

Ligonier Township Supervisors
Regular Meeting Minutes
July 26, 2022

The Supervisors of Ligonier Township met in regular session at 4:30 p.m. Chair, Dan Resenic; Vice Chair, John Beaufort; Secretary/Treasurer, Stephanie Verna; Supervisor, D. Scott Matson; and Supervisor, Erik Ross were present.

Also present were Manager, Michael Strelac; Solicitor, Dan Hudock; Engineer Ben Faas; and Finance Officer, Bethany Caldwell.

Comments from the Public

1. Susan Crouse (Laurel Mountain Borough resident) asked for an update on the multi-municipal agreement that was being drafted for the Laurel Mountain Borough, the Ligonier Borough, the Ligonier Township and the Municipal Authority of the Westmoreland County (MAWC). She encouraged the Township to get the agreement to their Solicitor, Mark Sorice. She asked if a meeting with MAWC, the Township Manager and representatives from the other municipalities could be set up. The private waterline replacement projects are going to take time and involves a lot of planning. She is hoping to use ARPA rescue money.

2. Patti Flowers Jacobina (ten year resident and master gardener) said the monarch butterfly arrives in Ligonier in early July. Someone is spraying pesticides near the SAMA gardens – not sure if it's the township or First Energy but it is deadly and kills the local and international pollinators.

Ms. Jacobina was advised to check with Penn Line and/or PennDOT (the Township was not spraying).

3. Dennis Swogger – Asked when Claycomb Road, when will it be finished? Supervisor Resenic asked the Public Works committee to meet with Mr. Strelac and put together a list of the roads that need the most attention. Mr. Strelac said that work on Claycomb Road was halted while the crew attends to the roads that are scheduled to be chip-sealed in mid-August. Work on Claycomb Road will resume after the crew completes the chip-seal prep. The Claycomb project needs to be completed by September 30, per the grant contract with the county. It was also noted the Public Works is short staffed, the Director is out and his return date is unknown and there is a vacant position.

4. Bruce Kemerer, Ligonier Township Municipal Authority (LTMA) Chairman provided a letter and some diagrams of the municipal building offices. Last year LTMA staff were asked to move offices to accommodate Rep. Rossi and the agreement was for staff to move into the large corner office; however, that did not happen. He is asking the Board to honor the agreement, they pay rent based on square footage. He does not want to jeopardize their good working relationships.

Supervisor Verna asked if the garage space has that stayed the same - yes.

5. Bill Stablien, LTMA Board Member said he was in attendance to support the LTMA's request regarding the office space.

Comments from the Supervisors

Supervisor Verna asked the Board to consider Susan Crouse's comments. There was a discussion about the private lines in the Township, MAWC's role in the process, and the Township's previous commitment to the project. Staff were directed to schedule a meeting with MAWC and the municipal representatives.

- A motion was made by Stephanie Verna and seconded by John Beaufort to approve the minutes from the July 12, 2022 meeting. Motion carried.
- A motion was made by John Beaufort and seconded by Scott Matson to approve the minutes from the July 20, 2022 meeting. Motion carried, with Supervisor Verna abstaining because she was not at this meeting.

Correspondence

1. Letter from Mr. Kift, 121 Saint Clair Circle, thanking public works for fixing damaged curb
2. Westmoreland County letter regarding the 2022 annual tax sale list of properties

Manager Report

Mr. Strelic gave a presentation on the fiscal state of the township.

There was a discussion about selling equipment. The zipper was listed for sale on the Municibid site twice; staff directed to reach out to equipment companies and gauge any interest (e.g. Laurel Equipment, Blacklick). Supervisor Resenic asked about the finance committee meeting. The committee made recommendations to streamline monthly income and expense reporting, divide the annual budget into monthly allocations to improve progress tracking and plan for a longer term (i.e. adopt a 5 year budget plan).

Engineer Report

Mr. Faas reported that work continues on outstanding administrative items related to the Dollar General.

Mr. Resenic said there is a rumor that stormwater runoff from the Dollar General's parking lot will end up in the stream. This is not true, the plans direct stormwater through an infiltration basin then into a retaining pond. This plan was approved by the DEP and our engineer will ensure specs are followed.

Solicitor Report

Mr. Hudock reported the Act 537 Plan appeal was filed on Friday, July 22, 2022.

Ligonier Township Municipal Authority Manager Report

Mr. Griffith reported that four bids were awarded for \$5.5M in water projects in late April. Ligonier Construction is clearing the site to install a water tank in September, anticipate it will be in operation by November. This tank will lessen the strain that Idlewild Park puts on the system in the summer. Ferri Construction is working on a booster station for the Waterford Plant first; there is 6-8 month lead time and will do foundation work. Kukrin is waiting on pipe, there is no ETA.

The grandfather clause of the sand filtration at the township's reservoir is ending (exact date still unknown) and the dam is 50% under capacity. To fix the reservoir, the dam and overflow and build a new filter plant is estimated to cost \$5-7M. As an alternative their plan is drill beside the artisan well and use a pump to increase and feed the system. They are applying for the permit now.

There was a discussion about the appeal of the DEP's decision on the Act 537. We will be going to the Environmental Hearing Board who will look at this with fresh eyes. The board is reaching out to our elected officials asking for their support on the matter. Supervisor Resenic asked Mr. Griffith to ensure the LTMA has the documentation to support our case. Supervisor Verna asked for clarification on the appeal process and how much time it will take. Mr. Hudock explained this is our one shot to flip the DEP's decision as it is unlikely to win an appeal of an appeal. Supervisor Verna asked if there is anything else the Board and/or residents can do to support the appeal – this is an critical issue for our community.

Treasurer Report

- A motion was made by Stephanie Verna and seconded by Erik Ross to approve the bills as presented and noted there were 2 checks being retroactively approved. Motion carried.

Old Business

Mr. Strelic reported the Ligonier Beach demolition project is on hold. There is a 10" main waterline running through the basement of the restaurant. MAWC would like to relocate it instead of protecting it in place. The specs our engineer recommended did not make it into the County's RFP. Mr. Faas to follow up with MAWC.

New Business

- A motion was made by Scott Matson and seconded by Erik Ross approving the LTMA's request to move into a vacant office. There was a roll call vote: Supervisors Matson, Ross, and Resenic voted aye and Supervisors Beaufort and Verna voted nay. Motion carried, 3:2.

There was a discussion about a motion made at the June 28, 2022 meeting, authorizing staff to procure a bounce house for the National Night Out event on August 2. The cost

has increased by \$290 and PennPRIME has advised against signing the contract due to onerous “hold harmless” language in the rental agreement. The board directed staff to research other vendors / options and not to exceed \$1200.

There was a discussion about the Myers School Road closure and previous resolutions (2019-R-21 and 2020-R-12) and Coal Loader current request to extend the closure (despite the Board’s previous approval to close the road ‘indefinitely’). Mr. Hudock recommended that Coal Loaders sign an agreement that specifies what was previously agreed to and outlined in Resolutions. There is a road bond, staff to research its details. Supervisor Resenic stated he is not in favor of keeping the road closed unless there is a financial benefit to the township. Supervisor Verna added that road repairs and improvements should be clarified. The Board directed Mr. Hudock to prepare a draft agreement for their review at the next meeting.

Executive Session

The Supervisors went into executive session at 5:45 PM and resumed the regular meeting at 6:12 p.m. Supervisor Resenic stated with the Pennsylvania Sunshine Laws as the discussions pertained to personnel and litigation.

- A motion was made by Erik Ross and seconded by John Beaufort directing Mr. Hudock to draft a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to reopen the UAW Local 204 agreement for wage changes and possible other changes. Motion carried.

Comments from the Public

There were not comments from the public.

Comments from the Supervisors

Supervisor Matson – asked if any updates had been received from the Friends of Ligonier Beach.

- A motion was made by Erik Ross and seconded by Scott Matson to adjourn the meeting at 6:15 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Bethany Caldwell
Assistant Secretary/Treasurer