

LEET TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

January 9, 2023

Minutes of the Board of Commissioner's Regular Meeting

The Regular Meeting of the Leet Township Board of Commissioners was brought to order at 7:00 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, and John Stephansky. Commissioner Carolyn Verszyla participated by phone. The meeting started with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Absent: Commissioner Dan Peluso

Also present:

Betsy Rengers, Manager

Brian Jameson, Interim Chief

Steve Chesney, Solicitor

Andy Wanto, Public Works Foreman

Joe Ferrang, Planning Commission Chairman

Donna Adipietro, Resident

Peggy Adams, Resident

Kris Shelton, Resident

Mrs. Verszyla announced that it was Nation Law Enforcement Week. She thanked the Leet Township Police Officers for their service and a job well done. She wished them safety considering the recent death of Police Chief Justin McIntire after he was killed in the line of duty. She asked for a moment of silence to honor Brackenridge Police Chief Justin McIntire.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Resident and Quaker Valley Rotary Club Member Wayne Hyjek informed the Board that the work to replace the roof on the pavilion at Plum Street Park was completed. The Public Works Department will stain the pavilion in May and replace two of the cherry trees. Mr. McDaniel thanked Mr. Hyjek for all his service to the Township. Mr. Hyjek will give Ms. Rengers the paperwork for the roof replacement for the Township files.

Interim Chief Brian Jameson explained to the Board that he had researched replacing the Motorola body cameras because the batteries do not last through an entire shift. Motorola said the body cameras had come to the "end of life" and as of January 1, 2023, replacement parts will no longer be available. There will be no service or maintenance by Motorola for the body cameras. The current body cameras are refurbished. He spoke with County Councilman Samuel Demarco at Allegheny County about grant funding for the purchase of body cameras. Mr. Demarco said we were eligible to receive \$2,000.00 per body camera for up to six cameras. The total amount for six body cameras would be \$17,640.00, and \$12,000.00 would be paid for with the grant. We could then make payments on the remaining \$5,640.00 over four years. It is a five-year agreement with Motorola, and after year three, they will replace the body cameras free of charge if a newer model comes out. After 5 years, we can explore our options for replacing the body cameras. The Allegheny County Chief's Association has not received its grant funding this year, but once they do, we could be eligible for more grant funds. The new body cameras will automatically upload to a cloud system and will be accessible to the D.A.s office. This will limit

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the ability of the department to change or alter the video. Interim Chief Jameson asked the Board for permission to move forward with the grant application process. Mr. Chesney said that the Board did not need to take any action at this time until further information was received regarding the grant other than allowing Interim Chief Jameson to apply for the grant. The Board agreed to move forward with the grant application.

Interim Chief Jameson asked permission from the Board to hold two police training seminars. The police department will receive two free seats on each training course for hosting the seminars. Each seat is \$425.00. The first seminar is on April 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> and the subject is background investigations. The second seminar is on July 24<sup>th</sup> and July 25<sup>th</sup>. This training is for sexual assault. Officer Wilson is interested in attending this seminar to further his career and will take information from it for his Sexual Harassment, Assault, and Rape Prevention (SHARP) program. We will receive two free seats in this program, and we will receive about \$1,700.00 in free training. The seminars will be at the Fair Oaks Fire Department.

Interim Chief Jameson sent the 2015 Ford Explorer to the mechanic. They informed him that the transmission on the car was starting to go bad. The car has a lot of miles on it and the Township will not put any more money into it.

Resident Kris Shelton let the Board know about an 18-wheeler that was stuck on Beech Street today. Interim Chief Jameson had the driver back out of Beech Street, and he was cited for a traffic violation.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

**November 10, 2022, Budget Workshop Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Stephansky made the following correction to the minutes of the November 10, 2022, Budget Workshop Meeting: on page two, bullet 9, add: "Mr. Stephansky asked Ms. Rengers to investigate mobile banking for the PNC bank deposit instead of going to the bank."

Mrs. Verszyla made the following corrections: page 1: "Ms. Rengers would like to apply for a 2023 TAN loan for \$150,000.00.

Page 2, bullet 2: "Interim Chief Jameson suggested the Board give the part-time officers a pay raise to \$25.00 per hour. The purpose of the raise is to attract additional potential candidates to apply for the position," and remove the last sentence.

Page 2: 9<sup>th</sup> bullet from the bottom of the page: change the word "insurance" to "liability." Remove the sentence where Interim Chief Jameson said the police car had mechanical issues. Add "Mrs. Verszyla stated that Interim Chief Jameson should escort Ms. Rengers to the bank."

Page 2, 8<sup>th</sup> bullet from the bottom: remove the word "soon". Change the word "equipment" to "uniforms" and add the word "necessary".

Page 2, 5<sup>th</sup> bullet from the bottom: change the word "have" to "insured under".

Page 2, the last bullet: add "previous" before the word "donation."

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Page 3, the last bullet: add the word "First National Bank" before the word "General Fund".

**MOTION:** Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to approve the minutes of the Board of Commissioners' November 10, 2022, Budget Meeting with corrections, seconded by Mr. Nash. Roll call was taken with a vote as follows: Mr. McDaniel; yes, Mrs. Verszyla: yes, Mr. Stephansky; yes, and Mr. Nash: yes. The motion carried.

**November 14, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes**

Mrs. Verszyla made the following corrections to the November 14, 2022, Regular Meeting Minutes:

The first four motions on page one should include the summary of the ordinance it was amending. The ordinance number should be included so the old ordinance can be referred to.

Page one: the motion to close the hearing should include the time it closed.

Page 3, the top line: should state the purpose for Interim Chief Jameson to go to Harrisburg.

Mrs. Verszyla was contacted by a resident in Olde Sewickley Highlands about the proposed landscaping plan to plant trees. The resident was upset that she will have to clean the leaves that blow into her yard in the fall. Mr. Peluso spoke with the resident about the issue.

Page 4: add "Mrs. Verszyla suggested that we get several more bids."

Page 4: Beech Street Traffic Update: add "Traffic Logistic Digital" before "speed sign."

Mrs. Verszyla asked Ms. Rengers if the Township had received the outstanding payment from the landlord who violated the landlord-tenant law. Ms. Rengers sent her a registered letter and is waiting for the return receipt. Once she has the receipt, she will file a citation with the magistrate for failure to comply with the landlord-tenant law. Mrs. Verszyla requested a follow-up on the code enforcement issue at the Ambridge Avenue property where the owner recently passed away.

Mrs. Verszyla read the motion made by Mr. Nash at the November 14, 2022, Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting. The motion was to give all the employees a 5% pay raise, except for the Interim Chief. This included the part-time police officers. This will put two of the part-time officers at over \$25.00 an hour. One part-time officer will not reach \$25.00 in pay. Mrs. Verszyla said that we are still faced with the problem of part-time officers going somewhere else for higher pay.

**MOTION:** Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 14, 2022, Board of Commissioners Regular meeting with corrections, seconded by Mr. Stephansky. Roll call was taken with a vote as follows: Mr. McDaniel; yes, Mrs. Verszyla: yes, Mr. Stephansky; yes, and Mr. Nash: yes. The motion carried.

**December 12, 2022, Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting Minutes**

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Mrs. Verszyla requested that the signature lines on the last page are on pages with other wording. This can be accomplished by making the font size 12.

**MOTION:** Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to approve the December 12, 2022, Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting Minutes as submitted, seconded by Mr. Stephansky. Roll call was taken with a vote as follows: Mr. McDaniel; yes, Mrs. Verszyla: yes, Mr. Stephansky; yes, and Mr. Nash: yes. The motion carried.

**FINANCE REPORT**

**Approval of Bill List and Current Invoices**

If an invoice is dated December and the vendor cashed the check in January, the auditor will adjust the payment to the month of December. Mr. McDaniel questioned check 10473 for LSSE: the invoice payment included a \$150.00 retainer fee. The fee is to attend two meetings a month and to provide telephone consultation related to Township engineering business as necessary. Mr. Stephansky would like the engineer to attend meetings to answer questions about the reports they submit. Mr. Chesney stated that the retainer covers all questions and phone calls placed to the engineer. Mr. Chesney suggested asking them to attend the meeting to answer the questions about the bills. Mr. Nash suggested asking them to charge us only if they attend the meetings and asked Ms. Rengers to contact them about the charge. LSSE sent a new 2023 rate sheet with a new contract. The 2023 rates are higher. Mr. McDaniel would like to have a conference call with Mr. Brett regarding the retainer fee.

**MOTION:** Mr. Stephansky made a motion to approve the current bills and invoices, minus the LSSE retainer fee, seconded by Mr. Nash. Roll call was taken with a vote as follows: Mr. McDaniel; yes, Mrs. Verszyla: yes, Mr. Stephansky; yes, and Mr. Nash: yes. The motion carried.

**Circulate Department Reports**

The Department Reports are circulating in the meeting room. We will vote to approve the reports later in the meeting.

**Approval of 2023 Book Minders Rates**

The Board reviewed the comparison rates from 2022 to 2023 from Book Minders. The rates are based on the usage of the service and may increase by \$100.00 per month depending on the number of monthly transactions. Currently, the bills range between \$1200.00 to \$1500.00 per month. Mrs. Verszyla said that we should have had the rate increase at budgeting time. Book Minders should be notified that we need the rates at budgeting time. Mr. McDaniel felt that we could have done a better job of this by contacting them at budgeting time for the renewal rates.

**MOTION:** Mr. Stephansky made a motion to approve the 2023 Book Minders fee structure, seconded by Mr. Nash. Roll call was taken with a vote as follows: Mr. McDaniel; yes, Mrs. Verszyla: yes, Mr. Stephansky; yes, and Mr. Nash: yes. The motion carried.

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**Finance Committee**

**Liquid Fuels Audit Review**

Ms. Rengers gave the Board a copy of the Liquid Fuels Audit letter in their packet. There was one finding from the auditor. The Township spent \$3,000.00 more than permitted on truck expenditures in 2021. Ms. Rengers explained that the former treasurer did not take the permitted truck expenditure budget into account when she decided to pay for a truck repair with Liquid Fuels funds. This caused an overage in spending for that category. The Township may have to return the \$3,000.00 but that has not been determined yet by the auditor. The Board does not need to act on the matter at this time.

**Personnel Committee**

**Approval of LSSE 2023 Engineering Service Agreement**

**MOTION:** Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to approve the 2023 LSSE Agreement, pending the status of the retainer fee, seconded by Mr. Nash. Roll call was taken with a vote as follows: Mr. McDaniel; yes, Mrs. Verszyla: yes, Mr. Stephansky; yes, and Mr. Nash: yes. The motion carried.

**Approval of Resolution 2023-01 (Manager Betsy Rengers)**

**MOTION:** Mr. Stephansky made a motion to approve Resolution 2023-01 to appoint Betsy Rengers to the position of at-will, exempt, full-time salaried Manager with a compensation of \$60,890.00 salary, with health, vision, and dental benefits, short-term, long-term and life insurance, paid by the Township for the year 2023, seconded by Mr. Nash. Roll call was taken with a vote as follows: Mr. McDaniel; yes, Mrs. Verszyla: yes, Mr. Stephansky; yes, and Mr. Nash: yes. The motion carried.

**Approval of Resolution 2023-02 (Deputy Tax Collector Jordan Tax Services)**

**MOTION:** Mr. Stephansky made a motion to approve Resolution 2023-02 to deputize Jordan Tax Collection Services to collect real estate taxes for the Township of Leet Tax Collector Kristine Shelton and the Quaker Valley School District in the Leet area taxing district, seconded by Mr. Nash. Roll call was taken with a vote as follows: Mr. McDaniel; yes, Mrs. Verszyla: yes, Mr. Stephansky; yes, and Mr. Nash: yes. The motion carried.

**Approval of Resolution 2023-03 (Public Works Foreman Andy Wanto)**

**MOTION:** Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to approve Resolution 2023-03 to appoint Andy Wanto to the position of at-will Public Works Foreman, with compensation at \$27.48 per hour, with health, vision, and dental benefits, short-term, long-term, and life insurance paid by the Township for the year 2023, seconded by Mr. Nash. Roll call was taken with a vote as follows: Mr. McDaniel; yes, Mrs. Verszyla: yes, Mr. Stephansky; yes, and Mr. Nash: yes. The motion carried.

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**Approval of Resolution 2023-04 (Public Works Laborer Cody Blumling)**

**MOTION:** Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to approve Resolution 2023-04 to appoint Cody Blumling to the position of at-will Public Works Laborer, with compensation at \$22.21 per hour, with health, vision, and dental benefits, short-term, long-term and life insurance paid by the Township for the year 2023, seconded by Mr. Nash. Roll call was taken with a vote as follows: Mr. McDaniel; yes, Mrs. Verszyla: yes, Mr. Stephansky; yes, and Mr. Nash: yes. The motion carried.

**Approval of Resolution 2023-05 (Public Works Laborer Jake Mosholder)**

**MOTION:** Mr. Nash made a motion to approve Resolution 2023-05 to appoint Jake Mosholder to the position of at-will Public Works Laborer, with compensation at \$20.69 per hour, with health, vision, and dental benefits, short-term, long-term, and life insurance paid by the Township for the year 2023, seconded by Mrs. Verszyla. Roll call was taken with a vote as follows: Mr. McDaniel; yes, Mrs. Verszyla: yes, Mr. Stephansky; yes, and Mr. Nash: yes. The motion carried.

**Approval of Resolution 2023-06 (Interim Chief Brian Jameson)**

**MOTION:** Mr. Nash made a motion to approve Resolution 2023-06 to appoint Brian Jameson to the position of at-will Interim Police Chief for the year 2023, with compensation of \$80,000.00, to manage both administrative and routine patrolman duties for the year 2023, seconded by Mrs. Verszyla. Roll call was taken with a vote as follows: Mr. McDaniel; yes, Mrs. Verszyla: yes, Mr. Stephansky; yes, and Mr. Nash: yes. The motion carried.

**Public Works Committee**

**LSSE's Review of the Camp Meeting Road Retaining Wall**

Mr. McDaniel explained that the Board had received a report from LSSE. LSSE had been tasked with researching the deed on this property with the retaining wall. Ms. Rengers contacted Allegheny County about the ownership of the wall, and they said they did not own the wall. Ms. Rengers wrote to the resident and asked him to provide their maintenance plan for the wall. The resident responded that they were having a landscaping company come out and give them a bid. Ms. Rengers had written to the resident again but had no response. Mr. McDaniel asked LSSE to research the deed and let us know who owns the wall. Ms. Rengers will follow up with LSSE.

**LSSE's Review of the Case Property**

LSSE researched the deed for the private road located on the Case property. The Township did not agree to take over maintenance of the road and it was recorded on the plan. Mr. Case informed Ms. Rengers that he would be out of town until the spring and that no snow plowing was necessary. Mrs. Verszyla asked that Mr. Case be sent a letter with the LSSE letter attached to it to let him know that we are not responsible for the maintenance of the road.

**PennDOT Ambridge Avenue Weight Study Letter**

We received the weight study letter from PennDOT. Mr. McDaniel read the contents of the letter. Based on the review by PennDOT, they stated that the crash data and the condition of the road did not warrant a weight study. Interim Chief Jameson felt that PennDOT did not review the information that had been presented by Mr. Stephansky. Mr. Stephansky suggested documenting all issues moving forward. We will send the PennDOT letter to Representative Valerie Gaydos and the traffic engineer at LSSE for comments. Mr. Stephansky stated that there was subsidence between Main Street and the bowling alley and in Bell Acres. Mr. McDaniel asked Interim Chief Jameson to work with the Public Safety Committee on the issue.

**Discussion and Approval to Obtain Bids for Public Works Pick-up Truck**

Mrs. Verszyla asked if the Township could use American Rescue Act Plan funds to help purchase a public works pick-up truck. Ms. Rengers read the *Final Rule* regarding the use of the American Rescue Act Plan funds and understood it to say that if the Township had incurred a revenue loss of 10 million dollars, they could spend up to that amount in American Rescue Act Plan Funds, if not, they could use a formula created by the fund to figure out the amount of revenue loss and then spend up to the amount of lost revenue on police or public works vehicles. She deferred to the solicitor for a final determination if this was correct or not. Mr. Chesney explained that any municipality may take the 10-million-dollar loss and that the rules changed on how the funds could be spent. Mr. Chesney will write a memo to the Board with his determination on how the funds can be spent.

**Approval to Purchase a Lawn Tractor**

Mr. Wanto submitted a bid to the Board for the purchase of a lawn tractor from Burk's Lawn and Saw, Inc. There was a 20% discount listed on the estimate and there was a discussion over whether it was a Co-Star bid. If it is a Costars bid, we will not need to go through the bidding process to purchase the tractor. Ms. Rengers will research the issue and move the discussion of the lawn tractor purchase to the Workshop Meeting.

**Closeout of Encompass Health Project-Performance Bond and Escrow**

Mr. Slagle sent a letter to the Board with a recommendation to close out the escrow account and release the performance bond for Encompass Health because they had completed all required private infrastructure work for the Encompass Health Site Plan in the executed Developer's Agreement dated July 10, 2018.

**MOTION:** Mr. Nash made a motion to close out the Encompass Health Escrow Account and release the performance bond due to the completion of all required private infrastructure work for the Encompass Health Site Plan following the executed Developer's Agreement dated July 10, 2018, seconded by Mr. Stephansky. Roll call was taken with a vote as follows: Mr. McDaniel; yes, Mrs. Verszyla: yes, Mr. Stephansky; yes, and Mr. Nash: yes. The motion carried.

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**Brian Brown Equipment Lease Meeting Update**

Mr. McDaniel explained that Brian Brown works as a seasonal public works employee, and he likes to use his leaf machine when working. We need to have a written agreement to lease the equipment in case there is an accident. If he is using his equipment, he should be considered a contractor.

**Public Safety Committee**

**Discussion and Possible Approval of Fair Oaks Fire Department Proposed Agreement**

Mr. Chesney compared the Fair Oaks Fire Department Proposed Agreement to Sewickley Borough's and Rochester Township's Fire Department Agreements. He had questions about firefighter training and some other matters that he would like to discuss with the Chief of the Fair Oaks Fire Department before approving the agreement. Mr. Chesney will submit his questions to Public Safety Commissioner Rody Nash and Carolyn Verszyla so they can meet with the Fair Oaks Fire Department Representatives.

**Beech Street Traffic Study Meeting Update**

Interim Chief Jameson spoke with Leetsdale Police Chief Raible and asked him to invite Leetsdale Representatives Jeff Weatherby and Mayor Sandra Ford to discuss the Beech Street Traffic Study and practical solutions to the traffic problems there. The meeting will take place after the January 23, 2023, Workshop Meeting at 6 p.m. Public Safety Commissioners Rody Nash and Carolyn Verszyla will attend the meeting. Mr. Nash requested to have an enlarged map of the area to view at the meeting. Resident Kris Shelton asked if speed bumps could be installed to slow the traffic.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Commissioners Announcements**

**Leet Township Zoning Hearing Board's Decision not to Appeal Judge James' Ruling**

Mr. McDaniel explained that Judge James ruled against the Leet Township Zoning Hearing Board's decision to not grant Quaker Valley School District a Special Exception Variance unless the district amended its plan to include an emergency-only road. In turn, the Leet Township Zoning Hearing Board voted against filing an appeal of Judge James' ruling. A Leet resident and a Leetsdale resident have filed an appeal against the Judge's ruling. Interim Chief Jameson has been invited to a first responder meeting at the school district to discuss the proposed high school plan and will report back to the Board about the meeting.

**Department Reports**

**Acceptance of Department Reports**

Mr. McDaniel thanked Interim Chief Jameson for the detailed police department report. Mr. McDaniel was impressed with the Fair Oaks Fire Department Report which contained a year-end report. There was a previous question from the audience about how many Fair Oaks Fire Department Firefighters were responding to calls. The reports should reflect the number of firefighters responding to the calls.

**MOTION:** Mr. Stephansky made a motion to accept the Department Reports as submitted, seconded by Mr. Nash, with all in favor of the motion.



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**Correspondence**

**Leetsdale Municipal Authority Letter/Sewickley Act 537 Plan**

Mr. McDaniel explained that the Board received a letter written by the Leetsdale Municipal Authority President regarding the Sewickley Act 537 Plan. Sewickley was going to decommission its sewer plant and tie it into the Leetsdale Sewer Treatment plant. Years ago, Sewickley could have tied into Leetsdale, but did not. The surrounding municipalities took a loan to pay for the Leetsdale plant. Engineer Dan Slagle reported on the cost for Sewickley to tie into the Leetsdale Sewer Plant and told everyone the consumer rates would go down. Sewickley's present engineers Gateway, as well as their former engineers, LSSE reported that the numbers did not make sense. Sewickley is withdrawing its request to tie into the Leetsdale Sewer Plant.

**Other Matters**

The Board will send a thank you letter to the Quaker Valley Rotary for the roof replacement at Plum Street Park.

Mr. McDaniel explained that the Civil Service Commission tested one applicant and he passed the test. Interim Chief Jameson will need to conduct a background check on the applicant. Mr. Stephansky read the Civil Service report that said the Board of Commissioners should increase police officer pay and benefits to attract more applicants. He asked that the Civil Service Commission put a detailed request in writing to the Board of Commissioners. Interim Chief Jameson stated that it was a collective bargaining agreement issue. The Civil Service Board tested one applicant and the applicant has since taken a 32-hour week position with another municipality. He suggested that the Civil Service Commission not conduct the testing if there is only one applicant. If we have conducted a test with one applicant, we must pay the money for the testing and the applicant can fail the test. Mr. McDaniel does not want to tell the Civil Service Board what to do or be involved in their decisions regarding testing and candidates. Mr. Chesney stated that if the Board of Commissioners voted to violate the Civil Service Commission law it would be a misdemeanor. All hires must be done by the Civil Service Commission.

**Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

**Executive Session Announcement**

The Board of Commissioners will have an Executive Session on January 12, 2023, at 10 pm the Offices of Amato and Start to discuss strategy for upcoming litigation.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Mr. Nash made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:24 pm seconded by Mr. Stephansky, with all in favor of the motion.

TOWNSHIP OF LEET

/s/Betsy Rengers  
BETSY RENGERS, MANAGER  
February 13, 2023  
Date

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