

TOWNSHIP COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES

October 18th, 2023

6:00 PM

- 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 an Executive Session on Wednesday, October 4th, 2023, at 5:00pm to discuss personnel related matters regarding public safety.
- 3) The Board of Commissioners held an Executive Session on Wednesday, October 4th, 2023, at 6:30pm to discuss personnel related matters regarding public safety. September 6th, 2023, to discuss potential legal action related to real estate matters.
- 4) The Board of Commissioners held an Executive Session on Wednesday October 18th, 2023, at 5:00pm to discuss public safety and other professional personnel matters.

CALL TO ORDER

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners and Other Officials

Mrs. DeBona, President

Mrs. Mylan, Vice President-Present via Phone

Mr. Angus, Commissioner

Mr. Molchen, Commissioner

Ms. Barlamas, Commissioner

Ms. Shannon Steele, Solicitor

Mr. Villella, Manager

Mrs. Winne, Tax Collector/Treasurer

Mr. Nordquist, Township Engineer

Residents in Attendance

Craig Winnie - Lenzman Court

Fabiola Gergerich - Woodland Road

Rosemary Shrum – 260 Woodland Road

James Essek - HTVD

Sam DeBona Jr. – Ridge Road

Vicky DeBona – Ridge Road

Vince DeBona – Laurel Avenue

Mike DeBona

Ed DeBona

John Cermak - 2650 Manning Street

Juan Villagomez

Angelita Villagomez

Miguel Villagomez

**Christopher Villagomez
Mark Montagna – Sylvan Road
John Krepp – Woodland
Alex Korol – Magistrate
Giovanni Trello – HTPD
Michael Scheers – HTPD**

The Solicitor, Shannon Steele made an announcement regarding the times that the public can make comments. The beginning of the meeting the Public has an opportunity to comment on agenda items only. The end of the meeting the Public has the opportunity to comment on any topic they wish.

Presentations and Appointments

- 1) A Motion of the Harmony Township Board of Commissioners honoring the Commitment and Service to the community of Samuel DeBona.
Roll Call Vote
Motion Barlamas Second Molchen
Barlamas Yes Molchen Yes Mylan Yes Angus Yes DeBona Yes**

The President of the Board of Commissioners, Grace DeBona, presented to the DeBona Family a commendation for Samuel DeBona’s Commitment and Service to the Community.

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 item #2 under Community Development. She wanted know if Harmony Township received a billing invoice for the Architect’s Services and what is the cost. She then told the Board they could tell her later. Questioned item #3 under Community Development. She was confused to what the motion was about. The Township Manager explained that Dennis Smith is the Building Inspector and he worked previously for KLH. The motion is to retain Dennis Smith as Harmony Township’s Building inspector for the remainder of 2023. Thereafter the Board of Commissioners will decide if they wish to pursue the relationship on a month to month basis. Questioned #5 under Public Works, she knows that Harmony Township is cutting down trees and she mentioned that Marcia needs her trees cut but that issue can be discussed later. Questioned item #1 under Recreation. What is the cost for the Petting Zoo and what fund pay for the Zoo. Commissioner Barlamas explained that Payment for the Petting Zoo will come directly from the Recreation Fund. Questioned Item #1 under Personnel. She asked if Harmony Township will no longer be using NIRA for Engineering. Commissioner Barlamas explained that the Board will be pricing out all of the Township’s services.

John Cermak- Questioned item #1 Under Finance B regarding the 2024 MMO. Historically the MMO allocation primarily went to the Police Pension Fund. Why is the 2024 allocation being distributed also to the Union Employees Pension Fund and the Service Employees Pension Fund? The Township Manager explained that in 2021 the Township received a reduced MMO which saved the Township \$75,000.00. Also, there has been several Police Officers who have retired. Therefore, the Township no longer needs to subsidize the Police Pension fund so now the MMO allocation can be distributed between the three Pension funds. Regarding the 2024 Budget, all of the MMO's will be utilized for the 2024 Budget. The State Aid will be a separate line item in the budget.

- I. Approval of the Minutes of the regular Meeting of September 20th, 2023 .
Voice Vote - Motion Carried Motion Barlamas Second Angus
Mylan Yes Angus Yes Barlamas Yes Molchen Yes DeBona Yes

- II. Approval of the following reports: The Township Manager is recommending the acceptance of the following Department Reports for the month of September/October 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 June and July 2023.
Voice Vote – Motion Carried
Motion Angus Second Mylan

- III. Approval of Accounts Payable for the month of October 2023.
 - A.) It is the recommendation of the Finance Committee to ratify and approve the October 2023 Accounts Payable in the total amount of \$236,937.55.

General Fund	\$ 45,638.94
2018 GO Bond Interest /Principal U.S. Bank	\$ N/A
Health Insurance	\$ 29,917.05
Developers Escrow Fund	\$ N/A
Liquid Fuels	\$ 4,835.47
Sewer Fund	\$ 20,296.49
Police Pension Fund	\$ 422.63
2018 Capital Program Fund	\$ 1,972.00

1 st Install M O' Herron	\$ 133,854.97
TOTAL	\$ 236,937.55

- . Township will receive 80% of this amount back from the County of Beaver American Rescue Plan Fund Grant (ARPA)

Roll Call Vote. Motion Carried.

Motion Barlomas Second Mylan

Mylan Yes Angus Yes Barlomas Yes Molchen Yes DeBona Yes

IV. Consent Agenda. NO 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. NEW BUSINESS

A. FINANCE

A Motion authorizing the transfer of funds to the plans as provided in the following:

- 1) A Motion authorizing the acceptance of the 2022 Volunteer Fire Relief Association allocation and to authorize the distribution of the amount of \$17,558.50 to the Harmony Township Volunteer Fireman's Protective Association within sixty (60) days of receipt (September 21, 2023) or earlier. The Township Treasurer is directed to file all required verifications of distributions to the Auditor General consistent with past practice. This amount is paid by the Commonwealth.
Manager's Note: In 2022 the distribution was \$17,542.01
- 2) Authorize the electronic transfer of State Aid received from the Commonwealth and directed to the General Fund to the Township Police Pension fund account in the amount of \$53,084.00 on or before December 31, 2023.
Manager's Note: In 2022 the distribution was \$49,173.00
- 3) To authorize a contribution in the amount of \$17,845.00 to the Service Employees Pension Plan consistent with the 2023 Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) prior to December 31, 2023, to be paid from the General Fund and State Aid.
Manager's Note: In 2022 the distribution was \$18,610.00
- 4) To authorize the retention of the amount of \$4,833.54 as reimbursement to the General Fund for the 2023 payments to the Union plan (Western PA Teamsters and Employers Pension Fund).
- 5) Authorize the Municipal Manager and the President of the Board of Commissioners to direct the MMO and Municipal Contribution to the appropriate pension Fund.

Roll Call Vote

Motion Angus Second Barlomas

Angus Yes Barlomas Yes Molchen Yes Mylan Yes DeBona Yes

B. FINANCE

A Motion to accept the 2024 Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) as prepared by Mockenhaupt Benefit Group as follows:

- 1) Approval of Minimum Municipal obligation for the 2024 year for the Harmony Township Police in the amount of \$59,047.00.**
- 2) Approval of the Minimum Municipal Obligation for the 2024 year for the estimate Harmony Township Union Employees Defined Contribution Pension Plan in the amount of \$27,128.00.**
- 3) Approval of the Minimum Municipal Obligation for the 2024 year for the Harmony Township Service Employees Pension Plan in the amount of \$21,556.00.**
- 4) Authorize these amounts to be appropriated in the 2024 General Fund Budget.**

Roll Call Vote

Motion Barlomas Second Mylan

Angus Yes Barlomas Yes Molchen Yes Mylan Yes DeBona Yes

C. FINANCE

- 1) A Motion authorizing the transfer of funds in an amount equal to \$133,854.97 from the harmony Township Capital Improvement fund to the Harmony Township General fund for the 3rd installment of the payment to M O Herron- Beaver county ARPA Grant Award.**

Roll Call Vote

Motion Molchen Second Barlomas

Angus Yes Barlomas Yes Molchen Yes Mylan Yes DeBona

Manager's Note: 80% of this amount will be reimbursed to the Township Through the Beaver County ARPA Grant.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- 1) A Motion authorizing the acceptance of the site plan submitted by Wright Auto for the erection of a 15,000 sq. ft. warehouse facility to be located at 2516 Duss Avenue, Ambridge, PA 15003 being parcel no. 64-009-0610.000 and contingent upon the following: that all permits and authorizations be obtained prior to the start of any development, that the recommendations of the Harmony Township and Beaver County Planning commission be accepted and incorporated into the site plan where applicable, and that all such information and materials as required by the Harmony Township Engineer to their satisfaction, where applicable.**

Roll Call Vote

Motion Angus Second Barlomas

Angus Yes Barlomas Yes Molchen Yes Mylan Yes DeBona Yes

- 2) The Harmony Township Commissioners have received Grant funding for the rehabilitation of the harmony Township Municipal Building in the total amount of \$744,000.00 and professional architectural services for construction administration is required, a Motion authorizing the acceptance of the professional services agreement with Stephen Paxton, Architect for the rehabilitation to the Harmony Township Municipal**

Building for the relocation of the Police (Ground Floor) and Administration (first Floor).

Roll Call Vote

Motion Barlomas Second Molchen

Angus Yes Barlomas Yes Molchen Yes Mylan Yes DeBona Yes

- 3) **Motion to accept the Agreement for the professional building inspection service of Dennis Smith, who previously served HMT and KLH, as building and inspection services, consistent with the International Building Code, tdba as United Code Consultants for the remainder of the 2023 year, and subject to a month-to-month contractual period.**

Roll Call Vote

Motion Angus Second Mylan

Angus Yes Barlomas Yes Molchen Yes Mylan Yes DeBona Yes

PUBLIC WORKS

- 1) **Motion authorizing the acceptance of bids/proposals for professional engineering services.**

Roll Call Vote

Motion Angus Second Molchen

Angus Yes Barlomas Yes Molchen Yes Mylan Yes DeBona Yes

RECREATION

- 1) **Motion to authorize the acceptance of the Agreement with Wallen Legacy, LLC (1137 Camp Nancy road, Apollo, PA 15613) for the Petting Zoo at the December Winter Community Event. Payment to be made from the Recreation fund.**

Roll Call Vote

Motion Molchen Second Barlomas

Angus Yes Barlomas Yes Molchen Yes Mylan Yes DeBona Yes

PERSONNEL

- 1) **A motion authorizing the acceptance of bids/proposals for professional engineering services.**

Roll Call Vote

Motion Mylan Second Barlomas

Angus Yes Barlomas Yes Molchen Yes Mylan Yes DeBona Yes

- 2) **A Motion authorizing the termination of the MOU of April 13th, 2022, concerning the OIC and pursuant to the language of the MOU and due to the appointment of the new Chief of Police effective October 21st, 2023, at 11:59 pm.**

Roll Call Vote

Motion Molchen Second Mylan

Angus Yes Barlomas Yes Molchen Absent Mylan Yes DeBona Yes

- 3) After having been determined as qualified through a non-competitive exam by the Harmony Township Civil Service Commission, and as required by the Civil Service Rules and Regulations, a motion to appoint Juan Villagomez as Harmony Township Chief of Police effective October 23rd, 2023, at 12:01pm.

Roll Call Vote

Motion Barlamas Second Molchen

Angus Yes Barlamas Yes Molchen Absent Mylan Yes DeBona Yes

At this time the oath of office was administered by the Magistrate Alex Korol and Juan Villagomez was sworn in as the new Chief of Police for Harmony Township. After Officer Villagomez was sworn in the Board of Commissioners and the audience congratulated him on his new appointment.

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. Congratulations to Juan Villagomez for his new position as the Chief of Police for Harmony Township.
 2. Local Share Grant total is a million dollars. No obligation. Grant is due by November 30th, 2023. will be receiving the 2nd Payment for the Storm Work contract.
 3. November 1st, 2023, there will be a Workshop Meeting to discuss the 2024 Budget.
 4. Township Manager and Frank Presto will be meeting with Columbia Gas to discuss the projects concerning Columbia Gas. Dearborn Road has been paved and the other streets are slated to be paved 1st Quarter 2024.
- B. Consulting Engineer's Report. An Engineers Report for the month of September 2023 have been submitted.
1. Minor items for the storm sewer project have been completed. The 5% retainer can be paid.
 2. The decision for the approval of the Small Water Program Grant is still delayed until Nover 21st 2023.
 3. Forest Road Project is complete as of October 2nd, 2023.
 4. No change regarding Skyline Metals.
 5. Wright Auto Storage Facility plans have been revised. The project should be approved.
 6. A list of three items have been prepared for consideration regarding the Local Share Act. This is a non-matching program which is great.
 7. MS 4 Annual Permits have been completed and submitted on September 29th, 2023.

- C. Solicitor's Report.** The Solicitor has entered her invoice for services and set forth the work performed for the month of September 2023. Hopefully negotiations with the Police Department will be completed soon and negotiations will begin with the Public Works Department.

VI. Elected Officials' Report

- A. Tax Collector Report.** The Tax Collector has submitted her reports for August 2023. Paula Winnie, Tax collector attended a meeting with Beaver County regarding printing of the new tax bill for 2024. Harmony Township bill is pretty standard so there should not be any big changes. Beaver County is going to reinstall the GIS on their website for residents. The rate change for 2024 should be announced by November 15th, 2023. Mrs. Winnie inquired about the check for the VFD; the check has not been generated yet but there still is time.
- B. Commissioner, Connie Barlamas,** mentioned the Winter Community day which will be held on December 9th, 2023, from 1 to 5pm. Volunteers are still needed! The event will have a petting zoo, Ice Sculptor will be making a Fire Truck out of ice, free popcorn and hot chocolate for the children, Officer Scheers along with other Beaver County Officials have secured SWAT will be present, Children will get a chance to meet the Police and Firefighters, Shop N Save will be making reindeer food with the children, The School of Rock will be performing, there will be Bounce houses and the Children will get a chance to meet with Santa and buddy the Elf (Matt Molchen), Frank Presto is bringing down a Backhoe for the Children to touch and the Ladies Auxiliary will be selling Poinsettias starting December 8th thru the 10th. We hope to have a great turn out so please come to support your Community.
- C. Commissioner Glen Angus** congratulated Juan Villagomez on his appointment of Chief of Police for Harmony Township.
- D. Commissioner, Terry Mylan,** congratulated Juan Villagomez on his appointment as Chief of Police for Harmony Township. Also, Halloween is on October 31st from 6 to 8pm. Please be careful and be aware of the Children who are out trick or treating.
- E. Commissioner Matt Molchen** congratulated Juan Villagomez on his appointment of Chief of Police for Harmony Township. Also, he is very excited to be Buddy the Elf for the Winter Community Day.
- F. Board President, Grace DeBona,** congratulated Juan Villagomez on his appointment as Chief of Police for Harmony Township. Also, reiterated Commissioner Mylan's comment regarding Halloween. Trick or Treating will be on Tuesday, October 31st from 6pm to 8pm. Please be careful and watch for children walking and please dress appropriately for the weather.

VII. 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.

John Cermak: Inquired about the following:

1. Regarding the 2023 and 2024 budget is there any Fund allocated just for Sanitary Sewer repairs. He said that in the past there use to be a separate line item in the budget specifically for the Emergency Sanitary Sewer repair work which some of the sewer fund payments were allocated for this fund. The Township Manager spoke to Mr. Cermak regarding this issue. internet web page needs updated. When the Manager was hired by Harmony Township this Emergency Fund did not exist. He will need discuss this matter with the Municipal Authority Board.

Fabiola Gergerich: Inquired about the following:

1. Marcia Lehman on Mayfield Street is concerned about the trees in her backyard. She is afraid they might fall, and they are located on an easement. Perhaps the Township could look into removing the trees.
2. A year later we finally have a Chief of Police congratulations to Juan. However, she then commented on what happened to Officer Brian Brooks. He has worked as OIC for a year, and he is not appointed Chief. When the Board did not answer her, she demanded an answer because she is a citizen, and she deserves an answer. The Solicitor, Shannon Steele, The Board of Commissioners and the Civil Service Board gave every Officer a chance to interview and take the non-competitive exam. A candidate was chosen by the Board and approved unanimously by the Civil Board. Mrs. Gergerich just feels that Officer Brooks should have been give more consideration.

John Kretz: Inquired about the following:

1. Will the Board consider bring back the blinking speed limit sign to Woodland Road. President DeBona said that issue is on Chief Villagomez list.

Paula Winnie: Inquired about the following:

1. Marcia Lehman has been concerned about the fracking in Harmony Township. Has there been any development regarding Fracking Ordinance? President DeBona explained Harmony Township has very little frackable land.

VIII . ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Commissioners will be as follows:

November Workshop: November 1st, 2023

November Regular Meeting: November 15th, 2023

The Township building will be closed on November 7th,2023 for Election Day.

The Township building will be closed on November 10th, 2023, for Veterans Day.

Trick or treat Tuesday, October 31st from 6:00PM to 8:00PM.

TRICK OR TREAT will be held on Tuesday, October 31st from 6:00PM to 8:00PM!

The Harmony Township Board of Commissioners at the meeting of September 20th, 2023, approved the extension of an agreement with the VFD for continued fire protection services and to provide additional financial support towards the truck purchase.

The Annual Cash Bash for the Harmony Township VFD will be held on October 21st, at 6:30PM. All proceeds go to benefit the Fire Department and Harmony Township residents who are directly served by the HTVFD.

Sunday, November 5th, the VFD Ladies Auxiliary VFD will be having a soup sale, \$8.00 per quart. Please call the Soup Ladies: Becky @ 724-312-1227 or Sharon @ 412-215-8656.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Voice Vote. Motion Passed.

Motion Angus Second Molchen Time of Adjournment: 6:58PM