

Pocono Township Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting Minutes
May 18, 2020 7:00 p.m.

The regular meeting of the Pocono Township Commissioners was held remotely on Monday, May 18, 2020 via video and teleconference, and was opened by President Rich Wielebinski at 7:05 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: Jerrod Belvin, present; Ellen Gndt, present; Jerry Lastowski, present; Keith Meeker, present; Rich Wielebinski, present.

IN ATTENDANCE

Leo DeVito, Twp. Solicitor, Broughal & DeVito; Jon Tresslar, Twp. Engineer, Boucher & James, Inc.; Taylor Munoz, Township Manager; Robert Sargent, Road Supervisor; Patrick Briegel, Sewer Consultant; and Dee Ackerman, Administrative Assistant.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- No public comment.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

R. Wielebinski announced the following:

- An executive session was held on May 6, 2020 to discuss the police contract and personnel issues.
- The Pocono Township Spring Cleanup will be held June 4-6, 2020 at the Township municipal complex. Information regarding the fee schedule is available at the Township office and online. Please note that the Cleanup is for residents only and proof of residency is required.
- An Executive Session was held tonight prior to the meeting to discuss personnel issues.

HEARINGS –

- Public hearings were held and motions made to adopt three ordinances. L. Devito confirmed that all ordinances were advertised in the Pocono Record on May 8, 2020.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Belvin, to close the hearing and to adopt Ordinance 2020-01 providing for the renaming of streets known as “To Fish Hill Road” to “Eleni’s Way”, “Pigeon Way” to “Learn Road” and a portion of “Learn Road” to “Fish Hill Road” in Pocono Township. No public comment. Roll Call Vote: Jerrod Belvin, yes; Ellen Gndt, yes; Jerry Lastowski, yes; Keith Meeker, yes; Rich Wielebinski, yes. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by K. Meeker, to adopt Ordinance 2020-02 amending the code of ordinances of Pocono Township, Chapter 425, Vehicles and traffic, Article 1, Speed Limits, Establishing maximum speed limits for motor vehicles on Bog Road and Back Mountain Road in Pocono Township, and for the posting of speed limit signs; adding a new Article IV, Traffic regulations, restricting truck traffic on Bog Road and Learn Road, and adding stop intersections; and providing for penalties; and repealing all ordinances inconsistent herewith. No public comment. Roll Call Vote: Jerrod Belvin, yes; Ellen Gndt, yes; Jerry Lastowski, yes; Keith Meeker, yes; Rich Wielebinski, yes. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Belvin, to close the hearing and to adopt Ordinance 2020-03 amending the code of ordinances of Pocono Township, Chapter 37, Planning Commission, to revise the number of members appointed to the planning commission and repealing all ordinances inconsistent therewith. No public comment. Roll Call Vote: Jerrod Belvin, yes; Ellen Gndt, yes; Jerry Lastowski, yes; Keith Meeker, yes; Rich Wielebinski, yes. Motion carried.

PRESENTATIONS - None

RESOLUTIONS – None

OLD BUSINESS

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by K. Meeker, to approve the minutes of the May 4, 2020 regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners. Roll Call Vote: Jerrod Belvin, yes; Ellen Gndant, yes; Jerry Lastowski, yes; Keith Meeker, yes; Rich Wielebinski, yes. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Ratification of COVID 19 Related Decisions & Expenditures per Declaration of Disaster Emergency

- Extension of local Declaration of Disaster Emergency (5/11/20)

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Belvin, to ratify the Declaration of Disaster Emergency approved on March 16, 2020 for the period beginning May 11, 2020 through May 18, 2020. E. Gndant asked that the timeline for the Declaration be included in the motion. Roll Call Vote: Jerrod Belvin, yes; Ellen Gndant, yes; Jerry Lastowski, yes; Keith Meeker, yes; Rich Wielebinski, yes. Motion carried.

Financial Transactions

Ratify Vouchers Payable

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Lastowski, to ratify vouchers payable for the period ending May 14, 2020 in the amount of \$93,210.16. Roll Call Vote: Jerrod Belvin, yes; Ellen Gndant, yes; Jerry Lastowski, yes; Keith Meeker, yes; Rich Wielebinski, yes. Motion carried.

Ratify Gross Payroll

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by K. Meeker, to ratify the gross payroll for the pay period ending May 3, 2020 in the amount of \$91,959.46. Roll Call Vote: Jerrod Belvin, yes; Ellen Gndant, yes; Jerry Lastowski, yes; Keith Meeker, yes; Rich Wielebinski, yes. Motion carried.

Approve Vouchers Payable

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Belvin, to approve vouchers payable received through May 14, 2020 in the amount of \$170,915.30. Roll Call Vote: Jerrod Belvin, yes; Ellen Gndant, yes; Jerry Lastowski, yes; Keith Meeker, yes; Rich Wielebinski, yes. Motion carried.

Capital Expenditures

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by K. Meeker, to approve capital expenditures made through May 14, 2020 in the amount of \$24,077.96. Roll Call Vote: Jerrod Belvin, yes; Ellen Gndant, yes; Jerry Lastowski, yes; Keith Meeker, yes; Rich Wielebinski, yes. Motion carried.

Sewer Construction Fund

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Lastowski, to approve sewer construction fund purchases through May 14, 2020, in the amount of \$3,950.00. Roll Call Vote: Jerrod Belvin, yes; Ellen Gndant, yes; Jerry Lastowski, yes; Keith Meeker, yes; Rich Wielebinski, yes. Motion carried.

Travel/Training Authorizations – None

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by K. Meeker, to approve the contract for the township manager, subject to the solicitor's review of the provisions of the township's short-term disability policy

with the insurance underwriter. Roll Call Vote: Jerrod Belvin, yes; Ellen Gndt, no; Jerry Lastowski, yes; Keith Meeker, yes; Rich Wielebinski, yes. Motion carried.

- Discussion regarding how to handle upcoming Spring Cleanup and limit Public Works exposure amid COVID-19 concerns. Conversation regarding having public unload vehicles into a loader bucket and having residents unload their own vehicles, unless elderly and in need of assistance. Potential liability concerns regarding residents getting out of their cars. It was stated that the object of any recommendations to minimize potential exposure to the virus. Decision that the Township will advertise that residents are asked to unload their own vehicles and extra gloves will be provided if needed.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS

Jerrod Belvin – Vice President

- Monroe County is still in red status due to COVID-19. June 4, 2020 is the tentative deadline for the state moving all counties into yellow status.

J. Belvin made a motion, seconded by R. Wielebinski, to extend Declaration of Disaster Emergency for Pocono Township effective immediately until May 25, 2020. Roll Call Vote: Jerrod Belvin, yes; Ellen Gndt, yes; Jerry Lastowski, yes; Keith Meeker, yes; Rich Wielebinski, yes. Motion carried.

Ellen Gndt – Commissioner

- Requested an update regarding the Township's policy for the Family First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) and how it has been communicated to employees. T. Munoz indicated, based on previous discussions with the Commissioners, a specific summary of the benefits available to employees under FFCRA was distributed directly to the Police, Public Works and Admin staff, with a presentation made directly to the Public Works employees as well.
- Discussion of re-opening Township parks. Stated that since the Township used its own authority to close the parks, the Township can open the parks independent of the State's COVID-19 related actions to give residents the opportunity to get outside.

E. Gndt made a motion, seconded by R. Wielebinski, to open the Township's parks, purchase sanitizing equipment and limit park hours. Discussion: R. Wielebinski stated he had no issue purchasing sanitizing equipment but expressed concerns about opening early and jeopardizing government reimbursements to the township for COVID-related expenses. J. Belvin said he would like to wait until county is in yellow status and said staff would need special mask to apply sanitizer to park equipment. Motion was amended by E. Gndt to clarify parks to open weekend of May 23. Roll Call Vote: Jerrod Belvin, no; Ellen Gndt, yes; Jerry Lastowski, no; Keith Meeker, no; Rich Wielebinski, no. Motion failed.

- Asked if picnic tables have been set up at the parks. R. Sargent confirmed that tables had been put out at Mountain View Park and tables were ready for TLC Park, depending on where they could be located.
- Suggested a work session to review revenues and budget to prepare for potential revenue losses and possibility of a tax revenue anticipation note or letter of credit. J. Lastowski suggested waiting until figures available from end of Q2. E. Gndt expressed concern about waiting too long and going over budget in various budget categories. T. Munoz stated he would sit down with the fiscal administrator and do a line-by-line comparison of budget items year-to-date for the Commissioners as a first step.
- Asked for report on sewer delinquencies year-to-date. P. Briegel stated that the Township is slightly ahead in receivables for 2020 compared to a similar period for 2019, not including additional EDUs from new connections in 2019. E. Gndt clarified that year-to-date revenues were essentially the same from 2019.

Jerry Lastowski – Commissioner

- Discussion regarding old flower stand on SR 611 and its dangerous structure status. T. Munoz stated that, before COVID-19, the owner was sent an enforcement notice and he was going to come into compliance by demolishing the building. The Township zoning department followed up with a recent

notice stating that, since the construction industry is now approved to continue, the owner should proceed with demolishing the building.

- Discussion regarding a short term rental complaint for a property located at 255 Faber Circle. The Township zoning department confirmed an enforcement action has been issued for non-permitted use as a short term rental.
- J. Lastowski received a call from Monroe Career & Technical Institute expressing concern about the cost of Township permit fees for construction of a new roof on the building. State that MCTI is not a taxing body and relies on funds from sending school districts. T. Munoz stated he reached out to zoning and confirmed that the fees were outlined in the Township's fee schedule. E. Gnantd stated she was not in favor of forgoing their permit fees. J. Belvin stated he would be open to some form of forgiveness for MCTI, as they are an educational institution that is already underfunded. K. Meeker stated it could open a can of worms to not provide forgiveness for other entities. Further discussion about potential issues if all or a portion of MCTI's fees were waived when other recent applicants were required to pay the same fees. J. Lastowski said he would follow up with MCTI and share the Board's consensus.

Keith Meeker – Commissioner – No report

REPORTS

.Public Works Report

- R. Sargent reported that Public Works crew is replacing drainage pipes and working on ball fields. The LED lighting upgrade in the municipal complex is now complete. Crew will be starting lighting upgrades at Mountain View Park starting next week, weather-permitting. Well work at MVP has been completed and replacement of fixtures will be next step.

Administration – Manager's Report

E. Gnantd made a motion, seconded by R. Wielebinski, to authorize the five-year lease of a Peterbilt 2020 Dump Truck through F.N.B. Commercial Leasing for a total purchase price of \$168,312.00. Roll Call Vote: Jerrod Belvin, yes; Ellen Gnantd, yes; Jerry Lastowski, yes; Keith Meeker, yes; Rich Wielebinski, yes. Motion carried.

- Shared that the flyer and fee schedule for the Spring Cleanup (June 4-6) is now available online
- T. Munoz is in discussion with Enterprise Fleet Management to investigate potential cost savings for the Township by leasing all township vehicles, including Police and Public Works. Will report back to Commissioners with findings.
- Pocono Township residents should respond to the 2020 Census to ensure the Township receives its fair share of federal and state grant funds.
- Monroe County polls, including those in Pocono Township, will be open for the June 2 General Election.

J. Lastowski made a motion, seconded by R. Wielebinski, to approve a letter in support of Northampton Community College – Monroe Campus and their plans to develop a walking trail around their Tannersville campus. Roll Call Vote: Jerrod Belvin, yes; Ellen Gnantd, yes; Jerry Lastowski, yes; Keith Meeker, yes; Rich Wielebinski, yes. Motion carried.

Township Engineer Report

- Provided update on Alger Avenue drainage issues. Township has completed all grading and drainage work as originally discussed. Stated opinion that planting arbor vitae, as requested by resident, would be counterproductive to Township's efforts to improve drainage. Stated arbor vitae is used as screening material, but not recommended in this instance at this location. R. Sargent stated that the arbor vitae discussion arose during demolition process. T. Munoz stated he will look into additional screening options.
- Provided update regarding St. Paul's drainage basin. St. Paul's Lutheran Drainage Basin. Performed site visit with R. Sargent and observed water leaving the basin without any rate control. Drafted a letter to the church asking for remediation and states that inspection was performed, and the basin is

malfunctioning. Recommended professional engineer needed to submit permit to replace drainage structure and ensure basin operates as intended. J. Tresslar also performed additional review of the drainage swale below church and, while plans originally show the swale was to be constructed partly within township right of way (ROW), the swale was constructed beyond the ROW. The Township cannot be responsible for remediating the issue, as the swale is on private property.

- Completed measurements for the maintenance building roof replacement and will provide bidding schedules to T. Munoz next week.
- White Oak culvert project is almost complete. Original bid specifications called for two gates securing emergency access into the development. Asked the Commissioners whether they still want two gates as included in original project scope or whether one gate would be sufficient. Consensus that two gates necessary due to concerns about cars parking in the emergency access during nighttime hours and alleviate safety concerns.

Township Solicitor Report

- The Camp Lindenmere Special Exception application was distributed to the entire board. A Zoning Hearing Board meeting is scheduled for June 3 at 5:00 p.m. Asked whether Board feels solicitor should be present. J. Lastowski asked whether surrounding residents have been notified and whether the camp will open for the season. L. DeVito stated the special exception process would evaluate whether the camp is operating within their 50% special exception limitation. Various conditions can be imposed upon the grant of the special exception and the engineer will also review and include comments. J. Tresslar indicated he will have a review letter complete as of Tuesday, May 19. E. Gmandt stated if the camp is expanding and putting on second floor for more counselors, it could trigger additional parking and more impervious surface. It was explained that these concerns would be further evaluated in the planning process and, if their plans exceed what is allowed per the Township's zoning ordinance, they will need to apply for additional variances and relief.

NO PUBLIC COMMENT

- E. Gmandt identified that the Township had last extended the proposed amusement tax until May 1, 2020 and asked whether the tax is now in effect. L. DeVito stated he spoke with Camelback representatives last week and they are interested in re-engaging amusement tax discussions. Stated the Township is technically past the original extension, so the amusement tax is now in effect.

J. Lastowski made a motion, seconded by R. Wielebinski, to extend implementation of the amusement tax to July 1, 2020. Roll Call Vote: Jerrod Belvin, yes; Ellen Gmandt, no; Jerry Lastowski, yes; Keith Meeker, yes; Rich Wielebinski, yes Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Belvin, to adjourn the meeting at 8:59 p.m. Roll Call Vote: Jerrod Belvin, yes; Ellen Gmandt, yes; Jerry Lastowski, yes; Keith Meeker, yes; Rich Wielebinski, yes Motion carried.