

**TOWNSHIP OF NORTH HUNTINGDON, BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**REGULAR MEETING, WEDNESDAY, JULY 21, 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	Also Present:
Commissioner Atwood	Present	Jeffrey Silka
Commissioner Blasko	tele-conference	Solicitor Alexander
Commissioner Zona	Present	Mike Turley
Commissioner Bevan	Present	Ryan Fonzi
Commissioner Gass	Present	Dan Miller
Commissioner Haigis	Present	Chief Rizzo
		Rich Albert

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**OPENING PRAYER**

Moment of silence.

**CITIZENS INPUT**

Rick Keenan – 700 Leger Road – first, thanks Commissioner Zona for getting some of the politics out of the police department. Secondly, he states a situation happened on Saturday at 9:30pm and called to police department to alert them of gun fire from the adjoining property. He states this was not a couple of shots fired, but blowing off clips. He states he could hear slugs hitting the trees. He states this was not a nuisance call and the person that answered the phone and the tone of his voice was if he was bothering him. The dispatcher stated he would send a car when available. Mr. Keenan states after the call ended, he turned on his outside lights and waited for the arrival. Right after, a second round of gun fire happened and he waited around until 12 midnight and never received a call back or no one ever showed up. He states about a year ago, there was a problem with speeding on Leger Road and now is much worse and now there is a trucking company and also a person operating a sign company that has a big boom truck that sticks out onto the road. Mr. Keenan states the Waste Management employees are parking in the right of way. He states speeding is a problem and there are unlicensed quads riding on the street. Last year, he was told by a member of the Board that North Huntingdon police could not ticket anyone on Leger Road because it is a State road, so how can they ticket any one on Route 30. He asks Chief Rizzo to address these situations.

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Greg Bittner – 10471 Farview Drive – states he is in the process of a subdivision and recently he was notified that he needed to bond a nice barn on his property. He states he tried two local banks and insurance companies and was told they need direction from the Township, but the Township is saying he needs to get something from the bank. He states he needs directions to go with this and is not opposed to it, but doesn't agree with it, as he has full intentions of building a home. Mr. Bittner needs direction from the Board and to the best of his knowledge this is the first where this has been done. He states the Township wants twenty thousand dollars set aside in a liquid account for the Township to have access to. Commissioner Haigis states this is not the first property where this has been done. Mr. Bittner states the barn is not dilapidated and the house will be built close to it. He states all of their intentions have been forward and have done everything needed to and Paula Drive has been extended further to gain proper road frontage.

Tom Hempel – 1259 Julius Drive – publicly thanks the Board and the North Huntingdon Township Police Department. On June 30, 2021, Commissioners Zona and Gass attended the event celebrating Back The Blue for the two police departments North Huntingdon and Irwin. He states the committee was not sure what that was going to intel due to the weather, but the turnout was great with almost three hundred people in attendance to show support of the community to the police. He also states planning for next year's event is already taking place and will be a bigger and better event.

Bob Morgan – 871 Northeast Drive – states he has some concerns about not having a senior center operating in the Township and can the Township somehow help find a way for seniors to meet or build a community center. He states he spoke with Rich Gray and sometimes in well to do communities funding is not available and this needs to be addressed and corrected. He also is requesting a list of streets to be paved.

**RESONSE TO CITIZENS INPUT**

1. Commissioner Haigis asks Chief Rizzo to follow up on Mr. Keenan's concerns.
2. Commissioner Haigis states he spoke with Greg Bittner's wife and states this is not the first time a request to put a bond on a property where a structure was being built. Manager Silka states the easiest way would be to get an irrevocable letter of credit from the bank guaranteeing a certain amount of money is available to the Township. He states whenever it is stated something needs bonded is a generic term and the performance is secured through a memorandum of understanding between the Township and property owner for the bond to be released. Mr. Bittner asks if that is the only option. Manager Silka states it is not the only option as there is a cash option or an insurance policy.

Commissioner Haigis suggests Mr. Bittner and Manager Silka talk to figure this out and give further direction.

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Mr. Bittner states in talking with the bank did not get anything resolved and someone is working on it but could take a while to get. He states he is not opposed to doing this however does not see the need for this. He asks if he will be approved upon the bond being completed.

Director Fonzi states that will be a condition and once satisfied then the subdivision can be recorded. He states the sewage planning still needs to be completed.

Manager Silka states if this gets approved, can work with S&T Bank upon his return from vacation.

Mr. Bittner asks if this is the only route to go.

Commissioner Haigis states this is what is being voted on tonight and was the Board's discretion at the Planning Commission meeting to place that condition.

Manager Silka states this is because Mr. Bittner is asking to go contrary to what the ordinance states and has a structure that basically illegal in the Township.

Mr. Bittner asks if it is illegal after eighteen months or immediately.

Manager Silka states it is illegal as soon as the subdivision is recorded. Mr. Bittner states but have eighteen months to complete a build. Manager Silka states that is what the bond is for is within the eighteen months to satisfy and the structure be removed. The structure cannot be a primary structure on a solo lot.

Mr. Bittner states he is selling his existing home to his son and can't move forward with selling his home until he has the subdivision. He states he is at a roadblock.

Manager Silka states he is the first person to ever come up in not being able to secure the surety. It has been done on three residential lots to date and with all the developers. He states this is solvable but need to get it into the direction.

3. Commissioner Haigis states we can get a list of the streets scheduled for paving to Mr. Morgan. The Board normally approves a two or three year plan, but this year was done a little bit different in concentrating in a few wards instead of moving equipment different ways. He states regarding the senior center, years ago were a group of people wanting a lavish community center. There was a feasibility study and at the time wanted a complex for twelve million dollars. He states he was not in favor of having the tax payers pay that kind of money and he suggests speaking with State and Federal Representatives to ask why North Huntingdon doesn't receive grants or funding as other communities do.

Mr. Morgan asks that plan years ago was an astronomical cost and is there anything more feasible. He asks if the Townhouse could be added onto to accommodate seniors.

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Commissioner Haigis states the room currently used for meetings is available for groups to use.

Commissioner Gass states there is a senior center at Penns Woods Civic Association to be used. He states he has been looking into the athletic fields and states the Township is pressed for space and land along with the cost and upkeep.

Commissioner Gass addresses Mr. Keenan's concerns and suggests Code Enforcement take a look at the issues regarding the vehicles extending beyond his driveway.

Mr. Keenan states he also has a junkyard for old signs and is getting closer to the road. He says he also has a boom truck that extends out onto the road and empty crates and vehicles in his yard.

Director Fonzi states he will send Code Enforcement to inspect.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion: Commissioner Zona  
Second: Commissioner Gass

Motion to approve. (Special Meeting 6/10/21)

Motion carried 7 – 0 – 0

Motion: Commissioner Atwood  
Second: Commissioner Zona

Motion to approve. (Regular Meeting 6/16/21)

Motion carried 7 – 0 – 0

**PAYMENT OF BILLS**

Motion: Commissioner Zona  
Second: Commissioner Stump

Motion to approve.

Commissioner Atwood questions on the bottom of page one a charge to Colker Janitorial Supplies and how often is there a charge like that. Manager Silka states that is multiple invoices and restocking supplies.

Commissioner Atwood questions Sherlock Pipe for eight thousand dollars. Rich Albert states Pipelines is our vendor for pipe and this is stock for different materials used. Commissioner Atwood asks how often is a purchase like this. Rich Albert states a considerable amount of money is spent on drainage supplies for the road program, etc., and is in the budget. Commissioner Gass asks if the piping is being stockpiled or used specifically for a project. Rich states this is being stockpiled especially nowadays with the suppliers being behind.

Commissioner Atwood asks if Tudi Mechanical is for the refrigeration issue. Manager Silka states this is basically charging the HVAC system monthly until it gets replaced.

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Commissioner Atwood asks about highway and street signs for twenty five hundred dollars. Rich Albert states there is a stockpile of signs and states this is a common purchase.

Motion carried 7 – 0 – 0

***\*\*\*Proclamation Dedicating July 2021 Parks and Recreation Month\*\*\****

**STAFF REPORTS:**

**PUBLIC WORKS REPORT**

There were no Board comments.

**PARKS AND RECREATION REPORT**

Director Dan Miller thanks the Recreation Advisory Board and also the parks labor staff. The Township parks were used an unprecedented time during COVID pandemic and proved parks are essential to local government. Director Miller publicly congratulates and thanks Rick Sima for his work in the Township for twenty six years who officially retired from the parks department.

Commissioner Zona thanks Dan Miller and his staff for keeping the parks in great shape and there is nothing further that can be done to make them any better.

**POLICE REPORT**

There were no Board comments.

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT REPORT**

Bob Dippolito states emergency management has been continuing to do a lot of training. He states he lost two members, one for relocation to Arizona and the other had health issues and he would like to replace those members.

**ENGINEERING REPORT**

**FIRE OFFICIAL'S REPORT**

There are no Board comments.

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**SUBDIVISION & LAND DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION REPORT**

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

*\*Action to approve a boundary line revision on Clay Pike.*

Motion: Commissioner Zona  
Second: Commissioner Bevan

Motion to approve.

Motion carried 7 – 0 – 0

**2) S-16-2021: Bittner Revision I**

*\*Action to approve a subdivision on Farview Drive with two conditions.*

Motion: Commissioner Atwood  
Second: Commissioner Zona

Motion to approve.

Motion carried 7 – 0 – 0

**SOLICITOR'S REPORT – Solicitor Alexander**

- 1) Action to approve an ordinance of the Township of North Huntingdon, amending Ordinance 2244 which prohibits the use of tobacco in recreational areas, parks and playgrounds to authorize penalties of civil and or criminal fines for violations of the ordinance.

Motion: Commissioner Stump  
Second: Commissioner Zona

Motion to approve.

Commissioner Gass says that smoking is not permitted but alcohol use is ok and he got a problem with that. He worries with children being around tobacco and just as much with them being around alcohol. He states he would like to see Ordinance #2244 not only prohibit the use of tobacco but also prohibit the use of alcohol.

Commissioner Zona states he is in support of Ordinance #2244 because he feels there is a difference between tobacco and alcohol. Second hand smoke is proven to cause cancer but alcohol is more regulated and can be controlled.

Commissioner Bevan asks if more police patrols for enforcement would need to be added or just routine patrols.

Chief Rizzo states this is what drove this was complaints from Indian Lake specifically mainly from the fishing community. He states this will be added to patrols.

Commissioner Bevan asks about the signage and just says No Smoking but can also say there will be fines.

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Manager Silka states the signs are the ordinance and all we're doing is amending the ordinance to give enforcement.

Commissioner Atwood asks if currently allowed to drink alcohol in the parks.

Manager Silka states no.

Commissioner Atwood asks if that has teeth behind it to enforce and cite someone.

Chief Rizzo states he would have to look at the ordinance.

Commissioner Gass states if no alcohol is permitted in the parks right now and getting ready to do the park pavilion alcohol permit, then what's wrong with adding alcohol onto Ordinance #2244.

Manager Silka states Ordinance #2244 is Young Lungs at Play and is a specific ordinance geared towards smoking. Alcohol would be a separate ordinance.

Motion carried 7 – 0 – 0

- 2) Action to approve an ordinance of the Township of North Huntingdon prohibiting the use of the Townhouse parking lot as a through way between Center Highway and Brownstown Road, establishing penalties for violations and authorizing police enforcement.

Motion: Commissioner Zona  
Second: Commissioner Gass

Motion to approve.

Motion carried 7 – 0 – 0

### TOWNSHIP MANAGER'S REPORT

- 1) Action to approve the June check register.

Motion: Commissioner Stump  
Second: Commissioner Bevan

Motion to approve.

Motion carried 7 – 0 – 0

- 2) Budget Report – June 2021 Report.
- 3) Action to approve the Comcast Franchise Fee Audit Settlement Agreement.

Motion: Commissioner Atwood  
Second: Commissioner Stump

Motion to approve.

Motion carried 7 - 0 – 0

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- 4) Action to approve a Separation Agreement and General Release with Westmoreland Sanitary Landfill, LLC / County Hauling.

Motion: Commissioner Zona

Motion to approve.

Second: Commissioner Gass

Motion carried 7 – 0 – 0

- 5) Action to authorize the Township Manager to execute documents to purchase a 2021 Elgin Street Sweeper for \$289,910.00 through CoStars Contract #25-044 and financing through Somerset Trust for sixty months at 1.59% interest.

Motion: Commissioner Zona

Motion to approve.

Second: Commissioner Bevan

Motion carried 7 – 0 – 0

- 6) Action to approve a resolution amending the 2021 Capital Budget.

Motion: Commissioner Stump

Motion to approve.

Second: Commissioner Bevan

Commissioner Haigis asks Manager Silka to explain what the amendment is again. Manager Silka states the amendment is reducing the line item for office furnishings and cameras by thirty five thousand dollars and putting in for a new plotter printer for the Planning & Zoning Office and to upgrade the alarm system.

Motion carried 7 – 0 – 0

- 7) Action to rescind the March 14, 2020, Corona Virus Declaration of Disaster Emergency.

Motion: Commissioner Atwood

Motion to approve.

Second: Commissioner Zona

Motion carried 7 – 0 – 0

- 8) Action to award the Liberty Avenue Slope Stabilization Project, Contract No. 2021-03 to Ligonier Construction, PO BOX 277, Laughlintown, PA 15655 in the amount of \$89,145.00, per the recommendation of the Interim Township Engineer.

Motion: Commissioner Stump

Motion to approve.

Second: Commissioner Bevan

Motion carried 7 – 0 – 0

Commissioner Haigis states this was under budget and was part of the budget for this year. Manager Silka states that is correct and was budgeted for one hundred twenty five thousand dollars.



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- 9) Action to reduce the \$171,119.45 Holly Brook Plan Set Aside Agreement by \$38,124.90 leaving a balance of \$132,994.55, per the recommendation of the Interim Township Engineer.

Motion: Commissioner Zona  
Second: Commissioner Gass

Motion to approve.

Motion carried 7 – 0 – 0

- 10) Action to approve the “Restore Your Store on the Corridor” campaign.

Motion: Commissioner Gass  
Second: Commissioner Zona

Motion to approve.

Motion carried 7 – 0 – 0

Commissioner Zona states when he brought this up last month, he was expecting a letter to the businesses, but Manager Silka, Jonathan Beskid and whoever else was involved made a really nice pamphlet and is beyond what he thought of. He feels a kickoff campaign is a good idea with social media and would like to be involved.

- 11) Motion to add to the agenda the park alcohol permits and authorizing an ordinance for publication.

Motion: Commissioner Atwood  
Second: Commissioner Stump

Motion to add to the agenda.

Motion carried 7 – 0 – 0

Commissioner Zona asks if the ordinance can be read.

Citizens Input:

Bob Morgan asks to explain the alcohol permit in parks. Commissioner Haigis states Manager Silka is going to read the ordinance.

Bob Morgan asks if there is a limit to how much alcohol is allowed. Manager Silka states there is no limit. Bob Morgan states he agrees with Commissioner Gass and is opening up the Township to a lawsuit and exposing youth to alcohol. He is asking the Board to protect the citizens of this Township and say no.

Commissioner Stump asks Manager Silka to explain the research done in neighboring communities and their experiences. Manager Silka states they went to Monroeville, Murrysville, Westmoreland County, Penn and White Oak to accumulate their permits. They found other communities had no issues with it.

Commissioner Zona states patrolling the roads of Westmoreland County for thirty one years as he did had no issues in any County parks. He states even Kennywood and Idlewild serve alcohol and as long as a regulation will be ok. #8 will hold the Township harmless.

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Solicitor Alexander agrees.

Commissioner Gass states he understands the legal ramifications, but it is the Board's job to protect the citizens. He is voting against this.

Bob Morgan asks why there is a need for this ordinance and a need for alcohol and whose idea was this.

Commissioner Haigis states Commissioner Blasko brought it up to the Board by interests brought to him.

Commissioner Stump states people have a personal responsibility and when talking about smoking, secondhand smoke causes cancer. Her only objection would be the fifty dollar permit fee is on the low side and would like to see it increased to one hundred dollars.

Commissioner Bevan agrees and states it comes down to personal responsibility and feels there are citizens in the Township that would like to see this happen and to be able to offer it to their guests and if you're going to drink are responsible for your own behavior.

Commissioner Gass states the problem with alcohol is it is altering and people have the habit of not stopping.

Commissioner Bevan states that Commissioner Gass once stated he did not want to control people's lives and to not control peoples' lives by telling them not to drink.

Commissioner Gass states alcohol can alter someone within just a few minutes and this is called risk mitigation and that's why he is against this. He states he does not appreciate Fran throwing that back in his face about ruling people.

Commissioner Bevan states this Board cannot mitigate every circumstance.

Commissioner Gass states she did it with the chickens and what was wrong with people wanting to take care of their own food needs.

Commissioner Stump adds that she is about personal freedom and liberty as long as you're not hurting somebody. She states however with freedom comes responsibility and she feels most people are responsible.

Commissioner Zona agrees with what both Commissioners Stump and Bevan said and it is a personal decision and a personal responsibility but to say that once people start drinking cannot stop is wrong. The majority of people can stop drinking and for Commissioner Gass to state because he doesn't like alcohol is putting opinions on someone else. He also agrees with raising the permit fee to one hundred dollars.

Commissioner Atwood states he has been against this from the beginning and his concern is the safety of the kids. He states he has nothing against alcohol or anybody that wants to drink alcohol.

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Motion: Commissioner Zona

Motion to approve with a one hundred permit fee.

Second: Commissioner Bevan

ROLL CALL:

Commissioner Stump – YES

Commissioner Atwood – NO

Commissioner Blasko – YES

Commissioner Zona – YES

Commissioner Bevan – YES

Commissioner Gass – NO

Commissioner Haigis – YES

Motion carried 5 – 2 – 0

**FURTHER BOARD COMMENTS**

Commissioner Zona states that if Mr. Keenan was told that our police department cannot enforce laws on a State road, that is not true and they can enforce laws on State roads.

Mr. Keenan states the Township Manager said it.

Manager Silka states he believes they were not talking about speeding on State roads but water problems on the highway. He would never say something like that because he knows better.

Mr. Keenan states he was surprised because the Solicitor never said a word and he even mentioned it to a few Commissioners and they said he didn't actually mean that.

Chief Rizzo states he will address this after the meeting and that Manager Silka is very aware of the enforcement capabilities.

Rich Gray states he remembers the meeting and what Manager Silka was talking about was private property, shopping centers, stop signs and things on private property that the Township couldn't do.

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ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Commissioner Zona  
Second: Commissioner Atwood

Motion to adjourn. (8:19 P.M.)

Motion carried 7 – 0 – 0

- Regular Meeting Minutes of July 21, 2021 were approved by the Board of Commissioners on August 18, 2021.

  
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Jeffrey Silka, Township Manager  
/jjm

  
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Zachary Haigis, President

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**Park Pavilion  
Alcohol Permits**

1. Beer/Wine Permit - \$50.00 PERMIT FEE. \$200.00 Refundable Deposit.
2. Alcohol permits shall only be issued in conjunction with Park Pavilion rentals or sponsored events in the parks.
3. All applicants must be at least 21 years of age.
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 and 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. If an event is sponsored in the Parks and the sponsor has vendors that will sell alcohol, the sponsor must ensure that each vendor applies for a permit at \$50.00, provides liability insurance naming North Huntingdon Township as an additional insured and is licensed to sell alcoholic beverages.
13. Consumption of alcoholic beverages shall be limited to a twenty (20) foot perimeter around the rented pavilion. The park's staff shall designate an approved area for consumption of alcoholic beverages for sponsored events within the parks. At no time shall there be the consumption of alcoholic beverages outside of the designated areas.
14. Alcohol applications will be completed by the Township Manager in no less than 3 business days.

