

TOWNSHIP COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES

APRIL 19TH, 2023

6:00 PM

ANNOUNCEMENTS. The meeting this evening is a regularly scheduled Public Meeting and is accessible in person subject to the occupancy limits of the Township facility.

- 1) The meeting this evening is a regularly scheduled Public Meeting and is accessible in person subject to the occupancy limits of the Township facility.**
- 2) The Board of Commissioners held a Workshop Session on Wednesday, APRIL 5TH, 2023.**

CALL TO ORDER

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners and Other Officials

Mrs. DeBona, President - Present
Mrs. Mylan, Vice President - Present
Mr. Angus, Commissioner - Present
Mr. Molchen, Commissioner - Present
Ms. Barlamas, Commissioner- Present
Ms. Shannon Steele, Solicitor- Present
Mr. Vilella, Manager - Present
Mrs. Winne, Tax Collector/Treasurer - Present
Mr. Nordquist, Township Engineer - Present

Residents in Attendance

Craig Winnie- Lenzman Court
Becky Homich-Beaver Road
Fabiola Gergerich-Woodland Road
Rosemary Shrum-Woodland Road
Sharon Speicher-Beaver Road
Greg Szuchy-25th Street
Jack Bedalota-Sylvan Road
Angela Meyers-Woodside Drive
Joe Brunner-Duss Avenue
Kaylie Szuchy-Manning Street
George Kurash-Forest Road
Dave Gorecki-Wilson Avenue

President DeBona made the following comment: The Harmony Township Volunteer Fire Department met with the Harmony Township Board of Commissioners at the April 5, 2023 workshop meeting and requested for the Township to assist with the purchase of a new pumper by allocating and reserving \$ 75,000.00 to be available on or before June 2025 for the purchase of said pumper. The Township Board of Commissioners will be taking this request into consideration as they recognize the value of the service and supports the VFD and the Ladies Auxiliary. At the request of the Harmony Township VFD leadership, they asked that the BOC repeal the tax credit ordinance and not consider it at this time. So you will notice that we have added this item to tonight's agenda for consideration by the BOC.

Public Comment

Manager Note: This Comment period is limited to Agenda Items only. All individual comments and dialogue are limited to 5 minutes.

Fabiola Gergerich questioned whether there was an Executive Session held on APRIL 5TH, 2023. The Board acknowledged there was not an Executive Session held. She also asked how many bids did they receive for the Storm Water project? The Board acknowledged that there were five (5) bids received. Mrs. Gergerich acknowledged that The Harmony Township Public Works Department was not permitted to perform repair work on a state road; however, she feels that the bid that was accepted was too high.

Jack Bedalota Had a question regarding the longevity of the plastic strips used for street paving. Frank Presto, Public Works Foreman, explained that the strips last between seven (7) to ten (10) years. Also, Mr. Bedalotta wanted to know why the paper dumpster has not been emptied in quite a while. Mr. Villella, Township Manager, explained that that particular dumpster is under contract with Royal Oak Company. The Royal Oak Company claims to be understaffed and they apologized for the lack of service. Mr. Villella will contact them again regarding the dumpster.

- I. Approval of the MARCH 15TH, 2023, Meeting Minutes amended.
Voice Vote -Motion Carried
Motion Angus Second Mylan

- II. Approval of the following reports: The Township Manager is recommending the acceptance of the following Department Reports for the month of APRIL 2023.
 1. Code Enforcement Department Report
 2. Road Department Report
 3. Police Department Report
 4. Sewage Department Report.
 5. Tax Collector/Treasurer's Report as submitted for MARCH 2023.

Voice Vote- Motion Carried
Motion Angus Second Barlamas

III. Approval of the Accounts Payable for the month of APRIL 2023

A.) It is the recommendation of the Finance Committee to approve the MARCH 2023 Accounts Payable in the total amount of \$128,700.44

General Fund	\$ 60,852.20
2018 GO Bond Interest U.S. Bank	\$ 0.00
Health Insurance	\$ 30,142.33
Developers Escrow Fund	\$ N/A
Liquid Fuels	\$ 5,560.78
Sewer Fund	\$ 28,000.50
Police Pension Fund	\$ 422.63
2018 Capital Program Fund	\$ 3,722.00
TOTAL	\$ 128,700.44

Roll Call Vote-Motion Carried

Motion Molchen Second Mylan

Molchen Yes Mylan Yes Angus Yes Barlamas Yes DeBona Yes

IV. Consent Agenda

The matters included under the consent agenda are self-explanatory and are not expected to require further review or discussion. Items will be enacted by one motion. If discussion is desired by any member of the Board of Commissioners, that item must be removed from the consent agenda and considered separately.

V. OLD BUSINESS

- 1) A Motion to authorize the advertisement of an Ordinance required to repeal Ordinance No. 445, the Volunteer Service Credit Program.

Roll Call Vote-Motion Carried

Motion Molchen Second Barlamas

Molchen Yes Angus Yes Barlamas Yes Mylan Yes DeBona Yes

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Finance

- 1) A Motion authorizing the public advertisement for the sale of a 2014 Ford Explorer to accept the highest bid.

Roll Call Vote-Motion Carried

Motion Molchen Second Barlamas

Molchen Yes Angus Yes Barlamas Yes Mylan Yes DeBona Yes

Public Safety

- 1) A motion accepting the bid of M. O'Herron Company, in the amount of \$456,806.00 for the Storm Sewer Replacement and Improvement Project pursuant to the Beaver County Covid 19 Grant and subject to a

satisfactory Agreement, bonding and all other criteria required by the Engineers and Solicitor being met.

Roll Call Vote – Motion Carried

Motion Molchen Second Barlomas

Molchen Yes Angus Yes Barlomas Yes Mylan Yes DeBona Yes

- 2) A Motion to accept the quote from Williams & Williams for the placement of thermoplastic transverse and cross bar markings on the following intersections: Rt. 65 and Logan Lane, Duss Avenue, and Dearborn, Keystone and Duss Avenue, Duss Avenue and Ambridge Regional crossing (North Gate), Rt. 989 and Ridge Road and Rt. 989 and Duss Avenue. The cost of the project is \$8058.00 and payment will be made through the Liquid Fuel Fund.

Roll Call Vote-Motion Carried

Motion Mylan Second Barlomas

Mylan Yes Angus Yes Barlomas Yes Molchen Yes DeBona Yes

VI. Community Development

A motion to approve a Conditional Use request submitted by Joseph J. Brunner, Inc. for the purpose of storing vehicles at the property located at 2973 Duss Avenue, Ambridge, PA 15003. The Planning Commission on February 23, 2023 approved the Conditional Use application with conditions and the Board of Commissioners held a Conditional use Hearing at 5:00Pm, March 15th, 2023 for the purposes of considering the Conditional Use request. The Conditional Use is subject to the acceptance of the Conditions recommended and implemented as soon as possible.

Roll Call Vote-Motion Carried

Motion Molchen Second Angus

Mylan Yes Angus Yes Barlomas Yes Molchen Yes DeBona Yes

Reports

- A. Township Manager's Report. The Manager has submitted updates to the Board of Commissioners on a regular basis from the last meeting.
1. A request for moving product on Woodland Road was denied due to weight limits.
 2. The Bid for Forest Road Project will go out soon.
 3. Big Sewickley Creek watershed is performing a clean-up project.
 4. Thank You Representative Matzie for the awarding a \$519,000.00 Grant to Harmony Township.
- B. Consulting Engineer's Report. An Engineers Report for the month of March/April 2023 has been submitted.
- Solicitor's Report. The Solicitor has entered her invoice for services and setting forth the work performed for the month of March/April 2023.
1. The Solicitor, Shannon Steele, explained that presently a Collective Bargaining discussion is taking place with the Police Department.
 2. Harmony Township is currently involved in a civil litigation case. The other party in this failed to appear at the last court hearing. The hearing was postponed to a later date.

VII. Elected Officials' Report

1. **Connie Barlamas had a meeting with the Township Manager, Bob Vilella, regarding the 2023 Budget. Unfortunately, the Forest Road Project cost is higher than was projected. Additional funds are needed.**
2. **Terry Mylan thanked the Police Department and Road Crew for their excellent work during the recent storm activity in Harmony Township. Also, The Finance Committee received an invitation from Representative Matzie's office for "Grants 101" a Grant Writing Workshop being held on MAY 19TH, 2023 at the Beaver County 911 Center from Noon-2:00pm. This Workshop is only open to Township Representatives and employees.**
3. **Matt Molchen spoke regarding the New Playground. Tentative, work will begin on the first or second week in May 2023.**
4. **Grace DeBona commended Officer Doug Edgell on visiting Ambridge area Schools on a regular basis. Perhaps all the Harmony Township Officers could make regular visits to the Ambridge area Schools.**

III. Public Comment. The Public is invited to comment on any item of interest.

Manager Note: All individual comments and dialogue are limited to 5 minutes.

Fabiola Gergerich asked a question regarding the new Playground. Will cameras be installed as promised by the Board. Commissioner Barlamas explained that the Township is hoping that Comcast will install Internet to the park as a donation. Mr. Vilella will contact Comcast to discuss this issue. Trail cameras are also an option which the Board is discussing.

Fabiola Gergerich questioned why is money an issue for the Township Building renovation? The Township received the original Grant Money, the Rescue Grant and the new grant for \$700,000.00 total. Commissioner Barlamas explained that the Forest Road Project came in much higher than expected also the renovation cost per square foot is more than expected. The renovation project cost at this point is \$744,900.00 and that is with not using the American Rescue fund. The Board would not like to touch that fund if possible. The Board is looking at ways to cut the project budget by the Township buying the raw materials for the renovation in order to lower the cost.

The meeting turned to the discussion of the Police Chief position and many members of the audience had questions for the Board. These members included:

1. **Fabiola Gergerich**
2. **Craig Winnie**
3. **Paula Winnie**
4. **Angela Meyers**
5. **Sharon Spiecher**
6. **Greg Szuchy**

The members of the audience were told that the position of the Police Chief is part of the Collective Bargaining negotiations and cannot be discussed at this time.

However, Craig Winnie said that the portion of the Sunshine Law regarding Collective Bargaining is private if it is regarding a specific person. Mr. Winnie feels that the issue is about the position of Police Chief not a specific person who will be given that position. As the discussion progressed, Commissioner Barlamas did explain that one of the delays in the process of hiring a Police Chief is lack of a specific job description for the position. Many members of the audience questioned why the discovery of a lack of a specific job description was not realized sooner. Since this a contract year this realization came to fruition recently. The Board went on to explain that the decision to appoint an OIC was done on seniority and the Board did offer the Sergeant exam to all the officers. However, not one officer applied to take the exam. The current OIC, Officer Brian Brooks, explained that at the time a discussion did occur with all the Officers and the decision was not to take the exam since the position of Police Chief was not appointed. Commissioner President, Grace Debona, did tell the audience that an Executive Session is scheduled for after the regular meeting tonight to discuss the position of Police Chief. Paula Winnie feels that the Board is being too secretive and is having too many Executive Sessions. That Commissioner DeBona original campaign format was to have transparency and in her opinion is not the case. At this point there was a call to adjourn the meeting. However, Sharon Spiecher said that at one meeting the Solicitor Shannon Steele, took the gavel and adjourned the meeting. Ms. Steele denied this allegation .

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The next Workshop Session of the Board of Commissioners will be held at 6:00Pm on MAY 3RD, 2023.

The VFD Ladies Auxiliary Spring Craft and Vendor Show, Saturday, MAY 6TH, 2023, from 10:00 Am to 4:00 Pm at the VFD 2400 Beaver Road, Ambridge, PA 15003.

The Harmony Township Offices will be closed on Tuesday, MAY 16TH, 2023, for the General Election. Township offices will open on Wednesday, MAY 17TH, 2023.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Harmony Township Commissioners will be MAY 17TH, 2023, at 6:00Pm.

Work will begin on the installation of the Beaver Road Playground facilities the first or second week of May 2023.

Dearborn Street will be ready for Columbia Gas to begin paving as the PW Department has completed the storm sewer work on that road.

Forest Road will be put to Bid and a award will be made at the MAY 17TH, 2023 Commissioners Meeting.

Storm sewer work is expected to begin on the projects awarded this evening.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Voice Vote-Motion Carried

Motion Molchen Second Mylan Time of Adjournment: 7:10 PM

The Board proceeded into Executive Session .