

Connoquenessing Township's Supervisors Meeting was called to order by Chairman Terry Steinheiser at 6:00 p.m. on November 3, 2021 at the Connoquenessing Township Municipal Building. Present were Supervisors Terry Steinheiser, Ed Rupert and Ricky Kradel. Also attending was Solicitor Andrew Menchyk, Jr., Engineer William Braun, Treasurer/Asst. Secretary Lee Kradel and Secretary/Asst. Treasurer Brenda Davis to take the minutes. Forty-seven people signed in on the public sign in record on file. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance and Prayer.

Steinheiser stated an Executive Session was held after the October 6, 2021 meeting to discuss possible litigation on the Act 537 Plan and the board decided to put the Plan on hold. Steinheiser stated Mr. Menchyk, Jr. did send a letter to the DEP requesting a meeting but has not heard back and stated he has listened to the residents complaints and is here to work for them. Mr. Steinheiser stated the Sewer Authority Board will also be in the meeting with the DEP and try to make the Plan less invasive and concentrate on the Rt. 68 corridor. Steinheiser stated the board has not hidden anything and asked the residents to give the board time to make adjustments if applicable with DEP. The residents clapped in appreciation.

### **REVIEW MINUTES**

Reviewed minutes of October 6, 2021. Rupert motioned to accept the minutes of October 6, 2021. Kradel seconded. Roll call, yes. Reviewed minutes of October 25, 2021 "special meeting". Kradel motioned to accept the minutes of October 25, 2021. Rupert seconded. Roll call, yes.

### **FINANCIAL REPORT**

Lee Kradel reported the beginning balance in the General Fund is \$169,665.61 but after deposits of \$27,951.99 and checks in the amount of \$64,843.91 are approved tonight the ending balance will be \$132,773.69. Lee Kradel stated the Escrow account beginning balance is \$59,190.50 but with deposits of \$2,550.00 and checks in the amount of \$3,007.00, the ending balance is \$58,733.50. Lee Kradel said the Highway Aide beginning balance was \$38,505.19 but with interest in the amount of \$1.53, the ending balance is \$38,506.72. Lee Kradel stated the Act 13 Impact Fee fund beginning balance is \$242,532.06 but with interest in the amount of \$38.54 the ending balance is \$242,570.60. Lee Kradel stated the Act 13 CD beginning balance remained the same at \$728,843.49 leaving a grand total of \$971,414.09. Lee Kradel stated the American Relief Plan had a beginning balance of \$203,237.53 but with interest in the amount of \$32.30, the ending balance is \$203,269.83. Rupert motioned to approve the financial report and pay the bills. Kradel seconded. Roll call, yes.

### **COMMENT PERIOD** - three minute limit pertaining to agenda

Wayne Kaltenbaugh asked the board if they could look at his neighbor's retention pond that causes stormwater issues on his property. Mr. Kaltenbaugh stated he has tried to get this resolved since 2007. Bill Braun stated he has looked at it twice over the years and Rupert stated he looked at it and thinks installing a smaller orifice in a larger pipe may correct the issue. Steinheiser asked Bill Braun and Ricky Kradel to meet Wayne Kaltenbaugh at the site to discuss a remedy.

Mr. Bill Long thanked the board for having the "special meeting" on October 25, 2021 and putting a moratorium on the Act 537. Mr. Long stated he sensed Mr. Steinheiser's sincerity about trying to reduce the invasiveness.

Christine Klink stated a group of 11 volunteers handed out information about the Act 537 Plan at the voting polls yesterday and submitted a copy to the supervisors to make sure their information was correct. Mrs. Klink stated 350 copies of the forms were handed out. Mrs. Klink said a petition was passed around and 198 residents signed with the majority against public sewer. Mrs. Klink stated she is trying to work with the board to get information out to the public. Steinheiser told Mrs. Klink that the board is here to

listen to the residents but needs space and time to get responses from the DEP. Mrs. Klink told Steinheiser that residents are also here to help.

Mr. Menchyk, Jr. stated Senate Engineering reached out by email to DEP on October 26, 2021 for a meeting and he followed up with mailing/emailing a formal letter to them on October 29, 2021 requesting a meeting but has not heard back.

Patricia Miller thanked the board for what they are doing and appreciated the prayer on remembering the first responders because they work so hard. Ms. Miller questioned if DEP requires this Act 537 Plan. Rupert stated, "yes" and supervisors have to put the Plan in place and the DEP will enforce it. Ms. Miller asked if this is only for problem areas not the whole Township? Rupert stated it is to help the whole Township for 20 years. Ms. Miller asked if the money being spent on this Plan could be used to fix the problem areas. Rupert stated two new members of the Sewer Authority Board are being appointed tonight and their goal will be to figure out what can be fixed or not be fixed and how to move forward.

Steinheiser held a letter dated June 13, 2005 from the DEP saying the Township needed an Act 537 Plan. Steinheiser said this is nothing new and the board has not hidden anything. Steinheiser said the Sewer Authority Board is appointed to follow through with the Plan and give advice back to the supervisors.

Debbie Schettler from Connoquenessing School Rd. asked the supervisors for help correcting this road. Ms. Schettler stated she lives where the pavement ends and turns into gravel and there is a hump there and it is getting bigger. Ms. Schettler stated all the water is directly down her driveway and into the barn. Ms. Schettler stated the pipes put in by the farm driveway are higher than the road and water is running around them. Ms. Schettler stated her neighbor's the Peters garage gets flooded and asked if the Township can put in a new ditch system on her side of the road. Kradel agreed to meet with her.

#### **REQUEST TO BE HEARD - three minute limit**

Mark Williams thanked the board for the special meeting and listening to the residents' concerns. Mr. Williams suggests that when meeting with the DEP the board should go in with a proposed plan and not let the DEP tell the board what to do.

Angela Fleeger thanked the board and feels they are sincere and respectful. Ms. Fleeger is in agreement of the Rt. 68 corridor but would like to know who all will be affected but knows the board needs time. Ms. Fleeger asked the board to respect "no trespassing" signs in the future and ask Senate Engineering not to zig zag through farms. Ms. Fleeger asked that the residents have a voice when moving forward. Ms. Fleeger mentioned Calvin Wonderly, Chairman of the Sewer Authority Board, who is appointed by the supervisors has not been respectful to the residents. Mrs. Fleeger asked the board to request Mr. Wonderly's resignation. Mrs. Fleeger stated she lost all respect for Mr. Wonderly when he told one of her neighbors not to pay for sewer and they would just put a lien on her residence. Several other residents seconded Mrs. Fleeger's request.

Charlane Rimer said she was the one Mr. Wonderly told not to pay her sewer and didn't appreciate it and thought it was disrespectful. Mrs. Rimer suggests the remaining meetings should be held at the Fire Hall where people can have a seat. Mrs. Rimer questioned what phase 1 is compared to phase 2. Kradel stated phase one was establishing the Township having a sewer plant. Brendan Linton stated phase 1 was mainly Rt. 68 but phase 2 picked up the remaining areas. Mrs. Rimer asked where the Rt. 68 corridor is? Rupert said the properties that front on Rt. 68 and also some problem areas. Mrs. Rimer asked where the \$400,000 has already been spent. Brendan Linton stated a spreadsheet of expenses is posted on the Sewer Authority website. Mrs. Rimer stated everyone should cooperate better with each other and come to a

solution and not be told to not pay the proposed tap in fee. Mrs. Rimer stated Mr. Wonderly said at the Sewer meeting that he wasn't paying the tap in fee and she shouldn't either.

Myrna Robson stated before planning goes too far with the sewer plan, some changes should be made. They show Connoquenessing School Rd. going the whole way back around her parents farm buildings (Rader Farm) and it doesn't go that far, it is a private lane. Ms. Robson stated the lines also run in the middle of the field to the highest hill and there are 300-400 ft. along the lane that doesn't have any farm buildings around they could go through. Ms. Robson said the map also calls Shannon Rd. - Shannon Dr. Kradel told them to talk to the Sewer Authority Board. Mr. Rosenbaum said the plan is on hold but will have someone call her to review the Plan.

Debbie Schettler stated she will have questions pertaining to sewer right-of-ways and how they will get compensated for any damages. Kradel stated the Sewer Authority would fix the damages. Ms. Schettler also questioned if they can just go through your land or will they compensate you like the gas well lines do. Mr. Menchyk, Jr. said that compensation would be an agreement between the Sewer Authority and property owner but if an agreement could not be reached then eminent domain is exercised and property owners get just compensation. The board stated the Sewer Authority Board is on pause now and suggests Ms. Schettler go to meetings to keep informed.

Adam Schettler was on the agenda but did not attend.

Lauren Schettler was on the agenda but did not attend.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Rupert stated four comprehensive plan proposals were received and after review Rupert stated they are all basically the same and range in cost from \$34,000 to \$71,000. Mr. Bill Long questioned if the vendor determines the land use. Kradel said they will talk to residents, officials and survey the area to determine. Mr. Menchyk, Jr. stated in the RFP advertisement the Township requested the company to do a specific plan tailored to our Township. Kradel told the public to get involved. Jennifer Kosar asked how the public will know about this? Kradel stated it will be on the Township website which is [www.connotwp.com](http://www.connotwp.com) and Facebook. Rupert motioned to accept the EADS Group proposal in the amount of \$34,800. Steinheiser seconded. Roll call, yes.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Kradel motioned to renew the Township's TASC HRA agreement for one year effective December 1, 2021. Rupert seconded. Roll call, yes.

Steinheiser stated it is Highmark insurance renewal time for Union employees on December 1, 2021 and the rates have increased by 4%. Rupert motioned to approve new rates through November 30, 2022 with the 4% increase. Kradel seconded. Roll call, yes.

Rupert stated he feels it is a good time for the Sewer Authority to look into the Township's small flow and package sewer treatment plants around the Rt. 68 corridor to see if they are feasible to cover the Rt. 68 corridor and take care of malfunctions. Rupert would like to see some areas charged for sewage soon to get some revenue in. Kradel questioned who would pay for the engineering to see if this is feasible. Mr. Menchyk, Jr. stated the Sewer Authority's current loan probably would not so it would be a Township expense. Ken Norman, treasurer of Vineyards/Brandywine HOA, stated Brandywine sewer plant already has lines around Rt. 68 that run across to the old WesBanco Bank. Mr. Norman suggests talking with their plant operators about feasibility instead of getting engineers involved.

Carol Christner stated Senate Engineering has already run the numbers for using the Brandywine plant and Shannon Mills so she thinks most of the information has already been done. Rupert said this is true but they did numbers based on tying those systems in to cover the bigger plan and now we are looking at a smaller scale.

Diana Edwards stated a whole lot of money has been spent on horrible plans. Mrs. Edwards feels the project should be redone with logic involved.

Don Spangler mentioned when he was on the board it was discussed to run sewer to BASA and stated our Sewer Authority Board said this is not feasible. Steinheiser said that BASA is in the process of selling and not taking any new tap ins.

Roy Gilliland asked the board if they are looking into another engineer, please don't go with Senate Engineering because they have milked the Township enough. Patricia Miller stated Senate Engineering is both the Township engineer and Sewer Authority engineer and asked if that is a conflict of interest. Rupert stated the Sewer Authority can appoint who ever they choose.

Rupert motioned to give the Sewer Authority Board permission to check into whether the small flow and package sewer treatment plants would be feasible to tie some of the Township's Rt. 68 corridor into these systems. Christine Klink asked if the motion could also include the Sewer Authority Board look into other alternatives. Steinheiser said, "yes". Roll call. Rupert, yes. Steinheiser, yes, Kradel, yes.

#### **PLANS**

\*NONE\*

#### **ENGINEER REPORT**

Bill Braun stated he received an update from the engineer at #1 Cochran who said the cattails have been removed from the stormwater pond but it has been too wet to replace the pipe.

#### **SOLICITOR REPORT**

\*NONE\*

#### **CODE ENFORCEMENT REPORT**

Rupert, after reviewing the October 2021 invoice in the amount of \$916.99, tabled approving this payment. Rupert stated the hours were totaled wrong. Report in packets.

#### **ROAD MASTER REPORT**

Kradel stated road crew are getting trucks ready for winter, mixing anti-skid and salt, replaced a pipe on Nursery Rd. to correct a draining issue, patched pot holes and replaced signs. Don Spangler mentioned how fast cars travel on Eagle Mill Rd. Kradel stated the hill is very slippery and he is going to micro mill both sides of the hill a.s.a.p. to get it back to the original blacktop so it is safe.

Roy Gilliland asked if blinking lights could be put up on Eagle Mill Rd. to help slow down drivers. Kradel said they are very expensive, between \$2,500-\$3,000 each.

Road superintendent report for October 2021 in packets.

#### **BUILDING PERMITS APPLIED FOR THIS MONTH**

\*NONE\*

**TAX COLLECTOR REPORT**

\*NONE\*

**SEO REPORT**

\*NONE\*

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR REPORT**

Matt McConnell, member of Fire Company, stated he has worked with the Township over 2 years to get a fire tax increase. Mr. McConnell stated they are in need of a new building. Mr. McConnell stated the Fire Company has owned the triangle lot at the end of Connoquenessing Main St. and Rt. 68 for 40 years and would like new Fire Station there. Mr. McConnell said they also need a new fire engine. Mr. McConnell thanked the Township for what they have done but stated that most neighboring fire companies are at 1.5-3 mills and we are only at .5 mill. Mr. McConnell has said he does do fundraising but feels his fire company's time should be spent on training. Kradel asked if the building can be started with the funds the Township has already supplied. Mr. McConnell said "no" because he needs more guaranteed income to get a loan. Mr. Bill Long stated fundraisers will not touch the amount of money you need to run a fire company. Mr. McConnell stated 4 of his men including himself have over 1,000 hours this year in calls, training, etc. Lee Kradel asked how much guaranteed income do you need. Mr. McConnell stated without knowing the cost of the building he doesn't know. Mr. McConnell handed out a breakdown of assessments on properties and what the different millage rates would generate. He stated the fire tax is based on .5 mill which for every \$1,000 of a resident's assessed value equals \$1.00 so .5 mill is \$.50. Mr. McConnell stated the highest assessment currently is \$70,000 which at .5 mill costs \$35.04/yr but at 3 mill would increase to \$210.00/yr. Mr. McConnell said the average cost per home would be \$50.00/yr at 3 mill. Brenda Davis said even if the Township agrees to raise the millage to 2 mill that may still not be enough to get the building or engine. Brenda Davis feels a plan/projection should be presented showing what the Fire Company needs. Lou Zimmerman, fire chief, stated that can't be done until they know their guaranteed funding. Patricia Miller asked what kind of grants are received. Lou Zimmerman stated around \$56,000 in 2021. Lou Zimmerman stated the tax millage was set at .5 mill in 1994 and he has ran on a \$62,000 budget since then. Patricia Miller stated the fire company does a lot with what they have and mentioned how close quarters it is to get dressed for a call. Ms. Miller stated Cranberry Community Chest pays for the training of the fire fighters and when there are false fire calls some fire companies invoice the resident for that but our Fire Company doesn't. Ms. Miller stated Butler County Community College also reimburses their college tuition if they pass the class. Ms. Miller said the Township residents are not paying these costs but are benefiting in so many ways. Roy Gilliland said he is in favor of the 2 mill increase and look at another increase in the future. Mr. Gilliland said he personally donates each year but feels others should do their part. Lambert Rosenbaum stated this is a volunteer fire company and if they go away we lose our service. Mr. Rosenbaum said his cost is \$1.00/month for fire protection and told the supervisors raising the tax is a "no brainer". Christine Klink told Mr. McConnell she contributes each year but questioned if Mr. McConnell feels by raising this tax, contributions will go down. Mr. McConnell did not think so. Kradel stated he is in favor of an increase and has been to tree down calls and said the fire men are always there. Rupert stated the increase would need put into the 2022 budget and Mr. Menchyk, Jr. stated it would be included in the tax resolution. Ken Norman commented that he does feel the fire company should submit a more comprehensive plan. Steinheiser made a motion to advertise for a public meeting to discuss an increase in fire tax and told Mr. McConnell to bring a plan showing his expenditures. Kradel seconded. Roll call, yes.

Rupert stated the Township received the CVREMA's 2022 budget and will have to pay liability and workman's comp. insurance next year. Rupert made a motion to send a letter stating we are staying joined to the CVREMA for next year but stated the following year the liability and workman's comp.

insurance needs to be split equally between the three municipalities involved. Kradel seconded. Roll call. Rupert, yes. Kradel, yes. Steinheiser agreed only if these insurances will be split equally in 2023.

Patricia Miller asked if the Township has a bomb shelter. Rupert stated he thinks it is the Armory.

### **MOTIONS & GENERAL INFORMATION**

Rupert stated five people applied for the two vacant Sewer Authority members and he and Kradel interviewed them. Rupert stated Brent Benoit and Tom Barnett recently resigned. Rupert stated terms are for five years so each year someone is appointed. Rupert stated the five applicants were Bill Long, Mark Williams, Estle Harp, Ken Norman and Ken Dambaugh. Rupert and Kradel said they were all excellent candidates. Kradel thanked the applicants for stepping up and stated it's a tough job. Kradel motioned to appoint Bill Long to Brent Benoit's unexpired term through 2021. Rupert seconded. Roll call, yes. Rupert motioned to appoint Ken Dambaugh, 144 Double Rd., to fill Tom Barnett's unexpired term through 2023. Kradel and Rupert stated Mr. Dambaugh's background in Accounting was impressive and thought the Sewer Authority could use his skills. Kradel seconded. Roll call, yes. Steinheiser welcomed the new members and Rupert stated there will be vacancies in the future and will keep the three other applicants on file.

Steinheiser motioned to advertise to appoint a certified public accountant to audit Township financial records for 2021. Kradel seconded. Roll call, yes.

Rupert motioned to advertise appointed positions. Kradel seconded. Roll call, yes.

Rupert motioned to advertise proposed 2022 budget. Kradel seconded. Roll call, yes.

Rupert motioned to advertise "close of business" meeting for Tuesday Dec. 28, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. Kradel seconded. Roll call, yes.

Steinheiser motioned to advertise organizational meeting which will be held January 3, 2022 (TBD). Rupert seconded. Roll call, yes.

Steinheiser motioned to advertise first supervisors meeting of 2022 (TBD). Kradel seconded. Roll call, yes.

Steinheiser motioned to advertise elected auditors meeting which will be January 4, 2022 (TBD). Kradel seconded. Roll call, yes.

Rupert motioned to return sign escrow to Alvin Vavro contingent on removing his political signs in the amount of \$50.00. Kradel seconded. Roll call, yes.

Kradel motioned to return sign escrow to Amy Marcinkiewicz contingent on removing her political signs in the amount of \$50.00. Rupert seconded. Roll call, yes.

Rupert motioned to return sign escrow to Larry Spangler contingent on removing his political signs in the amount of \$50.00. Kradel seconded. Roll call, yes.

Kradel motioned to return sign escrow to Joe Kubit contingent on removing his political signs in the amount of \$50.00. Roll call, yes.

Rupert stated that after reviewing the Code Enforcement report that was tabled earlier, the amount was wrong because the hours and miles were switched accidentally in the columns. Rupert stated the correct amount will be calculated and paid.

**Steinheiser said the below, which was on the agenda, is for information:**

Received thank you note from Meals on Wheels for our donation of \$1,200.00.

Received thank you note from Butler Area Public Library for our donation of \$800.00.

Received thank you note from Butler County Humane Society for our donation of \$500.00.

West Park Manor Mobile Home Park has been inspected and operating permit was issued.

Rolling Valley Estates Mobile Home Park has been inspected and operating permit was issued.

ARM Group LLC is notifying us on behalf of PennEnergy Resources, LLC as an affected municipality of proposed natural gas well drilling or alterations at the PER L103 Well Pad specifically Well Plats 3H, 9H, 11H, 13H and 15H. Information is on file at Township office.

Lambert Rosenbaum, sewer authority member, announced that the remainder of Sewer Authority Board meetings for 2021 will be held at the Connoquenessing Fire Hall to accommodate the residents.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

Steinheiser motioned to adjourn at 7:45 p.m. and stated the board would not return. Kradel seconded. Roll call, yes.