

**TOWNSHIP OF NORTH HUNTINGDON, BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
SPECIAL MEETING, THURSDAY, JULY 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 Present  
Commissioner Haigis Present

Also Present:  
Jeffrey Silka  
Mike Turley  
Solicitor Alexander  
Ryan Fonzi

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**CITIZENS INPUT**

There was no citizens input.

**Work Sessions Discussion Topics**

**1) 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Financial Review**

Manager Silka gives an update on the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter finances.



2nd Quarter  
Financial Review.pdf

**2) 2022 Budget Discussions**

Manager Silka states that it is very difficult in July to forecast expenses and will concentrate more on revenue today. He recommends using August as a priority meeting to get the first draft budget out. Commissioner Haigis asks if it will be an approximate three percent increase from last year's budget. Manager Silka states that is where it is right now.



2022 Budget  
Discussion.pdf

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### 3) Rescue Funding Update

Manager Silka states we received half of the allocation in the amount of 1.589 million and will receive the second allocation in July 2022. He states we have until August 2024 to spend the funds. He recommends having more in depth discussion in August.



Rescue Act  
Update.pdf

### 4) Comcast Franchise Fee Audit Findings / Settlement Agreement

Manager Silka states that in 2019 the Cohen Law Group was hired to renegotiate the franchise fee and paid for an audit of revenue collection. He states it was founded that one hundred fifty six addresses were miscoded and was underpaid of thirty two thousand four hundred thirty nine dollars, but also an overpayment for Netflix in the amount of four thousand nine hundred sixty six dollars.

Commissioner Blasko asks if the houses that were miscoded were in a collective area and scattered throughout the Township.

Manager Silka states they were newer developments and also Irwin and McKeesport addresses.

### 5) Street Sweeper Financing

Manager Silka states the street sweeper was approved in the Capital Budget for a five year lease and it is time to purchase as the current sweeper is down more than it is up. The COSTARS price of the Elgin is a lease option with purchase to buy. He states there were four quotes and Somerset Trust came in at 1.59% which is the lowest. He recommends the Board approve this with Somerset Trust at the next meeting and authorize the purchase.

Commissioner Gass asks what is going to be done with the old street sweeper.

Manager Silka states it will be traded in.

### 6) Capital Budget Amendment

Manager Silka states two expenditures need to be added and proposes a zero net adjustment by taking out a line item. One is we have to upgrade the fire alarm as it is outdated and doesn't work. The estimates are twenty five to thirty thousand dollars. Also, the plotter printer for Planning Department is costing more to repair than buy a new one. It was

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purchased use and has been a problem finding parts. He proposes the office furnishings / general administration for thirty thousand dollars can be put into the building expansion and zero out the line item. Also there were Townhouse cameras for thirty five thousand dollars and he recommends taking five thousand of those funds to make a zero net effect on the budget.

**7) Discussion to Rescind Emergency Declaration**

Manager Silka states in March 2020 the Township issued a declaration of disaster emergency for COVID. The State is rescinding their declaration and he recommends putting on the agenda for the Township to rescind their declaration of emergency.

**8) Liberty Avenue Slope Stabilization**

Manager Silka states there is a landslide that is undermining the road and putting water and spoils onto the railroad property. This project was put out to bid. The interim Township Engineer is recommending the low bid of eighty nine thousand one hundred forty five dollars from Ligonier Construction. This was budgeted for one hundred twenty five thousand dollars.

**9) Parks Month Resolution**

Manager Silka states Director Miller asked if we could do a resolution proclaiming July 2021 as Parks & Recreation month at the next meeting and recognize the parks staff.

**10) Consulting Engineer Discussion**

Manager Silka states proposals went out for an open RFP and received seven proposals. He states a committee comprised of Bob Robison Interim Township Engineer, Ryan Fonzi Director of Planning & Zoning, Mike Turley Assistant Township Manager, and himself independently reviewed the engineering firms based on the matrix and then gave numerical values to them, did the analysis and came up with the top three. Gateway was the top one, KU Resources and Remington & Vernick. He states they unanimously decided the interview KU Resources and Remington Vernick based on what they felt would be the best fit for the municipality in both pricewise and service level. He states they worked with both firms and the consensus was KU Resources may be a better fit. Manager Silka states the Board can further discuss this or take the recommendation of the staff or interview them yourself.

Commissioner Stump states she would like to further discuss the hourly rate. She states there is a big difference between the hourly rates between the two.

Manager Silka states the top people do not do projects and are corporate. The project manager gets the project and manages it, but then sends it off to engineers.

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Commissioner Blasko states he noticed the same thing when he was reviewing and says he would like to interview both companies.

Commissioner Stump asks if the Board can get an average number of hours for each type of job.

Manager Silka states the Township has only used Remington Vernick for one project, so there really isn't a way to compare the two.

Commissioner Stump asks if 2019 billings could be looked at. Manager Silka states no one was used in 2019 and KLH was used for different projects. She also asks why Gateway wasn't interviewed.

Manager Silka says because they are a very large firm and in past working history is that large firms are not responsive and their prices are higher. He states they are looking for midsize firms that are responsive and have a lot of municipal work.

Commissioner Atwood states that on the matrix, RVE wins five and KU wins two but what jumps out at him is the zoning / subdivision review.

Manager Silka states the reason there are anomalies of numbers is because it was solely based on books they presented. Then they were brought in for a technical grilling interview and that is where KU Resources came out as more knowledgeable and more effective. He states right now KU Resources does our zoning reviews with Don Housley.

Commissioner Haigis states he wouldn't mind bringing in a few of the firms to interview. He asks Director Fonzi if he is comfortable with KU Resources being the top pick.

Director Fonzi states he would be comfortable because of the familiarity with a lot of the workers in the firm and has worked with over half dozen of them. He states it would be a smoother transition to expand their duties.

Commissioner Haigis states he would still like to interview KU Resources and RVE.

**PLANNING / ENGINEERING TOPICS:**

**1) S-15-2021: JP Land Holdings**

***\*Proposed boundary line revision on Clay Pike.***

Director Fonzi states this is at Clay Pike and Guffey Road and JP owns most of this property and has a small business and duplex onsite. What they would like to do is purchase the rear four contiguous lots on Guffey Road. Currently JP owns 10.87 acres and with the land acquisition would own 13.227 acres in total. There are no conditions and the Planning Commission recommended for approval.

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Commissioner Gass asks when there are no conditions, does that mean there are no restrictions.

Director Fonzi states that means there are no third-party approvals needed such as sewage or stormwater review. It is truly just moving the boundary lines.

Commissioner Gass asks that the people who are selling their lots, is there a concern that the new owner is going to place buildings there.

Director Fonzi states typically the new owner could do that if he wanted but it is his understanding that the owner is going to subdivide just for single family homes with large lots.

**2) S-16-2021: Bittner Revision I**  
***\*Proposed subdivision on Farview Drive.***

Director Fonzi states Greg Bittner had come through in 2017 and subdivided off a lot for his son Hunter to build a house. Now, he would like to subdivide again so his home would remain at approximately 0.63 acres and then Lot 3 is the new vacant lot. There are a couple issues such as to ensure they had adequate frontage, they agreed to extend the right of way of what is called Paula Drive, a paper alley. Director Fonzi states Hunter's driveway goes through the alley and was ok on the frontage but to add this third lot extended the right of way to ensure the lots have at least sixty five feet of frontage which is required in R-2 District. The other issue on the right side is a barn or accessory structure and per the zoning ordinance cannot subdivide and have a lot with an accessory structure acting as the only structure without a principal dwelling. He states there is urgency to build a house on this lot, so what has been done, is asked the surveyor to put a note on the plan that if a home is not built on Lot 3 within eighteen months of approval, the structure must be razed. He will need sewage planning approval for the one EDU on Lot 3. The Planning Commission recommended approval with the sewage planning condition.

Commissioner Blakso asks if they have to put a bond on for the barn.

Director Fonzi states they have not but would be a good idea and will reach out to the owner.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**1) Alcohol in Parks**

Manager Silka states at last month's meeting alcohol permits in the parks was discussed and Director Miller and himself looked at the comments. In reading Murrysville's policy were similar issues brought up at the meeting. He reads the memo outlining the rules.

Commissioner Blasko asks for clarification of #10. Manager Silka states basically if you have a homeowners insurance will serve as liability.

Commissioner Haigis states he is comfortable in what was presented. He is unsure of rule #3 to prohibit alcohol at high school graduations and feels whoever rented the pavilion should be held liable.

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Commissioner Blasko agrees with Commissioner Haigis in omitting rule #3. He states he would like to add all PCLB laws apply and alcohol must be consumed in close vicinity of the pavilion and cannot be consumed in any play areas.

Manager Silka states can definitely make a rule with a perimeter on each pavilion and also PCLB is only for commercial.

Commissioner Gass asks was this not voted on last month and what was the outcome of the vote.

Commissioner Haigis states it was just to further research making a policy and it was a consensus to move forward.

Commissioner Atwood asks if a set amount of liability insurance would be needed to carry. State minimum is one hundred thousand dollars and would that be enough or more.

Commissioner Haigis states with a harmless agreement signed with the Township would fall back on whoever is renting the pavilion.

Commissioner Atwood asks what if someone leaves drunk and now they have liability issues, does the Township need to prove they have insurance to cover.

Commissioner Zona states if they don't have enough liability and get sued would be on them, as long as there is a holds harmless agreement, the Township would not be liable.

Solicitor Alexander states it would be pennies to have more liability insurance.

Commissioner Atwood asks if there is a certain point where we need to worry about making sure they are covered in a certain amount.

Commissioner Blasko states if too many fees are added on, it will no longer be desirable or profitable to the Township. He is comfortable with signing the liability waiver and moving forward. If it is made too complex, it will not be utilized.

Commissioner Atwood asks Solicitor Alexander if there is something specific that we should consider and he is comfortable either way with the holds harmless agreement.

Solicitor Alexander states the holds harmless will help, but do you want to put a threshold on how much insurance is required.

Commissioner Atwood states he just wants the Township to be covered in case of a liability issue.

Commissioner Haigis asks Manager Silka to bring something to next week's meeting for further discussion.

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**Park Pavilion  
Alcohol Permits**

**\$50.00 PERMIT FEE**

**\$200.00 Refundable Deposit**

**Beer/Wine Permit:**

1. Alcohol permits shall only be issued in conjunction with Park Pavilion rentals.
  2. All applicants must be at least 21 years of age.
  3. Alcohol permits for High School graduations are prohibited.
  4. Beer and wine shall be the only acceptable forms of alcoholic beverages permitted.
  5. No glass bottles will be permitted.
  6. Applicants shall be responsible for leaving the facilities in a clean and presentable condition; such condition shall be comparable to the state of the facility prior to the permitted event.
  7. All other facility rules shall be adhered to, including the hours of operation.
  8. The Applicant must execute a hold harmless agreement.
  9. The Township Manager has the ability to withhold all or part of the security deposit, for any violations of Ordinance XX or upon any conduct requiring police or other municipal services if such conduct can be associated with alcohol consumption, or upon the recommendation of the Director of Public Works, Director of Parks and Recreation, or the Chief of Police.
  10. Applicant must provide verification of age to the Administration or proof of homeowners insurance or liability policy for the event.
  11. Applicant must provide copy of liability insurance if alcohol is provided by a caterer at the Park Pavilion.
  12. Alcohol applications will be completed by the Township Manager in no less than 3 business days.
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2) **Beautification Letter**

Manager Silka asks Jonathan Beskid to join as a pamphlet has been created to send the businesses “Restore Your Store” asking for their participation in beautification efforts.

Commissioner Blasko says the brochure looks nice but asks if personalized pictures of what the Board feels is ideal.

Manager Silka states it does not want seem like we’re promoting a certain business.

Commissioner Blasko suggests having a Township meeting on this with the Chamber of Commerce and try to get people on board with this.

Commissioner Stump asks if the pamphlet is provided to the Chamber of Commerce and have them distribute it when people come in.

Commissioner Gass asks if the Township could put signs on both the east and west ends of the corridor to let people know something is in the works.

Manager Silka states he agrees however putting signs on the Route 30 corridor is State right of way and they don’t want signs.

Commissioner Blasko suggests putting it on the electronic sign.

**FURTHER BOARD COMMENTS**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion: Commissioner Atwood  
Second: Commissioner Zona

Motion to adjourn.

Motion carried 7 – 0 – 0 (8:02 P.M.)

- Special Meeting minutes of July 15, 2021 were approved by the Board of Commissioners on August 18, 2021.

  
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Jeffrey Silka, Township Secretary  
/jjm

  
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Zachary Haigis, President