

Brecknock Township, Berks County

Meeting Minutes: May 5, 2020 – Regular

Drafted: June 15, 2020

To Be Adopted: June 2, 2020

Meeting Information: The Board of Supervisors met via Zoom and the meeting was hosted at the township building located at 889 Alleghenyville Road, Mohnnton, PA 19540 on May 5, 2020. The meeting was advertised in the Reading Eagle on February 27, 2020 to begin at 7:00pm for the purpose of a regular meeting of the board.

Attendance: Supervisors Jeffrey Fiant, F. Mark Weber, and Ronald McClure were present. Township officials present included Hunter Ahrens, Township Secretary; Erik Grunzig, Chief of Police; John Weber, Engineer; Bethany Emkey, Solicitor. Members of the public including a representative of the Brecknock Fire Company were also present.

Called to Order: The meeting was called to order by Supervisor Fiant at 7:02pm, which was followed by the pledge to the flag.

Public Comment: Hunter read comments from Michael Gyda, a non-resident interested in buying a property in the Township. Mr. Gyda was looking for the board to address whether or not he could purchase a property in the township and close it to the Horseshoe Trail which ran through the property he was interested in. He added that the property had not deed or covenant restrictions that addressed this question.

The board directed Hunter to forward Mr. Gyda's email with his questions to the solicitor's office and investigate if there were any concerns that they had in Mr. Gyda's question or if they could locate any associated issues with the property's use related to the Horse Shoe Trail. Jeff commented that the Horseshoe Trail is an asset to the township and should be maintained wherever possible.

Action on Minutes: Motion by Mark Weber, seconded by Ron McClure, to approve the minutes for the April 7th Board of Supervisors meetings. Approved unanimously.

Action on Treasurer's Report: Hunter reported on the amounts on the Treasurer's report to Mark Weber. Motion by Mark Weber, seconded by Ron McClure, to approve the May 5th, 2020 treasurer's report. Approved Unanimously.

Emergency Declaration: Jeff Fiant commented that the Governor had lifted some restrictions. Hunter commented the resolution the board adopted to declare a state of emergency connected to the state's emergency, which could last for an entire year, so there would be updates as appropriate. Hunter added that Erik had been collecting information on invoices that could be eligible for emergency funds from the Federal and State Government. Erik added that there is not clarity around how or where the funds will come from and there is more information that still needs to be fleshed out. Bethany commented that the township should retain information that it can so that when funding becomes available, the township is prepared to submit whatever possible for reimbursement.

Sunoco Pipeline: John Weber commented that the Roadway Condition Report had been completed and gave a brief review of the process that was taken to get to this point. John added that the request from the report is for work in excess of \$800,000 to be done by Sunoco, and he wanted the board to be comfortable with that request.

John commented that because the road bonding agreement needed to be updated, it may be possible to amend the new agreement to include additional road bonding and these roads designated in the report. Bethany added that she and Solicitor Liz Magovern had discussed that issue and were researching its propriety. Hunter added that Sunoco had sent that day an amended road bonding agreement that would extend the agreement a single year (June 7, 2020 – June 7, 2021). Bethany commented that the board should not approve the amended road bonding agreement until Sunoco has made an indication about how they will proceed with the request in the Roadway Condition Report. Motion by Ron McClure, seconded by Mark Weber, to accept the Roadway Condition Report prepared by LTL Consultants. Approved unanimously.

Mutual Aid Agreement: Hunter commented that the board had approved the formal agreement, but there was a corresponding resolution that needed to be adopted in addition to the agreement. Motion by Jeff Fiant, seconded by Ron McClure, to approve the minutes for the April 7th Board of Supervisors meetings. Approved unanimously.

Resolution #2020-15

Budget Report: Jeff commented that due to the financial conditions that the township is facing due to the economic conditions from COVID-19 it has become necessary to review reports like this. Hunter added that the budget-to-actual showed that the township is moving in a good trajectory, but the most significant bills throughout the year had yet to be paid as they would be paid in the later part of the summer and year. Hunter added that the value he saw in the report was the board's closer review of expenses related to the budget and that could influence the costs for the rest of year.

Bethany asked if the township was aware of how much money had been collected early during the discount period. Hunter responded that he was not sure, as all of the funds for the year had yet to be collected. Hunter added that the last few days of April had yet to be disbursed to the township and that would give a better indication of how much had been collected during the discount period.

Flat Rate Tax Collection Resolution: Jeff began by sharing that he and Hunter had discussed the county's desire for an extension of the flat-pay period until September 30th by all municipalities. Jeff added that they had discussed extending the discount period, but the challenges it would pose at this stage of tax collection and because the county had not extended the discount period would overly complicate tax collections. Motion by Ron McClure, seconded by Mark Weber, to approve a resolution extending the flat-rate tax collection period. Approved unanimously.

Playground Program: Jeff commented that the township had reached a point where a decision about whether to hold the 2020 playground program in the midst of the Corona Virus. Hunter added that there is uncertainty around what use of the district's facilities could be made, as their guidance was not yet developed by the Department of Education. Jeff commented that a decision needed to be made that evening about whether or not to hold the program.

Bethany commented that the timing of the board's meeting was challenging, because guidance from the state was forthcoming on how to hold a program in the midst of the COVID-19 emergency. Bethany recommended that the board communicate that guidance was coming soon and that a final decision on the program should wait until that occurs. Ron commented that the programs beginning should respect when school formally ends, because it could influence the participation of local children.

The board discussed several logistical challenges to not make a decision prior to the next board meeting; including registration of participants, hiring of staff, and sending out information on the playground. Jeff commented that the board would make a formal decision at its next meeting and in the next two weeks get a firmer grip on how to proceed.

Legislative Resolutions for 2021: Jeff commented that there were no issues that would need to be forwarded to the county, but he was awaiting the PSATS conference to consider the previously adopted resolution on third party inspection agencies. Hunter commented that PSATS conference was cancelled for 2020 and the resolution that was previously adopted could be resent to ensure that the issue was considered at the county convention and then the state convention in 2021. The board directed Hunter to resubmit the previously adopted resolution.

Other New Business: Jeff asked if the Fire Company had any updates for the township that they wanted to share. Joel said that things were quiet and added that the Fire Company had a fair amount of PPE provided by the county.

Announcement: Jeff Fiant announced that they would be adjourning into an executive session to discuss personnel matters.

Closure of Meeting: Being that there was no other business, Chairman Jeff Fiant closed the meeting at 7:52pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Hunter L. Ahrens
Township Secretary