

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING
NOVEMBER 21, 2022**

MEMBERS PRESENT

John J. Merhottein, President
John K. Gallagher, Vice President
Jan Beatty, Commissioner
Dale A. Sourbeck, Commissioner
Luke A. Verdes, Commissioner

OTHERS PRESENT

James L. Broughal, Township Solicitor (via Zoom)
Anthony Giovannini, Jr., Township Solicitor
Doug Bruce, Township Manager
Andy Freda, Finance Director

CALL TO ORDER

President 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

**BARRY ROTH
4323 CHETWIN TERR.**

Mr. Roth commented on the stormwater budget and asked how much of the fund will be spent on actual stormwater projects. He said the leaf machine purchase for public works should not be coming out of the stormwater fund. Mr. Merhottein said the leaf machine helps to keep leaves from the storm drains. Mr. Gallagher said some of the staff salary and equipment come out of the stormwater fund.

Mr. Roth said the cars at the recycling center are going to waste. He feels they should be used by smaller departments or auctioned.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon motion (Sourbeck-Beatty), the Board of Commissioners voted by voice vote to approve the minutes of the November 7, 2022 regular public meeting as presented. Mr. Merhottein abstained.

2023 PROPOSED BUDGET

FIRST READING OF THE PROPOSED 2023 BUDGET AND MOTION TO ADVERTISE THE BUDGET ORDINANCE

Mr. Freda gave a summary of the budget and said no real estate tax or fire tax increase was proposed. He said the proposed budget will be made public for a 30-day inspection and then it will be up for adoption at the December 19th meeting. Mr. Merhottein thanked Mr. Bruce, Mr. Freda and staff for a balanced budget.

Upon motion (Gallagher-Sourbeck), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to advertise the proposed 2023 Budget.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

RESOLUTION R090-22

A RESOLUTION APPOINTING A PATROL OFFICER TO THE BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

Upon motion (Verdes-Beatty), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve Resolution R090-22 appointing Eric E. Norder to Patrol Officer to the Bethlehem Township Police Department.

**MOTIONS OF THE
BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS**

MOTION

A MOTION AUTHORIZING ADVERTISEMENT OF AN ORDINANCE IMPLEMENTING PENNSYLVANIA ACT 57 OF 2022, PROPERTY TAX WAIVER PROVISIONS, BY AMENDING CHAPTER 240, TAXATION; ADDING A NEW ARTICLE VII, PROPERTY TAX PENALTY WAIVER PROVISIONS, TO THE CODE OF CODIFIED ORDINANCES; AND REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES INCONSISTENT HEREWITH

Mr. Gallagher asked if the tax collector was notified. Mr. Freda said the tax collector is aware. He explained that this ordinance allows taxpayers, who failed to receive a tax notice during their first year of occupancy, to apply for a waiver from penalties and additional costs from the tax collector.

Upon motion (Sourbeck-Gallagher), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve a motion authorizing advertisement of an ordinance implementing Pennsylvania Act 57 of 2022, Property Tax Waiver Provisions, by amending Chapter 240, Taxation; adding a new Article VII, Property Tax Penalty Waiver Provisions, to the Code of Codified Ordinances; and repealing all ordinances inconsistent herewith.

MOTION

A MOTION AUTHORIZING A FUNDING COMMITMENT LETTER TO THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY, STATING THE TOWNSHIP IS REQUESTING A GRANT OF \$3,052,700 FOR PHASE 1 OF THE EASTON AVENUE FLOOD MITIGATION PROJECT AND COMMITTING TO PROVIDE A LOCAL MATCH OF UP TO \$1,308,300

Mr. Merhottein said the project costs have increased. Mr. Gallagher said this grant is for Phase I of the Bethlehem Township Infrastructure Project – Easton Avenue Flood Mitigation. The stormwater running to Easton Avenue starts upstream into the City of Bethlehem, he said. Mr. Gallagher said it is far better to get a grant than to borrow money.

Upon motion (Gallagher-Sourbeck), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve a motion authorizing a funding commitment letter to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, stating the township is requesting a grant of \$3,052,700 for Phase 1 of the Easton Avenue flood mitigation project and committing to provide a local match of up to \$1,308,300.

**APPROVAL OF BILL
AGENDA OF
NOVEMBER 16, 2022**

Upon motion (Gallagher-Sourbeck), the Board of Commissioners unanimously voted by voice vote to approve the Bill Agenda of November 16, 2022.

**APPROVAL OF
PURCHASE ORDERS**

**PO 20222556 – HYDRA-NUMATIC SALES – PPIS – \$17,316.18
PO 20222595 – CAMPBELL SUPPLY – FINANCE – \$35,444.88
PO 20222596 – TRAVELERS PROP. CASUALTY – FINANCE – \$16,719.45
PO 20222598 – SNOWSCAPES TREE REMOVAL – PW – \$2,800.00
PO 20222625 – PA STATE ASSOC. OF TWP COM – ADMIN – \$4,187.66**

Upon motion (Merhottein-Gallagher), the Board of Commissioners unanimously voted by voice to approve Purchase Orders 20222556, 20222595, 20222596, 20222598 and 20222625 as presented.

**APPROVAL OF
TREASURER'S REPORT
OF OCTOBER 31, 2022**

Upon motion (Sourbeck-Beatty), the Board of Commissioners unanimously voted by voice vote to approve the Treasurer's Report of October 31, 2022 as presented, subject to audit.

**ZONING HEARING
BOARD MEETING OF
NOVEMBER 30, 2022**

There were no comments regarding the Zoning Hearing Board meeting agenda of November 30, 2022.

MONTHLY REPORTS

Mr. Gallagher noted that in the Community Development Report, the township was awarded at \$25,000 WalkWorks grant to fund an active transportation plan, but that amount was not enough to fund the project. Mr. Gallagher said an additional \$10,000 to \$15,000 is needed to hire someone to create a plan, including biking, walking, and connectivity issues. By consensus, the board directed staff to continue to pursue proposals for an Active Transportation Plan, using up to \$15,000 in township funds to augment the \$27,500 grant. All reports were accepted.

DISCUSSION ITEM

**DRAFT POLICY FOR
NAMING PARKS &
RECREATION
FACILITIES**

Mr. Gallagher said that the Recreation Commission developed a policy for naming parks and recreation facilities. He said he would like the Environmental Advisory Council and the Planning Commission to review to the policy and offer comments. Ms. Beatty said it was a good idea. Mr. Merhottein he would rather see trees planted instead of renaming fields. No action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Merhottein adjourned the meeting at 7:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura G. Zapata
Recording Secretary