

ATHENS TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS
March 29th, 2023 5 PM Regular Meeting

Chairwoman Tressa Heffron called the meeting to order at 5:02 PM. Supervisors also present were Christine Vough, Bonnie Petruschak and Alan Burgess. Secretary Michelle Rude, treasurer Ruth Casterline, and Chuck Wright were also in attendance. Tressa lead everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance. Supervisor Kirstie Lake and Solicitor John Thompson joined shortly after the pledge.

Bill Morris presented the board with the auditor's report. He stated that he and Shelly are retiring after 35 and 18 years of service respectively. He addressed the meeting stating that there would be 3 auditor positions open for next year and that if anyone was interested or knew of someone that would be interested, they should write in on the upcoming election. Tressa presented both auditors with certificates of appreciation from the board.

Voice of the Residents: Dave Norton of 1305 Highland Drive wanted to know what the plan is for the section of road that meets with Meadowlark Dr. (200-yard stretch) for dust control as well as what the townships plan was for all dirt roads needing dust control. Alan stated that their intention was to return to oiling over salt for control and that they are working on a plan.

Joe Joyce of 70 Hickory Dr. in Hickory Heights wanted to know if Hickory Heights is on the road crew's plan for 2023. Alan stated that we are working on a plan for roads but that we don't know where it will fall as far as a timeline yet.

Corey Lasko of 25 Sunrise Circle wanted to know how the township prioritizes the repairs for roads. Tressa explained that Mr. Wright developed a rating system based on the number of residents, emergency vehicle access, and resources. He asked if the township receives impact funding from gas wells and Tressa stated that we do, however the amount received goes down more and more every year. She attributed this to the township not having many well sites.

Dave Chandler of 502 McCardle Rd. wanted to know how the board prioritizes safety as a group for their public works department employees. Tressa explained that the township follows a handbook in conjunction with working with the union to ensure safety. Dave asked how employees would be able to address their safety concerns with the board and Tressa stated that if the concerns related to personnel then it should be addressed in executive session and that can be set up through the secretary of the township. Solicitor Thompson stated that he would be reaching out to the union to set up a meeting to discuss concerns and that the employees would be welcome to address their concerns in said meeting once it has been set.

Kelly Barrett of 4018 Wolcott Hollow Rd. wanted to know if the board has considered contracting outside contractors to do work for the township in order to address the road and union issues as well as the cost of equipment and repairs. Tressa stated that they have looked into it and it is not off the table. There are several things the board is considering at this time and that is one of them.

Corey Lasko asked a follow up question of whether or not the township bids out whole projects and Tressa explained that we do. There are certain criteria that needs to be met to do so but we do use that process for several of our projects.

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Athens Twp. Volunteer Fire Department was represented by Dave Walter. He addressed with the board a letter sent by the Chief Bryan Farr requesting that the supervisors agree to pay the rental fee to add a new fire hydrant location to the township. He also requested that they review and execute a right-of-entry agreement with DCNR to grant them permission to make the appropriate updates to our fire danger sign. He referenced their fire report and added that last month they had 403 hours in fundraising and 351 hours in fire calls.

There was no representative from the Parks Commission, however their monthly report was included with the others.

Chuck Wright presented his road report to the board. He reviewed the use of materials, vehicle/equipment maintenance and needs and the work the crew has been doing this month. He is reviewing past PEMA/FEMA repair files and met with Mr. Johnson to review the conditions of the MacAfee Creek repairs. He also brought to the board's attention new CDL driver requirements and stated that they would need to review it and make changes to their current policy. A full report is on file with the township.

On motion of Alan, second by Tressa, motion passed to reject the fuel bids received in February on the basis that they were not similar and they were unable to evaluate them equally.

On motion of Tressa, second by Kirstie, motion passed to sign a resolution to support Carantouan Greenway's effort to name the tributary Wildwood Creek.

On motion of Alan, second by Kirstie, motion passed to renew our Morning Times subscription for 52 weeks at \$150.

On motion of Kirstie, second by Alan, motion passed to close Pennsylvania Ave @ 6 pm until the completion of the graduation ceremony on Friday, June 9th, 2023.

The board decided to table the detour discussion until the June meeting.

On motion of Kirstie, second by Christine, motion passed to pay the monthly bills as submitted. A complete listing of revenues and expenditures is on file in the office of the Treasurer.

On motion of Tressa, second by Kirstie, motion passed to approve the minutes of January 25th as written. Alan and Christine abstained.

On motion of Tressa, second by Alan, motion passed to approve the minutes of February 22nd and March 8th as written. Kirstie abstained.

On motion of Kirstie, second by Christine, it was unanimous to accept the monthly reports as submitted.

Correspondence/Information was as listed in the meeting agenda.

Chairwoman Heffron took the Board into executive session at 6:02 pm for personnel and pending litigation. The regular meeting reconvened at 7:58 PM.

On motion of Tressa, second by Christine, motion passed to add the following items to the agenda:

- 1) Discuss/Approve PO from the police department for training
- 2) Discuss/Approve right-of-entry authorization for DCNR to update the fire sign
- 3) Discuss/Approve the letter from the fire chief requesting an additional fire hydrant
- 4) Discuss/Approve Sayre Borough doing a preliminary assessment of our public works department
- 5) Discuss/Approve moving April's meeting from the 26th to the 27th to accommodate the PSATS conference
- 6) Discuss/Approve Road workshop
- 7) Discuss/Approve the solicitor corresponding with the union to set up a grievance meeting
- 8) Discuss/Approve executing the PILOT for Gateway Commons.

On motion of Christine, second by Alan, motion passed to approve the PO request for officers Bailey (Serfas), Condusta, and Warren to attend a training conference for 5 days in Nashville for \$3915.00 to be paid out of TRNG 410.174.

On motion of Kirstie, second by Alan, motion passed to approve and sign the right-of-entry authorization for DCNR to update our fire danger sign.

On motion of Tressa, second by Christine, motion passed to allow the fire department to add a new hydrant to the township and agreeing to cover the monthly rental fee for it.

On motion of Alan, second by Tressa, motion passed to allow Sayre Borough to do a preliminary assessment of our public works department.

On motion of Alan, second by Bonnie, motion passed to move April's supervisor meeting from Wednesday, April 26th to Thursday April 27th.

On motion of Alan, second by Kirstie, motion passed to hold a road workshop on April 13th at 5 pm.

On motion of Alan, second by Kirstie, motion passed to allow Solicitor Thompson to send correspondence to the union to schedule a meeting to address grievances with 2 members of the board.

On motion of Alan, second by Kirstie, motion passed to allow Solicitor Thompson to execute the PILOT for Gateway Commons according to the terms negotiated by Solicitor Thompson in conjunction with Attorney Kerr.

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Chairwoman Heffron took the Board into executive session again at 8:04 pm for personnel and pending litigation. The regular meeting reconvened at 8:18 PM.

There being no further business, on motion of Alan, second by Kirstie, it was unanimous to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle A. Rude
Athens Township Administrative Secretary