

TOWNSHIP OF NORTH HUNTINGDON, BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL MEETING, THURSDAY, APRIL 15, 2021, 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 Absent
Commissioner Haigis Present

Also Present:
Jeffrey Silka
Mike Turley
Solicitor Dice
Ryan Fonzi

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CITIZENS INPUT

Zach Davies – 14500 Michael Drive – states Hartford Heights VFD again was a no show at a fire alarm at Golden Eagle Equipment.

Scott Gest – 10 Bethel Road – states he was here in December regarding the corruption at Hartford Heights Fire Departments Club. He states this past week he was voted out and expelled after thirty years of service because he spoke of the corruption. He states in February, there was twenty one thousand six hundred fifty two dollars made at the bar and in March sixteen thousand two hundred thirty dollars, but questioned where the money is going. There are illegal poker machines and no accountability and no transparency. Mr. Gest states that no money from the bar is going to the fire department and when people donate money goes into the general account.

Craig Couchenour – 1978 Bernice Drive – states he is here on behalf of the North Huntingdon Township Fire Chiefs to discuss the Act 172 that was adopted in 2018. He states it started as a two hundred fifty dollar, one percent earned income reimbursement and a twenty percent property tax reimbursement. The property tax reimbursement is capped through the State, but the one percent can be adjusted within the municipality. He states he is here to try to keep the recruitment of volunteer members by offering FEMA grants to include college tuitions, stipends, money to fire departments, turnout gear, and insurance policies for the firefighters. He states the FEMA grant ends this year. He states it would be nice to increase the wage tax to a cap of five hundred dollars as fuel and wear and tear on their own vehicles while serving the community on their own time. If a paid fire service would be put in the Township, would cost the tax payers a lot of money.

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RESPONSE TO CITIZENS INPUT

Zach Davies - Manager Silka states he is still in the process regarding response times.

Scott Gest – Commissioner Haigis states if he has a formal complaint to reach out to the police department or chief.

Work Sessions Discussion Topics

1) 1st Quarter Financial Presentation

Manager Silka gives a presentation on the 1st quarter budget review.



1st Quarter
Financial Review.pdf

2) 2022 Budget Discussion – Comparable Municipalities Presentation

Manager Silka states Commissioner Haigis requested a comparison with other municipalities' spending.



Comparable
Municipalities Prese

Commissioner Blasko asks how McCandless is operating their Administration at fourteen percent. Manager Silka states most of their clerks are part time and non-union.

Commissioner Gass asks why North Huntingdon has the highest millage and is the reassessment the reason. Manager Silka states millage has to go down when reassessed and the last reassessment was in the 1950's. Also, a reassessment has to be County wide, could take four to five years and is very expensive.

Commissioner Stump agrees that it is very expensive to reassess.

3) American Rescue Plan

Manager Silka states there has been no update on this as there is no information to share. He states he has been to three webinars and the ways the money can be spent is unclear, however there is a good chance to use the money for the HVAC system.

Commissioner Gass asks how the money for the previous HVAC system lawsuit was spent. Manager Silka states the money was put into the fund balance.

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4) Proposed Resolution Supporting Local Radar (Commissioner Blasko)

Commissioner Blasko is asking for support to allow the use of radar in municipalities to make the municipality safer.

Commissioner Stump states signage will be required and there will be a limitation to how much revenue the Township is able to receive.

5) Act 172 EIT Rebate Discussion (Commissioner Blasko)

Commissioner Blasko states there are two stipulations to qualify for, one being twenty percent maximum property tax to be modified and second is the one percent wage tax. He states he spoke with Manager Silka and states fifteen fire fighters maxed out at the two hundred fifty dollar amount. Strawpump and Hartford Heights VFD's currently do not participate in the program. He feels this is a great incentive to off-set gas prices and wear on personal vehicles and not pay for a paid fire department.

Commissioner Gass states he will support the increase from two hundred fifty dollars to five hundred dollars. He states there are also stipulations that have to be met such as training and number of calls answered, per person.

Motion: Commissioner Blasko

Motion to put on the agenda for next Wednesday to modify Ordinance to change the value from two hundred fifty dollars to five hundred dollars.

Second: Commissioner Gass

Motion carried 7 – 0 – 0

6) Body Worn Cameras Grant

Manager Silka states the police department was able to receive a twenty four thousand six hundred thirty four dollar matching grant for the purchase of body cameras which was already in the budget for 2021.

PLANNING / ENGINEERING TOPICS:

- 1) S-03-2021: Silvis-Sage Boundary Line Revision, Ardara Road/Sage Lane, R-4 Zoning**
****Proposed boundary line revision between two lots off of Sage Lane.***

Director Fonzi states the Sages' would like to purchase 0.865 acres from the Silvis'. He states this is advantages in two ways as the easement for Sage Lane runs through the Silvis' property and the extra land will be used as an accessory structure. The Planning Commission recommended approval with no conditions.

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2) S-04-2021: Jacko-Andrykovitch Plan, Ridge Road/Lynch Drive, R-2 Zoning
**Proposed boundary line revision and subdivision between two existing lots.*

Director Fonzi states the Jacko's would like to create a new lot of five acres for a home for their daughter and increasing the Andrykovitch's lot to 17.299 acres. The Planning Commission recommended for approval.

3) S-05-2021: Mountain Ridge Estates Revision 8, Forest Oaks Trail, PRD Zoning
**Proposed minor subdivision involving two lots in Mountain Ridge Estates.*

Director Fonzi states this involves two lots where the developer is requesting set back relief on both. After these two lots are developed, there is only one vacant lot left. The Planning Commission recommended for approval.

4) S-07-2021: Thomas Farm Acres, Guffey Road, R-2 Zoning
**Proposed major subdivision located at Kerber's Farm and dairy store.*

Director Fonzi states this is at the site of the existing Kerber Farm. Knights Landing Incorporated has a sales agreement with Thomas and Ellen Kerber to develop approximately 2/3 of the existing farm, sixty one single family lots.

FURTHER BOARD COMMENTS

Commissioner Blasko states that Rescue 8 will be administering COVID vaccines at Calvary Church from 10am – 6pm on Tuesday, April 20th.

Commissioner Gass states Penns Woods Civic Association will host a food truck event on Saturday, April 17th from 3pm – 7pm. He also states he had the opportunity to visit the new NHTMA building and is very impressive. He encourages all to visit.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Commissioner Zona
Second: Commissioner Blasko

Motion to adjourn.

Motion carried 6 – 0 – 0 (7:57 P.M.)

- Special Meeting minutes of April 15, 2021 were approved by the Board of Commissioners on May 19, 2021.



Jeffrey Silka, Township Secretary
/jjm



Zachary Haigis, President