

**TOWNSHIP OF NORTH HUNTINGDON, BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL MEETING, THURSDAY, JANUARY 14, 2020, 7:00 P.M.
11279 Center Highway, North Huntingdon, PA 15642
Presiding Officer – Zachary Haigis, President, Board of Commissioners**

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Haigis called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL

Commissioner Stump Present
Commissioner Atwood Present
Commissioner Blasko Present
Commissioner Zona Present
Commissioner Bevan Present
Commissioner Gass Present
Commissioner Haigis Present

Also Present:
Jeffrey Silka
Solicitor Dice
Ryan Fonzi
Paul Christner

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CITIZENS' INPUT

There was no citizen input.

Work Sessions Discussion Topics

1) Act 537 Special Study

Manager Silka states he provided a memo to the Board that NHTMA and KLH provided a completed Act 537 sewage facilities plans special study for upgrading the Youghigheny waste water treatment plant. He states this plan has to be advertised for thirty days for public comments, then following the Board has to take action on it. The executive summary was attached for review.

Mike Branthoover – General Manager of North Huntingdon Township Municipal Authority – states the reason for the plan is because right now the treatment facility located on Turner Valley Road treats approximately twelve thousand five hundred homes in the Township. The facility was built in 1970 and is approximately fifty years old. He states replacement parts are hard to find and in the next year or so the new permit will be coming up for renewal which may cause treatment limits to be difficult to meet. Mr. Branthoover states the tanks are getting old, the concrete is bad and parts are difficult to find for repairs. The facility treats 3.31 million gallons per day. No recommendations are going to be made to increase the capacity of the plant however some new treatments will be implemented such as SBR (Sequential Batch Reactor) which does all the treatment in one tank. The plant will have four tanks and each tank will do a complete treatment process and then discharge. He states no chlorine will be discharged and will use a UV disinfection system. Manager Silka will put it on the agenda.

January 14, 2021

2) NHTMA Building Permit Fee Waiver Request

Manager Silka states in the past have worked cooperatively with NHTMA to waive building permits and they in turn have waived tap in fees / permits. There were no Board comments.

3) Westmoreland County Hazard Mitigation Plan

Manager Silka provided the Board with the plan along with the executive summary. He states this is a plan for FEMA and requires to be a participant if we want to access FEMA funds in case of a disaster. There were no Board comments.

4) McMahan Holiday Donation

Manager Silka states McMahan Engineers is the parent company of Traisr has donated one hundred dollars for recreation funding which will be used for gift cards for the snowman contest.

5) County Hauling Update

Manager Silka states the second quarter and on from last year have been seeing gradual improvements. Collections and routes have been more consistent and not as many missed pickups. Their administrative staff have been very much in contact with issues. Customer service has not been good, calls not returned and a lot of rudeness. Billing has also become an issue.

Commissioner Haigis states he can see improvements, but are still some issues. His biggest concern is still having issues with staff having to work on residents issues and using staff time. He asks if there are any future meetings scheduled to discuss.

Manager Silka states there was a meeting scheduled for this week, but Mike Turley is not available and will reschedule.

6) Forest Drive Stormwater Improvement Project

Manager Silka states sixteen bids were received for this project on January 12th and was awarded to CH&D Enterprises of New Stanton who was the low bidder at one hundred three thousand four hundred fifty one dollars for the base bid and one hundred twenty one hundred seventy six dollars for the alternate bid as there is one section of the project where it is unknown what is underneath. The budget for this project was one hundred twenty five thousand dollars for this and is under budget. He recommends putting on the agenda for approval.

Commissioner Haigis asks about the timeline to begin to start.

Paul Christner states once it is approved can start the work.

January 14, 2021

7) Brandon & Tracy Urban – 3331 Coulter Road

Manager Silka states they are building a new house and are asking to be allowed to keep the existing house occupied by their elderly father until the new house is completed. He states the Urbans have also posted a ten thousand dollar bond that if the old house is not torn down within six months of the occupancy permit, the Township will tear the house down with the bond.

8) 2021 Police Vehicle Purchases

Manager Silka states this goes through COSTARS for all police vehicles which means they do not have to be bid. He states three dealerships were contacted (Shorkey, Laurel Auto in Johnstown, and TriStar) and the recommendation is to go with Ford Interceptors instead of Dodge. Manager Silka recommends for roughly five hundred more than Laurel Auto at thirty three thousand two hundred thirty five dollars, to go with Shorkey for thirty three thousand seven hundred thirty nine dollars with the vehicles on the lot and is local.

Commissioner Stump asks if possible to ask Shorkey to match the lowest bid.

Commissioner Gass states that would save five hundred four dollars per vehicle and agrees to ask Shorkey to match the lowest bid.

Commissioner Haigis states he is ok with asking Shorkey and would like to see the business kept in the Township.

Commissioner Blasko states he would like to get the best deal.

Commissioner Zona also agrees in asking Shorkey to match the lowest bid.

Commissioner Gass asks if the dealerships knew what the others were bidding and where would the service be done. He feels to go with Shorkey and sides with Commissioner Haigis to keep the business in the Township.

Commissioner Stump states this was not a competitive bid for the Township.

Manager Silks states it is a competitive bid for the State.

Commissioner Zona states he is ok to check the price and asks if there is anything in COSTARS that would prohibit that.

Solicitor Dice states it is ok to ask to match the price to save money.

Commissioner Haigis states it is the Board consensus to reach out to Shorkey for price matching and place on the agenda.

January 14, 2021

PLANNING / ENGINEERING TOPICS:

- 1) **S-13-2020: Mountain Ridge Estates Revision 7, Wisperwood Court, PRD Zoning**
**Proposed lot consolidation involving two lots in Mountain Ridge Estates.*

Mr. Fonzi states this is revision 7 on Wisperwood Court in Mountain Ridge Estates. He states currently the developer owns both lots. Back in 2005, one of the lots was slated for a four unit townhouse, but the lots were never sold to build the townhouse. He states at one point in 2016, the developer had the four townhouse lots turned into two lots for single family homes. Since then, the lots still have not sold, so the developer wants to consolidate the two lots to make one large lot.

There were no Board comments.

OLD BUSINESS

Conditional Use of Chicken Keeping in Residentially-Zoned Areas (Process Update)

Manager Silka states the Municipal Planning Commission and Westmoreland Planning Commission have to have the proposed amendment at least thirty days prior to the public hearing which will be on Thursday, February 11th at 6:00pm. He states he provided to the Board the comments from the Westmorland County Planning.

FURTHER BOARD COMMENTS

Commissioner Gass states he would like to discuss the CARES Act Grant for thirty thousand dollars that found itself twice in the Tribune Review. He quotes that Township Manager Jeffrey Silka informed the seven commissioners that on December 28, 2020 that he picked up the thirty thousand dollars County CARES Act check. He asks Manager Silka if that is true. Manager Silka states that is true. Commissioner Gass explains the CARES Act provides assistance for State, Local and Tribal governments through the CORONA Relief Fund. Commissioner Gass states the editorial in the Tribune Review stated that North Huntingdon Board hurts its residents by defying State COVID mandates. He states that is not true and Gina Cerilli stated the Board committed no violations.

Manager Silka states the Township's application was lost in the mail, so Commissioner Zona contacted Commissioner Chew and Manager Silka scanned and sent the application and was able to pick up the check.

Commissioner Zona states that is what happened and everything he has read in the Tribune was very irresponsible saying how the Board is not following the mandates.

Commissioner Gass states two residents of the Township wanted Commissioner Chew to take back the thirty thousand dollars to punish the Board.

Commissioner Stump adds that North Huntingdon never took a vote on anything.

January 14, 2021

Commissioner Bevan adds that residents that wrote never attended a meeting so how can they be creditable and the other is she feels there is carelessness on the editor of the paper as she never checked it out before the articles were published nor was she ever at a meeting.

Commissioner Zona agrees with Commissioner Bevan with whoever wrote the articles are irresponsible and states there was a reporter from the Tribune that was present at the meeting and the article was still published. He asks the Tribune to retract the article and print a new corrected one.

Commissioner Haigis states he pushed to keep the meetings open to the public or residents can call or email the Commissioner and Manager to be addressed. Act 15 of 2020, that State Legislature gave permission to local government to hold virtual meetings but still has to have a quorum. He states it was his opinion and majority of the Board to hold public meetings.

Commissioner Zona states the General Assembly of Pennsylvania just swore in two hundred fifty three members and nobody had an issue with that.

Commissioner Atwood asks if the 2022 budget get started sooner than later so the Board has plenty of time to balance and fit the needs of the Township.

Manager Silka states the plan is to have a workshop in March dedicated to starting the budget process.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Commissioner Zona
Second: Commissioner Atwood

Motion to adjourn.

Motion carried 7 – 0 – 0 (7:44 P.M.)

- Special Meeting minutes of January 14, 2021 were approved by the Board of Commissioners on February 17, 2021.



Jeffrey Silka, Township Secretary
tjm



Zachary Haigis, President

