

Ligonier Township Supervisors
Regular Meeting
September 24, 2019

The Ligonier Township Supervisors met in regular session at 4:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance opening the meeting. Roll call was taken by Secretary/Treasurer Verna. Present were Vice Chair, John Beaufort; Secretary/Treasurer, Stephanie Verna; Supervisor Paul Knupp and Supervisor, D. Scott Matson. Absent was Chair, Wade Thomas.

Public Comment

Mr. Mellor stated a meeting has been set up for Tuesday, October 1 at 9:30 at the offices of Quatrini & Rafferty in their Greensburg location to discuss his client's stormwater issue. Attendees are Mr. Korn, George Welty (Borough solicitor), Dennis Rafferty (School District solicitor) and Richard Flickinger, (another resident living on Mellon Ave), and possibly engineers (EADS Group). Mr. Mellor wanted to follow up and see if there was any further information from Supervisor Beaufort & Supervisor Knupp's site visit. Supervisor Beaufort said Mrs. Beatty's son, Greg created an accurate drawing of the situation. Supervisor Beaufort asked if the house was being flooded. Mr. Mellor answered the yard floods and water collects on the paved area of the back patio, but does not get into the house. Supervisor Beaufort commented they had wanted to send a camera down, but the 24" pipe is too big and allows the camera to kink. They don't have a solution, they traced the stormwater's path to a stream along Farm Road; the concern is they might create a problem elsewhere. Mr. Mellor stated Greg Beatty interviewed business & homeowners along Farm Road who claimed that while the road had some stormwater issues, they did not have any issues "of note." Mr. Korn will check with the Township's Engineer on attending the Oct. 1 meeting. Supervisor Beaufort would like to attend too and wants to hear what the engineers have to say. Supervisor Knupp stated that they might be able to get a camera down the pipe – the kind that has wheels, but would need to first get a cost estimate.

- A motion was made by Stephanie Verna and seconded by Paul Knupp to approve the September 10, 2019 regular meeting minutes. Motion carried.

Supervisor's Comment

Supervisor Verna – The Ligonier Valley Police Department (LVPD) is fully financed by the Township & Borough. Per their Charter, they are not allowed to operate a deficit budget. A review of the 2020 draft budget indicates a deficit - just under \$8k. That amount will be split by the Township & Borough based upon their respective allocations outlined in the Charter. Please note these are draft numbers, this is the departments first full year and while they're building operational history, they did want to make the Supervisors aware.

Staff Reports

Manager's Report

Mr. Carcella reported that the Supervisors have been given a copy of the PennPrime appraisal report of the Township Building. It includes pictures and an evaluation of the Township property– this is a free service provided through asset works and is an update to an appraisal done several years ago. It is important to document the condition of the property, should we have to file an insurance claim.

Mr. Carcella reported that the Public Works crew has finished work on Berkley Road but still needs to lay some gravel berms next week. The road is closed until it sets. We will show before/after pictures at the next meeting. Funds to complete this project were provided via the County's "Dirt & Gravel Road Grant," approximately \$25k will be replenished to the General Fund once the paperwork is turned in.

Mr. Carcella stated Russell Standard completed all contract work on the seal-chip roads, 15 ½ miles. They paid for the Township's engineering costs to certify the temperature requirements were met and compensated the Township as our crew helped load their trucks with stone.

Mr. Carcella requested that the Supervisors act on advertising for an Administrative Assistant – about 30 hours a week max. Someone to assist with the LVPD, Public Works, Zoning, etc.

- A motion was made by Paul Knupp and seconded by Stephanie Verna to advertise for a part time (~30 hour a week) Administrative Assistant. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report

Supervisor Verna reported the account balances as of September 24:

General Fund account is \$518,732
Equipment account is \$12,271
Developers Account is \$12,544
Beach Property Account is \$3,618
Act 13 Account is \$52,991
Liquid Fuels Account is \$249,569
Capital Reserve CDs as of 8/31 is \$654,340
Total account balance is \$1,504,065

- A motion was made by Scott Matson and seconded by Paul Knupp to pay the September bills. Motion carried.

Correspondence

- 1) Laurel Highlands Visitor Bureau Dinner
Annual dinner is set for Tuesday, October 8; unfortunately, this is our regular meeting day.
- 2) Westmoreland County Demo Fund
Township needs to have control over any eligible property deemed unsafe, in order to use these funds (grant); staff to follow up in the October meeting with a list of possible properties.

Fire Department Annual Donation

- A motion was made by Scott Matson and seconded by Paul Knupp to donate \$10,000 to the three Township Fire Departments. Motion carried.

Mr. Carcella reported that additionally the \$47,268 "relief funds" (based on insurance & property values) received from the state has been split 3 ways to the fire departments (\$15,756), see the Bill Pay List.

Resolution 34-2019 MMO for the Non-Uniform Plan

Municipal Minimum Contribution- Received a \$70,636 check – some of this money goes to the police department (\$32,019) and needs to be sent to PNC Bank police pension account. The rest of the money goes to the Township pension, reducing the taxpayers' liability. \$41,600 total for 2020 MMO. See documentation in packets.

Supervisor Knupp asked Mr. Kornis if it was legal, the way it's been set up. Mr. Kornis responded yes, it is an annual requirement and he has attached Mr. Feaster's calculations to the resolution.

- Stephanie Verna made a motion, seconded by Paul Knupp to approve Resolution 2019-34, MMO for the 2020 Plan Year of \$44,100. Motion carried.

Mr. Carcella stated we will add what we expect to come from the state and what we expect to pay for the pensions to the 2020 Budget.

Work Shop Agenda Item

Property Maintenance Code Ordinance discussion:

There was a discussion on the Township's philosophy / approach to handling these issues.

Mr. Kornis said we adopted a Nuisance Ordinance that hasn't been very effective. It has been very difficult to get resolution on the dilapidated buildings. He has been invited to the Planning Commission to talk more about this issue, but does not expect anything to come to the board before January (wait until after elections). If we do adopt an ordinance, we could modify an existing ordinance – strip out parts (e.g. cosmetic issues) and streamline the process so that the Code Enforcement Officer would then be able to go before the magistrate for clearly defined issues. The kind of properties we deal with come from complaints. Not going after “car hobbyist,” but rather junk cars, cars that don't run, cars without wheels, piles of garbage, using property as a salvage yard. If we want to deal with the unsafe, unsanitary issues, we need more teeth in our ordinance or make a choice to not go after these. There are some things we can't regulate. We live in a rural community, but we also live in a rural community with million dollar homes. We have an obligation to all the residents. We want to treat everyone equally. We don't police anyone, but we will respond to complaints. We need to be fair and not selective with enforcement. We also don't want to waste time – bringing the Board of Supervisors an ordinance they aren't going to approve. Health, Safety & Welfare is one thing, use caution with aesthetic complaints. Maybe have a workshop between the Board of Supervisors & Planning Commission to get some consensus. We can provide a model ordinance from PSATS and go line by line – pick & choose what you want to keep. Tailor it to individual communities within the Township.

Old Business - Logo Contest

All the logos submitted (minus the ones with the Borough's bandstand) were presented to the Supervisors. The Supervisors picked their top 3 choices and asked that they be put on the township website and facebook page, polling the community. There was a discussion about the contest.

Work Shop Agenda Item

Solar Energy Proposal – there was a discussion about information provided in the Supervisor's packet, this is not the same as the Penn State proposal (different company).

Savvy Citizen Membership & Associated Costs – there was a discussion about this app that allows a Township to notify its residents – road closures, township events (calendars), etc. There are different levels of participation, cost is based on these levels. Supervisor Verna subscribes to the Borough. Her thought is to use the Borough as the pilot program before making any decisions. Would need to decide who and how its maintained.

Public Comment “B”

None

Supervisor Comments

Supervisor Knupp thanked staff for their work. Supervisor Matson agreed.

- A motion was made by Paul Knupp and seconded by Scott Matson to adjourn the meeting at 5:25 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Bethany Caldwell
Assistant Secretary/Treasurer