

**Pocono Township Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting Minutes
July 19, 2021 7:00 p.m.**

The regular meeting of the Pocono Township Board of Commissioners was held on July 19, 2021 and was opened by President Rich Wielebinski at 7:04 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Jerrod Belvin, present; E. Gnandt, present; J. Lastowski, present; Keith Meeker, absent; and Rich Wielebinski, present.

In Attendance: Leo DeVito, Township Solicitor, Broughal & DeVito; Amy Montgomery, P.E., Representative for Township Engineer, Boucher & James, Inc.; Taylor Muñoz, Township Manager; Robert Sargent, Roadmaster; and Krisann MacDougall, Administrative Assistant.

Public Comment – No public comment.

Announcements

- Pocono Township will host our annual Community Day on Saturday, August 14 (with an August 15 rain date). We will have a variety of activities, exhibitors, and food for the whole family, with fundraising opportunities to support our Fire Company and Library.
- An executive session was held prior to tonight's meeting to discuss personnel issues and the sale of the Township-owned I-80 parcel.

Hearings – No hearings.

Presentations

- Recognition of the service of Sr. Patrolman Scott Kresge and Detective Thomas Lynott upon their retirement from the Pocono Township Police Department.
- Swearing-in ceremony for new Patrolman, Chris Chiusano – District Magistrate Daniel Kresge swore-in Patrolman C. Chiusano.

Resolutions

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Belvin, to pass Resolution 2021-16 approving a Supplemental Appropriation to the 2021 Budget for the purchase of the property located at 114 Alger Avenue, Tannersville, PA. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Lastowski, to pass Resolution 2021-17 authorizing the submission of a DCED Multimodal Transportation Fund grant application to the Commonwealth Financing Authority for the purpose of infrastructure upgrades to the intersection of SR 611, Pigeon Way and Old Mill Road, and the intersection of Pigeon Way and Learn Road in Pocono Township. All in favor. Motion carried.

Consent Agenda

- Motion to approve a consent agenda including the following items:
 - Old Business comprised of the minutes of the July 6, 2021 regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners.
 - New business comprised of approval of the following financial transactions:
 - Ratification of vouchers payable received through July 15, 2021 in the amount of \$4,343.56.
 - Ratification of gross payroll for pay periods ending July 11, 2021 in the amount of \$108,757.21.
 - Vouchers payable received through July 15, 2021 in the amount of \$228,118.14.
 - Sewer operating fund expenditures through July 15, 2021 in the amount of \$128,564.56.

- Sewer construction fund expenditures through July 15, 2021 in the amount of \$10,860.74.
- Approval of a Fire Tax disbursement of \$3,997.44 to the Pocono Township Volunteer Fire Company.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Lastowski, to approve the consent agenda. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Lastowski, to approve an interfund transfer of \$192,000 from the Township's General Fund balance to the Township's Capital Reserve Fund for the purchase of the property located at 114 Alger Avenue, Tannersville, PA. All in favor. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Personnel

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Belvin, to approve a Memorandum of Understanding with the Police Union outlining terms for the temporary appointment of an Acting Chief of Police. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Belvin, to approve an agreement letter for the position of Interim Police Chief between Pocono Township and Shawn Goucher. All in favor. Motion carried.

2. Travel/Training Authorizations – No travel/training authorizations.

Report of the President

Richard Wielebinski

- R. Wielebinski discussed dead trees hanging over roads throughout the Township. A tree has split in half and is jeopardizing safety near 236 Learn Road. Asked for opinion of the Board of Commissioners as to how to handle problem trees on a wide scale. T. Munoz will discuss further with L. DeVito.
- Sealed bids were opened as follows for the purchase of the Township-owned I-80 parcel.
 - Trapasso & Winot, LLC - \$125,000
 - Thomas Lovito - \$63,500
 - Marathon Studios, Inc. - \$33,250

L. DeVito stated the Township does not have to award tonight. New information was discussed regarding a request for easement access across the Township parcel and Mr. Trapasso was given five days to consider whether he will continue with the purchase or withdraw his bid.

- R. Wielebinski made a motion to advertise a public hearing for August 2, 2021 to amend the Township's Cable Franchise Agreement Ordinance. T. Muñoz explained the Township is not ready to act on the agreement, as further review is necessary of the agreement provisions. The Township will develop a revised draft, make additional recommendations to Blue Ridge and ask for updated service discounts for senior citizen customers. R. Wielebinski withdrew his motion.
- Update – COSTARS quote from Miller Sports for the installation of a basketball court at TLC Park – Waiting for response.

Commissioner Comments

Jerrold Belvin – Vice President

- Emergency Management Update – Dam inspections began last week of seven dams located in Pocono Township.
- FEMA Flood Mitigation grant application – Grant application was rejected. Original intent for Public Works and contractor to do work jointly. One significant storm could severely damage Wilke Road. R.

Sargent is going to put together a quote for what it would cost to stabilize at least one side of the road prior to a more extensive fix. Possibility to apply for a Low Volume Road grant to offset the cost.

- Monroe County Hazard Mitigation Plan Update – Draft plan is posted online for review.
- Discussion regarding Township generator failure - Further discussion is needed regarding generator specifications for the municipal complex. T. Muñoz will contact D'Huy Engineering.
- Evaluating issues with crosswalk lights at the intersection of Discovery Drive and SR 611.

Ellen Gndt – Commissioner

- Asked for update on Short Term Rental activity and issues in Cobble Creek.

Jerry Lastowski – Commissioner

- Asked for follow-up regarding repaving of SR 314. T. Muñoz will investigate.

Reports

Public Works Report

- Current Public Works projects report – Wrapping up shoulder work on new pavement. Line striping has been completed. COG-approved line crew will be in Township to do line striping on other Township roads. E. Gndt asked about necessity of having double yellow stripes on roads that were not striped prior. It was clarified that double yellow striping is required for projects that use liquid fuels funds. Once shoulder work is complete, road crew will begin TLC Park projects.
- Update – Park Lane Culvert Replacement Dirt and Gravel Grant – Still waiting on DEP revisions.

Administration – Manager's Report

- Discussion regarding Mountain View Park staff hourly compensation rates and staffing shortages at the Park – Discussed increasing the park employee salary to \$14 per hour and offering a retention bonus due to difficulties attracting and retaining employees. Part of the bonus would be paid out in August with the rest being paid out if employee stays until the end of the season.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Belvin, to increase the base level park employee's salary to \$14 per hour with a retention bonus of \$250 payable on August 15, and a second \$250 in November if they stay the whole season. The new hire will receive \$250 payable in November if he stays the whole season. E. Gndt inquired about compensation for the new hire. Roll call vote: J. Belvin, yes; E. Gndt, no; J. Lastowski, yes; K. Meeker, absent; R. Wielebinski, yes. Motion carried.

- Update – American Recovery Act – Working on getting Recovery Act funds released to the Township.
- Update – Subdivision and appraisal of Bartonsville Avenue pump station property – J. Tresslar stated a field survey is scheduled for end of the week. Should have plan available in two weeks. Will submit plan directly to Planning Commission.
- Update – Regional HSPS Comprehensive Plan – Wrapped up meetings. Draft plan will be available in August and distributed to the Board for review.

Township Engineer Report

- Intersection improvements to Learn Road, Old Mill Road and SR 611 – Discussed a mini roundabout to address various issues with this intersection. Seeking a DCED Multimodal grant.
- St. Paul's Lutheran Drainage Basin – Estimate remediation work will begin in two weeks.
- Righthand turn lanes from Rt. 611 onto Rimrock Road and Bartonsville Avenue – Drafting comments in response to latest PennDOT review.
- Fish Hill easement plan – Church granted Township's easement request.
- Preliminary plan to address drainage issues at Sunlite Lane & Tara Hill Drive – A plan will be circulated tomorrow and will meet with R. Sargent to discuss a solution.

Township Solicitor Report

- HJP Park Agreement between Pocono and Jackson Townships is in progress.
- Preparing for closing at end of month for the purchase of 114 Alger Avenue.
- Core5 Industrial Partners Variance Request – Hearing set for August 31, 2021. R. Wielebinski stated Core5 will only impact a marginal area of the buffer and not the wetlands, and to repair what they disturb. E. Gndt expressed that the Township’s interests should be protected, and the project is too big for the property.

E. Gndt made a motion, seconded by J. Lastowski, to send J. Tresslar and L. DeVito to the zoning hearing to oppose the request for Core5’s intrusion into the wetland buffer. J. Lastowski does not feel we have established the interest of the Board for representation. R. Wielebinski stated he feels these issues are vetted thoroughly by the Planning Commission and does not feel there is a need to stop it. Roll call vote: J. Belvin, no; E. Gndt, yes; J. Lastowski, no; R. Wielebinski, no. Motion failed.

- Update – Johnson STR Appeal – Pending before Judge Zulick.
- Update – Kelly Family Trust – Will be tried on August 2, 2021.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by E. Gndt, to waive Mountain View Park pavilion fees for St. Luke’s University Health Network. All in favor. Motion carried.

Public Comment – No public comment.

Adjournment

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Belvin, to adjourn the meeting at 9:06 p.m. All in favor. Motion carried.