

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING
SEPTEMBER 5, 2023**

MEMBERS PRESENT

John J. Merhottein, President
John K. Gallagher, Vice President
Jan Beatty, Commissioner
DeAnn L. Lawrence, Commissioner

MEMBERS ABSENT

Luke A. Verdes, Commissioner

OTHERS PRESENT

Anthony Giovannini, Township Solicitor
James Broughal, Township Solicitor (virtual)
Doug Bruce, Township Manager
Amanda L. Jensen, Community Development Director

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Merhottein called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led those in attendance in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION
ANNOUNCEMENT**

Solicitor Giovannini announced that on Tuesday, September 5, 2023, the Board of Commissioners met in executive session from 6:30 pm to approximately 6:50 pm to discuss personnel matters pursuant to Section 708a of the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act.

**COURTESY OF THE
FLOOR****JOY ALBANESE
ARCHIE PROJECT**

Ms. Albanese asked for a status on the handicap ramp that was requested. Mr. Gallagher said they are waiting to hear from the architect. Ms. Albanese said they are hosting a tour at the estate on September 9th and asked for the second floor to be included. Mr. Merhottein said it was staff's recommendation to keep it closed because the plaster falling off the walls may contain asbestos. Ms. Albanese gave an update on the promotion effort and said they have reached over a million hits on social media and have secured professional actors and musicians for the event. She said the ARCHIE project had \$7,000 to put towards the hiring of professional fundraisers and asked the board for money to pay for the balance. Mr. Merhottein asked her to send that information to Mr. Bruce.

**MARIA SILVA
1825 9TH STREET**

Ms. Silva said she had attended the Zoning Hearing Board meeting and was not allowed to speak. Ms. Jensen said the board is a quasi-judicial board and in order to participate you have to be directly affected by the application also known as standing.

**BARRY ROTH
4323 CHETWIN TERR.**

Mr. Roth said the hydrant on Green Pond Road was replaced but is missing the coupler. Mr. Merhottein thanked him for the information and said staff will look into it. Mr. Roth said he thought the asbestos was abated in the mansion. Mr. Gallagher said anytime the plaster is disturbed, there is concern. Mr. Roth believes further testing should be done.

**PHILIP ALBRIGHT
3145 BLUE RIDGE DR.**

Mr. Albright said he visits the yard waste center frequently. Recently, he was told by an attendant that his truck was not permitted because of the size. Mr. Albright said he has a 1954 Chevy truck which is not a commercial vehicle but an antique. His property generates a lot of yard waste and asked the board to

make an exception since he is a township resident. Mr. Gallagher agreed that there ought to be a way to grant this exception.

**KATHLEEN HUDAK
4005 WILSON AVE.**

Ms. Hudak said she had issues with loud vehicles and motorcycles on the Miga property located at 4011 Wilson Avenue. She said the tenants are out of control and is concerned for her safety. Mr. Merhottein said he will notify the police chief.

**APPROVAL
OF MINUTES**

Upon motion (Gallagher-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted by voice vote to approve the minutes of the August 21, 2023 regular public meeting as presented. The motion passed 3-0-1. Mr. Verdes was absent. Ms. Beatty abstained.

**SUBDIVISIONS & LAND
DEVELOPMENT**

MOTION

A MOTION AUTHORIZING AN EXTENSION REQUEST FROM J.G. PETRUCCI COMPANY FOR THE MOWRER ROAD DELIVERY VEHICLE PARKING LOT PRELIMINARY/FINAL LAND DEVELOPMENT, EXTENDING THE DEADLINE TO SEPTEMBER 19, 2024, TO MEET ALL CONDITIONS OF PLAN APPROVAL

Upon motion (Beatty-Gallagher), the Board of Commissioners voted by voice vote to grant an extension request from J.G. Petrucci Company for the Mowrer Road delivery vehicle parking lot preliminary/final land development, extending the deadline to September 19, 2024, to meet all conditions of plan approval. Mr. Verdes was absent.

**RESOLUTIONS OF THE
BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS**

RESOLUTION R061-23

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ATTENDANCE OF CORPORAL JEREMY ANDERSON, CORPORAL ANDREW KANASKIE, AND POLICE CLERK JENNIFER SCHWARTZ AT THE CODY CONNECT CONFERENCE SEPTEMBER 12-14, 2023, IN HERSHEY, PENNSYLVANIA

Upon motion (Lawrence-Beatty), the Board of Commissioners voted by voice vote to approve Resolution R061-23 authorizing the attendance of Corporal Jeremy Anderson, Corporal Andrew Kanaskie, and Police Clerk Jennifer Schwartz at the CODY Connect conference September 12-14, 2023, in Hershey, Pennsylvania. Mr. Verdes was absent.

**MOTIONS OF THE
BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS**

MOTION

A MOTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH HERA PROPERTY REGISTRY TO PROVIDE PROPERTY REGISTRATION SERVICES FOR BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP'S FORECLOSURE AND VACANT PROPERTY REGISTRATION ORDINANCE, CHAPTER 187 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF BETHLEHEM, "PROPERTY, ABANDONED AND FORECLOSED."

Ms. Jensen said ProChamps Property Registration recently went out of

09-05-2023

business and recommended Hera Property Registry as the replacement.

Upon motion (Gallagher-Beatty), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to authorize the township manager to enter into a professional services agreement with Hera Property Registry to provide property registration services for Bethlehem Township’s foreclosure and vacant property registration ordinance, Chapter 187 of the Code of the Township of Bethlehem, “Property, Abandoned and Foreclosed.” Mr. Verdes was absent.

MOTION

A MOTION APPROVING DISTRIBUTION OF THE DRAFT ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN TO THE BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION AND THE LEHIGH VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION FOR COMMENTS

Ms. Jensen said this is the final draft and is expected to be adopted this fall. She said it was made possible by a grant and will be adopted as a supplement to the current comprehensive plan. Mr. Gallagher said it was a good document and the Environmental Advisory Council will also review it.

Upon motion (Gallagher-Beatty), the Board of Commissioners voted by voice vote to approve the distribution of the draft Active Transportation Plan to the Bethlehem Township Planning Commission and the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission for comments. Mr. Verdes was absent.

APPROVAL OF PURCHASE ORDERS

- PO 20232217 – CORE & MAIN – PPIS – \$4,193.28**
- PO 20232221 – BARWIS CONSTRUCTION – PW – \$96,349.27**
- PO 20232225 – H.T. LYONS CONTRACTORS – PPIS – \$4,043.00**
- PO 20232234 – AXON ENTERPRISES – BTPD – \$6,091.20**
- PO 20232235 – PA CHIEFS OF POLICE ASSOC.– BTPD – \$4,769.21**
- PO 20232236 – MCCANN ASSOCIATES – BTPD – \$2,371.00**
- PO 20232247 – GLICK FIRE EQUIPMENT – BTVFC EMS – \$190,561.85**
- PO 20232257 – SEAGRAVE FIRE APPARATUS – NRFC – \$1,165,517.00**

Mr. Gallagher asked how many police officer applications were received. Mr. Bruce said 151 applications were received and they are down to 20 candidates.

Regarding the last purchase order, Mr. Bruce said Andy Freda, Finance Director, believes it would be advantageous to put 50% down on the fire truck and 50% at the end.

Upon motion (Gallagher-Beatty), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice to approve the purchase orders as presented. The board approved a 50% down payment on purchase order 20232257 for the fire truck. Mr. Verdes was absent.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Merhottein adjourned the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura G. Zapata
Recording Secretary