

ATHENS TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS

April 27, 2016 7 PM

Chairman Cheryl Wood-Walter called the meeting to order at 7 PM. Supervisors also present were Ronald Reagan, Christine Vough and Susan Seck. George Ballenstedt was out of town, and Solicitor John Thompson had another commitment. Secretary Robin Smith and Treasurer Ruth Casterline were also in attendance. Cheryl led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Voice of the Residents:

Ann Skerpon, 195 Cole Street, asked what the plan is to fix Cole Street and make it right. She presented pictures of the drainage issues. They have standing water with green growing on it. The drain at the intersection of Cole and Elmira Streets is clogged. The road crew cut cattails out of the ditch but didn't remove them. Susan said Aqua PA has plans to replace a waterline down Cole Street this year, but they don't have a date yet as to when that will be done. Susan said she has a truck putting oil down as we speak. She also applied for a grant. The road has no base and needs to be raised and the drainage redone. She won't get the money if the project is already done. Ann said the road is so high the people have to drive up to get out of their driveways as it is. Susan said she cleaned the drain at Cole and Elmira Streets recently.

Cheryl Wood-Walter said without a good base, the road will erode from the top down, and from the bottom. We are trying to make a proper base. A resident said there are pieces of asphalt in the ditches by the cattails. Susan said the driveways have been put in without swales – this will be addressed when the top goes on.

George Williams, 115 Cole Street, said he can't get his trailer out of his driveway because the road is so high. Susan said they will put something in temporary so he can get it out. She also said that the \$18,000 figure thrown out there to blacktop would be if the base is already there. Tony Skerpon said you can't pave 2/10ths of a mile? Susan said it would take \$64,000. We're trying to fix it.

Michelle Murrelle, 110 Joy Street, asked if anyone has talked to the other utilities (cable and electric) to see if they plan any work in this area? What will be next? They have a huge water problem at the end of her road that needs a storm drain. Why did you spend \$104,000 for a roller when you could have put that money in the road?

Cheryl said she will talk to Larry about putting the new speed sign on Cole Street. Cole and Joy are not a thoroughfare. Michelle said they are – people cut through between Pennsylvania Ave. and Elmira Street. They have traffic from Lowe's and Aaron's every day, using it as a "cut through". Cheryl said we can move the speed sign there. Michelle asked if it could be made "No Thru Traffic" and we can't do that because it is a public road.

Joyce Mulcahy, 108 Cole Street, said it doesn't take long to do a traffic count. She drives 10 mph to keep the dust down and people pass her. The traffic has tripled and she doesn't know why. Tony Skerpon said there is traffic all day long, and they're not just going to the Dandy. Susan said we can't do anything to stop people from cutting through. Joyce said it started 6-7 months ago. They have a childcare place on that road.

Randy Simmons of Aqua PA said they intend to put their waterline project out to bid on May 16th, with a bid award around the beginning of June. Cole Street will be the first to be done. They will be going up the street with a new main and each house will get new service. Tony Skerpon was upset that they would be tearing up his perfectly good driveway. Randy said they don't need to do this project....

Cheryl said over on Pine Tree Road, they did the same thing. Randy said the main is on the north side of Cole Street, in the middle of the northern side lane.. Randy said they plan to go 5 feet deep.

Julie Swingle, 244 Vista Drive, had concerns as to where the work will be done, and what will be ripped up to do it. She added that at her house on Vista Drive, they have had an issue as long as they've lived there. The water comes down the driveway and into the garage. They have seen it flooded all the way to the back. Maybe you could look at that? Susan said the driveways don't have swales. We can look at it – the whole area needs drainage. It would be about \$300,000 to do the drainage.

Kevin Horn asked if they could get tax help for a few years.

Cheryl said the State is having a big push regarding stormwater. It's a matter of cost to get it done. It's hard to do in pieces because the water is all connected. Susan said to put storm drains in, the road has to be raised. It's very costly.

Another resident asked if this (roads being taken back to dirt) has affected real estate values in the township. Won't it hurt the tax base in the long run? Susan said if you go around the Valley, all roads need fixing. We're trying. Cheryl said we had this situation on Westbrook Street. We took a section of that back to dirt and it had to settle before a top could be put on.

Kevin Horn asked what we are doing on the south side of Cole Street? The water just lays there and you're not fixing it. What is the plan? Susan said the pipes will be the cost of the homeowners. Ron and Cheryl both said we pay for the pipes if we are doing the roadwork.

Michelle Murrelle asked if the township would put the cul-de-sac back in to keep the traffic out. Ron said people will just start going through Airport Seniors. Michelle said she and her neighbors would be willing to be inconvenienced with the cul-de-sac in order to keep through traffic out. Ron said with the required diameter of a cul-de-sac, you would lose a lot of yards.

Ron said road maintenance is always a problem and will take time. He said Public Works started on Cole Street – tying into Elmira Street. We have to be careful because PennDOT doesn't like us to put water into their storm drains. We have a 6-man road crew that needs to take care of 150 miles of roads if you count both lanes. We are trying to do the best we can with what we have.

Gregg Murrelle, 105 Joy Street, said their roads are like the Indy 500. They drag race to get to Elmira Street. Michelle Murrelle said the police can sit in their driveway if they want. Cheryl said we will get the speed sign over there. Michelle said they're all very frustrated.

Cheryl read the Treasurer's report. On motion of Christine, second by Ron, it was unanimous to have Ruth take the township vehicle to her Intermediate Accounting class in Scranton on May 3rd, and to take the Windham Township secretary with her.

On motion of Ron, second by Susan, it was unanimous to approve Ruth's attendance at the Quickbooks class in Towanda, and to pay the \$20 fee.

On motion of Cheryl, second by Susan, it was unanimous to pay the monthly bills as presented. A complete list of revenues and expenditures are on file in the office of the Treasurer.

On motion of Susan, second by Cheryl, it passed to pay for the roller with Act 13 funds received in check #3. Ron voted no.

Christine asked if anyone has given any consideration to the request that the township go to direct deposit for payroll. Ron said everyone would have to do it – all or none. We would have to pick a date to start, and it will mess up the first payroll to get it going. Time cards will need to be in 2 days prior. Ruth Casterline said the other option would be to hold one week back, leaving the first paycheck as only one week of pay. Ruth said the Board needs to decide. The direct deposit funds must be at the bank 2 days prior to payday. Susan said it's a direct deposit world now. All the shop guys want direct deposit. Cheryl asked if we should be sitting down with Ruth to see what works best. Ruth said you will need to adjust the pay period. Ron said it's a lot of work to get it up

and running. Discussion continued. Cheryl said the Board will have a plan worked out with Ruth by the May meeting.

No one was present for the Athens Township Fire Department. Cheryl reminded everyone that we still have a burning ban in effect.

Richard Bean reported for the Parks Commission. He has 4 Eagle Scout projects in the works: Zack Smith will be building 6 picnic tables; Spencer DeKay will be installing a flag pole for the American flag at Tozer's Landing; Jeff Gao will be building 6 picnic tables; and Cody Chandler has started to build a trail from the circle parking area to the lower pavilion. The water line contractor will start Wednesday, and Aqua PA will be blowing a line under Bobcat Road. The inmates have cut a path 20 feet wide through the woods. The bid package for Phase II of the park expansion will be ready for review this Wednesday. We plan to start the major work on June 15th. We have applied for a grant for Phase III. DCNR will come when work on Phase I is complete in the summer. The Tozer's Landing sign has been repaired at a cost of \$1500. Robin has sent a letter to the trucking firm but we have not received payment. John Thompson will be sending a letter. Park inspection was completed April 9th. Barry started work on April 11th. A rep from GameTime will be visiting the first week of May to discuss playground equipment. Richard said he and Robin attended the NTRPDC Annual Meeting. Round top was their number one project accomplishment for 2015. Matt Williams, our grant writer, did a great job describing the project. Richard also said Aqua donate their time for the park water project. Ron said there is a new eagle's nest on this side of Round Top. Ron asked if there was enough Act 13 money to cover the park expenses until the funds come and Ruth said yes. Ron also asked Richard how long he would like the term of the loan from the bank to be, and Richard said 10 years.

The Aqua Pennsylvania Conditional Use hearing was scheduled for June 9th at 6 PM.

The Board will hold a special meeting on May 18, 2016 at 6 PM for the Austin Gravel Mine land development on Wildwood Road instead of at their regular meeting of May 25, 2016.

On motion of Ron, second by Cheryl, it was unanimous to adopt RESOLUTION 2016-07 and to execute the Component 2 for the Hausknecht privy.

On motion of Ron, second by Cheryl, it was unanimous to table the Joann Souder subdivision on Braddock Road until the May 25, 2016 meeting.

The Williams Ford land development at 1538 Elmira Street was presented by Tim Gourley. They have received a zoning variance and will be constructing a 27000 sq. ft. building on the parcel. Christine asked if anyone had taken plans to the fire chief. Tim said that will be part of the building permit process. Ron said the fitting on the building needs to be correct. Ron asked where the trucks will load/unload and it will be off Bressler and Herrick in the bull pen area. Clif Cheeks outlined the deficiencies. On motion of Ron, second by Susan, it was unanimous to grant preliminary approval ONLY to this land development contingent upon the resolution of the following deficiencies:

- 1) Final design of utilities
- 2) Signatures on the plans
- 3) Township and PennDOT Highway Occupancy Permits
- 4) Lighting plan (presently shows significant amount of light going off the property) revised to Township Engineer's satisfaction.
- 5) Sidewalk installed on Herrick Avenue
- 6) Sign package

Susan reported that the Public Works Department is working all over the township pulling ditches. Ron said we need to think about taking our right-of-ways back. Susan will be doing a road inventory as well.

Road inspection was set for May 16th at 5:30 PM.

On motion of Cheryl, second by Ron, it was unanimous to approve, sign and execute the Bradford County dispatching contract for 2016.

On motion of Cheryl, second by Ron, it was unanimous to refund the property taxes from 2012 through 2015 for a Sullivan parcel 09-006.00-032, which does not exist. Robin will contact Ginger for the amount to be refunded.

Robin presented 2 assessment appeals (Putnam, Grippo) that will be heard on May 19th.

On motion of Christine, second by Cheryl, it was unanimous to approve the minutes of March 30, 2016 as written.

On motion of Christine, second by Ron, it passed to approve the minutes of April 6, 2016 as written. Cheryl abstained as she was absent on April 6th.

On motion of Cheryl, second by Christine, it passed to approve the minutes of April 23, 2016 as written. Ron abstained as he was absent on April 23rd.

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

Correspondence/Information was as listed in the meeting agenda.

Chairman Wood-Walter took the Board into executive session for pending litigation and personnel at 9 PM. The secretary was excused at this time. The regular meeting reconvened at 9:42 PM.

On motion of Ron, second by Christine, it was unanimous to adjourn the meeting at 9:43 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin L. Smith
Secretary