

**Pocono Township Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting Minutes
December 6, 2021 | 7:00 p.m.**

The regular meeting of the Pocono Township Board of Commissioners was held on December 6, 2021 and was opened by Vice President Jerrod Belvin at 7:01 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

In Attendance: Leo DeVito, Township Solicitor, Broughal & DeVito; Jon Tresslar, Township Engineer, Boucher & James, Inc.; and Taylor Munoz, Township Manager.

Public Comment

Sara Hagner (2156 Deerfield Way) – L. DeVito stated that all comments should be made to L. DeVito, due to the threat of litigation, and advised that communication between Commissioners be conducted in executive session. S. Hagner stated that the Hagners first alleged their neighbor had a septic issue on December 17, 2018. Asked whether SEO had responded to concerns addressed in the past and they have retained an engineer to conduct further testing on their property. Have spoken with various state agencies and stated her family has issues stemming from claims of fecal matter in their water.

James Hagner (2156 Deerfield Way) – Explained reason for why the well cap in his yard is cracked.

Tara Sanders (Lot 72 Deerfield Way) – Stated she owns property on Deerfield which was purchased in 2018 and has had ongoing problems with the property. When she purchased, there were problems unknown to her as the buyer, including a trench on the property and drainage washing out the property. R. Sargent stated the prior owners created the issues, the property is very steep and recalls issues tied to the original developer. L. DeVito asked J. Tresslar to pull subdivision plan to see what was shown for this lot of the particular property as it pertains to well, septic, and other features.

Announcements – None

Hearings – None

Presentations

- Presentation of the Pocono Township 2020 Audit – Jeff Weiss, Zelenkofske Axelrod LLC – J. Weiss provided overview of the 2020 audit based on modified accrual basis of accounting. General Fund showed unassigned fund balance at end of the year of \$4.3 million. Provided overview of end-of-year fund balances. Township finished with revenues exceeding expenditures. Police pension fund performed strongly, creating a small net pension asset. Revenues outperformed expectations by about 500k and expenses were less by about the same amount. No major red flags were identified. Further discussion regarding restricted open space fees, maintenance of HR files and material findings.

Resolutions

J. Belvin made a motion, seconded by K. Meeker, to approve Resolution 2021-31 Granting Conditional Approval of the Sanofi Pasteur, Inc. Building & Loading Dock Expansion Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan. J. Tresslar clarified it was a relatively small project, reconfiguring a small loading dock on an existing building. All in favor. Motion carried.

Consent Agenda

- Motion to approve a consent agenda of the following items:
 - Old business consisting of the minutes of the November 15, 2021 regular meeting and November 30, 2021 special meeting of the Board of Commissioners.
 - A budget adjustment request of \$23,857.73 to ensure specified line items have sufficient funding for the remainder of 2021.
 - Financial transactions through December 2, 2021 including:
 - Ratification of vouchers payable in the amount of \$9,020.89, sewer operating expenditures in the amount of \$694,952.70 and capital reserve expenditures in the amount of \$91,659.85.
 - Ratification of gross payroll for the pay period ending October 14 & October 28, 2021 in the amount of \$224,147.97.
 - Vouchers payable in the amount of \$76,388.81.
 - Sewer operating fund expenditures in the amount of \$20,255.82.
 - Sewer construction fund expenditures in the amount of \$29,757.25.
 - Capital reserve fund expenditures in the amount of \$28,597.00.
 - A fire tax disbursement of \$1,086.62.
 - An American Rescue Plan Act transfer to the General Fund of \$4,962.50 for the purpose of implementation of the Township Trais e-permitting platform.

J. Belvin made a motion, seconded by K. Meeker, to approve the consent agenda. E. Gndt requested changes to the minutes of 11/15/21 and 11/30/21. Motion amended to accept these changes. All in favor. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS – None

Report of the President - None

Commissioner Comments

Jerrold Belvin – Vice President

- Emergency Management Update – UGI paving of Swiftwater Road following Christmas gas line explosion incident last year. Continued issues with communications with UGI and no communication regarding issues.

J. Belvin made a motion, seconded by J. Lastowski, to amend agenda for purpose of acting on UGI concerns. All in favor. Motion carried.

J. Belvin made a motion, seconded by J. Lastowski, to have Township Manager reach out to UGI contact and follow up in writing, copying the PUC, formalizing the Township's communication concerns regarding UGI. All in favor. Motion carried.

- J. Belvin outlined issues with traffic light cameras at Northampton/Warner Road. Continued remediation to fix issues with traffic light that was damaged by recent police pursuit.

J. Belvin made a motion, seconded by E. Gndt, to engage Zelenkofske Axelrod LLC for the 2021 Pocono Township Audit. T. Muñoz stated details are included in the engagement letter received from Zelenkofske Axelrod this morning. All in favor. Motion carried.

- Corey Sayre was recognized for his action and work coordinating the entire response to the Birchwood fire. Presented plaque to Mr. Sayre recognizing his actions.

Ellen Gndt – Commissioner

- Requested updates regarding the Blue Ridge Cable Franchise Agreement and BCRA water service availability along the SR 611 corridor.

- Stated she saw an SUV at the Birchwood site and wanted to confirm there have been no issues. Asked if the owners have been asked to remove the dangerous structures.

Jerry Lastowski – Commissioner

- Asked T. Munoz to reach out to PennDOT regarding a pothole on Upper Swiftwater Road near the intersection of Upper/Lower Swiftwater Road.
- Discussion held regarding traffic issues at the church on Upper Swiftwater during foodbank operations.

Keith Meeker – Commissioner – No comment.

Reports

Emergency Services

- Police – Provided report via email.
- Fire – Provided report via email.

Public Works Report

- Current Public Works projects include removal of the Alger Avenue structures and old buildings in disrepair on the Township property.
- TLC Park Project Update – Skating rink liner is installed and holding water, but waiting on consistently cold weather for ice. Will contact PPL to hook up power for the park.
- Update – Park Lane Culvert Replacement – Dirt and Gravel Grant – Starting in late March.

Administration – Manager’s Report

- Job advertisements for open road crew and administrative assistant positions commencing.
- Completing final implementation efforts for Township e-permitting system with launch date timeframe set for January.
- Completing recommendations for revisions to the Township fee schedule, in coordination with the Township engineer and zoning, for Commissioner review. Ensuring applicant’s fees covers Township costs. Will include recommendations for sewer late fees and interest accrual for resolution approval.
- Still waiting on HSPS Comprehensive Plan draft.

E. Gnandt asked whether amusement tax producers have been notified that the tax will be raising in January and whether paperwork has been revised. T. Muñoz confirmed that they have been notified and that revised paperwork will be forthcoming.

J. Lastowski asked for clarification that it is not the Township’s responsibility to tell homeowners whether their lots are buildable or not. It was confirmed that it is the buyer’s responsibility to do their due diligence.

Township Engineer Report

- Update – Consolidation of the Municipal Complex lots – J. Tresslar stated the consolidation plan has been completed and can be added to the agenda for the next meeting for approval. L. DeVito recommended that a quit claim deed be executed by Mr. Ross in favor of Pocono Township for the parcel within the municipal complex.
- Update – Righthand turn lanes from Rt. 611 onto Rimrock Road and Bartonsville Avenue - Have addressed all the technical comments and submitted back to PennDOT. Prepared a letter of intent to be sent out by the Township notifying the property owners of right of way acquisition. E. Gnandt asked whether the owner of the storage facility will have to move the entrance.

Township Solicitor Report

- Zoning Hearing Board updates.
 - Lordi Hearing – 5:00 p.m. on 12/13/21. Side setback variance sought for construction of an attached garage.
 - Update – Taveras Appeal – Waiting for decision from Monroe County Court.
 - Update – Johnson Appeal - Should get brief in next 7-10 days with argument date in first quarter of the year.
- Tentative I-80 closing date set for next week.
- HJP Park Agreement between Pocono and Jackson Townships – Jackson Township’s position has not changed, but they have to revisit the entire “go it alone” proposition because grant funds were used for a multi-municipal park.

E. Gndt asked questions regarding the variance request being made by Lordi, the closing date for the I-80 property and HJP Park.

Public Comment – None

Adjournment

J. Belvin made a motion, seconded by E. Gndt, to adjourn the meeting at 8:31 p.m. All in favor. Motion carried.