

MINUTES
EXETER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING
MONDAY, JULY 13, 2020

Public Meeting

A Regular Meeting of the Exeter Township Board of Supervisors held virtually was called to order on Monday, July 13, 2020 at 7:06 PM by David Speece, Chairperson.

Supervisors Present: David Speece, Chairperson
Michelle Kircher, Vice Chairperson
John Cusatis
Gregory Galtere *joined at 7:21PM
Joseph Staub

Absent: None

Others in Attendance: Jeff Bartlett, Township Manager
Clarence Hamm, Highway Superintendent
Laurie Getz, Township Secretary
Alicia Luke, Fox Rothschild, Solicitor
Wendell Morris, Chief of Police
Joseph Rogosky, Great Valley Consultants, Township Engineer

REGULAR MEETING

The Meeting was opened with the Pledge to the Flag.

PUBLIC HEARING

MOTION of Mr. Cusatis seconded by Ms. Kircher, the Board UNANIMOUSLY adjourned the regular meeting at 7:07PM.

MOTION of Mr. Cusatis seconded by Mr. Staub, the Board UNANIMOUSLY reopened the regular meeting at 7:14PM.

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 Howell; Commented on the format of the Right to Know report.

John Carmello; Commented on the HVAC repairs proposed at the Reading Country Club. Questioned if now is the time to do the repairs in the absence of a final decision on the property. Asked for details on the repairs.

David Hughes; Commented on the Public Hearing process, asked how and where public hearings are

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advertised.

Ms. Getz informed the Chairman that a comment has been submitted by an individual who is not a resident of taxpayer of Exeter Township. The Chairman allowed for the comment to be read.

Amy Raugh; Commented on the reopening of the Dunn Community Center. Her daughter is scheduled to get married in the facility later in the year, is hoping it will be allowed to reopen.

Mr. Galtere joined the meeting at 7:21PM.

REGULAR APPROVALS

Minutes – June 22, 2020

MOTION of Mr. Cusatis seconded by Mr. Galtere, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED the June 22, 2020 Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes.

Disbursements – July 13, 2020

Mr. Staub asked for clarification on several charges.

Ms. Savage explained that All Traffic Solutions is for the electronic sign board used by the Police and Township for traffic issues to alert motorists. This has been used for COVID related messages and may qualify for federal or state reimbursement. The ETFD incentive is for payment of volunteer firefighter incentive payments. The charge for Mag District 23-2-02 was listed incorrectly and has been corrected to \$203.50. This cost is for filing of a civil complaint against an uninsured motorist that destroyed guide rail in the township. The initial amount that was listed was actually the cost of the repairs we are seeking. ProMax fence is for the fence installed between the walking trail and the detention pond at Lorane Hollow Park. This was installed at the recommendation of our insurance company. Funds coming from the Park Improvement Fund. US Treasury charges are for mandatory patient centered outcomes research institute fee instituted by the Affordable Care Act. All companies providing employee health insurance must pay \$2.54 annually per covered life into the fund.

MOTION of Mr. Staub seconded by Mr. Cusatis, the Board APPROVED payment of the bills presented on the Disbursement List dated July 13, 2020 in the amounts of \$357,740.17 in the General Fund; \$32,096.00 in the Fire Fund; \$5,961.86 in the K9 Fund; \$601.08 in the Developer's Escrow Fund; \$12,500.00 in the Sewer Fund; \$20,824.43 in the Golf Fund; \$1,587.65 in the RCC F&B Fund; \$1,670.19 in the Promenade Fund; \$14,885.00 in the Equipment Fund; \$418,530.24 in the Debt Services Fund; \$2,087,722.50 in the WWTP Sale Proceeds Fund; \$15,285.04 in the Park Fund; \$193,356.39 in the State Liquid Fuels Fund.

Ms. Kircher is opposed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Monthly Right to Know Report - June

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Mr. Speece stated that this report has been uploaded to the website. **Mr. Bartlett** discussed response times for RTK requests.

Monthly Golf Report - June

Mr. Speece stated that the report is available on the website. **Mr. Staub** discussed the number of rounds at the RCC. June was the highest number of rounds on record. Revenue is up with \$143,000.

Discussion on Community Park

Mr. Staub explained that he had a call with members of the Exeter School Board today prior to this meeting. Would like to schedule another meeting to include St. Lawrence to discuss future planning. Asked the Administration to set up that meeting.

Discussion on Parks and Recreation Facility and Field Rentals

Ms. Getz explained that a full review of available guidance released by the CDC, PA Department of Health, National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), and PA Parks and Recreation Society (PRPS) has been completed and presented to the Board for review along with recommendations for reopening amid COVID-19. The Administration also consulted with our insurance carrier to determine a path forward for reopening of facilities. In addition to the close review of all guidance, consideration was given to township resources and manpower when making a recommendation for reopening.

Ms. Getz recommended based on the guidance and township resources and abilities that playground equipment be reopened, park restrooms remain closed, rental facilities remain closed, basketball courts remain closed, sports fields can reopen to organizations who rent the fields from the township provided those organizations provide insurance information and are able to meet all of the guidance set forth by the authoritative bodies. Sports organizations will be permitted to rent portable toilets at their own expense to be used during their rental periods.

Discussion ensued regarding potential options and suggestions for possible reopening of rental facilities. **Ms. Getz** explained that should it seem that the COVID-19 restrictions will be remaining in place into 2021, new rules and regulations will be developed in order to accommodate rentals including potential increased fees for cleaning as part of the 2021 fee schedule.

The Board ultimately concurred with all of the recommendations set forth by Ms. Getz.

Update on Community Communications Committee

Ms. Getz provided an update on the second electronic newsletter edition. 51 new subscribers have joined the list since the first newsletter was sent out. Newsletters are posted to Facebook in an effort to encourage new subscribers. Research continues on postcards to be sent to residents, completed a mock-up of potential design for review. The postcard will be to encourage sign ups to the e-newsletter, or offer an opt-in for a paper newsletter, but also to encourage sign-ups for the emergency alert system SwiftReach.

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Mr. Galtere clarified that the purpose of the postcard is to alert residents that we will no longer be sending the traditional paper newsletter. **Ms. Kircher** asked if we might be able to find sponsors to pay for the postcards. **Mr. Cusatis** offered to help seek sponsors for this project.

Mr. Galtere also mentioned that we are working on removing ads from the search function on the website.

NEW BUSINESS

Authorize Repeal of Chapter 344 of the Exeter Township Code of Ordinances, titled “Telecommunications”

MOTION of Mr. Staub seconded by Mr. Cusatis, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED Authorization of Repeal of Chapter 344 of the Exeter Township Code of Ordinances, titled “Telecommunications”.

Approve “Telecommunications” Ordinance 390-71.8

MOTION of Mr. Cusatis seconded by Mr. Staub, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED Adoption of “Telecommunications” Ordinance 390-71.8.

Authorize Advertisement of Design Manual for Telecommunications Ordinance

Mr. Brugger explained that this will provide for aesthetic guidance for telecommunications equipment to be located within the Township.

MOTION of Ms. Kircher seconded by Mr. Cusatis, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED Advertisement of Design Manual for Telecommunications Ordinance.

Approval of Exeter Township Volunteer Fire Department Tax Credit Program List

Mr. Bartlett explained that this is a benefit afforded to our volunteer firefighters.

MOTION of Mr. Speece seconded by Mr. Galtere, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED the Exeter Township Volunteer Fire Department Tax Credit Program List.

Discussion Regarding HVAC Repair and Replacement Project at the Reading Country Club

Mr. Bartlett explained that the Township previously had an engineering firm review and report on the existing HVAC system at the Reading Country Club. The report identified what needs to be repaired and/or replaced. Some work has been done since the report, so the scope of the report is slightly reduced. The bulk of the work is in the main HVAC system located in the ceiling above the ballroom. It is very dated and challenging to access. The goal had been to install the new equipment in the spring of 2017, but it did not take place. The location of the equipment restricts the time of year that the work can be done, because it is either too hot or too cold. Goal to accomplish the work before winter. This work is necessary for the facility. Mr. Bartlett is asking for authorization to put the project out for bid.

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MOTION of Mr. Galtere seconded by Mr. Cusatis, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED advertising bid for HVAC repair project at the Reading Country Club.

Ms. Kircher asked where the money is coming from. **Mr. Speece** stated that he believes he saw it in the 2020 budget. **Mr. Bartlett** responded stating that it's a capital improvement, but would need to verify if it is specifically included in the 2020 budget. **Ms. Kircher** stated that she knows that the work needs to be done.

Discussion and Approval of Resolution Extending the Business Privilege Tax Deadline

Mr. Bartlett explained that this resolution would move the business privilege tax deadline to coincide with the federal deadline to July 15th. Those who have already made payments within the previously designated penalty period will be refunded the penalty fee.

MOTION of Mr. Galtere seconded by Mr. Staub, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED Resolution NO. 2020-17 Extending the Business Privilege Tax Deadline.

Authorization for Solicitor to Institute an Action to Quiet Title in the Berks County Court of Common Pleas.

Mr. Bartlett explained that this is related to the Perkiomen Avenue project. There is a median strip of which the ownership is in question. The Township has maintained it for many years, but there currently exist no official ownership documents. In order to continue moving forward on the project, we need to produce a title for the land. Administration is asking for authorization to move forward with the official steps to receive said document. **Ms. Luke** confirmed, and explained that it is a legal formality.

MOTION of Mr. Staub seconded by Mr. Cusatis, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED authorization for the Township Solicitor to institute an action to quiet title in the Berks County Court of Common Pleas.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Chief Wendell Morris; Police Department: Discussed the 4th of July holiday, this was the first 4th of July since the new ordinance went into effect. The Department received 21 fireworks related calls. 13 warnings were issued, no citations. Announced that the Department recently swore in two new officers. Excited to welcome them to the Township. Officers recently had a Narcan save at a business in the Township. Announced that 7/12-7/18 is Operation Save Driver Week which will focus on enforcement for commercial vehicles, speed, and aggressive drivers.

Clarence Hamm; Highway Department: The Department has been dealing with trees down due to storm damage. Have almost completed planned paving projects for the year. Continuing to work on highway mowing.

SOLICITOR REPORT

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Alicia Luke, Fox Rothchild: Nothing to report.

ENGINEER REPORT

Joe Rogosky, Great Valley Consultants: Provided an update on the Exeter Associates matter, they have been paying taxes on four streets that the Township has been maintaining. Based on the research, no deed of dedication has been recorded in the courthouse however the Township has been maintaining and receiving liquid fuels money for these streets. Deed of dedication should have been recorded in 2003 after action was taken by the Board to accept the roads as dedicated, but was not. Mr. Rogosky stated that he wanted to bring it to the Board's attention, as he may need some direction from the Solicitor as to how to remedy the issue and it may need to appear on a future agenda.

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.

Tom Howell; Commented on Township staff, asked when a full day's work will be done for a full day's pay.

David Hughes; Commented on communication with supervisors, would like to see increased transparency and explanations and responses to questions asked specifically referencing a budget overrun brought up at the last meeting.

Mr. Staub stated that Ms. Savage addressed his first question at the last meeting.

Discussed the tournament held at the RCC during which a ceremony was held to celebrate the property being added as a National Historic Site. Asked where this event was advertised and why it wasn't on the website.

Mr. Speece responded that this was not a Township event, so it was not included on the website. It was organized and held by a private group. **Mr. Staub** stated that it was mentioned at a prior meeting, it was also promoted on the RCC's Facebook page as well as other social media platforms. Also noted that the RCC's website is linked to the Township website. **Mr. Cusatis** stated that with COVID large crowds are discouraged. **Mr. Galtere** asked if it was included in the Township e-newsletter. **Ms. Getz** responded confirming that it was.

Asked when the DCED report will be published in the newspaper, and if the audit has been completed.

Ms. Savage responded that the DCED report was published on DCED's website, and is also available via RTK request. The audit is never completed by this time of the year, it is being finalized and will be published when complete.

SUPERVISOR REPORTS

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Ms. Kircher: Stated that fireworks were bad in Farming Ridge neighborhood. Stated that nothing has been done on the noise ordinance recently, would like to see it back on the agenda for action. **Mr. Speece** stated that it was his understanding that the Board was trying to wait until we could get back to in-person meetings. If the Board would like it back on the agenda, we can do it. **Mr. Galtere** commented that he believes we will be virtual for some time, would like to see this moved forward. **Mr. Cusatis** stated that we held two virtual public hearings this evening just fine. **Mr. Speece** suggested that conflict counsel be on the meeting to answer questions, we will include on the next agenda for discussion.

Mr. Cusatis: Discussed the Service Electric Cable Franchise Agreement, would like to see it brought back up again. We promised a follow up meeting on this item, would like to see it handled.

Mr. Staub: Discussed Community Park, recommended that the School Board members tour the facility. Mentioned the Heritage Tournament, thanked Tom Walker and the ERCCP for all of their work preparing for and planning the tournament. There were over 100 golfers in attendance, thanked everyone for their work.

Mr. Galtere: Thanked Tom Walker and Derrick for all of their work on the Heritage Tournament. Derrick is doing an outstanding job, the tournaments are going great and continue to increase.

Mr. Speece: Complimented the electronic newsletter, received many positive comments from residents on the publication. Would like to see follow up on the Wastewater Treatment Plant and RCC insurance claims to make sure issues get wrapped up.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION of Mr. Cusatis, seconded by Mr. Galtere, the meeting adjourned at 8:55PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laurie Getz
Township Secretary