

MINUTES
July 6, 2020
Teleconference Meeting of the Board of Supervisors
7:00 p.m.

A scheduled meeting of Milford Township Supervisors was called to order at 7 P.M. by Chairperson Penney Luhrs through a teleconference, the call-in number for which had been advertised in advance in the Pike County Dispatch. Also present were Vice-Chairman Gary M. Williams, Supervisor Rachel Hendricks, Solicitor Anthony Magnotta, Zoning Officer Shawn Bolles, and Secretary/Treasurer Shahana Shamim.

Gary M. Williams made a motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting, Rachel Hendricks seconded, and it was passed.

Treasurer's Report:

Shahana reported that she had received \$138.67 from Code Inspections, \$200 from Zoning, and \$7,627.43 from the Tax Collector. She also reported the account balances as \$54,106.97, \$122,216.20, \$22,026.27, \$7,043.61, and \$77,754.70 in NBT Bank, Wayne Bank (Investment), Wayne Bank (Payroll), PLGIT (General), and PLGIT (Liquid Fuels) respectively.

Roadmaster:

New PennDOT Winter Municipal Agreement: Gary M. Williams, the Roadmaster, reported that the Township had received a request from PennDOT to renew a five-year contract for Bennett Avenue and Foster Hill Road. The Solicitor said that he saw that there was a 1.3 percent increase. Gary made a motion to sign the contract resolution with Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Transportation for Maintenance of Bennett Avenue, which was two tenths of a mile and the Foster Hill Road, which was just over 2.165 miles, for the next five years. He added that the first-year payment would be \$5,692.74. Penney seconded to this motion, and it was passed unanimously.

Zoning:

Zoning Hearing Board Meeting: Shawn informed the Board that Zoning Hearing Board Solicitor Anthony Waldron will try to get an extension from Columbia Gas, otherwise this meeting would probably happen on the 22nd or 29th of this month. He continued that it is a safety matter for Columbia Gas, there won't be a lot of participants, and hence an in-person meeting could be held in the Township meeting room. Another option could be to conduct a hybrid meeting of the Zoom and an in-person meeting, where he himself and Zoning Hearing Board Members would be present in person, and to communicate with the rest of the participants remotely.

Public Participation #1:

None

Correspondence:

Shahana presented correspondences including PSATS, Pike County Commissioners Office, Westfall Authority, Pike County Conservation District, KC Sign & Awnings, NBT Bank, Orange Stone Group, Farley & Bernathy, LLC, Best Western Inn, Delaware Valley School District, PennDOT, freeconferencecall, A&H, PA Department of Community and Economic

Development, Pike County Emergency Management, Penn State University, Dingman Township, PIRMA, and Pike County Office of Community Planning.

Gary M. Williams commented that the correspondence from Orange Stone Group was a request about a property, which the buyer thought had three apartments when he bought the property, on Foster Hill. The Zoning Officer told him that that property could have two apartments only, and they had to remove the stove from the lower apartment. Shawn said that the current property owner did not show any proof of this property, which was foreclosed, being a legal three-family property. He continued that the previous owner had converted the garage into another apartment, for which no Zoning or Building permits existed. The Solicitor suggested checking on the assessment with the county and how the property was advertised for sale. He said that he would take a look at that correspondence. Rachel commented that the correspondence from Mike Sullivan had inquired about the Zoning of a particular property. Mr. Bolles indicated he was uncertain as to the zoning of that particular property. Mr. Stroyan commented that some property owners had chosen their properties to remain residential when they were offered a choice of Zoning. He added that Mr. Carson Helfrich probably had an original Zoning Map. Mr. DiLorenzo added that an original Zoning Map, which was colored, had been in the Township building.

Old Business:

- a. Extension of Emergency Declaration for COVID-19:** The Emergency Management Director, Robert DiLorenzo, said that the County had entered the Green Phase, and case numbers were not changing a lot. Penney suggested conducting in-person Planning Board meetings, as this Board would be handling important things in the upcoming months. Rachel suggested conducting Supervisors' meetings in person before any Planning Commission meetings, as Supervisors are the leaders. The Township Secretary had obtained pricing and approval to use the Best Western Inn and the DV Auditorium. Penney suggested conducting the next Supervisors' meeting through the Zoom and buying a camera to equip the Township Computer for the Zoom meeting. Mr. Stroyan said that somebody would have to be knowledgeable enough to put up documents on to the Zoom platform during meetings. Rachel said that nobody should be muted from making comments. Fred Weber added that muting somebody would violate the Sunshine law. Rachel added that the Pennsylvania Governor had extended the Emergency Declaration for 90 day in the past month. Penney made a motion to extend the Emergency Declaration for another 30 days, Rachel seconded, and it was passed unanimously. Penney made another motion for Shahana to advertise for the first Zoom meeting of Milford Township for the next Supervisors' meeting, which was scheduled to be held on July 20, 2020, and to purchase and set up the Township Computer with a camera, at a cost not to exceed \$100, for this Zoom meeting. Rachel seconded to this motion, and it was passed unanimously.
- b. Emergency Services:** Rachel said that the Fire Department was short of Volunteers, and the most this Township could generate without a Referendum was only \$14,000, which would not solve the EMT problem that the Fire Department was facing. During the EMS meeting on June 17th, there was discussion regarding doing a campaign so that residents realize how delicate this situation is. Tafton ambulance has even had to

come to handle calls from this area, as no local ambulances were available. Jeff Christiansen, the Chief of Milford Fire Department (MFD), had informed the EMS group that the Milford Fire Department has run out of the money that they had received from the Municipalities, and fortunately they had some Volunteers return to service. Estimates are that \$300K – 400K would be needed to solve this EMS problem, and an ongoing conversation would be needed to figure out how to generate and allocate this money. The Solicitor added that two and a half mils could be raised through the Referendum. Rachel continued that Dingman Township had some EMS Tax, but it is not their maximum half a mil amount. Dingman Township does not have any senior citizen housing complexes or nursing homes or major manufacturing sites, whereas the Milford area has Belle Reeve and Econopak.

The Solicitor commented that this cookie factory, Econopak, needed a conditional use approval. The Solicitor continued that the Township could use its Zoning Ordinance and SALDO, which are quite old and needed to be updated, to enforce this conditional use and the environmental impact. A Planner could take a look at a development and the Developer of a property could be made to pay for the installation and maintenance of a traffic light, for example. Penney suggested tabling this issue. Mr. Stroyan added that the Planning Commission could look at environmental impact fees, as the Township was moving towards making a major change in the Zoning Ordinance and the SALDO. The Solicitor assessed that it was actually important to educate residents about the critical shortage of the EMS service. Mr. DiLorenzo suggested hiring EMTs through the County and raising property taxes by \$100 a year. He added that another option could be to hire 1-2 paid EMTs for each Municipality instead of paying \$1.6 Million to an outside company. Rachel said that EMS services meeting participants came up with the impression that the County was not able to tax for Emergency Services but it was unclear whether the County was prohibited from hiring and employing EMTs without having a separate ability to tax for that. Penney commented that in that meeting it looked like the Fire Department was not keen on blending Municipalities for EMS services.

Penney suggested putting a letter on the Township website to inform people that volunteers and donations are needed. Rachel made a motion to put a letter in the website asking the Community for support for the Fire and Ambulance, and to send letters to the State Representatives and County Commissioners asking for solutions for the critical shortage of volunteers and the challenges with adequate funding for Emergency services. Penney seconded to this motion, and it was passed unanimously.

New Business:

- a. Zoning Permit Fees:** Supervisors said that there would be a new Fee Schedule, which would cap the Zoning Permit Fee to a max. Penney said that she had received a document for Zoning Fee caps from the Zoning Officer, and she would forward it to the other Supervisors. She added that according to the Township Zoning Officer, Shawn Bolles, this max could be set to \$10,000 for all multi-million-dollar construction projects. She asked Shawn if this amount would be able to cover the cost for such large construction projects. Shawn replied that large construction projects are often broken down into smaller projects, each of which would have its own Zoning

Permit. Rachel inquired if the Township was recording the costs associated with Zoning Permit administration properly, as developers might come back with a claim of being charged too more than the cost for their Zoning Permits. She added that the Township needed to be able to defend itself in case this scenario happens. Shawn replied that large projects go to the Planning Commission for approvals, these permits are logged into the Permit Manager, and the Secretary also keeps records. The Solicitor said that using the coverage of administrative fees and buying Zoning software can be used to defend the Township. He added that Escrow accounts for maintenance should be kept for 18 months for nonresidential constructions so that they know that they can get the money back if they maintain the site properly.

- b. Request from Planning Board for a Joint Comprehensive Plan with Westfall Township:** Mr. Stroyan said that Milford Township Planning Commission is requesting the Board of Supervisors to send a formal letter to Westfall Township for doing a Joint Comprehensive Plan with that Township, to seek the funding for this Joint Plan, and to formally start the process of development by making a motion. Penney commented that Westfall Township was bigger than this Township, and that Township has more businesses. Mr. Stroyan said that the bottom line was that it would cost much less to develop a Joint Comprehensive Plan with another Municipality. Penney inquired if this Joint Comprehensive Plan would exclude developing condos in the Township. Mr. Stroyan replied that it was hard to tell what kinds of development would be encouraged or discouraged until this plan was underway, but the financial advantage was the main point here. Rachel inquired if all uses needed to be provided for in each municipality unless Zoning was changed such as an overlay district across both municipalities which could be done with this Joint Comprehensive Plan. The Solicitor explained that a Comprehensive Plan is just a goal for developments of a Township or a number of Townships that are involved in the Joint Comprehensive Plan, and Zoning Ordinances could still remain different even if these Townships make a Joint Comprehensive Plan. He added that a Joint Zoning Ordinance (or Overlay) could still be done by these Townships if they wanted to. Rachel Hendricks made a motion to send a letter to Westfall Township to formalize Milford Township's desire to make the Joint Comprehensive Plan and seek State funding and County funding. Gary M. Williams and Penney Luhrs seconded, and it was passed unanimously.

Mr. Stroyan said that Mr. DiLorenzo had composed a survey, which Mr. Shepstone had tweaked, for the Comprehensive Plan. He informed the Board that this matter was discussed in the last Planning Commission meeting, and Mr. Shepstone had created this survey in a survey monkey site, where residents would be able to take this survey. He requested for this survey to be posted on the Township website. Mr. Magnotta inquired why a survey from residents would be needed if this Township was ready to proceed to make a Joint Comprehensive Plan with Westfall Township. Rachel said that the Planning Commission had been discussing that this survey was the precursor for developing the Comprehensive Plan for nearly a year. She added that some aspects of these Townships would be similar, such as, the ambulance, whereas some aspects would be different, and these different aspects for each Township could be added in this Joint Comprehensive Plan. Mr. DiLorenzo added

that the Joint Comprehensive Plan won't be made if these two Townships cannot agree with each other to do so when they sit at the table. Rachel made a motion to post the Comprehensive Plan Survey Monkey link, which Mr. Shepstone had sent to Township, on the Township website and on facebook, advertise the link in the Dispatch get feedback from the community, and thus to start the process of developing the Comprehensive Plan. Penney Luhrs seconded to this motion, and it was passed unanimously.

Public Participation:

Bill Pitman inquired if there were any requirements for calling 911. Supervisors replied that there were no requirements for calling 911, and the fire departments send appropriate personnel and equipment based on the call. Rachel said that people had been calling ambulances for non-life-threatening conditions, and some people even do not correctly portray the situation when they call 911. She added that the County should be asked to discuss the possibility of running ambulettes, which could reduce a lot of burden from ambulances. Evelyn DiLorenzo commented that the County should have gotten Municipalities together to solve the ambulance issue sooner. Supervisors said that the County is not allowed to tax for that purpose under current law.

There was no other business or executive sessions needed, and Penney Luhrs made a motion to pay the bills and adjourn, Gary M. Williams seconded, and it was passed unanimously. Adjournment was at 8:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Shahana Shamim

Secretary/Treasurer