

**BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING
JUNE 19, 2023**

- MEMBERS PRESENT** John J. Merhottein, President
John K. Gallagher, Vice President
Jan Beatty, Commissioner
DeAnn L. Lawrence
- MEMBERS ABSENT** Luke A. Verdes, Commissioner
- OTHERS PRESENT** Jim Broughal, Township Solicitor
Doug Bruce, Township Manager
Anthony Tallarida, Township Engineer
- CALL TO ORDER** Mr. Gallagher called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led those assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- COURTESY OF THE FLOOR** There were no comments or concerns during Courtesy of the Floor.
- APPROVAL OF MINUTES** Upon motion (Beatty-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted by voice vote to approve the June 5, 2023 regular public meeting minutes as presented. The motion passed 3-0-1. Mr. Verdes was absent. Mr. Merhottein abstained.
- SUBDIVISIONS AND LAND DEVELOPMENT**
- CONDITIONAL USE DECISION** **EASTON AVENUE CONDITIONAL USE DECISION – HIGHVIEW COMMERCIAL LLC SEEKING CONDITIONAL USE OF GARDEN APARTMENTS**
- Mr. Gallagher explained the conditional use hearing was held at the last board meeting and is before the board tonight for a decision. Solicitor Broughal went through the conditions and informed the board that approval must be subject to meeting all of the conditions. Mr. Gallagher asked if the conditions included reviewing the soil since the property was previously an auto salvage yard. Mr. Tallarida said a study was done and the soil was cleared in two phases. There is no problem with the site, he said.
- Upon motion (Merhottein-Beatty), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve the conditional use based upon the following conditions:
- The Applicant comply with comments contained in the Memorandum of the Pidcock Company dated May 11, 2023.
 - The Applicant comply with comments contained in the Zoning Officer’s conditional use memo dated May 17, 2023.
 - The Applicant come to an agreement with the Township regarding a voluntary, fair share contribution related to the off-site culvert.

- The Applicant comply with all other applicable sections of the Township ordinances.

Mr. Verdes was absent.

RESOLUTION R047-23 A RESOLUTION GRANTING PRELIMINARY/FINAL PLAN APPROVAL OF 4406 EASTON AVENUE

Mr. Gallagher said the plan is for a 3-story, 60-unit garden apartment building and a 3-story 36-unit garden apartment building with only one driveway. The driveway connection is proposed on Farmersville Road, with no vehicular access to Easton Avenue. A building height variance was granted by the Zoning Hearing Board in March, 2020.

Upon motion (Merhottein-Beatty), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve Resolution R047-23 a granting preliminary/final plan approval of 4406 Easton Avenue. Mr. Verdes was absent.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

RESOLUTION R048-23 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN APPLICATION TO THE NORTHAMPTON COUNTY HOTEL TAX GRANT PROGRAM

Mr. Gallagher said the township was awarded \$5,000 last year for Community Days festival. This year, the township is applying for a \$10,000 grant for the 2024 Community Days festival. He said it was money well spent.

Upon motion (Beatty-Merhottein), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approved Resolution R048-23 authorizing an application to the Northampton County Hotel Tax Grant program. Mr. Verdes was absent.

RESOLUTION R049-23 RESOLUTION APPOINTING A MEMBER OF THE BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Upon motion (Gallagher-Merhottein), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approved Resolution R049-23 appointing Kathleen F. Mugavero to the Bethlehem Township Environmental Advisory Council. Mr. Verdes was absent.

RESOLUTION R050-23 RESOLUTION APPOINTING A MEMBER OF THE BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Upon motion (Gallagher-Beatty), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approved Resolution R050-23 appointing Andrew St. Clare to the Bethlehem Township Environmental Advisory Council. Mr. Verdes was absent.

MOTIONS OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MOTION A MOTION TO AMEND THE STORMWATER CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN TO ADD CERTAIN IMPROVEMENTS AT THE

INTERSECTION OF BETHMAN ROAD AND FAIRWAY DRIVE, AND TO REQUEST THE BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY TO IMPLEMENT THESE IMPROVEMENTS

Mr. Gallagher said the intersection of Bethman Road and Fairway Drive have a major flooding problem. The stormwater engineer proposed a solution which would alleviate stormwater ponding by extending an existing stormwater pipe by 100 feet. The stormwater committee has recommended adding this \$90,000 project to the capital improvement plan. Mr. Bruce added that in the winter the water freezes and Public Works has to use a lot of salt to melt it.

**BARRY ROTH
4323 CHETWIN TERR.**

Mr. Roth believes this road is no different than the others in the township and asked the board to consider improving the stormwater in his neighborhood. Mr. Bruce said it would cost \$5 million dollars to improve the Chetwin Terrace neighborhood and that project is planned for the future. He said that staff and the engineers support this amendment. Mr. Gallagher said the board is aware of the problem but cannot address them all at once. Ms. Beatty said she is grateful for all the work done to create the stormwater fund.

Upon motion (Merhottein-Beatty), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to amend the Stormwater Capital Improvement Plan to add certain improvements at the intersection of Bethman Road and Fairway Drive, and to request the Bethlehem Township Municipal Authority to implement these improvements. Mr. Verdes was absent.

MOTION

A MOTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP MANAGER TO ADVERTISE FOR BID THE PEDESTRIAN CROSSING ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS ON OAKLAND ROAD AND HECKTOWN ROAD

Mr. Gallagher these crossings are located near the East Hill Middle School, Freedom High School, and Bethlehem Vocational-Technical School. The township received a grant to cover some of the costs. The board approved the advertisement of this project at its May 1 meeting, but there were no bids received. The project must be bid again; if no bids are received this time, the township can negotiate with a contractor to complete the project.

Upon motion (Beatty-Merhottein), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to authorize the township manager to advertise for bid the pedestrian crossing enhancement projects on Oakland Road and Hecktown Road. Mr. Verdes was absent.

**BILL AGENDA OF
JUNE 14, 2023**

Upon motion (Lawrence-Merhottein), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve the bill agenda of June 14, 2023 as presented. Mr. Verdes was absent.

**APPROVAL OF
PURCHASE ORDERS**

**PO 20231480 – LOWE AND MOYER GARAGE – PW – \$32,328.64
PO 20231497 – PORTNOFF LAW ASSOCIATES – FINANCE – \$12,735.08
PO 20231498 – PORTNOFF LAW ASSOCIATES – FINANCE – \$31,811.15
PO 20231577 – DBM CONSULTING – BTPD – \$4,200.00
PO 20231609 – REX EQUIPMENT AND CONSTRUCTION – \$6,373.25
PO 20231614 – SELEX ES – BTPD – \$2,500.00
PO 20231616 – HUNTER KEYSTONE PETERBILT – PPIS – \$2,538.71
PO 20231617 – MONARCH PRECAST CONCRETE – PPIS – \$4,640.00**

Regarding PO 20231480, Mr. Gallagher said the board did not approve this purchase order at the last meeting because of a question about the “core charge.” The core charge, as indicated on the Lowe and Moyer Garage estimate, in the amount of \$5,000.00, will be removed and/or credited back to the township upon extraction and inspection of the damaged engine. The final invoice to be paid to Lowe and Moyer will reflect this \$5,000.00 core charge deduction. Mr. Gallagher said the truck has a lot of life in it still. The cost of replacing the truck is \$240,000. The engine failed and the cost to replace it is \$30,000.

BARRY ROTH

4323 CHETWIN TERR. Mr. Roth asked the board to make sure to receive the deduction.

Ms. Beatty asked about the Portnoff Law Associates purchase orders. Mr. Bruce responded that is the agency which aggressively collects delinquent sewer and stormwater fees. Once that money is received by the township, Portnoff is then paid a portion. Mr. Gallagher said they have done a very good job of collecting fees.

GLENN KRIER
3942 KENRICK DR.

Mr. Krier asked what would happen if the money cannot be collected. Solicitor Broughal said a municipal lien would then be placed on the property and the house would not be able to sell until those fees are paid.

Upon motion (Merhottein-Lawrence), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve the purchase orders as presented. Mr. Verdes was absent.

TREASURER’S
REPORT OF MAY 31,
2023

Upon motion (Merhottein-Beatty), the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously by voice vote to approve the treasurer’s report of May 31, 2023, subject to audit. Mr. Verdes was absent.

ZONING HEARING
BOARD MEETING OF
JUNE 28, 2023

Mr. Bruce said there are several minor variances on the agenda but nothing that would require legal representation from the township.

MONTHLY REPORTS

All monthly reports were accepted.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, Mr. Gallager adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura G. Zapata
Recording Secretary