



## Allen Township Board of Supervisors

### Meeting Minutes March 8, 2022 7:00 P.M.

A General Meeting of the Allen Township Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, March 8, 2022 at 7:00 P.M. at the Allen Township Fire Company Building, located at 3530 Howertown Road, Northampton, PA. Mr. Hassler led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

1. **Roll Call:** Present: Gary Behler; Tim Paul; Paul Link; Dale Hassler; Jason Frack; B. Lincoln Treadwell, Jr., Esq; Ilene Eckhart, Manager and Andrea Martin, EIT.

2. **Announcements and/or Actions to Add New Items to Current Agenda:** No additional announcements or actions to add new items to current agenda.

3. **Public Hearings:**

**A. Gaugler/Mann Agricultural Security Addition (Tax Map # K4-30-14; 57.50 acres):** Mr. Behler made a motion to open the public hearing, seconded by Mr. Paul. On the motion, by roll call vote, all Supervisors present voted yes. Ms. Eckhart explained the application. The purpose of the hearing to answer any questions that the board may have regarding the application and to take public comment on the application. If application is approved the property be included in the existing agricultural security area of the Township. The property owner will have protections such as the ability to sell easements to the County and/or State if desired. Mr. Hassler asked if the agricultural security addition would apply to future deeds. Mr. Treadwell stated that it would apply to future deeds. Mr. Paul asked if this limited the property to agricultural uses only. Mr. Treadwell stated the property would have to be used for agricultural purposes which can include farming, timberland as well as other agricultural uses. There were no public comments or questions. Mr. Behler made a motion to close the hearing, seconded by Mr. Paul. On the motion, by roll call vote, all Supervisors present voted yes. Mr. Behler made a motion to approve the application for Gaugler/Mann parcel of 57.50 acres with Tax Map # K4-30-14 to be added to Agricultural Security, seconded by Mr. Link. On the motion, by roll call vote, all Supervisors present voted yes.

**B. Mixed Use Village Zoning and SALDO Amendments – continued to March 22, 2022 Meeting**

4. **Public to be Heard:**

**A. Veronica Laroche, Library Director of Northampton Area Public Library,** wanted to thank Allen Township, the Board of Supervisors, and the community for their support in the past. Ms. Laroche offered assistance with any outreach that the community or Allen Township may need in the future. Ms. Laroche stated that if they can be of any assistance to please reach out to them.

5. **Approval of Minutes:** Mr. Behler made a motion to approve the minutes of February 8 and 22, 2022; seconded by Mr. Paul. On the motion, by roll call vote, all Supervisors present voted yes.

6. **Reports – All Reports with exception of the Treasurers Report noted as “on file”.**

**A. Treasurer:** Mr. Behler made a motion to approve the Treasurers Report and Pay of the Bills; seconded by Mr. Paul. On the motion, by roll call vote, all Supervisors present voted yes.

**B. Solicitor:** On file. Mr. Treadwell reported working on an agreement with insurance company's attorney for the sewer issue. A zoom meeting is scheduled for either Tuesday or Thursday this week to try to finalize the agreement.

**C. Engineer:** On file.

**D. Planning/Zoning/Code Enforcement:** On file. Ms. Eckhart reported that there will be a meeting in March for the Planning Commission to review and comment on the draft of the Act 537 plan.

**E. Road Superintendent/Public Works Leader:** On file.

**F. Fire Company:** On file.

**G. Emergency Management Coordinator:** On file.

**H. Parks:** On file. Ms. Eckhart reported that Allen Township received negative feedback in a Facebook group regarding the dog park's seasonal closure. The post was brought to the attention of the Township by a member of the public. Ms. Eckhart reached out to the group's administrator to address the derogatory remarks made by a group member. Mr. Hassler stated he did see the post and that it was uncalled for. The negative comment was removed by the Facebook group's administrator.

**J. Nazareth Council of Government:** On file.

**K. First Regional Compost Authority:** On file.

**L. Stormwater:** On file.

## **7. Unfinished Business**

**A. Willowbrook Road/Radar Drive Restriping:** Mr. Wojciechowski summarized PennDOT's recommendations from the meeting between PennDOT, Pidcock, and Rockefeller. PennDOT recommends the area of the right turn lane in advance of the signal have hatching on the shoulder area to denote the area that is not a lane. PennDOT recommended eradicating the white stripes in the merge area. PennDOT found motorists are being confused by this which is causing some motorists to race around others in this area. Installation of large 36 inch by 36 inch "Right Lane Must Turn Right" signage is also recommended by PennDOT to clearly identify the beginning of the right turn lane. Mr. Wojciechowski explained that PennDOT starts out by recommending hatching in the area of roadway which often addresses the problem of people using the shoulder as a lane, but when there is heavy movement painted word "No" may be added. Rockefeller's engineer is to prepare a plan for PennDOT's review. If the plan is acceptable, a PennDOT TE-160 form will need to be submitted for final approval along with the appropriate resolution. This will be placed on an upcoming agenda.

**B. Completion of Probationary Period – M. Cser:** Ms. Eckhart reports that Mr. Cser has successfully completed the 90-day probationary period and recommends he be given permanent full time employee status. Mr. Behler made a motion to complete the probationary period of Mr. Cser and grant permanent full time employee status, seconded by Mr. Paul. On the motion, by roll call vote, all Supervisors present voted yes.

**C. Authorization to Advertise for Part Time Seasonal Road Crew Applicants:** Ms. Eckhart informed the board that two part time seasonal road crew employees will be returning for summer work. These two individuals may be transitioning to the full time job market within the next year or two. Ms. Eckhart recommends the advertisement for an additional applicant in order to have applications on file as well as educate and train new seasonal employees. Mr. Behler questioned how many positions are to be filled. Ms. Eckhart replied that in addition to the two returning seasonal employees, one to two positions would need to be filled. Mr. Behler made a motion for authorization to advertise for part time seasonal road crew applicants, seconded by Tim Paul. On the motion, by roll call vote, all Supervisors present voted yes.

**D. Authorization to Advertise Public Comment Period – Act 537 Plan Update:** Ms. Martin provided a brief update regarding the joint plan with Northampton Borough. The Joint Act 537 Plan Update has been sent to the Planning Commissions and the timeline has kicked off. There is a 60-day comment period for the Planning Commissions while concurrently advertising for the 30-day public comment. Ms. Martin explained the reason behind the timeline is to get as many review comments from the Planning Commissions in the first 30-days in order to include any comments and necessary revisions to the plan along with any addendums prior to the start of the 30-day public comment period. Ms. Martin noted the specific requirements that must be in the public notice such as new user fees to cover Allen Township. Ms. Martin noted she had drafted the language needed for Allen Township to meet the requirements and sent this to Northampton Borough’s engineer for their language to be added. The overall public notice draft will then be sent to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for their review. Advertisement is required one time in a paper of general circulation. Northampton Borough will take care of the advertising. Once the 30-day public comment period begins, the public will be able to access the plan at both Allen Township’s Municipal Office as well as in Northampton Borough. Comments from the public will need to be submitted in writing. Comments will be addressed by the engineers if needed. Once all comments from the Planning Commissions and the public are received the plan is then complete. A resolution will need to be passed to adopt the plan. The deadline is May 20<sup>th</sup> to submit to DEP for approval. Mr. Behler mentioned that he would like to see a post on the website when the 30-day public comment period begins that would also allow for the public to make their written comment electronically by either a link to submit their comment or commenting by email to make it more convenient. Ms. Martin will check if electronic commenting will be acceptable for the plan and if there will need to be a handwritten signature for each public comment. In the event that electronic comments are unacceptable for the plan, Mr. Behler would like to see access to the plan on the website for public review with information on how to officially make a comment. Mr. Behler made a motion to advertise for public comment period for Act 537 Plan draft when dates are available; seconded by Paul Link. On the motion, by roll call vote, all Supervisors present voted yes.

## 8. New Business

**A. Authorization to Prepare Scope and Request for Proposals for Architectural Services New Municipal Facility – 3530 Howertown Road Property:** Ms. Eckhart notes that this was addressed in the 2022 budget as a priority to obtain an idea of what the wish of the Board is for the property. In order to proceed with any grant applicants there must be an idea of what to do with the area and obtain estimates. Mr. Behler noted the importance of having a large meeting area for community hearings as well as for elections which are held in the space. He would like no division to minimal division of the space or discussing the possibility of adding an additional building to the property. Mr. Behler stated he would like to do the project right the first time if money is being spent. Mr. Link agreed with having separate building for offices and thought the space for meetings should be kept for the community. Mr. Link did not think it was a good idea to put the municipal building above the fire company and made mention of the distracting sounds that may travel from the below fire company that may inconvenience municipal staff. Mr. Paul stated his understanding was that the space was to be kept intact with only removal of stages. Mr. Paul questioned what the plan was for the current municipal office. Mr. Behler made mention of the age, history, and condition of the current municipal office. Ms. Eckhart mentioned the idea of designating the current municipal office for Public Works. She stated this would reduce safety concerns with

public entering the property while large equipment is being moved around the property. Mr. Hassler felt the space above the fire company could be offices, a training area, and a meeting area. Mr. Hassler stated the meeting space may only be reduced by one third. Mr. Hassler made mention of the significant cost differences between renovations of the current space and building a new building. Mr. Link entertained the idea of using a portion of the space to create a smaller meeting area that could be used as a multipurpose room for the public. Ms. Eckhart will obtain names of companies that may be able to provide estimates and additional information on the various options discussed.

**9. Public to be Heard:** Larry Hiestand, Kreidersville Road, commented on the amount of traffic traveling on Kreidersville Road which has increased from past years. He suggested a short term solution of increased Pennsylvania State Police presence within the Township. Mr. Hiestand questioned if brake retarders restrictions to reduce noise could be put in place; as well as having a traffic study completed and possibly reducing the speed limit. Mr. Hiestand made mention of a portion of Cherryville Road within Lehigh Township where there is a posted weight limit. Mr. Hassler replied that Lehigh Township took over that portion of Cherryville Road along with a portion of Indian Trail Road in Lehigh Township from PennDOT through the Turnback Program in the 1990s. Mr. Behler commented that a request for brake retarders and speed limit reductions can be requested but PennDOT would have to approve the request. Ms. Eckhart noted that there was a review in 2017 from PennDOT. From the 2017 review, PennDOT determined that the brake retarder request did not meet the criteria and that posted speed limits were appropriate at the time of the review. Ms. Eckhart is obtaining letters from adjoining communities and is submitting another request for review from PennDOT. Ms. Eckhart also states state police have been contacted and a request for an increase of their presence has been made. Mr. Behler stated state police are unable to do anything unless a law is being broken.

There being no further comments or business the meeting adjourned at 7:54 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ilene M. Eckhart