

ATHENS TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS
January 25th, 2023 5 PM Regular Meeting

Chairwoman Tressa Heffron called the meeting to order at 5:01 PM. Supervisors present were Kirstie Lake and Bonnie Petruschak. Solicitor John Thompson, Secretary Michelle Rude, Treasurer Ruth Casterline, and Public Works Director Charles Wright were also in attendance. Alan Burgess and Christine Vough were not present. Tressa led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Board of Supervisors recognized Richard Bean for 34 years of service to the Parks Commission with a plaque and Chief Roger Clink for 30 years of service to the township with a custom wooden American flag (with the blue line) gun safe.

Voice of the Residents: Dan Knolles from Round Top Rd. addressed his concerns with the condition of his road. He stated that they were not plowed in a timely manner and it has impacted their travel. He was told by one of our guys that they don't come in until 7 am and he wanted clarification as to why they weren't out at 5 am like they used to be. He also stated that the road seems to be minimally cindered and suggested that the plow drivers might be afraid to do his hill because the flat areas are well cindered and the hill is sparsely done. Tressa stated that the drivers should still be coming in early and asked Chuck to address his concerns. Chuck explained that the drivers are being called in and that they are working hard to address the road conditions as well as his concerns. Aaron Brotzman from Weaver Rd. asked the board why a pick-up truck was being used in place of a plow truck on his road. Chuck explained that they had a motor go in the spreader on one of the plow trucks so they were using the pick-up truck while it was being repaired. Aaron then asked what the plan was for the roads tonight and Chuck stated that the guys were out and working on them. Aaron then addressed the board and stated that Highland Rd, among others, have been tar & chipped 4 times and that he didn't feel that proper prep work had been done beforehand resulting in the roads being washed away. He suggested that the township seek advice from surrounding municipalities that aren't having this issue with their roads. He wanted to know what they planned on doing differently in the future to prevent this issue and repair potholes. Kirstie stated that we have a new road director and asked Chuck to address his concerns. Chuck stated that the road crew has purchased PDQ and has begun to fill potholes as their schedule and weather permits. He also explained that the crew is working on a rating system for the roads so that they can formulate an action plan for repairs. Aaron stated that his road was supposed to be graded twice a year and wanted to know if that was the plan for this year. Chuck told him that the crew is working on grading the roads but didn't think they could commit to twice a year with the current workload. Chuck told him that he should see some improvements in the road conditions as the year progresses and that they will work to address all concerns.

Dave Walter presented for the ATVFC. He stated that they responded to 242 calls last year. They currently have 7 members that are in training and will have 125 hours of class time when completed. They are hosting BINGO every Tuesday evening. Due to the weather, fundraising is slow but they expect things to pick up in the spring.

Michele Browning presented for the Parks Commission. They held their meeting on January 23rd and addressed development for pavilion 9 and making the overlook handicap accessible. They are setting

a rental rate for the pavilions and overlook and will be getting this to Cindy. They discussed the new parks brochure and changes for the parks logo. They asked about the grant application for the paving of the RTP roads and the board explained that the grant has been pushed back until March and we haven't gotten a response. They would like the board to make paving the RTP road a priority this year to avoid attendance of the park being impacted. Due to weather the ATVFC has been unable to take the star down. It will remain lit until the road is solid enough for them to get the aerial truck up there. The annual spring parks inspection will be on March 25th at 9 am. RTP is expected to open on May 13th. They would like to recommend Buck Place to fill Richard's position on the Commission.

Marion Carling was unable to make the meeting so Tressa represented Planning Commission. She presented the board with the maps and documentation for: **Secrist, Jeffrey** – a 2-lot subdivision located between Orcutt Creek and Vetter Roads. Recommend preliminary/final plan approval with one (1) deficiencies:

1. Needs sewage module – module is completed. They are waiting for it to be picked up and delivered to the township.

On motion of Kirstie, second by Tressa, motion passed to approve preliminary/final plan approval contingent upon the sewage module being provided.

Chuck Wright presented for the Public Works department and reviewed the road report with the supervisors. He welcomed Dave Chandler as the DPW Road Foreman. He then explained how they were handling the winter weather. There are 4 operational plow trucks (#8, #7, #4, and #3). He has been monitoring travel times to get materials out to the roads and would like to discuss some ideas to minimize this time in the future. They have adequate cinders for this season and have used about \$18,000 so far of the salt contract. They are patching potholes as weather permits and have placed a gravel and rock base on Bowman Rd. from Wolcott Hollow to Blackbear Rd. to build up the roadway. They are working with PennDOT to insure all materials used are compliant. They worked on the Round Top Road Pipe Culvert, installing underground supporting cables, to temporarily support the wing wall. They topped the trench off with 2RC material. Chuck met with the fire department at the turn-around area constructed for Moore Rd. Bridge on Jan. 18th. He plans to install clean backfill from the storage yard along the sides. They re-welded a 3/8" thick, 3x3 metal plate on the east end of Thomas Ave. Bridge. Borton Lawson has reported that the Thomas Ave. Bridge project is out for bid and demolition will take place summer/fall of this year. He will work with the solicitor on scrapping the metal. He met with PEMA on Jan. 11th to discuss the 2018/2019 flood projects. The small project was closed and the larger ones are being reviewed. He submitted a claim for repairs for the 430E backhoe and feels that the amount they will receive will not allow for the necessary repairs. The insurance wants to replace the current engine with a used engine. Chuck is proposing that we use the money to purchase a remanufactured engine which has a warranty. The difference in price from the used engine is \$4250. The claim will also not cover the pin and axle work that needs to be done. John stated that Chuck would need to get three quotes for the repairs with the remanufactured engine, because the cost exceeds the Township Code allowance, and verify that the warranty applies to the mechanics that would do the

work. Kirstie stated that a special meeting could be held to vote on the repairs once the quotes were obtained. Chuck requested that he be allowed to rent a backhoe from Warner Tractor & Equipment at the quoted rate of \$2250/month while they are working through repairs. The insurance company will cover up to \$7,500 of rental fees.

Tressa made the following committee assignments:

- 1) Alan - Roads, Buildings and Grounds and Public Relations
- 2) Tressa – Shared Services, Public Relations
- 3) Kirstie – Safety, Police, and Shared Services
- 4) Bonnie – Junk Yards, Office, and Planning/Zoning
- 5) Christine – Parks and Fire

On motion of Kirstie, second by Tressa, motion passed to grant permission to bid for fuel and road materials for the February 22nd meeting.

On motion of Tressa, second by Kirstie, motion passed to approve/sign the Designation of Agent Resolution for DR-4408 allowing Charles Wright to execute for and in behalf of the township for this PEMA project.

On motion of Bonnie, second by Kirstie, motion passed to approve the minutes for 12/14/22, 12/22/22, and 1/3/23.

On motion of Kirstie, second by Tressa, motion passed to approve the request for a new private drive off Idle Wheels Ln. to be named Albanian Ln. The homeowner will purchase the road sign and the public works department will install it.

On motion of Tressa, second by Kirstie, motion passed to add the one-month police pension COLA adjustment for 2022 to the agenda.

On motion of Tressa, second by Kirstie, motion passed to approve the police pension COLA adjustment for 2023 as well as the one-month adjustment for 2022.

On motion of Kirstie, second by Bonnie, motion passed to advertise for all vacant positions on various boards.

On motion of Kirstie, second by Bonnie, motion passed to approve the annual Traffic Signal Maintenance Agreement with TRA for \$3000.

On motion of Kirstie, second by Tressa, motion passed to allow the Public Works Department to rent a backhoe from Warner Tractor & Equipment for the quoted rate of \$2250/month up to \$7500, which is the maximum amount that is covered by the insurance claim.

On motion of Kirstie, second by Bonnie, motion passed to accept the monthly reports.

On motion of Kirstie, second by Bonnie, 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.

There was no Correspondence/Information.

Chairwoman Heffron took the Board into executive session at 6:15 PM for personnel and pending litigation. The regular meeting reconvened at 7:47 PM.

On motion of Tressa, second by Kirstie, motion passed to add the following to the agenda: hiring Jaydon Gardner, executing David Chandler and Roger Clink's MOU's, rescinding May 25th's motion to pay Vestal Asphalt from Liquid Fuels and making a motion to pay them from Act 13, Bradford Hospitality, LLC refund, and John to appeal the union grievance.

On motion of Kirstie, second by Bonnie, motion passed to hire Jaydon Gardner at the rate of \$16.50/hr. with the stipulation that he obtain his CDL license within 1 year of employment and that he sign a letter of understanding that he would remain employed with the township a minimum of 2 years after receiving his CDL.

On motion of Kirstie, second by Tressa, motion passed to authorize the execution of the MOU's for David Chandler and Roger Clink.

On motion of Bonnie, second by Kirstie, motion passed to rescind the May 25th, 2022 motion to pay Vestal Asphalt from Liquid Fuels and a new motion was made to pay Vestal Asphalt from Act 13.

On motion of Tressa, second by Bonnie, motion passed to refund the sum of \$7045.63 to Bradford Hospitality, LLC. for their 2021 tax assessment appeal rebate.

On motion of Kirstie, second by Tressa, motion passed to authorize Solicitor John Thompson to appeal the union grievance.

There being no further business, on motion of Kirstie, second by Tressa, motion passed to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Rude
Athens Township Administrative Secretary