

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 6, 2022**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

John J. Merhottein, President  
Malissa K. Davis, Vice President  
Jan Beatty, Commissioner  
Dale A. Sourbeck, Commissioner  
John K. Gallagher, Commissioner

**OTHERS PRESENT**

James Broughal, Township Solicitor – via Zoom  
Anthony Giovannini, Township Solicitor  
Doug Bruce, Township Manager  
Anthony Tallarida, Township Engineer

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Merhottein called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., and led those in attendance in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

**COURTESY OF THE FLOOR**

**GLEN KREIER  
3942 KENRICK DR.**

Mr. Kreier asked the commissioners to consider a shredding service for the residents. The one provided by the county requires that the residents leave the documents to be shredded there which makes Mr. Kreier uneasy. Mr. Merhottein said the board will consider it.

**DOROTHY ROMEO  
3022 MILLSTONE DR.**

Ms. Romeo asked the board to amend the ordinance that requires dogs to be on leashes to also include cats. She said her neighbor has four cats that jump over to her property and destroy the gardens. Ms. Romeo said she has called the police and the neighbors were warned twice and cited once. Solicitor Giovannini suggested she contact an attorney as this is a civil and private matter. Ms. Davis said cat behavior is difficult to enforce. Mr. Merhottein said the board will discuss the ordinance amendment.

**JAMES LALLY  
1949 BEAUJOLAIS PL**

Mr. Lally asked if the Harvey's Corner Wawa project was before the board tonight. Mr. Merhottein said it will be in front of the Zoning Hearing Board at their special meeting on Tuesday, September 13, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

**RESIDENT  
VIA ZOOM**

The resident asked about the status of the zoning change related to the Wawa project at Harvey's Corner. Ms. Davis said it has not yet been approved.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Upon motion (Gallagher-Sourbeck) the Board of Commissioners voted by voice vote to approve of the minutes of the August 15, 2022, regular public meeting. The motion passed 4-0-1. Ms. Davis abstained.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**ORDINANCE 08-22**

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CODE OF CODIFIED ORDINANCES BY AMENDING CHAPTER 252, VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC; ARTICLE II, TRAFFIC; SECTION 252-10, SPEED LIMITS; TO ALLOW FOR CERTAIN SPEED LIMITS ON ROADWAYS WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP AND REPEAL ALL ORDINANCES INCONSISTENT HERewith**

Mr. Bruce said the proposed ordinance would codify the speed limits in the Maple Shade development. Ms. Davis noted that White Barn Road should be White Barn Lane in the ordinance.

Upon motion (Sourbeck-Davis) the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to adopt Ordinance 08-22 amending the Code of Codified Ordinances by amending Chapter 252, Vehicles and Traffic; Article II, Traffic; Section 252-10, Speed Limits; to allow for certain speed limits on roadways within the township and repeal all ordinances inconsistent herewith, as amended.

**RESOLUTIONS OF THE  
BOARD OF  
COMMISSIONERS**

**RESOLUTION R075-22**

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN APPLICATION FOR THE BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP DUI ENFORCEMENT PROJECT GRANT FROM THE PENNSYLVANIA BUREAU OF HIGHWAY SAFETY AND TRAFFIC ENGINEERING AND AUTHORIZING SERGEANT DARYL LAPOINTE AS PROJECT DIRECTOR**

Mr. Merhottein said this is an annual grant application.

Upon motion (Sourbeck-Beatty) the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve Resolution R075-22, authorizing an application for the Bethlehem Township DUI Enforcement Project grant from the Pennsylvania Bureau of Highway Safety and Traffic Engineering and authorizing Sergeant Daryl LaPointe as project director.

**RESOLUTION R076-22**

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING APPLICATIONS TO THE NORTHAMPTON COUNTY PUBLIC SAFETY GRANT PROGRAM**

Mr. Bruce said this is a maximum \$20,000 grant requiring a 33 percent township match. The deadline to apply for this grant is September 9th. Ms. Davis asked if the grant was for three different items. Mr. Bruce said the grants allows for multiple requests: three grants with a match required for each. Grants will be sought for the following three items:

1 - Police body cameras and related technology (nine modules synchronizing vehicle and body cameras, four modules to modify existing vehicle docks, eight body cameras, eight-bay dock/transfer station, installation); total project cost \$25,140; grant request \$16,760.

Mr. Bruce said this was a budgeted item.

2 – Fixed license plate reader (LPR) technology (equipment for two fixed sites and a server upgrade); total project cost \$84,814.30; grant request \$20,000.

Mr. Bruce said this was a budgeted item.

3 – Bulletproof vests for first responders from Nancy Run Fire Company and Bethlehem Township Volunteer Fire Company; total project cost \$13,248; grant request \$8,832.

Mr. Bruce said this request was not budgeted for. Upon motion (Gallagher-Davis) the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approved Resolution R076-22 authorizing applications to the Northampton County public safety grant program.

**RESOLUTION R077-22**

**A RESOLUTION DESIGNATING TOWNSHIP MANAGER DOUG BRUCE TO EXECUTE ON BEHALF OF BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP ALL REQUIRED FORMS AND DOCUMENTS FOR THE PURPOSE OF OBTAINING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR THE HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAM (HMGP) OR THE PRE-DISASTER MITIGATION (PDM) PROGRAM UNDER THE ROBERT T. STAFFORD DISASTER RELIEF AND EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE ACT (PUBLIC LAW 93-288 AS AMENDED BY PUBLIC LAW 100-707) OR THE FLOOD MITIGATION ASSISTANCE (FMA) PROGRAM, REPETITIVE FLOOD CLAIMS (RFC) PROGRAM OR SEVERE REPETITIVE LOSS (SRL) PROGRAM UNDER THE NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE ACT OF 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4001 ET SEQ), NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE REFORM ACT OF 1994 (PUBLIC LAW 103-325) AND THE FLOOD INSURANCE REFORM ACT OF 2004 (PUBLIC LAW 108-264), AS PERTAINS TO FEDERAL MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAMS**

Upon motion (Beatty-Sourbeck) the Board of Commissioners voted by voice vote to approve Resolution R070-22 designating township manager Doug Bruce to execute on behalf of Bethlehem Township all required forms and documents for the purpose of obtaining financial assistance for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) or the Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) program under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Public Law 93-288 as amended by Public Law 100-707) or the Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) program, Repetitive Flood Claims (RFC) program or Severe Repetitive Loss (SRL) program under the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 4001 et seq), National Flood Insurance Reform Act of 1994 (Public Law 103-325) and the Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-264), as pertains to federal mitigation grant programs.

**APPROVAL OF PURCHASE ORDERS**

- PO 20221944 – HWA Group – PPIS – \$5,770.00
- PO 20221945 – New Arrival Studios – PPIS – \$39,300.00
- PO 20221950 – PCPA – BTPD – \$2,656.50
- PO 20221952 – Jets Landcare – PPIS – \$2,100.00
- PO 20221963 – Cody Systems – PPIS – \$17,197.21
- PO 20221992 –GovConnection Inc. – PPIS – \$6,176.15
- PO 20221995 – R.J. Doer Co. – PPIS – \$16,990.00
- PO 20222005 – Hydra-Numatic Sales – PPIS – \$5,601.24
- PO 20222023 – Motorola Solutions – BTPD – \$22,875.60
- PO 20222024 – Motorola Solutions – BTPD -- \$14,171.22
- PO 20222025 – Axon Enterprises – BTPD – \$4,456.80
- PO 20222029 – Signal Service – BTPD – \$3,588.55

Mr. Sourbeck asked if purchase order 20221995 for the Johnston mansion shutter repair and replacement was budgeted. Mr. Bruce said it was not a budgeted item but that the board directed PPIS to find a solution for the shutters. Mr. Sourbeck said he feels the money would be better used for the fire department. Mr. Merhottein said they have never turned down a request from the department. Mr. Gallagher said the Housenick Memorial Foundaion committed money for the exterior renovations which has come under budget.

This expense can be reimbursed. Ms. Davis said she would like a formal agreement to that affect from the trust and asked to table the purchase order.

Upon motion (Sourbeck-Gallagher), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice to approve Purchase Orders 20221944, 20221945, 20221950, 20221952, 20221963, 20221992, 20222005, 20222023, 20222024, 20222025 and 20222029 as presented and table purchase order 20221995.

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **PENNDOT CORRESPONDENCE REGARDING BETHMAN- CHURCH INTERSECTION**

Mr. Bruce said the board directed the township engineer to investigate the intersection at Church Road and Bethman Road to see if it meets the warrants for a four-way stop sign. In 2018, the request was made to PennDOT and was rejected in 2019. Mr. Bruce said he recently received a letter from PennDOT stating they were not opposed to adding additional warning signs at the intersection, but still not supporting a four-way stop. Mr. Bruce said he had also received correspondence from Senator Boscola's office asking the township engineer to redo the study at the intersection now that school has started and that PennDOT might review the matter again. Mr. Tallarida said a study was done in July and that traffic volume then is actually higher than during the school year. He said a new nearby development is coming in about a year and it may be advisable to do another study then. Mr. Merhottein said he would be agreeable to posting warning signs and revisiting the study in a year.

### **ROSEMARY MCGUINESS 4370 CHURCH RD.**

Ms. McGuiness said there have been 18 automobile accidents in the last four years at the intersection. She said it is becoming increasingly dangerous and asked the board for help in getting the stop signs. Mr. Merhottein said a traffic study was done, finding the intersection did not meet warrants for a four-way stop, and unfortunately that portion of the road is owned by PennDOT.

### **PAUL WEISS 3649 CHIPMAN RD.**

Mr. Weiss said he had discussions with Senator Boscola, who is also a resident of the neighborhood; Joe Kelly of Senator Boscola's office; and Mike Rebert, who works with PennDOT District 5; who agree that another traffic study should be done. He asked the township to write a letter to PennDOT with their safety concerns. Mr. Merhottein said they have already written a letter to PennDOT but would be agreeable to sending them a letter monthly, if necessary.

### **BARRY ROTH 4323 CHETWIN TERR.**

Mr. Roth asked the board to consider lowering the speed limit to 25 MPH on Church Road as the road dips and has caused accidents in the past.

### **ELAINE JOHNSON 3815 BETHMAN RD.**

Ms. Johnson asked the board to send a letter along with the photos to PennDOT. Mr. Merhottein said the photos will be included.

### **DON DUFFY 4326 CHURCH RD.**

Mr. Duffy said he was told in 2015 that it would take a fatality to make the changes at the intersection. He asked if PennDOT relies on the traffic reports. Mr. Tallarida said PennDOT reviews the counts on the reports and also looks at crash data., provided by the police chief and considers speed, grade of the road, and adequate sight distance. The crash reports are yearly. Mr. Duffy asked if they could meet with PennDOT. Mr. Tallarida said the department doesn't have public meetings. Mr. Duffy said regulations and data don't explain everything. He asked if a targeted speed enforcement could be provided. He believes the speeding is worst southbound on

Bethman Road near the farm. Mr. Merhottein said improving that intersection was the first thing he tackled when he was elected in 2018.

**MS. MCCOOL  
3796 BETHMAN RD.**

Ms. McCool said she believes there is a discrepancy in the criteria. Ms. McCool asked if the police could do anything. Mr. Merhottein said he will ask the chief to increase patrols at that intersection. Ms. Davis said this intersection was the first she was involved with after being elected. She said PennDOT owns many of the intersections and is frustrated that so little can be done to improve them. Mr. Gallagher suggested to the residents that they too write a detailed letter to PennDOT.

Upon motion (Gallagher-Sourbeck) the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to send a detailed letter including the traffic studies and photos to PennDOT monthly for the next 12 months.

At 7:55 p.m. Commissioner Beatty left the meeting.

**MEALS ON WHEELS  
CORRESPONDENCE**

Mr. Sourbeck said Meals on Wheels is a good organization and he served as a volunteer for ten years. He was concerned that if the board grants money to them, then they will have to grant money to all organizations that request. Ms. Davis agreed. Solicitor Giovannini said that under the First-Class Township Code, Meals on Wheels does not meet the criteria for municipal donations and therefore cannot be granted money. Mr. Sourbeck asked which organizations meet the criteria. Solicitor Giovannini said he will prepare a memo providing a list.

**ALLEY VACATION**

Solicitor Broughal said there are two types of alley in the State of Pennsylvania: one is constructed by the municipality and the other is a street that is unopened and not constructed or built within 21 years of a plan being recorded. It is also known as a paper alley. Solicitor Broughal said this particular alley is a paper alley. Mr. Gallagher asked why no one owns it. Solicitor Broughal said it was part of a subdivision that was unclaimed by the township. The township received a petition from the neighboring property owners with this request. He said the next step is to create an ordinance, advertise it and hold a public hearing.

Upon motion (Davis-Sourbeck) the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to direct the township solicitor to proceed with the alley vacation. Ms. Beatty was absent.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Upon motion (Sourbeck-Davis), the Board of Commissioners voted by voice to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura G. Zapata  
Recording Secretary