

CENTRE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 28, 2023

The regular monthly meeting of the Centre Township Board of Supervisors was held on November 28, 2023 at the Centre Township Municipal Building, 449 Bucks Hill Road, Mohrsville, PA. Chairman Jason Troutman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a Moment of Silence. The following were present: Chairman Jason Troutman, Vice Chairman James Fitterling, and Supervisor Charles Zimmerman. Solicitor Liz Magovern, Engineer Ryan Rhode, Zoning/Codes Enforcement Jeff Fiant and Secretary Jennifer Wassell-Bonser.

HEARING OF VISITORS ON AGENDA ITEMS

None at this time.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None at this time.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by James Fitterling to approve the October 24, 2023 Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes. Seconded by Jason Troutman. Upon roll call, Troutman and Fitterling voted yes.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

A motion was made by James Fitterling and seconded by Jason Troutman approve the payment of bills. Upon roll call, Troutman and Fitterling voted yes.

A motion was made by James Fitterling and seconded by Charles Zimmerman to approve the township's annual donation to the Volunteer Fire Company. Upon roll call, Troutman, Zimmerman, and Fitterling voted yes.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS/SOLICITORS REPORT – Liz Magovern

Employee Handbook Updates

ROAD DEPARTMENT

Vice Chairman James Fitterling noted that the Road Department has been crack sealing, tree trimming, and prepping the township road equipment for the upcoming winter season.

MuniciBid – Sale of Equipment Items

ENGINEER'S REPORT – RYAN RHODE

Engineer Ryan Rhode reviewed details related to a wall located in the Township's Right-of-Way at 101 Railroad Road. Ryan noted that the Township Roadcrew was approached by the new property owner regarding the failing retention wall along the edge of the road and questioned whose responsibility it is to repair the wall. Engineer Rhode noted that a Road Occupancy Permit would need to be pulled and/or it may be backfilled since it is on the property owner's property but in the Township's Right-of-Way.

Jeff also noted that Hafer Petroleum has submitted the yearly Sensor Functionality Testing Proposal and noted associated costs.

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Jason Troutman made a motion approving Hafer Petroleum Sensor Functionality Testing Proposal; Charles Zimmerman seconded the motion. Upon roll call, Troutman, Zimmerman, and Fitterling voted yes.

ZONING OFFICER REPORT

Township Zoning/Codes Enforcement Officer, Jeff Fiant noted that nine building permits were issued in the month of September with a total construction value of \$216,321.16. There were also fifteen building inspections performed and six zoning ordinance enforcement issues.

Jeff Fiant informed the Board about a two-family home on Bagenstose Road that was not built to code but somehow approved in 2004 and now the property owner has reached out to Kraft for a Certificate of Occupancy due to a potential sale of the property among the family. Jeff noted that the family cannot find the Certificate of Occupancy and Kraft cannot produce one since it was not built to code.

Jeff also reviewed details related to the Post Office roof that was constructed over the loading docks without permits and noted that the architect is in the process of applying for the appropriate permit.

It was noted that 208 Shartlesville Road was sent a letter regarding burning.

Jeff also noted that he conducted a site visit at 402 Plum Road regarding the previously-noted parking situation. Chris Stamm reported that numerous vehicles are parked and coming and going at all hours of the day and night and continue entering yards.

SEO REPORT

A motion was made by Jason Troutman, seconded by James Fitterling accepting the SEO report. Upon roll call, Troutman, Fitterling and Zimmerman voted yes.

OLD BUSINESS

Chairman Troutman noted that a vacancy remains for anyone who may be interested in serving on the Authority Board.

Chairman Jason Troutman also noted that the Berks County Treasurer's Office has sent the tax bill preparation Municipal Tax Sheet for review for the upcoming new year which will be reviewed and tabled for next month's meeting.

Chairman Troutman reviewed details of a discrepancy with the millage listed on the Berks County Treasurer's Office 2023 Tax Bill Preparation Form, noting that it should reflect .0036.

Comcast Franchise Agreement Renewal

NEW BUSINESS

Hazardous Mitigation Plan Update Resolution No. 9-2023

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Statewide Local Share Assessment Grant – Resolution No. 10-2023

Charles Zimmerman made a motion approving the 2024 Preliminary Budget; James Fitterling seconded the motion. Upon roll call, Troutman, Fitterling, and Zimmerman voted yes.

The Board reviewed details of increased Auditor Fees in relation to rates of surrounding municipalities and discussed negotiating a lower rate not to exceed \$10,000.00.

Jason Troutman made a motion for the Township Secretary to advertise Auditor Appointment for services to review 2023 financials at a cost not to exceed \$10,000; James Fitterling Seconded the motion. Upon roll call, Troutman, Fitterling, and Zimmerman voted yes.

MISCELLANEOUS

None at this time.

HEARING OF VISITORS – GENERAL

Mr. Hussman reported that there was a confrontation after last month's meeting caused by questioning the status of clean-up efforts at the Trolley Road property. Mr. Hussman stated that the State Police were called and the Constable was present and also intervened. Mr. Hussman expressed concerns that the incident was a form of intimidation by the Trolley Road property owner and that bullying during and after public meetings needs to be addressed. The Township Solicitor stated there is currently a lengthy process of on-going litigation, explaining that the Township is working with the property owner and that the Court Order allows the Board of Supervisors to assess the property. Liz noted that progress has been made and the Township is pursuing clean-up of the property and meeting with a contractor. It was also noted that some Attorney's fees have been recovered from the property owner at this time.

Dave Kauffman, of Bossler Road, addressed the Board of Supervisors relative to his experience with extremely poor-quality home internet service at his home for the past twelve years with Frontier. Mr. Kaffman stated that he has been researching options and questioned if there are any other viable options that the Township may be considering with the approaching Comcast Franchise Agreement expiration. The Township Solicitor noted that grant opportunities may exist and will research and notify the Township Office with details.

ADJOURNMENT

Constable Kevin Noecker noted that he has power to arrest and detain if necessary if there are any problems upon adjournment.

It was noted that the Board of Supervisors would meet in Executive Session upon adjournment.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Charles Zimmerman made a motion, seconded by James Fitterling, to adjourn the meeting at approximately 7:25 p.m. Upon roll call, Troutman, Fitterling, and Zimmerman voted yes.

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Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer A. Wassell-Bonser
Township Secretary