

**Pocono Township Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting Minutes
February 1, 2021 7:00 p.m.**

The regular meeting of the Pocono Township Board of Commissioners was held remotely on February 1, 2021 via video and teleconference and was opened by President Rich Wielebinski at 7:03 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Jerrod Belvin, present; Ellen Gndt, present; Jerry Lastowski, present; Keith Meeker, present; and Rich Wielebinski, present.

In Attendance: Leo DeVito, Township Solicitor, Broughal & DeVito; Jon Tresslar, Township Engineer, Boucher & James, Inc.; Taylor Muñoz, Township Manager; Paola Razzaq, Financial Administrator; Bob Sargent, Roadmaster; and Krisann Wean, Administrative Assistant.

Public Comments – No public comment.

Announcements

- An executive session was held before meeting to discuss potential acquisition of real estate.
- We encourage residents to avail themselves of our Township ice skating rink located at TLC Park at the corner of Route 715 and Route 611 in Tannersville. The rink is open weather dependent. While we do our best to update our Facebook page with its availability, we ask residents to always exercise caution and use common sense before using the rink.
- If you have not already, we would encourage you to sign up for the Township newsletter at www.poconopa.gov, follow our Facebook page for frequent community updates and subscribe to our township-wide Savvy Citizen notification system at www.savvycitizenapp.com.

Presentations

- 2020 Q4 Treasurer's Report – Frank Cefali, CPA & Township Treasurer

Provided summary of Pocono Township's revenue, expenses and state of all funds as of December 31, 2020. Stated overall revenue underperformed by about \$200,000, although this was offset by a reduction in expenses which were lower by about \$500,000. Both Real Estate Tax and Local Services Tax revenues were lower than anticipated. E. Gndt asked if the numbers were final for the year or whether additional income or expenses are expected that might not be reflected. P. Razzaq explained there are no large expenses left and there are a couple sources of revenue that have not been realized yet, including franchise fees and delinquent real estate taxes.

Resolutions – None

OLD BUSINESS

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by K. Meeker, to approve the minutes of the January 19, 2021 regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners. All in favor. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Personnel** – None

2. **Financial Transactions**

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Belvin, to ratify vouchers payable received through January 28, 2021 in the amount of \$103,234.86. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by K. Meeker, to ratify gross payroll for pay period ending January 24, 2021 in the amount of \$101,029.92. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by K. Meeker, to approve vouchers payable received through January 28, 2021 in the amount of \$70,457.09. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by K. Meeker, to approve sewer operating fund expenditures through January 28, 2021 in the amount of \$5,227.28. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by K. Meeker, to approve capital reserve fund expenditures through January 28, 2021 in the amount of \$85,541.00. E. Gndant asked if roof was complete. All in favor. Motion carried.

3. Travel/Training Authorizations

- LTAP Flagger Training

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by E. Gndant, to approve flagger training for 12 members of the public works crew at Jackson Township, Monroe County, on April 19, 2021. Cost is PSATS rate of \$50 per person. All in favor. Motion carried.

Report of the President

Richard Wielebinski

- Discussion regarding amendments to the Pocono Township Transient Dwelling Unit Ordinance -

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Belvin, to authorize L. Devito and Township staff to prepare a draft ordinance for consideration at the next meeting. E. Gndant provided clerical notations and grammar edits to the draft. E. Gndant asked about occupant limitation and whether this would be upheld if challenged in court. L. DeVito believes the Township has this authority under health, safety and welfare provisions. All in favor. Motion carried.

- Motion to advertise Pocono Township's amended sign ordinance for public hearing on March 15, 2021 and to send the ordinance to the Monroe County Planning Commission for review –

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by K. Meeker, to advertise Pocono Township's amended sign ordinance for public hearing on March 15, 2021 and to send the ordinance to the Monroe County Planning Commission for review. E. Gndant noted the amended sign ordinance does not mention political signs and asked for clarification on several provisions. J. Lastowski stated he supports the draft as written and further issues can be addressed if needed in the future. All in favor. Motion carried.

Commissioner Comments

Jerrod Belvin – Vice President

- COVID-19/Emergency Management Update – No update.
- FEMA Flood Mitigation grant application – Working with grants consultant to get information to PEMA that is needed.
- The Brookdale Road/S.R. 611 traffic light is on a flash pattern during the snow storm event because motorists have trouble stopping at the light on a hill.

J. Belvin made a motion, seconded by R. Wielebinski, to close Township offices on February 2, 2021 due to snow storm conditions. All in favor. Motion carried.

Ellen Gndant – Commissioner – No update.

Jerry Lastowski – Commissioner

- Follow-up regarding Christmas Eve UGI incident on S.R. 314 – A meeting was held with UGI and he felt many questions about the incident remain unanswered. While UGI is under investigation by the PUC and may be facing a lawsuit, he still felt they could answer more questions regarding the incident and the issues identified. This creates further concerns about the integrity of the entire gas line.

Keith Meeker – Commissioner

- PMCCCI Health & Safety Issues – Zoning Inspection(s) – No update.

Reports

Zoning – No report.

Emergency Services

- Police – No report.
- EMS – No report.
- Fire – No report.

Public Works Report

- Current Public Works projects report – Snow.
- Motion to approve a low bidder for the purchase of a used boom mower, per the specifications publicly bid on PennBid. Bid documents were opened on 1/29/21. Extensive discussion followed regarding buying new versus used. R. Sargent and T. Muñoz were instructed to gather quotes on new equipment, including a mower, bucket truck and asphalt roller. Three bids were received.
 - **Gearhart Brothers Services** – Used John Deere, 385 hours – \$129,000
 - **Messick's** – Brand new unit – \$139,989.76
 - **Stevenson's Equipment** – John Deere 6105 w/Tiger mower, 600 hours – \$93,900

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Lastowski, to reject all bids. All in favor. Motion carried.

- Update – Park Lane Culvert Replacement – Dirt and Gravel Grant – No update.
- Update – Well at MVP – Still working to meet DEP's concerns.

Administration – Manager's Report

- Monroe County Land Bank – Site visit and potential acquisition of 17 Summit Drive, Pocono Manor – The Land Bank is continuing to investigate the property.
- Evaluation of Township's Wireless Carrier – Verizon vs. FirstNet (ATT) – Evaluation is ongoing and additional test units from ATT are being sent to Township to sample.
- Scantek began the process of digitizing Police Department records on Wednesday, January 27, 2021.
- Appraisal of Township-owned property along I-80 by Tom McKeown – Appraisal will be provided sometime this week.
- Motion to proceed with an appraisal of the Township-owned parcel along Bartonsville Avenue adjacent to the current Wine Press Inn parcel.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Lastowski, to proceed with an appraisal of the Township-owned parcel along Bartonsville Avenue adjacent to the current Wine Press Inn parcel. T. Muñoz clarified it would be a public bid process. All in favor. Motion carried.

J. Lastowski stated there was a listing of all township-owned properties and would like to see a copy. E. Gnandt stated she may have that information.

- Update – Pending grant applications – LSA, Multimodal & Recreation Grant Applications – Pending grant applications will be reviewed at the meeting in March of the Commonwealth Finance Authority in Harrisburg.
- The next meeting to discuss the regional HSPS Comprehensive Plan is set for Wednesday, February 17, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

J. Lastowski asked that T. Muñoz send a thank you note to Senator Scavello for attending the UGI meeting on behalf of the Board of Commissioners.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by K. Meeker, to schedule a joint work session with the Jackson Township Board of Supervisors to discuss the Pocono Jackson Joint Water Authority. All in favor. Motion carried.

Township Engineer Report

- St. Paul's Lutheran Drainage Basin - Reviewed plans submitted by the Church and they met the Township's expectations. Responded with some comments back and waiting on the Church engineer's response.
- Archer Lane Drainage Issues – No report.
- Update – Righthand turn lanes from Rt. 611 onto Rimrock Road and Bartonsville Avenue – No report.

R. Wielebinski stated it appears the Township may be responsible for right-of-way that contains a drainage culvert off of Fish Hill Road. Asked that J. Tresslar meet with R. Sargent.

Township Solicitor Report

- Discussion regarding I-80 parcel easement request – Jonathan Weber – Background research continues.
- Sheetz Inc. Liquor License Transfer Hearing – There will be two public hearings at the next meeting to cover the transfer of the liquor license followed by an ordinance hearing.
- Update – Kelly Family Trust - Spoke with Kelly's attorney.
- Zoning Hearing Board Update
 - Appeal of Ryan Possinger – A hearing was held last week where the Possingers provided testimony. Follow-up hearing is on February 11, 2021 where Township will present its arguments.

Public Comment – No public comment.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by E. Gnandt, to adjourn the meeting at 8:32 p.m. All in favor. Motion carried.