

**Pocono Township Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting Minutes
January 4, 2021 7:00 p.m.**

The regular meeting of the Pocono Township Board of Commissioners was held remotely on January 4, 2021 via video and teleconference and was opened by President Rich Wielebinski at 7:00 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Jerrod Belvin, present; Ellen Gnanadt, present; Jerry Lastowski, present; Keith Meeker, present; and Rich Wielebinski, present.

In Attendance: L. DeVito, Township Solicitor, Broughal & DeVito; Jon Tresslar, Township Engineer, Boucher & James, Inc.; Taylor Muñoz, Township Manager; and Krisann Wean, Administrative Assistant.

Public Comments – No public comment.

Announcements

- If you have not already, we would encourage you to sign up for the Township newsletter at www.poconopa.gov, follow our Facebook page for frequent community updates and subscribe to our Township-wide Savvy Citizen notification system at www.savvycitizenapp.com.

Presentations – No presentations.

Resolutions – No resolutions.

OLD BUSINESS

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by K. Meeker, to approve the minutes of the December 21, 2020 regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners. Minutes were approved with changes. All in favor. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Advertisement of 2021 Township Meetings

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Belvin, to set the Board of Commissioners meetings for the first and third Mondays of each month at 7:00 p.m. When a meeting date falls on a Township holiday, the meeting will be held the following day. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by K. Meeker, to set the Board of Commissioners Sewer Committee meetings for the first Monday of each month at 6:00 p.m. When a meeting date falls on a Township holiday, the meeting will be held the following day. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Belvin, to set Planning Commission meetings for the second and fourth Mondays of each month. When a meeting date falls on a Township holiday, the meeting will be held the following day. All in favor. Motion carried.

2. 2021 Board, Committee & Other Appointments

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Lastowski, to appoint Tom Felver to the Pocono Township Vacancy Board with a term to expire December 31, 2021. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Belvin, to re-appoint Angela Tullo, to serve as a member of the Zoning Hearing Board with a term to expire December 31, 2023. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by E. Gnandt, to appoint Taylor Muñoz to the Monroe County Tax Committee with a term to expire December 31, 2021. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by E. Gnandt, to re-appoint Randy Peechatka to the PJJWA Board with a term to expire December 31, 2021. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by K. Meeker, to re-appoint Marie Guidry to the PJJWA Board with a term to expire December 31, 2021. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Lastowski, to re-appoint Jeremy Sawicki, Marie Guidry, and Christina Kauffman to the Planning Commission with a term to expire December 31, 2024. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by K. Meeker, to appoint Berkheimer as EIT Tax Collector for Pocono Township. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Belvin, to appoint the following Pocono Township Volunteer Fire Department members as 2021 Fire Police as requested by Chief Tom Kresge. All in favor. Motion carried.

Kevin Kresge	34-9-7	Peter Gallagher	34-9-17
Chris Kinsley Sr.	34-9-8	William Ward	34-9-18
Don Simpson	34-9-11	Robert Gupko	34-9-19
Gerald Lastowski	34-9-12	Corey Sayer	34-9-20
Steve Jacobs	34-9-13	Robert Kinsley	34-9-21
Thomas Kresge	34-9-14	Al Kresge	34-9-10
Chris Kinsley Jr.	34-9-15	Rich Shay	34-9-9
Angela Tullo	34-9-16		

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Lastowski, to set the mileage reimbursement rate at the 2021 IRS rate of 56.0 cents per mile. All in favor. Motion carried.

3. Personnel

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Lastowski, to appoint Kent Werkheiser as Pocono Township Chief of Police through December 31, 2021. All in favor. Motion carried.

4. Financial Transactions

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Belvin, to ratify vouchers payable received through December 31, 2020 in the amount of \$113,601.14. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by K. Meeker, to ratify gross payroll for pay periods ending December 27, 2020 in the amount of \$106,044.94. E. Gnandt asked for confirmation as to when buyouts were included in payroll for police. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by K. Meeker, to approve vouchers payable received through December 31, 2020, in the amount of \$74,972.36. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by E. Gnandt, to approve sewer operating fund expenditures through December 31, 2020 in the amount of \$3,380.51. All in favor. Motion carried.

5. Travel/Training Authorizations

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by K. Meeker, to approve the attendance of Taylor Muñoz, Township Manager, Jerrod Belvin, Commissioner, and Robert Sargent, Road Supervisor, at the PSATS

2021 Annual Conference, April 18-21, 2021 in Hershey, PA. Registration, travel and hotel costs will be covered by the Township. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by E. Gnandt, to appoint Jerrod Belvin as voting delegate at the 2021 PSATS Annual Conference. All in favor. Motion carried.

Report of the President

Richard Wielebinski

- Shared that Scantek is offering their customers a 5% discount on document digitization services until January 15, 2021.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by K. Meeker, authorizing T. Muñoz to sign a contract with Scantek reflecting a five percent discount for an amount not to exceed \$18,000 to complete document digitization of police files. E. Gnandt expressed concern with the quoted price being an estimate. T. Muñoz gave clarification. All in favor. Motion carried.

Commissioner Comments

Jerrod Belvin – Vice President

- COVID-19/Emergency Management Update – No update.
- FEMA Flood Mitigation grant application – No update.
- Township Ice Skating Rink – TV 13 and WNEP gave positive coverage on the skating rink. There has been a spectacular public response. R. Wielebinski asked whether shovels are provided for grooming the ice. Shovels are not provided because they have been stolen in the past.

Ellen Gnandt – Commissioner

- Inquired about timing of when first quarter amusement taxes were due. T. Muñoz indicated the first quarter is due January 31, 2021 and the application packet stated the producers are to provide a tax return to the Township regardless of whether they have tax revenue to report or not. Notices will be sent out this month as a reminder of the due date.

Jerry Lastowski – Commissioner

- Expressed concerns about the gas explosion in Swiftwater over the Christmas holiday and its proximity to school traffic. Suggested the Township express concerns to UGI about preventing issues like this from happening in the future. J. Belvin indicated the Public Utility Commission (PUC) and Pennsylvania State Police are investigating since a death was involved. UGI had not updated Township maps with locations of shutoff valves for the gas lines. A request was sent to update maps and shut-off valve locations. J. Lastowski asked if UGI was working on testing the lines. He suggested the Township Manager contact appropriate parties for a sit-down to discuss the UGI issues.

J. Lastowski made a motion, seconded by R. Wielebinski, to have the Township write a letter to UGI expressing concern and ask what they are doing with the gas lines to ensure all residents and guests in Pocono Township are safe. Motion amended to include Township Manager contact appropriate parties for a sit-down to discuss the issues at hand pertaining to UGI. All in favor. Motion carried.

Keith Meeker – Commissioner – No comment.

Reports

Zoning – No report.

Emergency Services

- Police – Included on website.
- EMS – No report.
- Fire – No report.

Public Works Report

- Current and remaining Public Works projects for 2020 – Focusing on keeping roads clear and replenishing supplies for snow/ice.
- Update – Park Lane Culvert Replacement – Dirt and Gravel Grant – No report.
- Update – Well Work at MVP – No report.

R. Wielebinski asked when the well pump will be pulled for Mountain View Park. R. Sargent will stop by the park with Leon Clapper to check the amperage with the pump.

Administration – Manager’s Report

- Monroe County Land Bank – Potential acquisition of 17 Summit Drive, Pocono Manor – Submitted all information to the County, got confirmation information was received and waiting to hear back from Land Bank.
- Evaluation of Township’s Wireless Carrier – Verizon vs. FirstNet (ATT) – Evaluation is on-going and devices are being tested around the Township.
- Update – Amended Sign Ordinance – Zoning officials are reviewing comments and will report back to the Planning Commission at next meeting.
- Update – Pending grant applications – LSA, Multimodal & Recreation Grant Applications – Action expected on grants in January.
- Wine Press Inn – Interest in Township-owned property – No report.
- Update – Regional HSPS Comprehensive Plan – Next meeting is Wednesday, January 20, 2021 via Zoom at 6:00 p.m.

Township Engineer Report

- St. Paul’s Lutheran Drainage Basin - Received plan from the church’s consultant. Under review this week.
- Archer Lane Drainage Issues – No report.
- Update – Righthand turn lanes from Rt. 611 onto Rimrock Road and Bartonsville Avenue – No report.

Township Solicitor Report

- Discussion regarding I-80 parcel easement request from Jonathan Weber – Currently working with J. Tresslar and hope to have a report by the next meeting as to whether this parcel qualifies as landlocked.
- Discussion regarding HJP Park – A virtual joint work session with Jackson Township will be advertised for Tuesday, January 12, 2021. There will be a conversation about what Jackson would like to see happen with the former HJP park property versus Pocono Township’s interest.
- Update – Kelly Family Trust - Received word last week that the trustee has retained an attorney and will hopefully receive a response by the end of this week. T. Muñoz to find out whether there are any fines on the property. Also check with the Prothonotary to see what further outstanding fines are on the property.
- Zoning Hearing Board Update
 - Sheetz, Inc. variance request for sign construction – There was a disparity between what was testified to as to their square footage vs what the plans showed. Coming in next week to amend their testimony to conform to the plans.
 - Ryan Possinger Appeal Zoning Hearing - Hearing was held December 22, 2020. Issue being addressed was whether the ZHB has jurisdiction to hear the appeal. If the ZHB finds the Township has jurisdiction, will move into the merits of the case.

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- Johnson Appeal – Certified record was received by the Court filed by T. Weitzmann. Will be filing briefs with the Court and will have opportunity to respond and argue.

Public Comment – No public comment.

Adjournment

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Belvin, to adjourn the meeting at 7:56 p.m. All in favor.
Motion carried.