

**Pocono Township Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting Minutes
January 16, 2024 | 6:01 p.m.**

The regular meeting of the Pocono Township Board of Commissioners was held on January 16, 2024 and was opened by President Rich Wielebinski at 6:01 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Jerrod Belvin, present; Ellen Gndt, present; Natasha Leap, present via Zoom; Mike Velardi, present via Zoom; and Rich Wielebinski, present.

In Attendance: Taylor Munoz, Township Manager; Leo DeVito, Township Solicitor present via Zoom; Jon Tresslar, Engineer; Pat Briegel, Public Works Director; James Wagner, Detective Sergeant; Shawn McGlynn, Zoning Officer present via Zoom, and Jennifer Gambino, Administrative Assistant.

Public Comment

Heather Snell (Resident) – Expressed concern about a January 4 incident where she was attacked by a dog on Tara Drive. Stated her dad was also attacked on the same street prior by another dog. Concerned about regulations to protect the public from dog attacks. Expressed concerns about funding for the Police Department and the way she felt the incident was handled.

Joshua Knapp (Resident) – Expressed concerns regarding the environmental impacts of a proposed Warner Road warehouse.

Announcements

- An executive session was held on Tuesday, January 9 for the purpose of discussing personnel matters.

Presentations

- Recognition of Pocono Township Police Officers for life-saving actions.
 - Officer Liam Rebetje – Successful performance of Heimlich Maneuver on choking woman.
 - Corporal Smith and Patrol Officers Miller, Moser, & Gupko – Administering of AED and CPR.

Certificates were presented to the officers for their lifesaving actions.

Hearings

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Belvin, to open a public hearing for Trap Enterprises LLC – The Ridge PRD. All in favor. Motion carried.

L. DeVito recounted hearing details to date. Review of modification requests. *Votes on each modification are recorded in the formal transcript of the hearing.*

L. DeVito read into the record the conditions agreed to by the Township and applicant.

Public Comment: Jim Pellegrini (Resident) – Asked if this proposal is a “done deal.” Asked whether the zoning of the property is being changed to residential.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Belvin, to close the public hearing. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by E. Gndt, to approve the tentative plan as presented for the Ridge at Swiftwater PRD, conditioned upon the applicant accepting the conditions proposed within 30 days of the date of the decision prepared by the Township solicitor. All in favor. Motion carried.

Resolutions

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Belvin, to approve the lease purchase of a 2023 Ford Police Interceptor with accompanying upfit in the amount of \$61,529.23. R. Wielebinski asked whether this was replacing a current car. All in favor. Motion carried.

Consent Agenda

- Motion to approve a consent agenda of the following items:
 - Old business consisting of the minutes of the January 2, 2024 regular meeting and reorganizational meeting of the Board of Commissioners.
 - Financial transactions through January 11, 2024 as presented, including ratification of general fund expenditures, sewer operating expenditures and gross payroll; vouchers payable, sewer operating expenditures, construction fund expenditures, capital reserve expenditures and transfers.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to approve the consent agenda. All in favor. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Personnel

- Discussion and possible action regarding the appointment of a Pocono Township Police Chief – Placeholder.

2. Travel/Training Authorizations – None

Commissioner Comments

Richard Wielebinski – President

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by E. Gnadtt, to approve Construction Release No. 2 for the Great Wolf Lodge Expansion Project in the amount of \$5,904,888.77 as recommended by the Township Engineer in a letter dated January 10, 2024. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by E. Gnadtt, to approve Construction Release No. 12 for the Trapasso Hotel Land Development Project in the amount of \$97,660.33 as recommended by the Township Engineer in a letter dated January 10, 2024. Discussion regarding change needed to letter for outstanding balance. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Belvin, to approve Change Order Request No. 1 for the 2023 Green Light Go Adaptive Signaling Control Project extending the date for substantial completion to April 15, 2024 and final completion to May 15, 2024, due to PennDOT delays. Discussion of project history and specifics. All in favor. Motion carried.

Jerrod Belvin – Vice President

- Discussion and possible action regarding continued issues with washout and flooding on Archer Lane – Discussion of continued issues with Archer Lane runoff washing out the Learn Road intersection. There have been six washouts in three weeks.

J. Belvin made a motion, seconded by R. Wielebinski, to file suit against Jim Archer. Discussion – L. DeVito would like to meet with S. McGlynn, P. Briegel, and J. Tresslar to get a full picture of the issue on 1/24. Will meet at 9 AM on 1/24. All in favor. Motion carried.

- Laurel Lake Dam – Meeting 1/26 at 10 AM.

- Bartion Court Utility Lines – PPL distribution technician inspected and stated communication lines are low and developing a plan to work through engineering to raise facilities slightly which would allow the communication companies to do the same.

5th Annual Super Bowl Polar Plunge – Annual event where funds are raised for charity. Fire police will manage traffic this year on Stadden Road. Date of 2/11.

Attended County kickoff for hazard mitigation meetings with Detective Sergeant Wagner.

Reported on recent flooding issues. Highlighted intersection of Warner Road and SR 611 flooding from the Pocono Creek. Going to explore the option of stacking grants with the County to improve the intersection. These are two PennDOT roads affected. Flooding issues in Cobble Creek need to be reviewed/discussed.

Ellen Gandt – Commissioner

Asked for a budget vs. actual printout on a monthly basis for the Board of Commissioners.

Asked for a calendar of land development plans and their status to be shared on a regular basis with the Board.

Discussion regarding issues with Middle Road and requirements for Townships to take over a roadway.

Discussion regarding whether time limits should be set on conditional use and special exception approvals within the Township ordinances.

Natasha Leap – Commissioner – None

Mike Velardi – Commissioner – None

Reports

Public Works Report

- Current Public Works Projects – Gave kudos to the Road Crew for all their winter cleanup work. Hoping the Township ice rink will firm up soon.
- Mountain View Park Updates – No update.
- TLC Park Updates – No update.
- Old Learn Farm parking access – Completed additional work removing trees on the Old Learn Farm parking access.

Administration – Manager’s Report

Township Engineer Report

- Learn Road safety enhancement project and roundabout survey work – Moving along and plans shaping up well.
- Update – TASA SR 611 sidewalk project – At point of talking with property owners about temporary and permanent easements. One of the requirements for this grant is to have “public participation.” One way suggested is to place a board on display showing the extent of the project and what is taking place. A display board will be posted in the Township building lobby.
- In Progress – Discussion and possible action regarding the Township’s revised Act 167 Stormwater Ordinance, incorporating changes to the Ordinance as prepared by the Township engineer and as required by PA DEP.

Township Solicitor Report

- General legal update – Will be at Township on 1/24 for the second meeting pertaining to Kalahari/Tobyhanna. Attempting to resolve litigation issues.
- Zoning Hearing Board updates – Expected application from MCTI.
- Update – Johnson Appeal Commonwealth Court argument – Nothing received from the Court.

Public Comment

Cynthia Hamil (Jackson Resident) – Expressed Warner Road and SR 611 intersection concerns. Concerned proposed warehouse may cause further flooding concerns.

Joshua Knapp (Resident) – Expressed concerns about warehouse project on Warner Road causing further flooding.

Adjournment

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by E. Gndt, to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m. and go into Executive Session and not return. All in favor. Motion carried.