

TOWNSHIP OF NORTH HUNTINGDON, BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING, WEDNESDAY, MAY 18, 2016, 7:00 P.M.
11279 Center Highway, North Huntingdon, PA 15642
Presiding Officer – Tony Martino, President, Board of Commissioners

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Martino called the meeting to order at 7:01 P.M.

ROLL CALL

Commissioner Herold	Present	Also Present:
Commissioner Haigis	Present	John Shepherd
Commissioner Bertani	Present (via phone)	Michael Turley
Commissioner Gray	Present	Solicitor Craig Alexander
Commissioner Faccenda	Present	Andrew Blenko
Commissioner Kucera	Present	Rich Albert
Commissioner Martino	Present	Dan Miller

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

OPENING PRAYER

The opening prayer was given by Reverend Terry Erwin from Norwin Christian Church.

Commissioner Martino states this meeting is being recorded via video and electronically.

Motion: Commissioner Gray

Motion to suspend the regular order of business to address two items under the Township Managers report.

Second: Commissioner Haigis

Motion carried 7 6 0 6 0

Manager Shepherd states the first item is:

- 7) Action to accept the resignation of Bernard Solomon from the Planning Commission in accordance to the May 2, 2016 letter.

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Motion: Commissioner Gray

Motion to accept the resignation with great regret.

Second: Commissioner Faccenda

Motion carried 7 0 0 0

8) Action to adopt a Resolution to recognize the service of Bernard Solomon on the Planning Commission.

Motion: Commissioner Gray

Motion to adopt such Resolution.

Second: Commissioner Haigis

Motion carried 7 0 0 0

Manager Shepherd thanks Mr. Solomon for his years of service.

Mr. Solomon states he has enjoyed serving the Board very much.

Motion: Commissiner Gray

Motion to return to the regular order of business.

Second: Commissioner Haigis

Motion carried 7 0 0 0

CITIZENS' INPUT

1. Mark Kettren ó 10948 Carlson Drive ó states he imagines itøs the Water Authorityøs problem, but is wondering if the Township has any input on getting Old Trail Road fixed.
2. Michelle Shuker ó 430 Hillcrest Drive, Delmont PA ó states she grew up on Longview Drive in Circleville. Ms. Shuker introduces Bob Arth from 10851 Martin Drive, NHT, stating it is his idea of Hilltop Park community garden. Ms. Shuker states she is a lawyer and offered her legal services to support this endeavor.

Bob Arth states he grew up on McDonald Drive and grew up in the Hilltop Park with neighborhood friends. He spends a lot of time in the park with his own children. He is asking about the area by the fence at the entrance to build a garden. He started a Facebook page and received a lot of response. He is here tonight asking for approval to proceed.

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Ms. Shuker gives an overview of what the current piece of property looks like stating it is a fallow field of vacant property that is producing nothing but weeds. The proposal for the community is that between Mr. Arth and Ms. Shuker to provide the structure to put together a community garden. A community garden is an opportunity for a structure which would be a 501C3 and Ms. Shuker is volunteering her services for free to assist in organizing as a 501C3 which permits an organization to do fundraising and commit those funds back to the mission. The mission is to protect and promote the green space in the neighborhood and to provide the residents of the neighborhood with a beautiful place to garden and to also promote and enhance the value of Hilltop Park. Ms. Shuker states that until approved, she will not provide the bylaws, etc. Ms. Shuker shares what she feels would be a negative for the community with this project. The topography of the land will not impact drainage, they will not take old aged trees, there will no financial impact to the community, Eagle Scouts will be providing their support and the use of the property would not be adjusted. If the project was defunct in a few years, the Township would have approximately twenty raised beds that would need to be taken out. Ms. Shuker states there really are no negatives and would be a risk-free endeavor for the Township. The excess of any flowers or vegetables that are grown will be donated to the Food Bank.

3. Jim Gergely ó 341 Marbury Drive ó states he is representing his neighbors and residents on that street in questioning the house at 350 Marbury Drive that has deplorable conditions in the yard. Both the front and back yards are overgrown. The neighbor next to that house has trapped three raccoons and a groundhog which brings up a health issue. They would like to know what can be done with the appearance of the house. It is actually devaluating the property values. Could a fine be levied against the individual that owns the house.

4. Fran Bevan ó 640 Stonebridge Drive ó asks if any of the volunteer fire departments responded to the request concerning the new practice area and if so, which ones responded and what were their comments. Ms. Bevan asks what is happening with the investigation and has any additional information been received from the County or State agencies. Ms. Bevan also asks since the meetings are now being live recorded, would the Board consider using Comcast public access to have the meetings on Comcast.

RESPONSE TO CITIZENS INPUT

1. Mark Kettren ó Manager Shepherd states that Old Trail Road is scheduled to be repaved later on this summer. It will be curb to curb, the entire length of the road, in July or August.

2. Michelle Shuker and Bob Arth ó Commissioner Kucera states the area they are talking about is when entering the park on the left where already fenced off. He believes that was

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a fill area for the Township as to why nothing is growing there. He states that he likes the idea but will need the approval.

Commissioner Gray states he likes the idea but that area was a dump area for the Township is why there is no growth there. His number one concern is security having been issues with vandalism and trespassing. His concern of whatever is developed there and the responsibility for it. The other concern is how it would be scheduled and how much time the Township staff would have to put into it.

Ms. Shuker states prior to the meeting she spent time reviewing bylaws of other community gardens looking to see if there was the necessity of community support from a Township or organization and she has found none.

Mr. Arth states that three of the members who are anxious to start the project have properties that abut the park and will keep their eyes on it.

Manager Shepherd states the Board along with Solicitor Dice to discuss possibly leasing a piece of the ground. There are a lot of questions and if the Board is interested will do more research for both parties. One question he has is what is the timetable being it is already May, it may be difficult to get this off the ground.

Ms. Shuker states this will take some time and she would like an idea as to whether the Board will seriously consider this before investing time in the 501C3, getting a committee together, and the bylaws approved. She states she will contact Bruce Dice & Associates to discuss. She also asks if a survey is necessary if a piece of land is donated.

Manager Shepherd states it all depends on things discussed with the Staff, Parks Director, and Legal, and then they can be in contact with Ms. Shuker before she proceeds further.

Commissioner Herold asks if there are any other community gardens in this area. He states he feels it is a good idea to bring residents together.

Mr. Arth states that Turtle Creek just installed one and also Jeannette.

Commissioner Faccenda states he feels it's a good idea too to bring new life to Hilltop Park.

3. Jim Gergely ó Manager Shepherd gives some background on this that the Board is familiar with this property because within the last few years, residents have come to meetings. The home looks overgrown from a standpoint of how most people keep their properties. Code Enforcement has looked at this and the biggest struggle is the Township has an Ordinance for high grass and weeds, but his understanding is the property has an abundance

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of vegetation and large bushes. The Township does not have an Ordinance that addresses this and the Board decided years ago that this would be difficult to enforce or to come up with regulations

Mr. Blenko states there are two issues. One being the outside of the house, the other being the inside of the house. The inside of the house had multiple pets and the house was in foreclosure. Mr. Blenko has been in contact with Tom McGuire, the Building Inspector, and confirms the owner was able to get a loan to get the house out of foreclosure and do some repairs. Mr. McGuire has been waiting for the contractor to get in touch with us, but he doesn't know the extent of what will be needed until the floor coverings are lifted and drywall removed. He confirms the outside of the home is an issue due to an abundance of overgrowth. He is unsure there is an Ordinance, in any town, that says it is ok or not.

Mr. Gergely states that if you drove by the house, one would think the home is condemned due to the overgrowth in the yard and now is attracting wild animals. Can a fine be levied that she has an amount of time to clean up the yard both front and back.

Commissioner Martino states he understands what Mr. Gergely is saying and knows what needs to be done but is unsure the Township can do anything. There is no Ordinance on how a person keeps their personal property.

Manager Shepherd states that what would need to happen is for the Board to give direction to develop some regulations that would address the concerns. It has to be objective.

Solicitor Alexander states there are no violations that can be enforced. The only thing the neighbors may be able to do is file a Private Nuisance Action with the Courts, but as far as local code enforcement, there is no Ordinance that the property violates.

Commissioner Kucera states he was in that area and was talking with Bill Balbock who trapped the groundhog and the three raccoons. Viewing from his property, there is a huge pile of brush, tree cuttings, Christmas tree, etc. Is that a violation?

Mr. Blenko states that is something that can be addressed.

Commissioner Kucera feels that pile could be causing the rodent problem. The other concern with the overgrowth would be the amount of dampness attracting mosquitoes, Zika Virus.

Commissioner Faccenda states there has to be a way to protect the citizens and the values of their homes.

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Solicitor Alexander states he is not aware of any Ordinance. With newer housing developments there are Homeowners Associations or developer's covenants.

4. Fran Bevan ó Commissioner Bertani states he does not have anything on that and thought they were waiting on the Fire Chief Association.

Commissioner Gray states he attended the March meeting and discussed it with them. The reaction he got from the Fireman's Association was they were not all in favor of this idea. Commissioner Gray gave some advice on what they should do if they were interested which was typically if the Fire Departments want something of that nature, they meet on their own, discuss what they want, put it in a letter to the Board, sign off on it, and then some of them come to the meeting and make a presentation. He feels at this point, this is on the back burner.

INVESTIGATION:

Commissioner Martino states he has not heard anything regarding the investigation.

Manager Shepherd states the report was sent to the three agencies that the Board directed him to, but have not heard anything yet.

COMCAST:

Commissioner Gray states he and Manager Shepherd have discussed this topic numerous times. He has taken it upon himself to stream the meetings as an experiment to see what the interest would be. From what he has seen, it seems it is a benefit. He feels that if it is something the Township wants to do long term, then he would like the Township to take it over and install equipment via Comcast. Based on what he has seen so far, he feels it has value. There were approximately twenty seven people that viewed the first one live, then two hundred thirty three viewed it since then and also people in various States. He states he would be in favor of the Board exploring options and installing a permanent type set up.

Commissioner Haigis states he would be in favor exploring different options with Comcast or putting on the Township website.

Commissioner Martino states he is also in favor.

There are no further Board comments.

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APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: Commissioner Haigis

Second: Commissioner Faccenda

Motion to approve. (Public Hearing ó 4/14/16)

Motion Carried 7 ó 0 ó 0

Motion: Commissioner Haigis

Second: Commissioner Faccenda

Motion to approve. (Special Meeting ó 4/14/16)

Motion Carried 7 ó 0 ó 0

Motion: Commissioner Haigis

Second: Commissioner Faccenda

Abstain: Commissioner Herold

Motion to approve. (Regular Meeting ó 4/20/16)

Motion carried 6 ó 0 ó 1

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Motion: Commissioner Haigis

Second: Commissioner Gray

I make a motion we pay Voucher No. 72183 through Voucher No. 72269.

Motion Carried 7 ó 0 ó 0

STAFF REPORTS

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

Commissioner Kucera comments on the paving company and states he's got good reviews about the job they've been doing and the workers are very nice to the residents. There is a question on the backfilling but will be discussed later

Mr. Albert states that he has been quite pleased so far working with the new company. The inspector from KLH, Bob Robinson, is also pleased with their work and how fast they are doing it.

Commissioner Kucera states they could be better with their signage, but other than that are doing a great job.

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Commissioner Faccenda asks why the roads that are being paved are not on Nixle.

Manager Shepherd states it depends on how well we know the schedule, but changes occur and may be difficult to keep it in real time.

Mr. Albert states that certainly the people in the neighborhood know.

Commissioner Kucera states that in the past, they have called to the Police Department to let Emergency Services know. Maybe at that point a Nixle could be sent but it would be last minute.

Mr. Albert informs the Board of a project they are working on as a staff. Last year, he found out about a project that Cranberry Township and Carnegie Mellon were working on concerning road surveying and grading the roads for future paving. He spoke with a professor from Carnegie Mellon and informed him about the project. He then took the information to Manager Shepherd to discuss and working together with Ryan Fonzi and Michael Turley. Funding is being provided through the Department of Transportation. A device is placed on the windshield of a vehicle and it surveys all the roads which is then sent to Carnegie Mellon and they take the information for their study then send it back to us for the GIS system and will continue to update.

PARKS AND RECREATION REPORT

Commissioner Kucera asks why at Oak Hollow Park the amount of weeds that are around the lake making it difficult to get close.

Mr. Miller states that after attending quite a few conferences on pond management, what they discovered was that there was a lot of algae that was in the pond even though there is a lake aeration fountain, however the high grass and vegetation that surrounds the pond works as a filter to keep all the bad elements from getting into the water. The parks staff is working on building a floating dock.

POLICE REPORT

Lieutenant Mahinske is not present at the meeting. There are no Board comments.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT REPORT

There are no Board comments.

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PLANNING AND ENGINEERING REPORT

FIRE OFFICIAL'S REPORT

- There are no Board comments.

SUBDIVISION & LAND DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION REPORT

- 1) S-05-2016: Kurhansky Plan
 - *Proposed boundary line revision on Robbins Station Road.*

Motion: Commissioner Haigis
Second: Commissioner Gray

Motion to approve.

Motion carried 7 6 0 6 0

- 2) S-06-2016: Cordis Moore Plan
 - *Proposed side yard add-on along Vincent Drive.*

Motion: Commissioner Haigis
Second: Commissioner Faccenda

Motion to approve.

Motion carried 7 6 0 6 0

- 3) S-07-2016: Squillace Plan
 - *Proposed subdivision and consolidation on Sunset Avenue.*

Motion: Commissioner Haigis
Second: Commissioner Faccenda

Motion to approve.

Motion carried 7 6 0 6 0

- 4) S-08-2016: St. George Acres / Lot 5 & 6 Boundary Line Revision.
 - *Proposed subdivision to correct lot lines surrounding a temporary cul-de-sac.*

Motion: Commissioner Faccenda
Second: Commissioner Haigis

Motion to approve.

Motion carried 7 6 0 6 0

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5) SP-03-2016: Wendy Restaurant

- *Proposed demolition of existing building with new construction on same site.*

Motion: Commissioner Haigis

Motion to approve.

Second: Commissioner Herold

Motion carried 7 0 0 0

SOLICITOR'S REPORT – Solicitor Craig Alexander

There are no items for discussion.

TOWNSHIP MANAGER'S REPORT

1) Action to approve the April check register.

Motion: Commissioner Herold

Motion to approve.

Second: Commissioner Faccenda

Motion carried 7 0 0 0

2) Budget Report ó April 2016 Report.

3) Action to approve a Tax Refund to MAC Realty Management, LLC for Tax Map # 54-06-00-0-38 in the amount of \$437.49 in accordance with the letter on April 15, 2016 from Westmoreland County.

Motion: Commissioner Haigis

Motion to approve

Second: Commissioner Herold

Motion carried 7 0 0 0

4) Action to approve the Conservation Partnership Agreement between the Westmoreland Conservation District and the Township.

Moton: Commissioner Herold

Motion to approve.

Second: Commissioner Faccenda

Motion carried 7 0 0 0

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5) Action to approve the request of the Penns Woods Civic Association for the annual fireworks display at Penns Woods Park on July 4, 2016 (rain date 7-5-2016).

Motion: Commissioner Kucera
Second: Commissioner Gray

Motion to approve.

Motion carried 7 ó 0 ó 0

6) Action to approve the request of Hartford Heights Volunteer Fire Department dated May 2, 2016 for a waiver of a demolition permit for property at 14289 Route 30.

Motion: Commissioner Gray
Second: Commissioner Haigis

So moved.

Motion carried 7 ó 0 ó 0

7) Request of Flat Tire Company for a 10K Event ó discussion.

Manager Shepherd reports this request was received by Lieutenant Mahinske. The request is related to a 5K or 10K walk / run event and encompasses both a part of North Huntingdon and Sewickley Township. If the Commissioners would approve it, some roads in the Township would need to be closed. Part of Guffy Road would also need to be closed also. If approved, the Police Department would be to assist although it would be inconvenient to the homeowners on the roads that would be closed. The race will be held in November.

Commissiner Haigis states to put this item on the agenda for June.

8) Action to approve a Resolution to authorize overhead banners for the St Agnes Church bazaar on Route 30 near Malts Lane and Lincoln Highway at Jodie Lane.

Motion: Commissioner Haigis
Second: Commissioner Kucera

Motion to approve.

Motion carried 7 ó 0 ó 0

9) Action to approve payment in the amount \$61,198.50 (50% of total local match) for the Route 30 SINC-UP Project.

Motion: Commissioner Herold
Second: Commissioner Haigis

Motion to approve.

Motion carried 7 ó 0 ó 0

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10) Action to award the demolition of a building at 690 Main Street to Lutterman Excavating in the amount of \$11,750.00.

Motion: Commissioner Haigis
Second: Commissioner Faccenda

Motion to approve.

Motion carried 7 0 0 0

11) Action to award the salt storage fabric building to Penn State Construction in the amount of \$69,350.00.

Motion: Commissioner Herold
Second: Commissioner Haigis

Motion to approve.

Motion carried 7 0 0 0

FURTHER BOARD COMMENTS

Commissioner Kucera states the since contracts negotiations are here and he understands several guys from the police department may retire. At the March 16, 2016 the discussion to pass an Ordinance for the Civil Service regulations was discussed and he would like to get it put on the agenda again. He states he has spoken with Solicitor Dice and are clear with some of the items discussed.

Manager Shepherd states that since that meeting, he has been trying to get Bill Gamble to a meeting. Mr. Gamble is an expert in this area, but is difficult with the timing of schedules, unless the Board wants to have a special meeting.

Commissioner Kucera states he does not want this put on the back burner because there are already two guys activated so they are already short of staff downstairs not including the possible five guys who may retire next year. It takes approximately ten months to one year to get new guys on the street.

Manager Shepherd states he thinks they could work off the old contract but he believes the new Ordinance should be used and is up to date. He recommends if they do a hiring that they do it with the proposed Ordinance even if it is modified.

Solicitor Alexander states that would be his recommendation also.

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Commissioner Kucera states he attended the training for the Civil Service and there was the one question about promotions and the one year probation.

Commissioner Martino states he is not ready to agree with the Civil Service ordinance. He needs to speak with Mr. Gamble first.

Manager Shepherd asks if the Board would like to do a special meeting. He will check with Mr. Gamble to attend the July work session.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 1) The Department of Parks & Recreation has officially started the Tagged Fish Contest and will continue through October at Indian Lake and Oak Hollow Park. Participants can win a prize by turning in the appropriate ATF tag to the Town House.
- 2) Discount amusement park tickets are available for sale at the Town House. For more information, please contact the Administration Office.
- 3) North Huntingdon Township Department of Parks & Recreation is pleased to announce öOpen Enrollmentö for the 2016 Summer Day Camps. Various day camps and mini camps are designed for children ages 3-14 beginning in June.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Commissioner Gray

Motion to adjourn. (8:23 P.M.)

Second: Commissioner Haigis

Motion Carried 7 ó 0 ó 0

- Regular Meeting Minutes of May 18, 2016 were approved by the Board of Commissioners on _____

Tony Martino, President

John M. Shepherd, Township Secretary
/jjm

