



Allen Township Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes September 10th, 2024 6:00 P.M.

A General Meeting of the Allen Township Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, September 10th 2024, at 6:00 P.M. at the Allen Township Municipal Building, located at 4714 Indian Trail Road, Northampton, PA. Mr. Hassler led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

1. **Roll Call:**

Present: Gary Behler; Jason Frack; Dale Hassler; Paul Link; Tim Paul; B. Lincoln Treadwell, Jr., Esq.; Ilene Eckhart, Manager; Tom Gogle, Public Works Crew Leader, and Stan Wojciechowski, PE, CME

Absent: Andrea Martin, Engineer

2. **Announcements and/or Actions to Add New Items to the Current Agenda:** Ms. Eckhart announced that tonight's agenda is a revised agenda with the Willowbrook Farms Final Land Development Plans Phases 3, 4, and 5 removed from the agenda and an item has been added under new business in regards to High Meadow Estates.

3. **Public Hearings:** There were no public hearings.

4. **Public to be Heard:** There was no public to be heard.

5. **Approval of Minutes:** Mr. Behler made a motion to approve the minutes of August 13th and August 27th, 2024; seconded by Mr. Paul. On the motion, by roll call vote, all Supervisors voted yes.

6. **Reports – All Reports on File with Exception of Treasurer's Report and Paying of the Bills:**

A. **Treasurer:** Mr. Frack made a motion to approve the Paying of the Bills; seconded by Mr. Link. On the motion, by roll call vote, all present Supervisors voted yes.

B. **Solicitor:** On file.

C. **Engineer:** On file.

D. **Planning/Zoning/Code Enforcement:** On file. Ms. Eckhart announced that there will be a Planning Commission meeting for September 16th, 2024.

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

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

G. Emergency Management Coordinator: On file.

H. Nazareth Council of Government: On file.

I. Parks: On file.

J. Planning: On file.

K. First Regional Compost Authority: On file. Ms. Eckhart indicated that at a previous meeting, she announced that there was an issue with the remaining amount of the DEP grant. She stated that State Representative Zach Mako's Office assisted FRCA with the grant. She stated that FRCA will be increasing their fee rates, and the Township should be receiving the adjusted rates in time for the Township's Budget.

L. Stormwater: On file.

7. Unfinished Business

A. High Meadow Estates Phase 1 and 2, Security Release Requests #3: Mr. Behler made a motion to approve the security release for High Meadows Phase 1 for the amount of \$394,460.38; seconded by Mr. Frack. On the motion, by roll call vote, all Supervisors voted yes.

Mr. Behler made a motion to approve the security release for High Meadows Phase 2 for the amount of \$77,205.29; seconded by Mr. Frack. On the motion, by roll call vote, all Supervisors voted yes.

B. Willowbrook Farms Final Land Development Plans Phases 3, 4, 5:

C. ~~West-East Bullshead Median:~~ Ms. Eckhart explained for budgetary purposes, the East Bullshead Median project would most likely take place next year. She stated she assumed the estimate in the 2025 draft budget. Mr. Wojciechowski stated that the project is ready for bid and as requested, his team put together a timeline and cost. He stated that the cost amount is \$11,000.00 and to date a total amount of \$8,219.00 has been billed.

Mr. Hassler felt that the East Bullshead median work should be held off until the Willowbrook Road Bridge is completed as it would cause chaos as travelers are using East Bullshead Road to get into Northampton due to Willowbrook Road being closed. Mr. Hassler stated that the opportunity to work on the median was missed as it would have been ideal to work on the median in the spring of 2024 before the Willowbrook Road Bridge construction. Mr. Behler questioned when the Willowbrook Road Bridge would be open. Ms. Eckhart stated it was uncertain when it would be open, however, she felt that the County's Authority contract stated the end of the year, however, they were delayed in the project which may cause the work to be completed next year. Mr. Behler indicated that he would prefer if all the administrative work for the project could be completed in the winter, such as the bids. Mr. Link indicated that the bids are only valid for 60 days. Mr. Treadwell indicated that the Township does not have the right-of-way from Northampton County yet. Mr. Hassler suggested that the Township should wait till February to put the bids out and then have a start date of late April or May when the weather is warm, and the frost would no longer be a factor.

Mr. Wojciechowski explained that Barry Isett has had internal issues with its surveying department. He stated that a couple of longtime surveyors that were semi-retired and then fully retired caused issues with obtaining needed information for the project. Mr. Wojciechowski indicated that he discussed with Mr. Matt Walter, Vice President of the Public Division of Barry Isett, that Barry Isett would not charge the Township for construction administrative work. Ms. Eckhart stated that Mr. Wojciechowski should check the estimate for line-item charges as the administrative work is still in the estimate. Mr. Treadwell stated that the Board will wait to make a motion once the Township receives the easement from Northampton County and the item is placed back on the agenda.

D. Dry Run Interceptor Repair Project: Ms. Eckhart explained that Ms. Andrea Martin prepared a document with the timeline and budget amount details for the project. She stated that the Dry Run Interceptor Repair Project could move forward should it be the wish of the Board of Supervisors. She stated that the estimated amount was \$66,385.00. Mr. Behler made a motion to move forward with the project in the amount that Ms. Eckhart stated of \$66,385.00; seconded by Mr. Frack. On the motion, by roll call vote, all Supervisors voted yes.

E. Application and Certification of Payments - Renovation of Municipal Building and Fire Station:

- i. Warko Group (Plumbing Contract Sum \$183,804.00) -Request #2 for \$24,042.53:** Mr. Behler made a motion to release \$24,042.53 to the Warko Group; seconded by Mr. Paul. On the motion, by roll call vote, all Supervisors voted yes.
- ii. ASL Refrigeration (Mechanical Contract Sum \$828,000.00) – Request #1 for \$2,250.00:** Mr. Behler made a motion to release \$2,250.00; seconded by Mr. Paul. On the motion, by roll call vote, all Supervisors voted yes.
- iii. Mohawk Contracting and Development LLC (General Contracting Contract Sum \$1,919,000.00) – Request #1 for \$19,395.00:** Mr. Behler made a motion to release \$19,395.00; seconded by Mr. Paul. On the motion, by roll call vote, all Supervisors voted yes.
- iv. Albarell Electric, Inc. (Electrical Contract Sum \$715,000.00) – Request #1 for \$16,200.00:** Mr. Behler made a motion to release \$16,200.00 to Albarell Electric, Inc.; seconded by Mr. Paul. On the motion, by roll call vote, all Supervisors voted yes.
- v. PSC EHC Acquisitions LLC dba EHC Associates (Asbestos Abatement & Selective Demolition Services Contract Sum \$42,383.00 w change order) – Request #2 for \$10,520.10:** Mr. Behler made a motion to release \$10,520.10; seconded by Mr. Paul. On the motion, by roll call vote, all Supervisors voted yes.

Mr. Hassler indicated that he was displeased with the quality of work that is being conducted at the Fire Company portion of the building. He indicated that power has been disconnected to the rooms and that the workers are utilizing the Fire Company's equipment ladders and return them in a sloppy condition. He also stated that doors have been left unlocked and overall, the building is left in a sloppy condition. Ms. Eckhart agreed and stated that the worksite now has an appointed individual who must confirm with her that the building is locked and left in good order.

8. New Business

A. Resignation of Township Real Estate Tax Collector: Mr. Treadwell explained that the Board of Supervisors received the resignation of the Township Real Estate Tax Collector, which was dated September 1st, 2024. He stated that the Board has 45 days to accept the resignation and that the letter states that the effective date is December 31st, 2024. He stated that the Township technically does not have a vacancy until December 31st, 2024, and the vacancy will be filled in the same manner as a Board Member resignation. He explained that the Township Real Estate Tax Collector position is an elected position, therefore, the Board will need to appoint someone to fill the remainder of the term which would be for the year 2025. He explained that if there are not any residents interested in the position, then the Township could share a tax collector with a neighboring municipality or ask the County Treasurer to become the Township's tax collector. He stated that another option is to appoint Berkheimer to be the deputy tax collector, and the tax collector office would remain vacant, but Berkheimer would work as the deputy tax collector.

Mr. Link recommended that the Township advertise for the vacancy and reach out to Lehigh Township to see if the Lehigh Township Tax Collector would be interested in being the Tax Collector for Allen Township as well. Mr. Frack indicated that the Township has time, meaning if applications are not received by a certain date, then the Township should pursue other avenues.

Mr. Behler made a motion to regretfully accept the resignation letter of the Township's Tax Collector, Ms. Carolyn Davis effective December 31st, 2024; seconded by Mr. Frack. On the motion, by roll call vote, all Supervisors voted yes.

B. Real Estate Tax Collection Options, Discussion: The Board generally discussed the advertisement period and application deadlines. Ms. Eckhart indicated that the position has a standing salary of \$6,050.00.

Mr. Behler made a motion to advertise to fill the vacant position of Township Tax Collector, which starts January 1st, 2025, and to accept applications till October 15th, 2024; seconded by Mr. Link. On the motion, by roll call vote, all Supervisors voted yes.

C. Resolution # 2024-15 – Supporting the Pennsylvania Commission for The United States Semiquincentennial (America250pa): Mr. Hassler read proposed Resolution #2024-15, which reads as follows:

“RESOLUTION #2024-15

A RESOLUTION OF THE ALLEN TOWNSHIP OF NORTHAMPTON, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, SUPPORTING THE PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION FOR THE UNITED STATES SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL (AMERICA250PA)

WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania legislature and the Governor created AMERICA250PA in 2018 to plan, encourage, develop and coordinate the commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the United States and Pennsylvania's integral role in that event and the role of its people on the nation's past, present and future; and

WHEREAS, AMERICA250PA hopes to engage ALL Pennsylvanians and ALL 67 counties through their many signature and officially recognized programs, projects and events over the next several years by inspiring future leaders and celebrating all Pennsylvanians contributions to the nation over the last 250 years; and

WHEREAS, by adoption of AMERICA250PA's four pillars of EPIC, we hope to educate, preserve, innovate, and celebrate.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AND IT HEREBY RESOLVED, that the Board of Supervisors of Allen Township of Northampton County hereby endorses AMERICA250PA and their mission to educate, preserve, innovate and celebrate EVERY Pennsylvanian in EVERY county; and

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Northampton County legislative delegation and AMERICA250PA Commission.

ADOPTED by the Board of Supervisors of Allen Township of the County of Northampton, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, this 10th day of September, 2024.”

Mr. Behler made a motion to adopt Resolution 2024-15 as it relates to the resolution that the Allen Township Chairman read; seconded by Mr. Link. On the motion, by roll call vote, all Supervisors voted yes.

D. 2025 Non-Uniformed Pension Minimum Municipal Obligation: Ms. Eckhart indicated that she is required to present to the Board the non-uniformed pension minimum municipal obligation in order to receive state aid and to comply with the Township's responsibilities. She indicated that the minimum municipal obligation calculation is \$45,822.68. She explained that the Township's estimated General Municipal Pension System State Aid amount is \$46,800.00 therefore the Township is fully funded. Mr. Behler questioned what would happen to the difference as the estimated state aid amount is greater than the minimum municipal obligation. Ms. Eckhart indicated that the difference would go into the fund.

Mr. Behler made a motion to accept the certification for the 2025 non-uniformed pension minimum municipal obligation as it was read by the Township Manager; seconded by Mr. Frack. On the motion, by roll call vote, all Supervisors voted yes.

E. 2025 Draft Budget and Priorities: Ms. Eckhart explained that the draft budget will be discussed during both Board of Supervisors September meetings. She indicated that she circulated to the Board the first draft and that she will give the Board highlights on the general fund. She stated that the Township revenues are growing, especially with real estate tax. She stated it is projected for the year 2025, that the Township should be receiving an estimated additional

amount of \$293,000.00 from real estate tax. The Board generally discussed real estate tax and reassessment of properties.

Ms. Eckhart explained that the earned income tax (EIT) as well as the local service tax (LST) has had growth over the past several years. She stated that the millage rate has not changed for the past 20 years due to the Township receiving revenue from EIT and LST.

Ms. Eckhart generally discussed the liquid fuels funds and indicated that the Township held off on the 32nd Street paving project due to the water line being installed for the High Meadows project, however, the Township will be working on Becker Ave and Kensington Circle. She stated that the ARPA money, which was moved during the budgetary transfer a few months ago, was closed out and the funds were used to fund various items such as capital equipment fund for the road crew; radios for the Fire Department; and the 2024 road projects and park equipment.

Ms. Eckhart highlighted a major budgetary item, which was the Municipal and Fire Department Building renovations. She stated that Phase I will be at 50% completion by the beginning of the year 2025. She stated the remainder of the work should be completed by February 2025 and then Phase II will commence. She indicated that Phase II will be bid out as soon as the Township knows a definite timeline. She explained that there is one more grant that the Township is waiting on and that the next CFA meeting may announce the grand awardees. She stated that there have been a few changes, with one being the silo removal and smoke detectors additions. She generally discussed the project contingencies.

Ms. Eckhart generally discussed road project schedules, PennDOT allotments, and ADA sidewalk compliances. Ms. Eckhart generally discussed Public Works equipment and equipment schedule. The Board generally discussed purchasing a bucket truck.

Ms. Eckhart discussed the general fund and its carryover projection of \$4,610,000.00. She stated the projected Liquid Fuels carryover project is \$340,000.00 and with the fund the Township is planning on major road work. The Board generally discussed other accounts' projected balances. Mr. Behler expressed concerns about funding for fire trucks and vehicles. Ms. Eckhart stated that the Township could place move a certain amount of money from the general fund and place it in the reserve and capital funds for overall projects. Mr. Hassler stated that he agreed with Ms. Eckhart and indicated that if additional funds are placed in the capital reserve, then the money could be used towards a fire truck or if something catastrophic happens such as a sinkhole or equipment failure. The Board generally discussed funding and future equipment purchases.

F. High Meadow - Alternate for Public Improvement Inspections: Ms. Eckhart explained that she had a conversation with the developer of High Meadow regarding inspections. She indicated that Mr. Treadwell attended the conversation and that Mr. Treadwell and herself felt that an alternate inspection firm might be a solution. Mr. Treadwell explained that the Supervisors received a proposal for public improvement inspections for the High Meadow project from Gilmore Associates in their meeting materials.

Mr. Link made a motion to hire Gilmore and Associates to be the alternate for public improvements for the High Meadow project starting Monday, September 16th, 2024; seconded by

Mr. Frack. On the motion, by roll call vote, all Supervisors voted yes.

G. Executive Session: Mr. Hassler announced that there will be an executive session. Ms. Eckhart indicated that the executive session is regarding personal issues.

9. Public to Be Heard: There was no public to be heard.

10. Announcements:

Mr. Hassler announced the upcoming meetings. All meetings and events below will be held at the Allen Township Municipal Building. These meetings and events are as follows:

- Planning Commission, Monday, September 16th, 2024, 6:00 PM
- Board of Supervisors, Tuesday, September 24th, 2024, 6:00 PM

11. Adjournment: There being no further comments or business the meeting adjourned at 7:14 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ilene M. Eckhart