

Connoquenessing Township's Supervisors Meeting was called to order by Chairman Terry Steinheiser at 6:00 p.m. on February 2, 2022 at the Connoquenessing Township Municipal Building. Present were Supervisors Terry Steinheiser, Larry Spangler and Ricky Kradel. Also attending were Solicitor Andrew Menchyk, Jr., Engineer Bill Braun, Treasurer/Asst. Secretary Lee Kradel and Secretary/Asst. Treasurer Brenda Davis was present to take the minutes. Thirty people signed in on the public sign in record on file. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance and Prayer.

REVIEW MINUTES

Reviewed minutes of January 3, 2022 organizational and supervisors meetings. Spangler motioned to accept the January 3, 2022 organizational meeting minutes and the January 3, 2022 supervisors meeting minutes. Kradel seconded. Roll call, yes.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Lee Kradel reported the beginning balance in the General Fund is \$158,959.64 but after deposits of \$40,013.16 and checks in the amount of \$74,034.14 are approved tonight, the ending balance will be \$124,938.66. Lee Kradel stated the beginning Escrow account balance is \$56,496.50 but after deposits of \$570.00 (which Lee stated the formula did not total on the financial report) and checks in the amount of \$570.00 being approved tonight, the ending balance will be \$56,496.50. Lee Kradel said the Highway Aide beginning balance is \$38,510.05 with interest of \$1.64, leaving the ending balance at \$38,511.69. Lee Kradel stated the Act 13 Impact Fee fund beginning balance was \$242,654.34 but with interest of \$41.22, the ending balance is \$242,695.56. Lee Kradel said the Act 13 CD remained at \$729,392.97 for a grand total of \$972,088.53. Lee Kradel stated the American Relief Plan had a beginning balance of \$203,340.00 but with interest in the amount of \$34.54 the ending balance is \$203,374.54. Kradel motioned to accept the financial report and pay the bills. Spangler seconded. Roll call, yes.

Maher Duessel will be auditing the 2021 books during Feb. 2-4, 2022. Lee Kradel stated they will be in the Township office tomorrow or Friday but doing most of it remotely.

Steinheiser stated the 2022 budget needed amended because of the fire tax increase and the change in the allocation of 75% from Local Services Tax back to 25%. Steinheiser stated it had been advertised and available for viewing by the public for the required 10 days. Spangler motioned to adopt the amended 2022 budget. Kradel seconded. Roll call, yes.

COMMENT PERIOD - Three minute limit pertaining to agenda

Bill Long stated he has concerns with the Sewer Authority Board meetings. Mr. Long stated he gave the board a handout about the Sunshine Act at their September meeting referencing what they can do and not do during an executive session and stated there have been no changes. Mr. Long stated he has sat through executive sessions and the meetings were not what they were advertised to be. According to the Sunshine Act putting "discuss personnel and litigation issues" is general and supposed to state clearly to the public what is being discussed in the meeting. Mr. Long stated he has given this handout to them twice now and again to the Solicitor tonight and requests they follow through. Mr. Long stated this information can be found in section 708 "executive session" in the Sunshine Act. Mr. Long stated he is making the supervisors aware. Mr. Long stated he doesn't feel that anything is being hidden but wants the meetings to be run properly. Steinheiser stated the supervisors can call executive meetings as long as they announce what the meeting was about at their next meeting. Mr. Menchyk, Jr. agreed. Mr. Long stated when announcing at next meeting it needs to be specific, not in general terms.

REQUEST TO BE HEARD (Three minute limit)

David Dreher started by thanking the road crew for the excellent service. Mr. Dreher stated he was disappointed at the last two meetings because the supervisors only gave the Fire Dept. an increase of 1.5 mills but reduced the LST disbursement of 75% to 25%. and including the payment for their Workers

Comp. in these figures. Mr. Dreher felt the community had supported the Fire Dept. increase at a special meeting but the supervisors, with these cuts, have let them down. Mr. Dreher stated the community needs these firefighters. Mr. Dreher also wished that more time would have been spent on advertising the Sewer Plan. Mr. Dreher stated he got one letter in November about the sewer but the Fire Dept. Tax was advertised and had a special meeting. Steinheiser stated the Fire Dept. has always received the 25% but for last year because they did not get a fire tax increase, the board raised it to 75% to help compensate. Steinheiser stated now the Supervisors have pulled it back to 25% because of the millage increase.

OLD BUSINESS

Kradel stated 8 engineering firms applied to review the Act 537 sewer design plan and the Sewer Authority Board has selected 4 to interview and hope to select one at their meeting on February 28, 2022. Mr. Long stated there has already been over \$600,000 spent on engineering and asked the board to take their time before wasting any more money.

NEW BUSINESS

Kradel motioned to approve changing E. Woodchuck Rd. to Woodchuck Rd. and address range to 100-349. Steinheiser verified that the residents currently use Woodchuck Rd. but the mapping calls the road E. Woodchuck Rd. Brenda Davis stated a "Road Name Change" form needs completed and approved by the board and then sent to Emergency Services and County Mapping for their approval. Spangler seconded. Roll call, yes.

Steinheiser stated the elected auditor Biidaw Morin submitted a resignation letter because she moved out of the Township and is no longer eligible to be an elected auditor. Spangler motioned to accept Biidaw Morin's resignation as an elected auditor. Kradel seconded. Roll call, yes.

Steinheiser stated Estle Harp, former elected auditor, stated he would accept the appointment of the elected auditor but asked the public if anyone else was interested. No comments. Steinheiser motioned to appoint Estle Harp as the new auditor until the next election. Kradel seconded. Roll call, yes.

Kradel motioned to hire a cleaning person after interviewing the applicants. Spangler seconded. Roll call, yes.

PLANS

NONE

ENGINEER REPORT

Bill Braun stated there is a new grant available (LSA grant program) that may be applicable for replacement and construction costs for the Lower Harmony Rd. culvert. The application is through the DCED and due March 15, 2022. Mr. Braun stated the project must be \$25,000-\$1,000,000 and improve the quality of life. Mr. Braun stated the grant is funded entirely, no match. Mr. Braun presented a draft resolution to Mr. Menchyk, Jr. that will need to be passed if the supervisors move forward. Mr. Braun stated there is a \$100.00 application fee and the supervisors may want to put a certain amount (ex. \$40,000) towards the project as a match which can help in getting the grant. Kradel stated that would need discussed. The board asked Bill Braun to prepare the application and have Lee and Brenda assist where needed.

SOLICITOR REPORT

Mr. Menchyk, Jr. noted that a part of Constitution Ave. in the Township is incorrectly named as Reiber Rd. on the PennDot map and in order to get this corrected an ordinance needs adopted by the Township. The road area the Township considers Constitution Ave. runs from Connoquenessing Borough's line to Reiber Rd. Mr. Menchyk, Jr. stated all the residents on this stretch use the address of Constitution Ave.

and anyone in proximity to this location will receive a copy of this draft ordinance. Steinheiser motioned to advertise the ordinance for adoption. Kradel seconded. Roll call, yes.

Mr. Menchyk, Jr. stated the Armstrong Franchise Agreement that has been discussed for several months has been changed again to change the term to five years instead of the previous 10 year term.

Mr. Menchyk, Jr. stated Armstrong's new agreement is for 5 years but with 2 automatic renewals for a total of 15 years however if either party wants to change/open the agreement at any 5 year term they must give the other party 180 days notice. Kradel feels it should just be a five year term. The other board members agreed. Mr. Menchyk, Jr. stated he would update Armstrong with the boards decision.

Mr. Menchyk, Jr stated he sent back the EADS Group Comprehensive Plan draft agreement, per the supervisors approval, with his recommended changes. Mr. Menchyk, Jr. stated the EADS Group acknowledged receipt by email and stated they feel they can revise some of the sections. Mr. Menchyk, Jr. said no action needs taken.

CODE ENFORCEMENT REPORT

Spangler motioned to approve Sandi Cox's invoice for January in the amount of \$187.06. Kradel seconded. Roll call, yes. Report in packets.

ROAD MASTERS REPORT

Kradel stated road crew is working on maintaining the snowy roads and doing small repairs to equipment (brakes). Evelyn Hockenberry said, "good job". Mr. Bill Long said he has seen the updated signs and the new 3-way stop at Reiber Rd. and thinks they are excellent. Kradel stated the road crew is working on updating all the signs and will let them know they are appreciated.

Kradel stated he would like to rehire last year's summer help. He said they are excellent workers and already have their certifications to be flaggers. Kradel motioned to rehire the two temporary summer help. Spangler seconded. Roll call, yes.

Kradel mentioned he left copies on the table from the 2nd Class Township Code this evening in reference to Organizational Meetings being required to be held the first Monday of January. Kradel stated he heard complaints that the meeting was held at 10:00 a.m on January 3, 2022 and said that was due to the Chairman not being able to attend in the evening because of prior commitments. Steinheiser said nothing was hidden from anyone and it was advertised, posted on the door and on the website. Kradel said if anyone wanted a copy, just ask.

Kay Double mentioned the board stating that elected auditors have to live in the Township and questioned if Sewer Authority Board members needed to. Kradel stated they must own property or reside in Township. Ms. Double questioned the new member of the sewer authority works for Evans City Water Authority and one of the four out of eight new engineers that are being interviewed also does the Evans City Water Authority and could be good or bad. Ms. Double stated the residents don't get to vote on the decision referring to Bill Long not being voted back on to the Sewer Authority. Kradel stated the residents elected the supervisors to make those decisions. Ms. Double said she wasn't being negative and staying positive but didn't feel anyone has more experience than Bill Long for the Sewer Authority Board. Kradel stated he voted for Ed Tanski, newest member, because he has 14 years experience with a Sewer Authority and is a licensed operator of his sewage treatment plant at the Buttercup Campground. Steinheiser said he explained this to Bill Long why the board chose Mr. Tanski and he was okay with the boards decision. Mr. Long said he is not upset that he is not on the board but said he will be at each meeting and expects all the residents to continue attending the meetings and speak up if they disagree. Kradel told the residents that the final decision maker in the plan is the DEP and unfortunately there may be some unhappy residents.

Road superintendent report for January 2022 in packets.

BUILDING PERMIT REPORT

Steinheiser stated there were no building permits applied for this month.

TAX COLLECTOR REPORT

Steinheiser stated that Ann Isaacs, Tax Collector, is requesting an increase to \$35.00 per tax certification letter starting immediately. Steinheiser stated it was raised from \$25.00 to \$30.00 a year ago and doesn't feel it should be raised again. After discussing, the board was not in favor of the increase.

Kradel motioned to approve Steinheiser to sign and approve to retain Kara Gold as Deputy Tax Collector through 2025. Spangler, seconded. Roll call, yes.

SEO REPORT

NONE

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT REPORT

Matt McConnell with Connoquenessing Volunteer Fire Company stated he has submitted paperwork to be certified with the PA Fire Academy to become a Participating Department because 50% of their firefighters are trained to the minimum of Firefighter 1 & 2. This means half of them are trained to a professional level. Mr. McConnell stated he will be meeting with the engineer/architect at the end of February about the building plans. Mr. McConnell wanted to clarify that a gym such as a basketball court, swimming pool, etc. is not being put in the new building. Mr. McConnell stated it will be a large closet area with weights and elliptical. Lou Zimmerman stated they received the maximum PEMA grant in the amount of \$15,000 and will use this money for replacement of electric/cordless hand tools for the rescue and other items on the rescue truck. Mr. Zimmerman stated that firefighters that achieved this professional status have 184 hours of in class instruction. Mr. Zimmerman said Connoquenessing Fire Dept. ranks 4th in the county for trained firefighters. Spangler asked how the volunteer count is. Mr. Zimmerman stated it's the healthiest he has seen in a while. Kradel stated he coordinated with Mr. Zimmerman during the big snow storm last week to assure that if the Fire Company needed help to get to a location, the road crew would be there.

MOTIONS & GENERAL INFORMATION

Township received materials from PSATS for the "Youth Awards Program" where youth groups can be recognized for contributions they have made to our Township. Application and entry forms can be picked up at Township office. Deadline to submit is March 1, 2022.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Kradel motioned to adjourn at 7:46 p.m. to an executive session to discuss possible litigation. Spangler, seconded. Roll call, yes.