

**MINUTES**  
**EXETER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING**  
**MONDAY, AUGUST 24, 2020**

***Public Meeting***

A Regular Meeting of the Exeter Township Board of Supervisors held virtually was called to order on Monday, August 24, 2020 at 7:01 PM by David Speece, Chairperson.

***Supervisors Present:*** David Speece, Chairperson  
Michelle Kircher, Vice Chairperson  
John Cusatis  
Gregory Galtere  
Joseph Staub

***Absent:*** None

***Others in Attendance:*** Jeff Bartlett, Township Manager  
Clarence Hamm, Highway Superintendent  
Laurie Getz, Township Secretary  
Wendell Morris, Chief of Police  
Joseph Rogosky, Great Valley Consultants, Township Engineer  
Elizabeth Magovern, Hartman Valeriano Magovern & Lutz, P.C.

**REGULAR MEETING**

The Meeting was opened with the Pledge to the Flag.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Agenda Items

\*Public comments were submitted in advance of the meeting via email and voicemail. The e-mail comments were dictated by computer software.\*

**Tom McAuliffe;** Commented on behalf of the Exeter United FC Board of Directors asking the Board to allow rentals of sports fields for Fall sports. Their organization has put a detailed COVID safety and action plan together in accordance with CDC and PA DOH guidelines. A copy of the plan has been submitted to Township officials for review and feedback.

**Chris Jordan;** Asked the Board to please keep parks and sports fields open. Believes that there are safe ways for the fields to be used during COVID and has confidence in the parents and sports coaches of organizations to implement safety protocols.

**David Hughes;** Commented on the Treasurer's Report specifically consulting expenses showing as being over the budgeted amount. Is wondering why there is not discussion on this matter before approving the Treasurer's Report. Also commented on program based budgeting process, recalls the Board previously telling the public that the Township has implemented this budgeting philosophy but is only seeing a departmental breakdown. Would like clarification and additional detail.

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**John Carmello;** Asked two questions about the disbursements. What is special about the police PC replacement that justified the cost of \$3000? Also asked for details on a \$1509 charge for t-shirts from Weikel Sportswear.

**Ms. Savage** responded explaining that the charge is for set-up and software installation on the 12 or 15 new PC's that were purchased recently for the department.

**Mr. Hamm** responded that the t-shirts were for Highway Department, they are safety reflective t-shirts.

### ***REGULAR APPROVALS***

#### ***Minutes – Public Hearing (1) – August 10, 2020***

**MOTION** of Mr. Cusatis seconded by Mr. Galtere, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED the August 10, 2020 Public Hearing Minutes.

#### ***Minutes – Public Hearing (2) – August 10, 2020***

**MOTION** of Mr. Staub seconded by Mr. Cusatis, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED the August 10, 2020 Public Hearing Minutes.

#### ***Regular Minutes – August 10, 2020***

**MOTION** of Mr. Cusatis seconded by Mr. Galtere, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED the August 10, 2020 Board of Supervisors Minutes.

#### ***Disbursements – August 24, 2020***

**Ms. Savage** explained that Weikel t-shirts were for the highway department. \$3940 charge to General Recreation was for a swing set to replace a broken one at Mountain Park, this was paid for out of the Park Fund. PA American Water charge was for fire hydrant water service paid for out of the Utility Fund. South Reading Blacktop was for paving of Spruce Avenue paid out of the Liquid Fuels Fund. Susteen invoice is for police equipment purchased using DEA share money.

**MOTION** of Mr. Staub seconded by Mr. Speece the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED payment of the bills presented on the Disbursement List dated August 24, 2020 in the amounts of \$324,151.37 in the General Fund; \$15,559.76 in the Utility Fund; \$9,079.00 in the Fire Fund; \$3,000.00 in the Capital Police Fund; \$509.72 in the Developer's Escrow Fund; \$139.29 in the Sewer Fund; \$22,737.89 in the Golf Fund; \$3,162.78 in the RCC F&B Fund; \$2,015.07 in the Promenade Fund; \$4,302.00 in the DEA Fund; \$3,940.00 in the Park Fund; \$39,060.96 in the State Liquid Fuels Fund, subject to audit.

#### ***Treasurer's Report – July, 2020***

**Mr. Speece** opened up for comments in response to the public comment made. **Mr. Staub** clarified that there maybe were some charges included in the consultant section that may need to be reallocated. Mr. Bartlett stated that most of those charges were for the Perkiomen Avenue project, and it maybe should

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have originally been allocated to the Capital Fund as it is a capital project. If the Board desires, a line item transfer can be completed. This money does serve as our match towards the grant funding for the project.

**MOTION** of Mr. Speece seconded by Mr. Cusatis, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED the July 2020 Treasurer's Report subject to audit.

**Ms. Savage** explained that we do implement program-based budgeting. The budget is broken down by department, and then further broken down by program visible underneath each department. For MS4 and the Park budget there are items that have to be added together to get the full picture, that's because work is shared in some instances by different departments.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

#### **Discussion on Township Sports Field Rental for Fall Sports**

**Ms. Getz** explained that at the last meeting this item was discussed, and the Board opted to wait to make a final decision until the PIAA announced their plan. Governor Wolf has recommended that fall sports be postponed until at least January 1st but has stated he will not enforce, is hoping localities will work directly with organizations. Since the last meeting, the PIAA has announced that they are moving forward with Fall sports. Exeter School District is also moving forward with their season. The Township has pending requests for field rentals for fall sports. Some of the organizations have submitted very comprehensive plans to the township demonstrating how they are meeting CDC and PA DOH recommendations.

**Ms. Getz** recommended that we allow field usage provided that the organizations are meeting all of the CDC and PA DOH recommendations. Spot checks can be conducted and if regulations are not being followed usage can be rescinded at any time. Asked for direction from the board.

**Mr. Galtere** asked the Solicitor if there are any liability concerns given the recent news stories that the PIAA is not covered for COVID related illnesses on their insurance. Would the Township be at risk if allowing field usage? **Ms. Magovern** responded stating that they have had other municipalities require indemnification agreements and that would be her recommendation for us. We should have every organization sign such an agreement prior to use.

**Mr. Galtere** asked if she's comfortable that they will hold up. **Ms. Magovern** indicated that she is comfortable with the waivers. **Mr. Cusatis** added that the youth soccer organization has submitted a very well thought out plan. **Ms. Getz** also reiterated that the organizations are all willing to share their information and would not see any issue getting them to sign indemnification agreements. The organizations are all taking on the burden of following the regulations.

**Mr. Staub** agreed, if they sign waivers and we retain the ability to rescind if they are not following he is in agreement. **Ms. Kircher** asked about spectators. Will they be covered by the same waiver or do we need to post signage stating that attendance at such an event is at their own risk. **Ms. Magovern** stated that she could share examples of posted guidelines that we can use to post at the parks in addition to the waivers to the organizations. **Mr. Galtere** asked if the Solicitor feels comfortable that such signage would cover us. **Ms. Magovern** confirmed.

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**Ms. Getz** stated that she would post signage, share the guidelines with the organizations, and will have each organization sign indemnification waivers. Will continue to monitor and ensure rules are being followed.

**Mr. Bartlett** asked about the restrooms, are they all aware that they need to provide their own restroom and keep them locked? **Ms. Getz** responded indicating that all of the organizations are aware that our restrooms remain closed and that they need to obtain their own port-a-potties and are responsible for them. Will reiterate that to the teams.

**Mr. Galtere** asked about spectators, are there regulations in place for them. **Ms. Getz** stated that organizations are still working on rules for spectators when games begin. Will continue to work with the teams to develop those policies. **Mr. Galtere** asked about bleachers, discussion suggesting blocking off and/or removing bleachers from the parks.

### **Discussion on Community Park**

**Mr. Bartlett** explained that St. Lawrence has informed us that they are not interested in participating in a plan for Community Park so we will be continuing conversations with the Exeter School District for a final determination on how to complete our lease agreement term with them. Recommending removing all equipment and leaving it a green space for people to use. Will report back to the Board after meeting with the school on next steps.

**Mr. Cusatis** asked if equipment should be removed for safety purposes. **Ms. Getz** responded stating that the swings should be removed due to their condition, as well as the equipment in the sandbox. The other equipment can wait until a final determination is made.

**Mr. Staub** stated that a meeting with the school is scheduled for early September. Stated that he has explained to School Board members that due to the vandalism at the park the Township is not interested in continuing financial investments into the leased property at this time. He recommends we get rid of the swings and the sandbox equipment for now and made a final determination after the meeting.

**Mr. Speece** asked who is responsible for the bridge across the creek. **Mr. Hamm** stated that the bridge belongs to the school. We will be repairing the path leading to the bridge on the park side, but the bridge itself is the school's responsibility.

Consensus to remove the swings and the sandbox including the equipment in the sandbox from the park at this time. Will discuss again after the meeting with the school district.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Consider Renewing Lease Agreement with County of Berks for Magisterial District Justice Offices located at 10 Fairlane Road**

**Mr. Bartlett** explained that this is a one-year lease renewal with the County for the District Justice office. The lease is being extended for one year while we continue to work on plans for the future of a municipal complex. Decisions relating to the property will need to be determined as we move forward in the municipal complex planning process. Recommends for now approving the lease extension. **Mr.**

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**Speece** asked if we own just the building. **Mr. Bartlett** confirmed that we own the structure but not the contents.

**MOTION** of Mr. Galtere seconded by Mr. Cusatis, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED renewing lease agreement with County of Berks for Magisterial District Justice Offices located at 10 Fairlane Road for one-year.

### **Consider Adopting Resolution Updating Right to Know Officer Information with the Office of Open Records (OOR)**

**Mr. Bartlett** explained that this resolution is just a formality to update our records with the Office of Open Records. The Open Records Policy is attached to the resolution.

**MOTION** of Mr. Speece seconded by Mr. Galtere, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED Adopting Resolution Updating Right to Know Officer Information with the Office of Open Records (OOR).

### **Accept Resignation of Jacki York from the Exeter Community Library Board**

**Ms. Kircher** thanked Ms. York for dedicating her time to the library and the community. **Mr. Cusatis** also thanked Ms. York.

**MOTION** of Mr. Staub seconded by Mr. Galtere, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED accepting resignation of Jacki York from the Exeter Community Library Board.

### **Consider Appointing Mariel Jordan to the Exeter Community Library Board Vacancy**

**Mr. Speece** welcomed Ms. Jordan to the Board and thanked her for taking it on.

**MOTION** of Mr. Cusatis seconded by Mr. Staub, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED appointing Mariel Jordan to the Exeter Community Library Board Vacancy.

### **Authorize Advertisement for Bids for Township Mowing Contract**

**Mr. Hamm** explained that he'd like to get started on this bid to have a better idea as we move into the budget process.

**MOTION** of Mr. Staub seconded by Mr. Galtere, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED authorizing Advertisement for Bids for Township Mowing Contract.

## **DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

**Clarence Hamm; Highway Department:** We have finished work at Mountain Park, installed new mulch and repaired drainage issue, installed new swing set and planted grass seed. Great result, the park was in dire need of improvement. Still working on cleaning up trees, highway mowing. Discovered honeybees in a large walnut tree that came down on the golf course, brought in an expert who extracted two full sized colonies with two queen bees, over 20 gallons of honey. The bees were rehomed.

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**Joe Rogosky, Township Engineer, Great Valley Consultants:** At Planning Commission an informal sketch plan was received by Exeter Commons proposing sub-dividing the property so the businesses will be on their own separate parcels. Determined that a various zoning relief including, and variances will be required, concerns were relayed at Planning Commission. At this point waiting to see if a formal request is made, just bringing to the Boards attention at this time no action needed.

**Elizabeth Magovern, Solicitor;** Nothing to report.

**Wendell Morris; Police Department:** Asked for help of the residents to combat vehicle theft in the Township. Please lock your vehicles.

**Jeff Bartlett, Township Manager:** Reported that today the signs for the Perkiomen Avenue traffic plans were signed off of, will move forward with permits. Municipal complex feasibility study is underway, departments have completed surveys and next step is to schedule walk through of the facility.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT – General Comments**

\*Public comments were submitted in advance of the meeting via email and voicemail. The e-mail comments were dictated by computer software.\*

**John Noll;** Commented on the Right to Know Request that he submitted in April relating to the noise ordinance. He stated that he still has not received a response to his request despite the Township Manager stating at the August 10<sup>th</sup> meeting that the request had been taken care of. Would like to receive the response to his request.

**Mr. Bartlett** clarified that he misspoke previously when indicating it was completed. He meant to explain that the extension had been given and it was still being worked on. The response to this request involves over 4000 pages of documents, so it has been quite time-consuming due to the additional redaction needed.

**Glenn Hoover;** Provided clarifying statement on his comments made at the last meeting regarding disbursements. Stated that he feels that if the full board does not approve the disbursements it should be noted along with the reason. There needs to be a paper trail. Disappointed in the lack of follow up on the insurance claim for \$750K. Would like to see this resolved.

**Mr. Speece** stated that he brought this up at the last meeting, asked if there is any update. **Ms. Savage** explained that she spoke with Fox Rothschild about this matter today, this is a bond claim pending with Travelers Insurance. This is related to the misappropriation of bond funds for the Reading Country Club discovered in 2018. Mr. Cortes explained that they have provided multiple documents to Travelers, an in-person meeting was held just before COVID hit in February during which he was given the impression that the claim was wrapped up and the claim would be paid. Due to COVID there was then a delay, then within the last two weeks more information has been requested from Travelers. So, the matter is ongoing and will continue to be followed up on.

**Mr. Speece** responded to the comment relating to the minutes. **Ms. Getz** confirmed that negative votes are always recorded. If a reason for a negative vote is given it is recorded, but if not given just the vote is recorded.

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**John Carmello;** Stated that he asked at the June 8<sup>th</sup> meeting why the Reading Country Club was not on the agenda and the Board responded indicating that an individual was hired to do a survey to be completed by the end of July. Is wondering the status on that. Would also like to know when a town hall meeting on the Reading Country Club will be scheduled, noting that it has been said that there will be town hall's scheduled for the Promenade.

**Mr. Bartlett** clarified that a consultant has been hired to compete a study on the Reading Country Club. Unfortunately, due to personal family reasons the consultant has been delayed and spent some time out of state to help family. The consultant has indicated that the report will be to the township this week. The report will be shared with the Board at the next meeting.

**Mr. Speece** stated that the information needs to be reviewed before holding a public meeting. **Mr. Bartlett** clarified that the Township is not planning to hold Town Hall meetings for the Promenade, but rather the architect will be holding small public gatherings to discuss the topic.

**SUPERVISOR REPORTS**

**Ms. Kircher:** Nothing to report.

**Mr. Staub:** We will be holding a meeting with the new superintendent in an attempt to build a relationship with the school district.

**Mr. Cusatis:** Thanked the staff for continuing to work under very challenging conditions.

**Mr. Galtere:** Also thanked the staff.

**Mr. Speece:** Thanked the staff for all the work. Good research on sports fields, excellent work at Mountain Park. Would like to start thinking about the bid for recycling soon. Announced short executive session to be held following this meeting.

***ADJOURNMENT***

***MOTION*** of Mr. Cusatis, seconded by Mr. Staub, the meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laurie Getz  
Township Secretary