

LEET TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
March 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 6:00 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

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 6:01 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 7:00 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
Nathan Turner, Fair Oaks Fire Department	
Mark Brooks, Fair Oaks Fire Department	
Katherine Longwell, Resident	Joe Ferrang, Planning Commission Chair
Chuck Soman, Resident	Bob & Diane Gulish, Resident
Curt Bubb, Resident	David Kovacs, Resident
Rick Hite, Resident	Don Birnie, Resident
Dave Volk, Resident	Emily Bennet, Resident
April Martin, Resident	Charlie Frederick, Resident
Joanne McDaniel, Resident	Bill Wanto, Resident
Ernie Mancuso, Resident	Chief Mike Molinaro

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Bill Wanto, a resident, gave a War Memorial Project update to the Board. The committee has met several times and decided on a design. There is an issue with the design of the stone because it is only 1 inch thick. The dimensions of the stone are 10x6. They are considering a location and can save \$1,500.00 if the Public Works does the site work. There will be electricity and landscaping. Residents will be able to buy pavers with the names engraved on them. The majority of Leet veterans are from Fair Oaks. The discussion continued.

Rick Hite, a resident, asked about the traffic mirrors for Eckert, Willow, and Neely. The mirrors have been ordered.

Curt Bubb, a resident, asked that the reports from the meetings be posted on the website. Ms. Rengers will create a separate packet for the reports for the website.

Dave Volk, Emergency Management Coordinator, attended the required quarterly emergency management meeting at the Allegheny County Emergency Service Building and he is attending a flood education seminar on April 6th. Mr. Volk suggested the Township install a post with color-coded levels marked on it for flooding events at Big Sewickley Creek. There will be a written procedure of what to do when each level is hit by the water for the emergency coordinator, fire, and police departments.

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APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mrs. Verszyla would like the amount to be added to the motion on page 4 for the American Rescue Plan Act funds. Mrs. Verszyla would like to have the Township seal on the approved minutes along with the signature of the President. Mrs. Verszyla read a statement about the meeting minutes and talked about the number of minutes that were presented at the last meeting. Meeting minutes must be accurate.

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

APPROVAL OF BILLS PAYABLE

The bills were presented at the meeting. There were no questions about the bills.

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

There were no comments about the financial or department reports. The Quaker Valley COG has set up a permanent glass recycling center at River Front Park in Sewickley. The Township received the Liquid Fuels allocation of \$43,061.00 on March 1st.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Public Works Committee

Sidewalk Invoice Update: There is no update currently.

Proposals/Appointment of Engineer: The Township is reviewing proposals for Engineers. The Township has received more proposals to review, and they will be distributed to the Board members.

Approval to Advertise Work Sessions: The Township will have a work session to interview Engineers and Building Inspector Services. We will have work sessions on the 4th Monday of the month, and we will advertise these meetings. Mrs. Verszyla would like a commitment from the Board to attend work sessions.

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to advertise work session meetings for the 4th Monday of each month at 4 p.m. seconded by Mr. Peluso, with all in favor.

This is an increase in responsibility for Ms. Rengers with another set of minutes, agendas, and posting. Mr. Chesney let the Board know that the Sunshine Act rules apply to work sessions as well.

Finance/Personnel Committee

IT/Computer Support Update/Appointment

Mr. Stephansky has been working on this issue and reported that we need to separate the police from the administration, and we need to encrypt the system. We will interview vendors at the workshop meeting.

Implementation and Policy regarding requests for Employee Time Off

Mr. McDaniel receives a copy of the employee's schedule. Mrs. Verszyla would like a copy of the schedule and would like to know when the public works employees are on vacation.

Approval to engage Mark Turnley to do Police Payroll Hour's Audit

Mr. Stephansky would like to have more detail on what the audit should contain before he requests for the auditor to move forward with a payroll audit.

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Public Safety Committee

Fair Oaks Fire Department

Mark Brooks stated the Fair Oaks Fire Department. He is currently the President and Fire Captain of the Fair Oaks Fire Department. In April 1920, twenty-one members of the community petitioned the Court of Common Pleas to establish the fire department to lessen the threat of fire in the Township. Articles and Bylaws were filed with the state. Article 9 of the Department's Constitution states that no one within the department shall cast a negative light on the department or its members. Unfortunately, there has been an attempt to change the leadership of the department without due process afforded to members within the roles of the organization. The members who participated in this event have resigned from the department. The department is reorganizing and has focused on increasing membership and bringing back old members. We will hold a recruitment drive this summer. We have long-term plans to upgrade Station 2 at Watson Institute and will actively recruit members from the Camp Meeting Road area. We thank our donors, past and present members, the Commissioners, and the Manager for their support of the fire department.

There was a brief discussion about the adequacy of the department in case of a fire and there are mutual aid agreements with local departments in place. Fire coverage will be available if needed. Several public works employees are members of the department. The Commissioners will investigate Act 172 to allow tax breaks for firefighters. There is also a "Fire Vest" program which will pay for a young volunteer with 5 years of service to attend Allegheny County Community College for free.

Building Code Official Update/Appointment

We will interview the companies on March 28th.

Stop Sign on Hill/Oak Update

The Township had a traffic study and they recommended that the sign stay there. Mr. Nash suggested that the traffic study include a speed survey. We will contact the traffic engineer for the cost of a speed study.

Recommendation to Appoint Civil Service Commission Vacancies

There are a few vacancies on the Board. There is a term that ends on Dec 31, 2023, and one in December 2027. Three people applied for the seats. We had two alternates, and if one of the three regular members does not show up, the alternate can step in.

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to open the floor to nominations for the open Civil Service Seats, seconded by Mr. Peluso, with all in favor.

MOTION: Mr. Stephansky nominated William (Curt) Bubb to be a regular member of the Civil Service Commission for a term ending on December 31, 2025, seconded by Mr. Peluso. Roll call was taken with all in favor of the motion.

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to close the nominations for the Civil Service Board Regular Member, seconded by Mr. Peluso, with all in favor.

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla nominated John Mook to be Alternate One of the Civil Service Commission for a term ending on December 31, 2025, seconded by Mr. Peluso. Roll call was taken with all in favor of the motion.

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to close the nominations for the Civil Service Board Alternate One Member, seconded by Mr. Peluso, with all in favor.

MOTION: Mr. Stephansky nominated Katherine Longwell to be Alternate Two of the Civil Service Commission for a term ending on December 31, 2023, seconded by Mr. Peluso. Roll call was taken with all in favor of the motion.

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MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to close the nominations for the Civil Service Board Alternate Two Member, seconded by Mr. Peluso, with all in favor.

New members will need to take the Oath of Office with a notary before the member can participate. The bylaws will need to be updated. Alternates may participate in the discussion but may not vote unless the board does not have a quorum of regular members. The Board will need to meet to reorganize and set future meeting dates. Mr. Volk will give the new board the meeting minutes and any other documents in his possession. We will provide a file cabinet for the board.

Purchase of New Ford Explorer Police Vehicle

Last year the Board approved for the Township to order a new Dodge Durango. Recently, we were notified that the Durango will not be produced. The Chief has located a new Ford Explorer on a lot for sale and recommended that the Board trade in the 2016 Explorer. A discussion was had about trading in the car, the costs of the new car, and the ways to finance the car. The interest rate for a car loan from FNB is 2.95% for up to 60 months. Mrs. Verszyla would like the newest police car to be utilized more often.

MOTION: Mr. Nash made a motion to advertise the 2016 Ford Explorer on Municibid with a base price of \$6,500.00, seconded by Mr. Peluso. Roll call was taken with all in favor of the motion

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to approve the ISVUS Tech quote, in the amount of \$6,745.00, to outfit the new police car with lights and stickers from the Capital Reserve Account, seconded by Mr. Nash. Roll call was taken with all in favor of the motion.

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to purchase a 2022 Ford Interceptor Police car with a down payment of \$13,255.00 to be paid from the Capital Reserve Account, and the balance of \$14,500.00 to be financed at First National Bank for a two-year period at 2.95% interest rate, seconded by Mr. Peluso. Roll call was taken with all in favor of the motion.

Property Committee

Township Municipal Building Signage Update

Mr. Peluso is working on a report for signage for the building. He asked a sign company to give him a quote and he will report on the quote at a subsequent meeting. The signs will be located on the existing structure in front of the building.

War Memorial Update: The committee is continuing to formulate the plan for the memorial.

Solicitor's Report

Stop Sign on Hill/Oak Update

This was discussed earlier in the meeting.

Approval to Advertise Ordinance 2022-01 (Wireless Communication Devices)

Mr. Ferrang, Planning Commission Chair, spoke to the Board about the ordinance and its purpose to regulate 5G cell towers. The ordinance gives the Township control over the placement of the towers and sets fees for the use of Township right of ways. This ordinance requires a public hearing.

MOTION: Mr. Nash made a motion to advertise Ordinance 2022-01 for wireless communication devices, seconded by Mr. Peluso, with all in favor.

Approval to Advertise Ordinance 2022-02 (Fence Rules and Regulations)

Mr. Ferrang explained the new fence ordinance. Ernie Mancuso, a resident, was upset with corner lot fences because they may block site distances. The Planning Commission will work on the ordinance to clarify corner lot fences site distances and construction. There was confusion over the wording about where the rear yard fence can start in

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relation to the house. The ordinance is written to allow the fence to start at the corner of the front of the house. The Planning Commission will work on a diagram for fences and show a site triangle. The fence will be located 6 to 12 inches from the property line.

MOTION: Mr. Nash made a motion to table the fence ordinance until a diagram is drawn with a transparency table, seconded by Mr. Peluso, with all in favor.

Approval to Advertise Ordinance 2022-03 (Trailer wording)

Mr. Ferrang explained the definition of trailers and the current ordinance. Several travel trailers were being parked on the street or in driveways. The definition is in an attempt to regulate trailers and keep them screened or garaged.

MOTION: Mr. Peluso made a motion to advertise Ordinance 2022-03 for the definition of a trailer, seconded by Mrs. Verszyla. Roll call was taken with all in favor of the motion.

Approval to Advertise a Public Hearing for the above Ordinances

We will hire a stenographer for the hearing for the above ordinances. Due to the costs, we will wait to have the public hearing.

Approval to Advertise Ordinance 2022-04 (Chapter 16 Municipal Code: Firearms)

Mr. Chesney explained that the firearms ordinance regulates the carrying of firearms. State law preempts the Township ordinances so the ordinance wording should be amended.

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to advertise Ordinance 2022-04 amending Chapter 16 Municipal Code: Firearms seconded by Mr. Stephansky. Roll call was taken with all in favor.

Truck Traffic on Ambridge Ave Update

The Township is trying to find an old statute on truck traffic on Ambridge Ave. with no luck. Mr. McDaniel put in a call to PennDot for more information.

Engineer Reports

45 Plum Street Flooding Concern

A resident complained about flooding in his basement and thought the water was coming from the Township. Mr. Slagle investigated the claim and sent a letter regarding his findings to the DEP and the Township. He felt that the resident's backflow preventer was installed incorrectly or there was another issue, but it was not the Township's issue. The letter will be forwarded to the resident.

Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan Update

Edgeworth Borough Council agreed to a separate force main for the Sewickley Act 537 Plan. Mr. McDaniel looked for an independent engineer to review the plan and give the findings to the Board. Sewickley should have to pay a tap fee. Most of the sewage on Camp Meeting goes to Ambridge. The Municipal Authority feels the costs savings would not be as substantial as reported.

Watson/Encompass (Health South) Site Plan Completion Update

Mr. Slagle sent a report about the Watson and Encompass Health Site plan closeout. They both have to finish the required tasks before the Board can close out the projects.

Eckert, Willow, and Neely ADA Sidewalk Final Closeout

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to approve Final Estimate #4 for the closeout of the Eckert, Willow, and Neely ADA Sidewalk Project in the amount of \$13,987.00 seconded by Mr. Peluso, Roll call was taken with all in favor of the motion.

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Orchard, Beech, and Plum Street ADA Project

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to authorize the Township Engineer to design and publicly bid out the Orchard, Beech, and Plum Street ADA Sidewalk Replacement Project, seconded by Mr. Peluso. Roll call was taken with all in favor.

NEW BUSINESS

Consulting Service Agreement- Civil Service Rules and Regulations

The Township received a proposal from Bill Gamble to consult with the Civil Service Board to update the bylaws. He will attend the meetings to help the Board with the bylaws for costs of \$1,100.00 for attendance at two meetings.

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to hire William Gamble for consulting services for the Civil Service Commission Technical Assistance/Hiring and Promotional Rules Writing Process and to update any existing Civil Service Rules within 90 days in the amount of \$1,100.00 conditional on Civil Service Board approval, seconded by Mr. Peluso. Roll call was taken with all in favor.

Chief Molinaro asked about the provisional testing of Officer Sam Holden. Mr. Chesney stated that the bylaws should be in place before the testing is approved. Mr. Holden is nominated for the testing. Mr. McDaniel stated that he did not know who was being hired in the police department. There was a short discussion about how many officers work on each shift.

CORRESPONDENCE

Goehring Rutter and Boehm sent a letter to Vince Restauri letting him know that the School District declined to submit an amended application for emergency access to the proposed high school site.

Mr. Chesney stated that he felt they would appeal the Zoning Hearing Board's decision after they receive the written decision.

Portnoff Law Associates sent a letter about their services for delinquent tax collection. Mr. Stephansky stated that Portnoff had done a great job on the collection.
We received a letter from Cargill about a fuel adjustment due to higher gas prices.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Board had an Executive Session to discuss a police officer personnel matter. It involves a complaint from an officer that was terminated. We are unable to talk about the specifics of this subject. Mr. Chesney stated that the Township hired a special counsel and they have looked at the issue and suggested these motions.

MOTION: Mr. Nash made a motion to amend the agenda to add three suggested motions in connection with the officer discussed in Executive Session, seconded by Mr. Peluso, with all in favor.

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to establish an investigatory committee consisting of the President and the Vice President of the Board of Commissioners to do an internal investigation into the issue surrounding the termination of the Leet Township Officer by engaging investigator Lisa Mantella, Esquire of the Leech Tishman Law Firm, with the investigatory committee of said investigation to have full authority to determine the scope of the investigation, determine the duration of the investigation and to take all other reasonable actions as the Investigatory Committee deems necessary or desirable to carry out the fully the intent of the investigation, seconded by Mr. Peluso. Roll call was taken with all in favor of the motion.

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The rules of the Civil Service Commission were not in place.

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to reject the resignation of the Leet Township Officer dated January 24, 2022, effective immediately, and direct Chief Molinaro to place him back on the schedule until the outcome of the independent investigation, as advised by Special Counsel Campbell and Durrant, seconded by Mr. Nash. Roll call was taken with all in favor of the motion.

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to direct Chief Molinaro to correct the Separation Record Form under Act 57 of 2020 to reflect that the Leet Township Officer in question was not terminated for a disciplinary record and is still employed at Leet Township, seconded by Mr. Peluso. Roll call was taken with all in favor of the motion.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Emily Bennett, a resident, asked about the fire department being separate from the Township. She asked why the Township would investigate the Police department, but not the fire department. She asked if the other mutual aid fire departments were aware of the shortage of firefighters in Leet.

Ms. Bennett stated in January, they voted in a new president to help with the issues that were happening at the fire department. They had asked for their own internal investigation of the fire department and the expenditure of the taxpayers' money. The rationale was to have a new president take over the duties, but it never happened. They are asking that the Commissioners look into the fire department expenditures. Ms. Bennett asked about the money the township gave the fire department for the roof repair and the roof was not repaired. The discussion continued about the letter to the Commissioners regarding the mismanagement of funds. Mr. Nash and Mr. McDaniel met with the members that sent the letter. Mrs. Adipietro asked when the Board received the last financial accounting from the fire department. Mr. Chesney will write a letter requesting an accounting of the finances for last year. They have to file a 990 short form that is prepared by a CPA. Ms. Longwell has worked for several fire departments and stated every dime of taxpayer money should be accounted for. The discussion continued.

MOTION: Mrs. Verszyla made a motion to have the Solicitor send a letter to the fire department to ask for an accounting of the 2021 expenditures, seconded by Mr. Stephansky, with all in favor.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Mr. Nash made a motion to adjourn at 10:03 p.m., seconded by Mr. Peluso with all in favor of adjournment.

TOWNSHIP OF LEET

BETSY RENGERS, MANAGER

MARTIN C. MCDANIEL, PRESIDENT

4/11/2022
Date