

March 26, 2024

The regular meeting of the Ligonier Township Supervisors was held Tuesday, March 26, 2024 at 4:30 p.m. in the Municipal Building with Chairman Dan Resenic presiding.

Members Present: Dan Resenic, Erik Ross, Scott Matson, and John Beaufort. Absent was Stephanie Verna.

Others Present: Township Manager Michael Strelac, Solicitor Dan Hudock, Public Works Foreman Lance Griffith, Zoning / Code Enforcement Officer Rick Krouse and Finance Officer Bethany Caldwell.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no public comments.

COMMENTS FROM THE SUPERVISORS

There were no Supervisor comments.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A **motion** was made by Erik Ross and seconded by Scott Matson to approve the minutes from the March 12, 2024 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

REPORTS:

MANAGER

Mr. Strelac reported the Zoning Ordinance is with the county. The county has 45 days to review it and then it will be back on the agenda in May. Mr. Strelac had a conversation with Supervisor Matson regarding the private sector and bidding out the township's work. Mr. Strelac reviewed the last three times the Township considered using vendors / outside contractors to do work and each time it was more cost effective to do the work in-house. He thought it prudent to share this information with the rest of the board and cited both the in-house cost and external quotes for vehicle maintenance, hauling, and garage door inspections.

SOLICITOR

Mr. Hudock met with a Laughlintown property owner last week regarding a code complaint and will update the board during the executive session.

ZONING & CODE ENFORCEMENT

Mr. Krouse presented his monthly report and added there was a recent code enforcement issue at 26 Old Lincoln Highway. The resident was burning materials from a demolition that are banned by the state and local ordinances. Mr. Krouse was able to rectify the situation.

Supervisor Resenic asked about the Cherokee Lane code complaint – Mr. Krouse said no progress has been made, and noted the owner’s deadline is October 1.

PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. Griffith reported that he and Michael Shadron were trained on environmentally sensitive practices and the certification is good for 5 years. The ash pile work is almost complete. The stormwater list is done but, materials haven’t been ordered yet. Staff met with the Conservation District this afternoon to discuss grant work to be done on Hidden Valley and Mallard Lane.

FINANCE

The General Fund’s Actual vs. Budget report for the month of February was presented to the board. Mrs. Caldwell noted the Township’s 2023 audit will be finalized pending one outstanding item (the LTMA’s audit report) and the state has concluded their 2022 audit of the Liquid Fuels fund.

BILLS PAYABLE

A motion was made by Erik Ross and seconded by Scott Matson to approve the bills payable as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Ordinance 2024-O-03 Property Maintenance Code:

Mr. Strelac explained this version includes recommendations made by the solicitor and eliminated redundant penalty sections. Mr. Hudock added there was some ambiguity – it was unclear what sections the penalties applied to. The property maintenance code was internally inconsistent, it didn’t flow and seemed like a “cut & paste” job. The ordinance is not ready to be adopted as it needs dollar amounts added to the penalty section and then it has to be advertised.

Special Events Permit – Ligonier Country Market & Holiday Market:

Mr. Strelac met with the Country Market staff and they shared some internal documents, including a map showing 109 vendors in 130 spots. At most there would be 115 vendors in 125 vendor spots which is below the 130 maximum outlined in the conditional use. Mr. Strelac talked to Susan Huba, Executive Director of the Loyalhanna Watershed (property owner). She will take a year-to-year lease agreement to her board if the Market commits to 130 vendors spaces in writing.

Supervisor Resenic stressed the need for something more concrete – something in writing, with signatures.

Supervisor Beaufort asked about the map and noted vendor(s) taking up multiple spots. He said the traffic looks good, parking is as good as it can get, but they haven’t addressed the safety concerns and planning for an emergency. Do the parking attendants / staff know what to do? Mr. Strelac said the market staff are open to ideas and will coordinate with the County’s Emergency Management Coordinator for subject matter expert assistance.

A motion was made by Dan Resenic and seconded by Eric Ross to approve both the Ligonier Country Market and Ligonier Country Holiday Market special event permits contingent upon their signing an agreement prepared by the Township Manager, that specifically outlines critical elements of the permit application, such as but not limited to, the number of vendors, the number of vendor spots, police traffic control, an emergency management plan and any other pertinent factors deemed advisable. Motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Deeds Water Line CDBG amendment:

Mr. Strelac explained the county approved an amendment increasing the Deeds Water Line grant project budget by \$122,286 to cover emergency work required to fix the broken line. (Agreement 23-12, new project budget \$269,561)

A motion was made by Erik Ross and seconded by John Beaufort authorizing Township Manger, Michael Strelac to sign for the Deeds Water Line grant agreement amendment. Motion carried unanimously.

Hidden Valley Road and Mallard Lane DGLV grants:

Mr. Strelac reported the Conservation District has granted both of our project requests for Hidden Valley Road and Mallard Lane.

A motion was made by Erik Ross and seconded by Scott Matson to accept two County Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume grant awards, one for Hidden Valley Road and the other for Mallard Lane. Motion carried unanimously.

Ordinance 2024-O-04 preemption of 10-acre sewage exemption

Mr. Strelac recapped at the last meeting Mr. Lewis' subdivision plan was exempt from securing a sewage permit and the associated inspection (provided the sewage system set back 200 feet) due to the fact the parcel is 10+ acres and he has owned it prior to 1987. Municipalities can pass their own ordinance to close this loop hole.

Supervisor Matson asked about sand mounds – there are so many failed systems in the Township, what is supposed to happen when they fail? Mr. Strelac said the Township can get its Sewage Enforcement Officer involved and request an inspection.

Supervisor Resenic understands it's fine if someone has a lot of property, but what happens when it's not fine and sewage starts leaking onto someone else's property? What recourse do we have?

Supervisor Ross said he would like it to think about it more. No action was taken.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The board went into an executive session at 5:00 p.m. to discuss legal strategy related to a code enforcement issue in Laughlinton and resumed their regular meeting at 5:24 p.m.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no additional comments from the public.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM THE SUPERVISORS

There were no additional comments from the Supervisors.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

A motion was made by Erik Ross and seconded by Scott Matson to adjourn the meeting. All of the board was in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bethany Caldwell
Assistant Secretary/Treasurer