

TOWNSHIP OF LEET  
WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES  
APRIL 24, 2023

The Workshop Meeting of the Leet Township Board of Commissioners was called to order at 4:00 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, Carolyn Verszyla (by phone), Dan Peluso, and John Stephansky. The meeting started with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Absent: Commissioner Rody Nash

Also present:

Betsy Rengers, Manager                      LSSE Engineer John Valinsky  
Donna Adipietro, Resident                  Interim Chief Brian Jameson  
Auditor Mark Turnley  
Curt Bubb, Civil Service Commission Member  
Don Birnie, Civil Service Commission Member  
Tom Weber, Civil Service Commission Chairman

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Resident Curt Bubb reported that the War Memorial Committee was making headway on the names of veterans to be added to the memorial. The names of the veterans from the most recent conflicts are the hardest to find. Mrs. Adipietro went to the Sewickley Historical Society and was able to find names there. If any names are missed when engraving the stone, their names may possibly be added to it at a later date. There are about 300 veteran's names, so far.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**2022 DCED Audit Review with Auditor Mark Turnley**

Mr. Turnley reviewed the highlights of the 2022 Audit focusing on the General Fund:

- There are 5 years of General Fund Balances listed. In 2022, there was a \$30,000.00 decrease in the General Fund.
- The 2022 General Fund balance was \$249,390.00 which was 12.7% of the approved 2023 General Fund budget.
- In December of every year, the General Fund balance should have two months of funds to pay for next year's expenses in January and February. The Township was slightly under the target goal of 13.5% with 12.7%. This is a target goal, and the Township was consistent with the goal.
- General Fund revenues were less by \$46,276.00 because of the \$150,000.00 TAN Loan in 2021. If the TAN Loan was removed from the figures, the Township had a gain of \$60,475.00 because of the increase in tax revenue.
- General Fund Expenditures were increased by \$52,000.00. If the \$150,000.00 Tax Anticipation Note was removed from the 2021 numbers, there was a \$192,000.00 increase in expenditures, and the expenditures are noted on the audit report.
- Budget versus Actuals reflect the Township exceeded budgeted revenues by \$18,746.00, with \$41,838.00 from increased tax revenues.

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- General Fund expenditures exceeded the budget by \$7,985.00 and this was good management of the budget.
- Page 4 reflects the expenditures by category with General Government over by \$67,247.00, Public Safety over by \$83,113.00, Public Works under by \$70,519.00, and Recreation and Community Development under by \$30,661.00.
- There was a detailed revenue versus expenditure report at the back of the supplemental report.
- Other funds are listed on page 4, showing how the funds were managed.
- The Pension Fund is reflected on page 7. The Uniformed and Non-Uniformed Pension are listed here. There was a decrease in the Uniformed Pension Plan of \$463,035.00 and the Non-Uniformed Plan lost \$98,662.00. This is a 25% loss. 2022 was a bad year in the market. The 457 Plan is reflected here, as well.
- The DCED Audit report was filed in a timely fashion. The audit went well.

Mr. Stephansky asked about Mr. Turnley's recommendation to start an operational manual in case something happens to the manager. Mrs. Rengers has been working on one. Mr. Turnley asked the Township to get a System and Organization Control Report from ADP, Jordan Tax Collections, Keystone Tax Collections, and others. This report will show the company's internal controls on how they process internal functions and information.

Mrs. Verszyla commented that the bills are presented at the Board meetings and two Commissioners' signatures are required on the checks. Mr. Turnley is happy with the internal controls and felt the Board was active in terms of the finances. A purchase order system has been implemented and the purchase is approved before the purchase is made. Mrs. Verszyla asked Mr. Turnley if he could recommend to the Board a threshold amount to authorize the Manager to spend. He suggested \$500.00 as a threshold amount. Mr. Turnley did not have any suggestions on how to approve the internal controls. The Township uses Book Minders for the accounting work. Mr. Turnley reviewed the payroll and did not see any issues that triggered him to look further.

Mrs. Verszyla asked if the DCED paperwork was filed with the TAN Loan. The Township did not take a TAN Loan in 2022, but in 2023, the Bank filed the DCED paperwork for the TAN loan.

**Discussion and Possible Vote to Conduct Civil Service Testing for Part-time Officers**

Chairman Tom Weber said that passing the physical agility test is an issue for part-time officers who may be older in age than a full-timer. Interim Chief Jameson had Don Sedelack meet with the Civil Service Commission because he does physical agility testing for police officers. Mr. Sedelack reviewed testing standards with the Civil Service Commission. The Civil Service Commission is ready to test part-time officers as soon as they receive an opinion from their solicitor and the Board of Commissioners approves the testing.

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**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**Approval of Building Renovations/Site Plan Architectural Bid**

Mr. Peluso received three proposals for design work for the renovation of 194 Ambridge Ave. The proposals were from Architect Denny Campbell for a schematic design at \$7,200.00, the LSSE staff architect for the preparation of conceptual designs at \$10,000.00, and Architect David Pecharka for a preliminary design at \$3,600.00. Mr. Pecharka will charge more if the scope of the project becomes larger. Mr. Pecharka is frugal with his designs. Mrs. Verszyla suggested designing the project in phases. Ms. Rengers and Mr. Peluso met with Mr. Pecharka. The Board would like to have the design done within four weeks.

**MOTION:** Mr. Peluso made a motion to hire David Pecharka for professional preliminary designs for renovations at 194 Ambridge Avenue, in the amount of \$3,600.00, seconded by Mr. Stephansky. Roll call was taken with a vote as follows: Mr. Stephansky; yes, Mrs. Verszyla; yes, Mr. McDaniel; yes, and Mr. Peluso; yes. The motion carried.

**Plum Street Park Use by Salina Everette Discussion and Vote**

Resident Salina Everette asked the Board for permission to have a flea market at Plum Street Park at the April 10, 2023, Board of Commissioners Meeting. The ordinance intended to prevent the park from being used for flea markets because the taxpayers of Leet pay for the park. Mr. Stephansky did not want the residents of Plum Street to have to deal with a caravan of cars going up and down for a sale at the park. Mr. McDaniel explained that some properties are donated to municipalities and deeded not to be used for those purposes. Mr. Bubb asked if she could use Ambridge Avenue Park instead of Plum Street. Ms. Rengers was concerned about insurance liabilities and the Township may need an event waiver for an event like that.

**MOTION:** Mr. Peluso made a motion to deny Salina Everette's requests to use Plum Street Park for a flea market, seconded by Mr. Stephansky. A roll call vote to deny the use of Plum Street Park for a flea market was taken as follows: Mr. Stephansky; yes, to deny the requested use of the park, Mrs. Verszyla; yes, to deny the requested use of the park, Mr. McDaniel; yes, to deny the requested use of the park, and Mr. Peluso; yes, to deny the requested use of the park. The motion carried.

Ms. Rengers was directed to notify Mrs. Everette of the Board's decision to deny the park use for a flea market and let her know the reasons why it was not approved.

**Approval of Leet Township Police Disciplinary Policy**

Interim Chief Jameson informed the Board that he and Mr. Chesney were reviewing police policies and specifically the Leet Township Police Department Disciplinary and Code of Conduct policies. Mr. Nash and Mrs. Verszyla were given copies of the policies. Mr. Chesney gave Interim Chief Jameson his approval for both policies. The officers need to be held accountable for their actions in public. The old policies had conflicts with First Class

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Township Code and made it difficult to handle low-level offenses. The goal is to correct behavior to have a more professional police department. Interim Chief Jameson researched policies from other departments and First-Class Township Code. These policies are not a matter of the bargaining unit negotiations but were reviewed by the head of the bargaining unit, Officer Ron Wilson. Officer Wilson found no language that would conflict with the police contract. Interim Chief Jameson will review the new policies with the officers and have them sign and date the acknowledgment. Mr. Stephansky asked if Interim Chief Jameson will be signing the written reprimand. Interim Chief Jameson explained that he will investigate an infraction and then decide what action to take. If it is a written reprimand, he will cite the policy that was violated and give a definition of the infraction. He can add signature and date lines to the page. If an officer is suspended with pay, the Board will be notified. The Chief of Police may discipline an officer up to the point of suspension. The Board will have 72 hours to decide if the officer should be reinstated or suspended with pay or suspended without pay.

**MOTION:** Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to approve the Leet Township Police Department Disciplinary Policy with the addition of a signature page including a signature line for the officer and Interim Chief and to be dated, seconded by Mr. Stephansky. A roll call vote was taken as follows: Mr. Stephansky; yes, Mrs. Verszyla; yes, Mr. McDaniel; yes, and Mr. Peluso; yes. The motion carried.

**Approval of Leet Township Police Code of Conduct Policy**

**MOTION:** Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to approve the Leet Township Police Code of Conduct Policy, seconded by Mr. Peluso. A roll call vote was taken as follows: Mr. Stephansky; yes, Mrs. Verszyla; yes, Mr. McDaniel; yes, and Mr. Peluso, yes. The motion carried.

The Board thanked the Interim Chief for his work on these policies.

**Approval of Encompass Health Developers Agreement**

The Engineer and Solicitor worked on the Encompass Health Developers Agreement. One of the issues was the noise created by the construction of the project. The Developers Agreement has a start time of 8 am and a finish time of 6 pm due to the hospital being located in a residential neighborhood. They may work until 7 pm if they are inside the building. Ms. Rengers will send the Developers Agreement with the Exhibits to Encompass Health for signatures and once the bonding is in place, they may begin the project.

**MOTION:** Mr. Peluso made a motion to approve the Encompass Health Developer's Agreement, seconded by Mr. Stephansky. A roll call vote was taken as follows: Mr. Stephansky; yes, Mrs. Verszyla; yes, Mr. McDaniel; yes, and Mr. Peluso, yes. The motion carried.

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**Approval of Encompass Health Bonding**

Ms. Rengers received a letter from LSSE with the required bond amount for the Encompass Health Site Plan project of \$158,727.80. This bond will be in the form of a certificate. Ms. Rengers has a cash escrow account for Encompass Health in the amount of \$13,000.00 for engineering fees. The bond would be called in if Encompass defaulted on the work.

**MOTION:** Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to approve the Encompass Health Bond amount of \$158,727.80, seconded by Mr. Peluso. A roll call vote was taken as follows: Mr. Stephansky; yes, Mrs. Verszyla; yes, Mr. McDaniel; yes, and Mr. Peluso, yes. The motion carried.

**Update on Camp Meeting Road Retaining Wall**

Ms. Rengers sent a letter to Reverend John Guest, 30 Myrtle Hill Road, inquiring about the maintenance plan for the retaining wall that runs along Camp Meeting Road. Reverend Guest met with Ms. Rengers, and he obtained an estimate to repair the wall in the amount of \$32,000.00. He contracted with a tree specialist to take down leaning trees and trim back the tree that fell in March. He will contact the school district to find out if they are planning lane improvements in his area or if they have plans to fix the wall.

**Keep Leet Neat Event**

Mrs. Verszyla thanked the volunteers who picked up litter for the annual Keep Leet Neat event.

**Correspondence**

The Board received a letter from Dave Goerman on High Street regarding motorbikes riding on Leet Township property behind his house. One of the motorbikes does not have a muffler. He sent copies of Ordinance 15-215 restricting the operation of motor vehicles on Township property and Ordinance 15-802 requiring exhaust mufflers on vehicles. Interim Chief Jameson took the complaint from Mr. Goerman and identified the resident with the motorbikes. Officer Ken Battaglia went to the resident's home and asked them not to ride their motorbikes on Township property and he let them know that if they do, they will be cited. Mr. McDaniel would like to amend the ordinance to prohibit the riding of motorbikes on Township property without extensions or waivers from the police. Mr. Stephansky had an issue with motorbikes on his property and he stopped them. Mr. Stephansky does not mind if they are riding respectfully, but when they are tearing through the area it is a problem. Interim Chief Jameson will let Mr. Goerman know that he spoke with the resident, and they are not allowed to ride motorbikes there.

**ALOM Conference Update**

Ms. Rengers gave the Board a summary of the seminars she took at the ALOM Conference. One of the topics was about when meetings go off the rails. During public participation, there have been instances of residents making defamatory comments against board members or employees. If the defamatory comments are distributed by the municipality in a recording or in the meeting minutes, the municipality can be culpable in a defamation lawsuit. This is a

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very complex issue, and it is hard to prove defamation. The Township is to keep order while balancing the right to free speech at a public meeting.

The State is trying to change the advertising requirement from a print ad to advertising on the municipality's website.

The State is encouraging municipalities to install and regulate electric car charging stations for the public.

**Correspondence**

**Leetsdale 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade Donation**

The Leetsdale 4th of July Parade Committee requested support for their July 4<sup>th</sup> celebrations.

**MOTION:** Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to give the Leetsdale 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade Committee a donation of \$100.00, seconded by Mr. Peluso. A roll call vote was taken as follows: Mr. Stephansky; yes, Mrs. Verszyla; yes, Mr. McDaniel; yes, and Mr. Peluso, yes. The motion carried.

Because the donation is de minimis in nature, the agenda did not need to be amended.

**Public Participation**

Resident Curt Bubb asked about the installation of a traffic mirror on Mound Street. The Board decided to have the resident trim back the hedges to see if it solved the issue. Interim Chief Jameson thought they should remove the hedges for the site line. A mirror would help the situation. We will put this on the May agenda for a vote. LSSE will need to provide specs for how high the mirror should be, and the size required.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:28 pm, seconded by Mr. Peluso, with all in favor of the motion.

TOWNSHIP OF LEET

      /s/ Betsy Rengers        
Betsy Rengers, Manager

      /s/ Martin McDaniel        
Martin C. McDaniel, President

      May 8, 2023        
Date