them to comply. There are restrictions on what the township can offer. There is a credit limit of 20% on the township's property tax. This credit can vary but cannot be more than what the individual owes. Furthermore, this is only applicable to the township's portion of the 1% Earned Income Tax payable, which is only ½%. This would not apply to the school district's 1/2% of the 1% collected.

The board would have to decide on the Earned Income Tax credit. Mr. Stephansky found examples, and these typically range from \$200-500 maximum. The EIT credit cannot be more than the individual owes.

MOTION: Mr. Stephansky made a motion to have the solicitor draft an ordinance to adopt PA Act 172 of 2016 to enact a volunteer tax credit for the volunteers of the Fair Oaks Fire Department with a 20% maximum for the Township's property tax and a \$500.00 maximum for Earned Income Tax, seconded by Mrs. Verszyla, with all in favor.

Pension Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) Update

With the current fluctuations and market rates, Mr. Stephansky spoke with Girard Pension Representative Ron Bittner about the effect of the markets on the municipal obligations to the pension plans. Mr. Bittner said the market takes inflation into account and that there is no change to the minimum obligation this year. Both plans are approximately 80% funded. There was a \$160,000.00 pension shortfall in 2018, but Mr. Bittner explained that the markets in 2020 and 2021 had made up for this.

Delinquent Real Estate Tax Collection Services

Mr. Stephansky contacted Jordan and Portnoff about their rate structures and they are similar. Portnoff has been our collector since 2010 and has collected \$213,459.00, which is about 78.8% of delinquent taxes collected. The 2021 delinquent collections are incomplete because they did not receive the list in a timely fashion. They would like to have these by February, but they came in later in the year in October or November. Jordan is our current tax collector and if they collect the delinquents, they will be able to act immediately, and we will get the money sooner. There is no cost to the Township. Mr. Stephansky recommended using Jordan Tax Services for delinquent tax collections. There was a short discussion about the transition from Portnoff to Jordan. The Portnoff agreement ends in July.

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to appoint Jordan Tax Services as the Leet Township Delinquent Tax Collector effective August 1, 2022, seconded by Mr. Peluso. Roll call was taken with all in favor.

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Mr. Stephansky explained that some delinquent taxes are not collectible and should be written off.

DCED Audit Report

Mr. Stephansky reported that Mark Turnley had submitted the Audit on March 30, 2022. Mrs. Verszyla would like for Mr. Turnley to attend a meeting and report to the Board. Mr. Stephansky and Mr. McDaniel would like to meet with him first and then he can attend the workshop meeting.

Liquid Fuels Audit Report

The Township completed the Liquid Fuels Audit with no findings or comments.

Public Safety Committee

Stop Sign on Oak/Hill Update

Mr. Nash met with Curt Bubb at the corner of Hill and Oak Street to discuss the placement of the stop sign. Mr. Bubb felt that a speed survey was needed for the sign. The cost for the survey is \$500.00. The stop sign would be removed for the study. Mr. Nash felt this would be a liability. Mr. Bubb would like for the speed limit to be lowered. The discussion continued.

Mr. McDaniel called for a motion to take the stop sign down for a speed study for \$500.00. There was not a first or second to the motion, so the motion failed.

Purchase of New Ford Explorer Amendment

The Board had previously voted to purchase a police car and set forth the payment plan but did not include the \$6500.00 from the sale of the 2016 Ford from Municibid.

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to amend the previous motion regarding the financing for the purchase of a new 2022 Ford Police Car as follows: the down payment will include \$6,500.00 from the sale of the 2016 Ford unmarked car, \$13,255.00 from the Capital Reserve Account and \$14,300.00 is to be financed at First National Bank for a two-year term at a 2.95% interest rate, seconded by Mr. Nash. Roll call was taken with all in favor of the motion.

Property Committee

Township Municipal Building Sign Update

Mr. Peluso will report on a new sign for the Township Building at the workshop meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Approval of Ordinance 2022-04 (Firearms Amendment)

There was a discussion about an outdated firearms ordinance. Mr. Chesney researched the issue and wrote an amendment to the ordinance to include the new laws.

MOTION: Mr. Nash made a motion to approve Ordinance 2022-04, amending the firearms ordinance to follow state law, seconded by Mr. Stephansky. Roll call was taken with all in favor of the motion.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. McDaniel received a text message from Fair Oaks Bowling Alley Owner John Niaros regarding the mechanical device tax for his gaming machines. He did not pay the tax in 2020 and is asking for relief from paying the 2021 tax. The Board did not waive the payment for 2020. There was a short discussion about waiving and eliminating the tax.

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to have John Naris comply with the mechanical device tax ordinance and bring up the arrears and the Board will consider in the future to amend or abolish the tax, seconded by Mr. Nash, with all in favor of the motion.

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Code Enforcement

Ms. Rengers explained to the Board her process for code enforcement. When a complaint is received, a letter is sent to the resident asking them to resolve the issue. Usually, the resident resolves the situation with the first notice. The Code Enforcement report reflected some property maintenance issues. This is because the houses are in disrepair and there may be garbage around the house or a hole in the roof. Ms. Rengers spoke with the residents regarding these issues, and they are working on resolving the issue. There is a building owner who refuses to maintain the property and Ms. Rengers sent him a letter to let him know that citations will be filed if the property is not maintained. Mrs. Verszyla asked if there were churches that would help those in need. Some churches will help those in need. There is a Department of Aging that may help.

Ms. Rengers provided a list of open permits from BIU. The list includes permits for fences and final reports may not have been closed out. Denny Campbell finished the building plans for 194 Ambridge, and they have been given to the building inspector. The building inspector will inspect 194 and issue the occupancy permit. The discussion continued about the open permits. Some of the issues on the list have been closed. Code enforcement is done throughout the day to expedite the resolution of the issue.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Chuck Soman, a resident, was upset that the Township has unmarked police cars. He liked the Act 172 decision, and it may attract volunteers. There was a discussion about the mutual aid agreement.

Curt Bubb would like to have the firearm ordinance on the park application form.

The Board needs to decide about the markings on the new police car.

Ms. Longwell, a resident, asked to have the fire department made aware of hoarding situations in the Township.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Ms. Verszyla made a motion to adjourn at 8:40 p.m., seconded by Mr. Nash with all in favor of adjournment.

TOWNSHIP OF LEET

/s/Betsy Rengers
BETSY RENGERS, MANAGER

/s/Martin C. McDaniel
MARTIN C. MCDANIEL, PRESIDENT

5/9/2022
Date