

**Pocono Township Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting Minutes
February 21, 2023 | 6:03 p.m.**

The regular meeting of the Pocono Township Board of Commissioners was held on February 21, 2023 and was opened by President Rich Wielebinski at 6:03 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

In Attendance: Taylor Munoz, Township Manager; Leo DeVito, Township Solicitor; Jon Tresslar, Township Engineer; Paola Razzaq, Finance Administrator; and Jennifer Gambino, Administrative Assistant.

Public Comment

Mary McIsaac (Jackson Resident) – Discussed steps other municipalities are taking to address concerns and impact of warehouses.

Elizabeth Casciano (Resident) – Appreciates the hard work and progress with the establishment of the enterprise overlay district. Expressed continued concerns about the proposed Core5 warehouse projects.

Lisa Buccholz (Jackson Resident) – Thanked the Township for work on the curative amendment. Expressed concerns regarding impact of solar fields and warehouse development and discussed potential of putting solar panels on top of warehouses.

Announcements

- Pocono Township is bringing back the Fishing Derby to TLC Park on April 15 from 9 a.m. to noon! More information will follow soon on the Township's Facebook and website.
- The Pocono Township Spring Cleanup will be held Thursday, April 27th through Saturday, April 29th at the Township complex. Residents are welcome to bring their items between 7:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. each day. The Cleanup Fee Schedule is on the Township website at www.poconopa.gov.

Presentations

- Q4 2022 Treasurer's Report – Frank Cefali, CPA & Township Treasurer

F. Cefali presented the revenues and expenses for Q4 and provided a summary of each fund.

E. Gnantt questioned the amusement tax numbers. Discussion regarding a potential audit of the amusement tax producers. Board authorized Township Manager to discuss with the Township auditor and costs that would be involved.

- Running Lane LLC – Discussion regarding request for extension of the conditional approval for proposed hotel project in Scotrun.

Developer has requested a one-year extension on their hotel approval and hopeful for a construction start this year.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by K. Meeker, to prepare a resolution to further extend the plan for an additional 9 months beyond the 3 months given at the last meeting. E. Gnantt asked for clarification. J. Lastowski stated he has no issue giving the additional 9 months for the full year to accomplish the necessary tasks. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Belvin, to amend the agenda to hear Monroe County Conservation District presentation. All in favor. Motion carried.

John Motz presented on behalf of the MCCD regarding the Act 167 model stormwater ordinance. Act 167 is designed to protect water resources. The County has recently completed updates to the model ordinance. The plan was approved on a county level by DEP at the end of 2022. He recapped certain revisions including weather calculations, definitions, digital mapping, and a number of “fill in the blanks” for municipalities to tailor the new model for their use. Municipalities are supposed to adopt the plan by May 2, 2023.

Hearings – None

Resolutions

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by K. Meeker, to approve Resolution 2023-06 granting the President and Vice President of the Board of Commissioners signatory authority for executing all documentation pertaining to the acquisition of ROW for the S.R. 715 bridge replacement project. 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 February 6, 2023 meeting of the Board of Commissioners.
 - Financial transactions through February 16, 2023 as presented, including ratification of general fund expenditures, sewer operating expenditures and gross payroll; vouchers payable, sewer operating expenditures, construction fund expenditures, capital reserve expenditures and transfers.

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

NEW BUSINESS

1. Personnel

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by K. Meeker, to authorize the Township Manager and Public Works director to hire a total of seven seasonal park staff for Mountain View Park as provided for in the 2023 budget. E. Gmandt asked for clarification on number of park staff. All in favor. Motion carried.

2. Travel/Training Authorizations – None

Report of the President

Richard Wielebinski

- Interview of interested candidates for two Zoning Hearing Board alternate positions:
 - Dee Ackerman – Stated she wants to help the community and served as the secretary for the ZHB for ten years while employed by the Township. Working in the Township for over 30 years, and having served as zoning assistant and ZHB secretary, prepared her for the role. Familiar with various provisions governing hardship, etc. Confident in ability to remain unbiased in the position – has no agenda.
 - Gary Gallerie – Would like to give back to the community. Has not sat on a board in the Township prior and stated it would be a good steppingstone to become more involved in the Township. Has overseen projects up to \$90 million and has managed properties up and down the East Coast. Has grown up around Township projects, dealing with building codes, plans and Township requirements. Affirmed ability to be neutral.

- Elizabeth Casciano – Expressed interest in serving on the ZHB after witnessing activity of the Board of Commissioners and Planning Commission at work. Has the ability to show up, listen and be part of a team. Has worked as a realtor for 35 years and has developed skills including listening, problem solving, organization, STR management, and contract negotiation. Stated she can be unbiased in her approach and would be conscious of any situations where she may need to recuse herself if there was a potential conflict.
- Kyle VanFleet – Lifelong resident of Pocono Township. Used to serve with the volunteer fire department and feels this opportunity would be better aligned with his work schedule. Has experience in welding, construction, and planning. Professional experience aligns with what would be needed on a Zoning Hearing Board. Stated he has the ability to remain neutral in all decisions.
- Motion to advertise the 2023 Material Bids – No action taken.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Lastowski, to engage Zelenkofske Axelrod for completion of the 2022 Township audit. E. Gndt asked whether this should include an audit of the amusement tax producers. Further discussion regarding use of auditor separately. All in favor. Motion carried.

- Discussion and possible action regarding expansion of the Township's sewer service area – Discussion regarding survey of residents to see whether there is interest in connecting to public sewer. Would like to have a survey of residents first to see whether it is something desired. Discussion regarding exploratory cost.

Commissioner Comments

Jerrod Belvin – Vice President

J. Belvin made a motion, seconded by R. Wielebinski, to open agenda to consider filling open spot in ZHB. All in favor. Motion carried.

J. Belvin made a motion, seconded by R. Wielebinski, to appoint Natasha Leap as full member of the Zoning Hearing Board to fill the remainder of the position vacated by Bill Sayre, to be ratified via resolution at the next Board meeting. All in favor. Motion carried.

- Emergency Management Update – Thanked Township personnel for work to move fallen trees in storm this afternoon.
- Update – PPL utility lines and possible drainage issues on Barton Court – No update.

Ellen Gndt – Commissioner

Expressed concerns regarding language in PJJWA transfer agreement. Discussion regarding specific provisions in the agreement. L. DeVito to review the PJJWA agreement further and provide answer to submitted questions.

Jerry Lastowski – Commissioner – None

Keith Meeker – Commissioner - None

Reports

Police Report

Discussion regarding change with local MDJ no longer allowing for a court liaison, which could increase costs to the Township for overtime expense.

Planning to host Coffee-with-a-Cop and National Night Out Event.

E. Gndt made a motion, seconded by K. Meeker, to approve a quote from Mount Pocono Fence to install barbed wire around the perimeter of the police impound yard in the amount of \$2,275.00. All in favor. Motion carried.

- General police updates. Officers Iannazzo, Dehart, and Moser saved life of a victim using an AED back in November. Officer Kylie completed her FTO program.

Discussion regarding need for a generator.

Public Works Report

- Current Public Works projects – New Foreman and Assist Foreman did good work wrapping up an emergency tonight to the benefit of the residents. Continuing to cut back roads, completing drainage repairs, repairing mowers, inventory of all equipment and tools, tour of the parks and getting project list together.
- Mountain View Park updates – Preparing for opening of season.
- TLC Park updates
 - Dog Park Project(s) – Completed mulch in the dog park and will conduct drainage/grading work.
 - Sealing of Lower Pond – Working to address lower pond leaks.
- Update regarding the rental or lease of a new sweeper truck – Township has looked at multiple units and still evaluating options.

Administration – Manager’s Report

- Coordination of DCNR punch list items for installation of splash pad – Working on punch list.
- Due diligence ongoing regarding Swiftwater bus stop dumping issues – Working with PennDOT to identify ownership, and various issues at the Swiftwater bus stop.

Township Engineer Report

- Sidewalk installation for Wendy’s and Turkey Hill – On hold for Wendy’s and waiting on response from Turkey Hill. L. DeVito will reach out and ask them to communicate with solicitor.
- Parking area design for Old Learn Farm open space parcel adjacent to PPL easement – Completing survey work for parking area design.
- Update – TASA SR 611 sidewalk project – Had a meeting with consultant regarding street lighting. Will review layout with T. Munoz for proposed sidewalk design.
- Update – Righthand turn lanes from Rt. 611 onto Rimrock Road and Bartonsville Avenue – On hold.

Township Solicitor Report

- Easement agreement with Tom Lovito for access to Old Learn Farm open space parcel – Comments received from engineer and will plan on action item at next meeting.
- Discussion regarding preparation of an ordinance codifying BCRA’s public water service area for consistency with the Township’s central sewage (Act 537) service area – Would like permission from Board to talk with Patrick, Mike, and Jon to see what is required.
- Update – Closing for sale of Bartonsville Avenue parcel – Monroe County has been difficult in recordation of the deed for the parcel, which has held up the closing. Working to resolve.
- Update – Request for sewer service received for the proposed Hawthorne development – Majority of the property is located in Paradise Township. Request needs to come from Paradise Township.
- Zoning Hearing Board updates
 - February 16, 2023 – Cima Network, Inc. seeing variance from the ordinance restricting wall signs to a maximum of 50 square feet - Relief was granted.
- Update – Johnson Appeal Commonwealth Court argument – Nothing from Commonwealth Court.
- Update – PJJWA transfer agreement – Discussed previously.

Public Comment - None

Adjournment

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Belvin, to adjourn the meeting at 8:53 p.m. All in favor.
Motion carried.