

FORKS TOWNSHIP, NORTHAMPTON COUNTY
Board of Supervisors

1-05-2023

Work Session Minutes

A work session of the Forks Township Board of Supervisors was held on Thursday, January 5, 2023, at the Forks Township Municipal Building, Easton, PA. Vice-Chairman Corallo opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

BOARD MEMBERS:

John O'Neil, Chairman - absent
Ty Corallo, Vice Chairman
Tim Hughes, Secretary/Treasurer
Kelly Keegan, Member
Dean Turner, Member

IN ATTENDANCE:

Donna M. Asure, Township Manager
Mark Roberts, Director of Public Works
David Backenstoe – Conflict counsel
Sean Policelli – Gilmore & Associates, engineer

Supervisors Comments:

Chairman O'Neil – none

T. Corallo - none

T. Hughes –

Mr. Hughes reported that the project and grant listing are being updated and reviewed. The list will be on the February 2nd work session meeting for discussion.

K. Keegan –

Mrs. Keegan gave an update on the open space task force. The next committee meeting will be Wednesday, January 11, 2023, at the municipal building.

D. Turner –

D. Turner requested the board to place on a future agenda, a discussion on classes and training for volunteers to the township. The manager will place this on the next work session agenda.

Public Comment:

Andrew Koch, 2894 Sheffield Drive spoke to the board of his concern about the emergency access that is supposed to be available to be used by the fire company for emergencies such as the one that occurred the other night on Kirkland Road. The access is overgrown and has not been maintained since 2018. Mark Roberts, Director of Public Works told the board that he will need to have a survey completed of the road, is concerned about the road being able to handle the larger fire equipment but has found that the emergency access road is on the approved plan. More research will be done to get this issue corrected.

Announcements:

An executive session will be held on Monday, January 9, 2023 at 5:30pm concerning personnel issues.

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Discussion Items –

Lafayette Hills Easement –

An easement was developed by Gilmore and Associates and provided to the developer. The board reviewed a sketch of the needed easement which at this time is large enough and extends into the next property, to accommodate a large project to reduce flooding. The township engineer met with PennDot and discussed the township's wish to do something about the flooding in this area. PennDot has stated, per the engineer, that the project must be larger than the township had considered doing. There was discussion as to why we needed an easement defined by meets and bounds at this point in time since the township is unsure of the direction of any possible flood mitigation project. D. Backenstoe strongly suggested that the township enter into an agreement at this time so as to not let any opportunity to solidify areas for the easement get by.

The developer's representative, Attorney Joel Weiner, stated that his client is willing to enter into an agreement with the township concerning the easement as developed by Gilmore and Associates. The easement does include property on a parcel that is not involved with this development, but the developer is willing to grant that easement.

After discussion concerning the easement, the board instructed D. Backenstoe, conflict counsel to prepare a document, with meets and bounds of this easement for the township and the developer to sign. It will be placed on a future meeting.

Zucksville/Bushkill Flooding issue –

The township engineer spoke with PennDot about a flood mitigation project in this area. Per the engineer PennDot has stated that the township must include areas in the project that the township had not anticipated doing. The project cost estimate developed by Gilmore and Associates is now \$862,500.00. The board questioned why the project has increased by such a large amount. S. Policelli stated that PennDot wants pipes fixed under Bushkill Drive, they consider the swales regulated water ways and they want it fixed to at least the 50 to 100 year flood.

G. White from HRG stated he was here as a member of the public not as HRG. He did state that he believes fixing this area to the 50–100-year flood is useless since the Bushkill floods at approximately the 20–25-year flood level. He stated that the HRG study did not consider the swales as regulated water ways and would argue that point with PennDot and DEP.

The board stated that the next step would be to meet with DEP to get a definition of the swales. They asked HRG if they could do this, and he stated that currently HRG does not have a contract with the township to act on their behalf. The board stated that they need to know the definition of regulated waterways for the swales in question.

The board continued to discuss with both engineers the flow of water, where it was coming from the and the different interpretations of the repair. G. White stated that had they been given the authority to move forward with the project after the feasibility study the next step would have been to meet with PennDot and DEP. He stated that of course they want the fix they want but sometimes the township has to push back.

Public Comment- none

K. Keegan made a motion, seconded by D. Turner to adjourn the meeting at 7:49pm. Motion carried.