

**Pocono Township Board of Commissioners  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
July 1, 2024 | 6:00 p.m.**

The regular meeting of the Pocono Township Board of Commissioners was held on July 1, 2024 and was opened by Vice President Natasha Leap at 6:00 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call:** Ellen Gndant, present; Natasha Leap, present; Mike Velardi, present; and Brian Winot, present. Rich Wielebinski, present via Zoom.

**In Attendance:** Patrick Briegel, Public Works Director; Leo DeVito, Township Solicitor; Amy Montgomery, Engineer; Lindsay Scerbo, Zoning Officer; James Wagner, Chief of Police; Jennifer Gambino, Admin Assistant; Jerrod Belvin, Township Manager.

**Public Comment**

Patricia Lippert (Resident) Expressed her concerns regarding the excessive gun/shooting issues within the township.

Lawrence Lippert (Resident) Expressed his concerns regarding the excessive gun/shooting issues within the township.

Cheryl Parks (Resident) Expressed her concern regarding the Kennel on Ruby Lane.

**Announcements**

**Presentations**

**Swearing in & Oath presented by the Honorable District Magistrate, Dan Kresge** for the following Promotions of Aaron Anglemyer to Detective, Raymond Kuehner to Corporal, and James Scott to Corporal.

**Zoning Hearing Board Interviews** were held for the following applicants: Blaine Fardella & Matthew Lentz. E. Gndant made a motion, seconded by R. Wielebinski, to appoint Blaine Fardella as the new ZHB Alternate. All in favor. Motion carried.

**Resolutions**

Resolution 2024-10 – MPMS 79473 – Agreement 05U414 – N. Leap made a motion, seconded by R. Wielebinski, to sign the reimbursement resolution. All in favor. Motion Carried. Discussion.

Resolution 2024-11 – MPMS 79473 – Agreement 05U461- N. Leap made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to sign the agreement for PennDOT to absorb some of the utility easement from the township. All in favor. Motion Carried. Discussion.

Resolution 2024-13 – Brook Village Apartments Road names – N. Leap made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to approve the following road names within the Brook Village Apartments, Boulder Dr., Brook Village Court, Woodland Way, and Tower Drive. E. Gndant abstained due to the applicant being her clients, All in favor. Motion carried.

Resolution 2024-14 – Spirit of Swiftwater Conditional Approval – Lengthy discussion was had between the parties regarding the review letters from both the township engineer and the MCPC. R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to table the resolution. Rollcall: E. Gndant, No; N. Leap, No; B. Winot, No; M. Velardi, Yes; R. Wielebinski, Yes. Motion Failed.

N. Leap made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to allow the solicitor with the condition of reimbursement to the township by the developer to begin working on the development agreements

and other related agreements, coupled with tabling the plan, but allowing the project to move forward with the appropriate paperwork pending the boards final decision. All in favor, Motion carried.  
Resolution 2024-15 – Plan Revision, The Ridge at Swiftwater Sewage Facilities Planning Module – N. Leap made a motion seconded by E. Gndt, to approve the Ridge at Swiftwater Sewage Facility Planning Module. The motion was rescinded due to needing the PC's approval.

### **Consent Agenda**

- Motion to approve a consent agenda of the following items:
  - Old business consisting of the minutes of the June 3, 2024 regular meeting.
  - Sewer Operating Budget Adjustment to reflect additional funding to cover Emergency repair Valve 2 in the amount of \$47,340.00.
  - Financial transactions through June 11, 2024 as presented, including ratification of general fund expenditures, sewer operating expenditures and gross payroll, vouchers payable, sewer operating expenditures, construction fund expenditures, and capital reserve expenditures.

N. Leap made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to approve the consent agenda. All in favor. Motion carried. E. Gndt pointed out items that need to be changed on the minutes.

### **NEW BUSINESS –**

Travel/Training Authorizations – N. Leap made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to authorize J. Belvin, Township Manager and K. MacDougall, Township Assistant Secretary, to attend the secretary/manager summit with PSAT's September 23 and 24<sup>th</sup> in Lansdale, PA. E. Gndt questioned what it was along with costs. All in favor. Motion carried.

### **Commissioner Comments**

#### **Richard Wielebinski – President**

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by E. Gndt, to approve Richard Wielebinski, Natasha Leap, Ellen Gndt, Michael Velardi, Brian Winot, Jerrod Belvin, and Paola Razzaq as signers for all accounts in Citizens Bank, Essa Bank & Trust, Wayne Bank, First Keystone Community Bank, First Northern Bank & Trust, and PLGIT Trust. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to authorize the Vice President of the board to approve the MOU between Pocono Township and Monroe Career & Technical Institute for part-time police services for the 2024-25 school year at the rate of \$79.42/hr. Discussion was had. Roll call: E. Gndt, No; N. Leap, Yes; B. Winot, Yes; M. Velardi, Yes; R. Wielebinski, Yes. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to open the agenda for a discussion amongst the commissioners, for a policy to look at any documents in a fair manner across the board. All in favor. Motion carried. A lengthy discussion was had between the Board and Solicitor on thoughts for putting a policy in place.

#### **Natasha Leap – Vice President**

N. Leap made a motion seconded by M. Velardi, to open the agenda to discuss advertising a no parking ordinance for the Ertle Wawa parcel. All in favor. Motion carried. Discussion: L DeVito explained PennDOT requires no parking in front of the parcel and the owner asked the township to assist in moving the process forward. N. Leap made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to authorize the solicitor to advertise a no parking ordinance for parcel number 12.9.1.73 along route 611 and Bartonsville Ave. All in favor. Motion carried.

#### **Ellen Gndt – Commissioner**

SBA Cell Tower – Some activity is taking place regarding stormwater management for test pits.  
Solar Field – Engineering is continuing to inspect. They are continuing to move forward.

Kennel – More puppies, bad neighbor. Checking with dog warden. E. Gndt stated Proof needs to be obtained by the neighbors. Discussion was had on this subject.

L. DeVito stated that a draft of the Nuisance ordinance should be ready to be reviewed by the board next week.

Regional Zoning – Conversations would need to be had with neighboring townships. Many ideas were considered. N. Leap added the possibility to regionalize the police force with other townships as a consideration down the road. There was a lengthy discussion between the board.

Special Exception – E. Gndt questioned the process and the conditions. L. DeVito explained.

#### **Mike Velardi – Commissioner**

M. Velardi made a motion, seconded by R. Wielebinski to authorize solicitor to obtain an administrative order in order for public works to perform demolition on 229 Hemlock Dr. Tannersville. Discussion with Zoning and the Board took place. E. Gndt voted No; N. Leap, B. Winot, M. Velardi, R. Wielebinski, all voted Yes. Motion carried.

M. Velardi passed along a compliment to the Pocono Township Police, DPW & Staff from a 60-year resident of the township.

M. Velardi suggested we update the Welcome to Pocono Township sign along Route 611 in Bartonville.

M. Velardi questioned what the Blue Ridge surcharge is. R. Wielebinski explained the franchise tax.

#### **Brian Winot – Commissioner**

##### **Reports**

##### **Zoning – (Lindsay Scerbo)**

See attached.

##### **Police Report – (Chief J. Wagner)**

Interview updates – Last week, first oral interview with two candidates. One passed and one failed. The next oral interview with the command staff and Jerrod is scheduled for July 17<sup>th</sup>.

##### **Ambulance Report - None**

##### **Fire Report – None**

##### **Manager Report – (Jerrod Belvin)**

J. Belvin asked for and N. Leap made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi to authorize the signing of the AT-55 Drainage Maintenance Agreement A&B for Rout 611/715 Realignment. All in favor. Motion carried. Discussion was held between the board, engineer, and township manager.

Green Light Go – We are still waiting for the communications parts to link all the lights together (Modems). E. Gndt made a motion, seconded by R. Wielebinski to authorize the township manager to sign the Green Light Go Change Order No. 2 – Time extension to Friday, September 27, 2024. All in favor. Motion carried.

The township is required to obtain an Industrial Appraisal Requested by EHD for the new buildings. The board members discussed why this would be needed. L. DeVito explained for insurance purposes. R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to accept the quote provided by IAC to provide an appraisal for insurance valuation purposes in the amount of \$5,985.00 for the newly acquired properties by the township (NCC & Kenny's Way) All in favor. Motion carried.

M. Velardi made a motion, seconded by R. Wielebinski, to approve the Pocono Township Volunteer Fire Departments Fireworks permit application and waive the fee for display on 7/18/24. All in favor. Motion carried.

Park Board Update: L. DeVito and J. Belvin are going over policies and procedures to better realign the park board.

Rebranding discussion coming up in the budget workshops.

L. DeVito updated the board regarding the situation regarding the handicap ramps at the intersection of Bartonsville Ave. and Route 611 that PennDOT is requiring for the new Wawa. Further discussion was had regarding the township right hand turning lanes being affected by this project.

### **Public Works**

N. Leap made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to have township manager sign annual agreement with Evoqua for 2025 Bioxide treatment in Pocono Township Sewage System \$13,200.00. All in favor. Motion carried.

B. Winot made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to authorize the purchase of a replacement Bioxide tank for pump station 5 at a cost of \$29,898.00. All in favor. Motion carried.

P. Briegel updated the board of the interview progress for the open position with the DPW Staff, along with updates from the storm, paving and park paving.

N. Leap made a motion, seconded by E. Gnandt, to open the agenda to discuss policies for Pocono Township parks. All in favor. Motion carried.

P. Briegel is collaborating with staff and the township manager on putting together updated policies for the parks. Discussion was held between P. Briegel, L. DeVito, J. Belvin and the board.

### **Events**

Concerts in the park kicked off June 27<sup>th</sup> and July 25<sup>th</sup> will be the next concert.

### **Township Engineer Report**

Learn Road safety enhancement project and roundabout survey plans are going through a final review. Jon is going to put the bid specifications together directly after submitting the plans to PennDOT.

TASA 611 project – N. Leap made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to award the TASA SR611 sidewalk inspection services project to TPD. All in favor. Motion carried.

### **Township Solicitor Report**

Sewer Business – coordinating a meeting with Tobyhanna Township. Special Counsel has been contacted if necessary.

Lot 610 Williams Lane has requested a public hearing for relief from the stormwater management ordinance. N. Leap made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to authorize the township solicitor to advertise for a public hearing. All in favor. Motion carried.

Volunteer Tax Abatement Ordinance – under review by the board for feedback. Forms are completed and ready should it be approved.

B. Winot made a motion, seconded by E. Gnandt, to advertise to amend the Township Property Maintenance Code to amend the penalty provisions from a Civil Action to a Summary Offense in order to bring the Township's Property Maintenance Ordinance into compliance with the First-Class Township Code. All in favor. Motion carried.

The Township received a \$12,000.00 judgement from Judge Kresge regarding Archer Lane. Zoning hearing application on 127 Crescent Lake Rd. has been received pending scheduling. Township Fee Schedule – discussion was had with the board on this matter. Pocono Places LLC – waiting for transcript. The board will reconvene to deliberate.

### **Public Comment**

Cheryl Parks – Read what a Kennel is from the Department of Agriculture. Compared the transcripts from the Ruby lane Kennel with the outline.

**Adjournment** - N. Leap made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to adjourn the meeting at 9:46 p.m. All in favor. Motion carried.