

COOLBAUGH TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
February 21, 2023

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Weimer at 6:00pm at the Coolbaugh Township Municipal Center located at 5520 Municipal Drive, Tobyhanna, PA.

Board Members present:

William Weimer, Clare Colgan, Lynn Kelly, Alma I. Ruiz-Smith and Cara Rogan

Board Members absent:

None

Staff present:

Colby Grim, Solicitor, Erin Masker, Township Secretary, Meredith Thompson, Business Manager, Darren Dixon, Controller, Clinton Oddy, Code Enforcement Officer and Tomas Keane, Director of Codes and Zoning

Announcements:

Mr. Weimer announced the following:

- Public Input will be considered at the beginning of the meeting for non-agenda items. The public will be given an opportunity to speak on each agenda matter.
- The meeting is being recorded to aid in the preparation of the minutes, please remember to state your name and community or city you reside in before speaking.

1. Public input

Nothing was heard.

2. Approval of minutes / notes:

- February 7, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes

Ms. Colgan made a motion second by Ms. Rogan to approve the meeting minutes of February 7, 2023 as presented.

- **Discussion:** None
- **Vote:** All in favor, motion passes.

3. Monthly/Quarterly Reports

- **Pocono Mountain Regional Police Commission-** Presented by Mr. Weimer
- **Pocono Mountain Regional EMS-** Presented by Ms. Colgan with the Board stating that the new report is not easy to understand and asked that it be modified to ensure easier reading and understanding.

4. Codes and Zoning Report/STR Report

Reports were presented by Mr. Keane. He also stated that there is a Zoning Hearing scheduled for tomorrow evening for a variance being requested by PA American Water. He reviewed the application in the Board's packet with the Board agreeing that they will not be participating in the hearing.

5. E-911 Report

Presented by Mr. Oddy.

6. Authorization for Russ Kresge, Township Engineer to Work with Carson Helfrich and Solicitor Clark Connor on the Act 167 Ordinance Update

Ms. Ruiz-Smith made a motion second by Mr. Weimer to Authorize Township Engineer, Russell Kresge to work with Carson Helfrich and Solicitor Clark Connor on the Act 167 Ordinance Update.

- **Discussion:** None
- **Vote:** All in favor, motion passes.

7. Reschedule April 1, 2023 STR Work Session and Authorize Advertisement

Mr. Weimer made a motion second by Ms. Ruiz-Smith to Reschedule the Short-Term Rental Work Session on Saturday, April 29, 2023 at 2:00pm at the Pocono Mountain Public Library.

- **Discussion:** Ms. Kelly stated that she must work until 2:30pm but will attend after she finishes.
- **Vote:** All in favor, motion passes.

8. 2022 National Bridge Inspection Standards Routine Inspection Summary Update

Mr. Weimer provided the Board with an update from the meeting he had regarding the inspections of the bridges on Industrial Park Drive. He stated that the concerns that were discussed were the guiderails which were not up to the current standards. He stated that the DPW Foreman has money in the budget for guiderails and he is going to use those funds to make repairs. Based on the cost, it will determine if both bridges will be able to have the guiderail repaired this year, if not one will be repaired this year and the other next year. They also were not happy about the amount of trash that was dumped over there. Mr. Weimer stated that he is not sure what our right is over there since it is private property. There is only so much that DPW can do off the road. Ms. Ruiz-Smith stated that after the last conversation, she thought that we were going to reach out to Chuck Leonard about it since the EDC owns the property. She also stated that in the past Street to Feet did cleanup in conjunction with Jim Lambert of the Monroe County Waste Authority. She believes that if we try to coordinate this cleanup with that group again, we will have the outcome that we want. The other item that they had slight concern with is that the bridge is a dome and they checked for cracks from the trucks traveling over it. He stated that there are reinforcements and steel bars under it and he said that they have rusting around the bolts, stating that we can sand them down and paint them again. DPW will be doing the work and he just wanted to keep the Board up to date. He stated that they will be working on a couple bridges in the area in the upcoming month.

9. Resolution #08-2023: Authorization for Tax Collector Gratz Washenik to serve as Interim Tax Collector for Tobyhanna Township and Authorization of William Washenik as the Deputy Tax Collector

Ms. Rogan made a motion second by Ms. Colgan to adopt Resolution #08-2023: Authorization for Tax Collector Gratz Washenik to serve as Interim Tax Collector for Tobyhanna Township.

- **Discussion:** None
- **Vote:** All in favor, motion passes.

Ms. Kelly made a motion second by Mr. Weimer to amend the agenda to include Item #9A: Authorization to Execute the Agreement to Allow Coolbaugh Township Tax Collector, Gratz Washenik to serve as the Interim Tax Collector for Tobyhanna Township and Item #9B: Adoption of Resolution 09-2023: Appointing William Gratz Washenik as the Deputy Tax Collector.

- **Discussion:** None
- **Vote:** All in favor, motion passes.

9A. Acceptance of the Agreement and Authorization to Execute the Agreement for a Mutual Tax Collector between Coolbaugh Township and Tobyhanna Township

Ms. Colgan made a motion second by Ms. Ruiz-Smith to Authorize Entering into and Executing the Agreement between Coolbaugh Township and Tobyhanna Township Allowing Tax Collector, Gratz Washenik to Serve as the Interim Tax Collector for 2023.

- **Discussion:** Solicitor Grim stated that this is an agreement to share the Tax Collector.

- **Vote:** All in favor, motion passes.

9B. Resolution #09-2023: Appointment of Deputy Tax Collector

Ms. Colgan made a motion second by Ms. Ruiz-Smith to Adopt Resolution #09-2023: Appointing William Gratz Washenik as the Deputy Tax Collector for tax year 2023.

- **Discussion:** M. Peterson asked if this is only until January 2024, being advised that is correct, as Mr. Washenik stated that he would be hiring someone to help with the extra work created from serving as the interim tax collector for Tobyhanna Township. M. Peterson thanked the Board for confirming that the level of service for Coolbaugh Township residents would not be impacted.
- **Vote:** All in favor, motion passes.

10. Planning Commission Request to Send Letter to RCI Properties (Lot 24, Pocono Mountains Business Park)

Mr. Weimer made a motion second by Ms. Rogan to Authorize sending out the Letter to RCI Properties relating to their Land Development Plan for the Property located at Lot 24, Pocono Mountain Business Park stating that the Board will take action on the plan at their March 21, 2023 meeting.

- **Discussion:** Ms. Kelly stated that she attends the Planning Commission meetings, and this plan has been before them for a couple of years with no movement or submissions. M. Peterson stated that the commission discussed the waiver process with Ms. Masker stating that she and Solicitor Connor had a call with Solicitor Armstrong and it was determined that the waivers of procedural time would be handled administratively as it is the applicant that is granting the township the waiver of time and that if at any point the commission wants to put the applicant on notice that their plan will be acted on, they can provide notice to the applicant in this same manner as they are requesting now.
- **Vote:** All in favor, motion passes.

11. Coolbaugh Township Volunteer Fire Company Sewage Planning Module Funding Request

George Dobson, Fire Chief with the Coolbaugh Township Volunteer Fire Company was in attendance to discuss the request for waiver of fees associated with the permitting and testing of the Sewage Planning Module. He requested that the Board waive any fees associated with the Escrow required to cover testing by the SEO and permitting for their property located on Route 196. He stated that the money raised through their fundraising efforts has been used for the engineering and design of the system and that they need assistance with the township fees.

- **Discussion:** Ms. Ruiz-Smith asked if they have had the septic designed yet, being advised that they have not. She stated that before the Township SEO goes out to the property, the design will have to be available. She asked if they are asking for the waiver of any and all township fees that may come up (i.e. building, zoning, construction), being advised that they would like those waived, but at this time it is just for the fees associated with the Sewage Planning Module. Ms. Kelly stated that Building permit fees cannot be waived, and that the Board can only consider waiving fees associated with Township fees. Discussion continued about the waiver that is being requested and Ms. Thompson stated that the Township SEO provided a list of fees in accordance with the fee schedule that will be required for the process, however a set amount is not available as it will be dependent on the work involved and amount of testing required.

Ms. Kelly made a motion second by Ms. Ruiz-Smith to Authorize waiving all township escrow fees relating to the testing and permitting for the Coolbaugh Township Volunteer Fire Company Sewage Planning Module.

- **Discussion:** Ms. Ruiz-Smith stated that she has a lot of concerns with the expenses that are being incurred with the concept of a regional fire department being discussed. She asked what will happen if a regionalized fire department does come to pass, then you will have spent a lot of money for the testing/system and will be left with the property with a sewer system. She stated that she doesn't want to make decisions now that will have you writing out checks with so many variables still unknown. Ms.

Colgan asked if regionalization does occur, would a station on Route 196 be necessary, with Mr. Dobson stating that it is his opinion that it would still be necessary but that it would be up to his board. He stated that regionalization is not the elimination of stations, but the reduction of apparatus. The point of regionalization is to be able to pull resources in case of an emergency from the participating companies. Ms. Ruiz-Smith asked if regionalization was to happen wouldn't it make more sense to build a station in a more central location to the areas that are being served. Mr. Dobson stated that Coolbaugh Township is large enough to function most effectively with multiple locations within the municipality. He stated that with the limited information that is available relating to the regionalization of fire companies, he is open to the discussions but stating that he is not in favor of it. Ms. Kelly asked if the building on Route 196 is needed, being advised that it is, and asked if you will keep the other two stations as their locations also impact SRO ratings for our residents, being advised that is correct, there have been no discussions to close any other stations once this building is built. Ms. Kelly stated that if regionalization was to happen, she is not in favor of it, but asking if the buildings will be in possession as determined by regionalization, with Mr. Dobson stating that is correct they would essentially be a bargaining chip but stating that this is at least five years away from an agreement. Ms. Thompson confirmed that the motion is to waive the sewage planning module escrow and sewage permitting escrow relating to this project with Ms. Kelly stating that is correct, to waive the township fees that are associated with this project.

- **Vote:** 4-0-1, motion passes. (Mr. Weimer abstained)

12. Training Opportunity for DPW

Mr. Weimer stated that there is a training opportunity for DPW regarding OSHA Certified digging of trenches that are deeper than 4'. He stated that he could have someone come in and provide the training that is certified at the cost of \$100.00 per employee, asking that Board if they want to approve a number of DPW employees to attend or all DPW employees to attend. Mr. Weimer stated that there is a municipality towards Allentown that is facing heavy fines due to a situation that occurred when digging and he would like to avoid that from happening in our Township.

Ms. Colgan made a motion to Authorize all DPW Workers to Attend the Training at the Cost of \$100.00 per employee.

- **Discussion:** Ms. Kelly asked if the training will be open to other municipalities in our area with Mr. Weimer stating that it can be.
- **Vote:** All in favor, motion passes.

13. Authorize Business Manager, Meredith Thompson to Attend the Annual PA Workers Compensation Conference at the Hershey Lodge June 1st-2nd, 2023

Mr. Weimer made a motion second by Ms. Rogan to Authorize Business Manager, Meredith Thompson to Attend the Annual PA Workers Compensation Conference at the Hershey Lodge June 1st – 2nd, 2023 to Include the Cost of the Hotel, Meals and Travel Expense.

- **Discussion:** Ms. Ruiz-Smith asked if she will be taking a Township vehicle advising that she would not as they are needed here for the zoning department.
- **Vote:** All in favor, motion passes.

14. Authorize up to Three Zoning Hearing Board Members to Attend the Training Seminar at Pocono Township Municipal Building on March 23, 2023 at 6:30pm at the Cost of \$75.00 per person

Ms. Rogan made a motion second by Ms. Kelly to Authorize up to Three Zoning Hearing Board members to Attend the Zoning Hearing Board Training at Pocono Township Municipal Building on March 23, 2023 at 6:30pm at the Cost of \$75.00 per person.

- **Discussion:** None.
- **Vote:** All in favor, motion passes.

15. **Controller Report**

Presented by Mr. Dixon

16. **Current obligations**

• General Fund	\$ 102,497.09
• American Rescue Plan Fund	\$ 10,820.00
• Escrow Fund	\$ 1,910.00
• Sewer Fund	\$ 8,841.96
Total Disbursements	\$ 124,069.05

Ms. Colgan made a motion second by Ms. Rogan to Authorize paying the current obligations as presented in the amount of \$124,069.05.

- **Discussion:** Ms. Ruiz-Smith asked Mr. Dixon if he could provide a breakdown of the PPL bills for the past 24 months.
- **Vote:** All in favor, motion passes.

17. **Business Manager Comments/Updates**

- Ms. Thompson requested a brief executive session following the meeting for Legal.
- Ms. Thompson stated that we have received some promising applications for the parks position and asked if the Board had an issue with interviews being scheduled during the day and one evening to accommodate the applicants. She stated that this would be overtime for the DPW Foreman and Assistant Foreman. The Board agreed that would be fine. She also asked if anyone from the Board would like to sit in on the interviews, stating that in the past Ms. Colgan has participated. Ms. Colgan stated that she would again, and the Board agreed as she is the parks liaison.

18. **Solicitor Grim Comments/Updates**

Nothing to report.

19. **Board of Supervisors Executive Sessions**

- Tuesday, February 21, 2023 from 7:15pm-7:25pm Re: Legal

20. **Adjournment**

Ms. Colgan made a motion second by Ms. Rogan to adjourn at 7:09pm.

NEXT WORK SESSION/ REGULAR BOARD MEETING:

Regular Meeting Tuesday, March 7, 2023, at the Coolbaugh Township Municipal Center located at 5520 Municipal Drive, Tobyhanna, PA.

- Work Session/Regular Meeting – 6:00pm

Submitted by: _____ Date: _____
Erin Masker, Township Secretary

Witnessed by: _____ Date: _____
William Weimer, Chairman