

FORKS TOWNSHIP, NORTHAMPTON COUNTY
Board of Supervisors

5-18-2023

Regular Meeting Minutes

The regular meeting of the Forks Township Board of Supervisors was held on Thursday, May 18, 2023 at the Forks Township Municipal Building, Easton, PA. Chairman O'Neil opened the meeting at 7:00p.m., and invited Boy Scouts from Troop 29 to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

BOARD MEMBERS:

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

IN ATTENDANCE:

Lisa Pereira, Twp. Solicitor
Sean Policelli, Twp. Engineer
Donna M. Asure, Township Manager
Michael Friel, Chief of Police
Mark Roberts, Director of Public Works
Kacee Stout, Director of Finance
Rachel Sulzbach, Director of Parks & Recreation
Mike Vinci, Fire Chief

Swearing in of police chief -

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by T. Corallo to appoint Michael Friel as Forks Township Police Chief effective Monday, May 8, 2023, at an annual salary of \$108,000.00 and benefits as outlined in the employment agreement. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes; D. Turner, yes; J. O'Neil, yes. Motion carried.

Chairman O'Neil invited the board members to join him as he administered the oath of office to Chief Friel. The board wished the new chief the best of luck.

Supervisors Comments:

J. O'Neil, Chairman –

J. O'Neil stated that the board wished to recognize National Police Week and thank our department for the great job they do for the residents of Forks Township.

T. Corallo, Vice-Chairman – none

T. Hughes, Sec't/Treasurer – none

K. Keegan, member – none

D. Turner –

D. Turner stated that he attended the PSATS conference and placed the notes he took from the various sessions as well as a synopsis of the resolutions that were voted on by the body. If any member has any questions, he would be happy to discuss.

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Mr. Turner also stated that when the open space task force first started meeting he was chairman of the planning commission. There has been a lot of discussion concerning a possible EIT tax and real estate tax increase, and changes to zoning. He would like to make sure that the discussion continues and have everyone do all the necessary homework to meet the deadline for a referendum on the November ballot. Mr. Turner requested that this discussion be placed on the June 1, 2023 work session of the board of supervisors. The township manager was asked to place this on the agenda.

Announcements:

An executive session was held this evening, at 6:00pm to discuss personnel issues. NO decisions were made in executive session.

Public Comment: (non-agenda items) –

Robert Parella – 3089 Corey Terrace – Mr. Parella asked the board how many signatures on a petition it will take to get this on the ballot.

Amy Blum – Barnyard View – Ms. Blum spoke to the board about the current petitions being circulated in favor of an EIT tax. She questioned as to why this discussion was taking so long.

Jill Rudolph – 4151 N. Delaware Drive – Ms. Rudolph stated that first you need the program and then you do an inventory of the properties you want to acquire and hope you get them. Without a program the township is ineligible to receive any funds.

Carrie Bachman – Lower Way – Questioned the board as to why this topic is not on the agenda.

Gene Parziale – 1904 Quail Court – Mr. Parziale stated the EIT tax was voted down at the March 16th meeting. He stated that hundreds of people in opposition to the EIT tax have been blocked from the Forks Residents page.

Ed Reagan – 1364 Fox Ridge - Mr. Reagan stated that there are many ways to fund open space acquisitions such as bonds, property taxes, EIT taxes and a mixture of them all. He asked if parcels have been identified and owners spoken to as to whether or not they are even interested in selling. He asked if there has been an inventory done of properties that are going to be targeted.

Department Head reports

Fire –

- Report on drive – 117 calls year to date
- the county has clarified that the upgrade to 800 MHz is several years away so there is time to research grants for funding
- a federal grant was applied for to purchase new monitoring equipment for gas pipeline monitoring and leak detection
- Glick has been out to start to provide pricing to refurbish unit 2511

Police –

- Report on drive

Fiscal –

- Report on the drive
- The township will be moving to the new utility system. Residents are slowly being made aware of the change over.
- Still completing the change over from Fidelity to Unity

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- The 2022 audit is still ongoing
- Looking to provide budget adjustments to the board after the end of the second quarter.

Parks & Recreation –

- Report on drive
- Food Truck festival coming up
- Smart angler is June 10th
- Movies in the park and the sounds of summer are starting up

Public Works –

- Report on drive
- Working on patching roadways throughout the township
- Repaired a sinkhole on Winchester
- Ramblewood basin project is ongoing which is being overseen by Randy Temples

Zoning –

- Report on drive
- The board asked that someone from zoning be represented at the meetings

Solicitor –

- Nothing additional other than items on the agenda.

Engineer –

- Working on Ramblewood
- Lafayette Hills phase I is being recorded
- Working with the Padula Road project to receive plans

Township Manger –

- Report on the drive
- The trash hauler bids are due May 23rd and will be discussed at the June 1st work session
- The hometown heroes banners are being held
- Would like to advertise for the next round of banners

Hearings:

Daniels – conditional use –

L. Pereira, township solicitor reported that the applicant has withdrawn their application for conditional use thus the hearing is cancelled.

Presentations –

Seifert Residential -

The engineer for the project gave a brief over view of the project. There will be 46 single family homes in the Pheasant Ridge development and 200 active adult homes on the other side of Arnadt Road. He was here tonight to discuss the requested waivers that had already been recommended for approval by the planning commission.

Waivers –

Section 175-42.L – Sidewalks shall be required on both sides of the street in all developments. They are requesting relief only on the east side of Fox Run Road, between proposed Road A and the existing Fox

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Run Road. This will encourage people to cross at the intersection. Sidewalks are 5 ft wide. The trail on the west side of Fox Run is 8 ft wide with 2 ft grass section. This will be concrete rather than asphalt. (Recommended for approval by PC 6-0)

D. Turner made a motion, seconded by T. Hughes to grant the waiver from Section 175-42.L, that sidewalks shall be required on both sides of the street in all developments. Relief is only requested on the east side of Fox Run Road, between proposed Road A and the existing Fox Run Road in accordance with the exhibit. In addition, the path will be concrete as opposed to asphalt. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes; D. Turner, yes; J. O'Neil, yes. Motion carried.

Section 175-50.A – SALDO states that curbs of portland cement concrete shall be constructed pursuant to the provisions of the Township Construction Standards. They are requesting relief to allow for 6" reveal Belgium block curbing in the active adult community only. This road will be privately owned and maintained. (Recommended for approval by PC 6-0)

T. Corallo made a motion, seconded by D. Turner to grant the waiver from Section 175-50.A to allow 6" reveal Belgium block curbing in the active adult community only. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes; D. Turner, yes; J. O'Neil, yes. Motion carried.

Section 175-610.A – Swales with velocity in excess of 4 ft/second, or flow in excess of 5 cubic ft/second shall be lined with riprap consisting of stone of the required size, thickness and gradation. They are requesting relief from swales #2, 3, 4, 6 and 11 which have flows in excess of 5 CFS. Township Engineer does not have issue with this request. (Recommended for approval by PC 6-0)

There should be discussion on who will maintain the swales. The engineer stated that the HOA will maintain the swales. The board also stated that the ordinance is outdated and should be upgraded with newer approved options.

D. Turner made a motion, seconded by T. Corallo to grant the waiver from Section 175-610.A which requires riprap consisting of stone to allow for the placement of alternate matting subject to the strict approval of the Township Engineer for swales 2, 3, 4, 6 & 11 which have flows in excess of 5 CFS. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes; D. Turner, yes; J. O'Neil, yes. Motion carried.

Section 175-42.N.11 – SALDO requires the edge of any driveway to be at least 40 ft from the nearest end of the paving radius of a street intersection. They are requesting relief for properties in the Southern Parcel. 10 lots would be affected. The applicant does not believe this would not create an unsafe condition and it would be the most efficient use of the land. PC requested no parking signs between the driveway and the intersection. (Recommended for approval by PC 5-1)

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by T. Corallo to grant the waiver from Section 175-42.N.11 of the Forks Township SALDO which states that the edge of any driveway shall be at least 40 ft from the nearest end of the paving radius at the street intersection to allow lesser than 40 ft in accordance with the attached site plan, in accordance with the specifications listed in the waiver request, and pursuant to approval by the Township Engineer for the 10 lots listed on the waiver and further with the understanding that there will be no parking between the driveway and the intersection on any of these lots, with appropriate pavement markings/signage for no parking. Under discussion K. Keegan asked how the parking will work in these areas. It was also asked why a member of the planning commission voted no. H. Keim stated that he thought the developer should rework the plan and have less houses. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, no; D. Turner, no; J. O'Neil, yes. Motion carried.

Section 175-42.N.2 – SALDO requires that residential driveways shall be offset from the center line of the nearest intersecting local road by 75ft. They are requesting relief for units listed on the waiver. (The PC recommended approval of the waiver with a 5-1 vote and the following conditions) -

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T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by T. Corallo to grant the waiver from Section 175-42.N.2 of the Forks Township SALDO which requires that residential driveways be offset from the center line of the nearest intersection local road by 75 ft. to allow less than 75 ft with the following conditions:

1. driveway for lots SF-19 & SF-43 will be realigned.
2. In accordance with the submitted site plan
3. In accordance with the criteria set forth in the waiver
4. Pursuant to approval by the Township Engineer
5. 12 lots listed at the bottom of the waiver with the further understanding that the location of certain homes on certain lots will be flipped as per the recommendation of the PC and in accordance with the Township Engineer approval.

Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, no; D. Turner, no; J. O'Neil, yes. Motion carried.

Invited Guest Reports:

Planning Commission – Matt Menkowski gave a brief overview of some of the ongoing projects the planning commission is reviewing.

FBA –

D. Turner stated that the upcoming events were discussed. They also discussed how the money is split between Forks and Easton Chambers and if there is a way to keep more money raised in Forks, in Forks.

Treasurer's Report –

T. Hughes reported that the township's outstanding debt is \$3,253,000.00.

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by K. Keegan to ratify the following online/ACH payments –

- Infradapt – ACH - \$7,050.30 – 5/9/23
- FP Finance (postage machine) - \$119.00 – 5/9/23
- Verizon - \$ 1,542.64– 5/15/23
- Civic Plus - \$ 8,230.75 – 5/18/23 – recreation capital fund

All in favor. Motion carried.

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by K. Keegan to approve vouchers payable received through May 15, 2023, in the amount of General Fund - \$ 189,570.37; Real Estate Fund - \$ 362,215.04; Utility Fund - \$ 20,300.10; Utility Capital Fund - \$ 1,885.50; Escrow Fund - \$ 39,327.21. All in favor. Motion carried.

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by K. Keegan to approve the following payments to Unity Bank to close the following Fidelity Bank accounts –

- Utility Capital - \$204.20
- Capital Improvement Fund - \$239.68
- Real Estate Tax Fund - \$62.43

Under discussion, T. Hughes asked if this closed all the accounts. K. Stout stated that this will only close three of the accounts at Fidelity as the other accounts have outstanding checks in them.

All in favor. Motion carried.

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by K. Keegan to ratify the gross payroll for the pay period ending May 7, 2023, in the amount of \$ 159,849.96. Motion carried.

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by K. Keegan to approve purchase order #2873 to Best Line in the approximate amount of \$7,162.50 for the rental of heavy equipment for four weeks to perform work on the Ramblewood Basin project as part of the grant. All in favor. Motion carried.

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OLD BUSINESS

Minutes

T. Corallo made a motion, seconded by D. Turner to approve the minutes of the May 4, 2023, joint work session of the Board of Supervisors and planning commission with one correction of changing the word are to our under Supervisor Hughes' report. All in favor. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS –

Tatamy Park annexation –

L. Pereira explained that Tatamy Borough is interested in pursuing the discussion on the annexation of Tatamy Park. This would annex the park, that is owned by Tatamy Borough and patrolled by Tatamy police, into the borough. A new law has been passed since the last discussions which makes it easier to accomplish this request. There are no tax implications for the township. Tatamy Borough would be responsible for paying for all costs associated with this process. The board of supervisors were supportive of moving forward with this process.

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by K. Keegan to authorize township staff and the solicitor to work with Tatamy Borough to proceed with the process for the annexation of Tatamy Park. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes; D. Turner, yes; J. O'Neil, yes. Motion carried.

Gilmore proposal for GLG Kesslersville/Uhler –

T. Corallo made a motion, seconded by T. Hughes to approve the proposal from Gilmore & Associates for the grant management and providing bid documents, specifications and construction administration of the GLG Kesslersville/Uhler grant in the amount of \$5800.00 to be paid from the general capital fund.

Under discussion S. Policelli states this is the Green Light Go project that will repair and upgrade the detection system at this intersection. This proposal is to move the project to construction. Engineering and design are already included in the grant. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes; D. Turner, yes; J. O'Neil, yes. Motion carried.

Township ORI –

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by T. Corallo to authorize Donna M. Asure, Township Manger to apply for and once received be responsible for a township ORI (Originating Agency Identifier (ORI) Non-Criminal Justice Agencies (NCJA) for the filing of non-traffic citations with the Magisterial District Justice. Under discussion D. Asure stated that this will be used for the filing of zoning citations with the local MDJ. The records must be kept in a separate locked filing cabinet. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes; D. Turner, yes; J. O'Neil, yes. Motion carried.

PCCD Grant –

T. Corallo made a motion, seconded by T. Hughes to accept the PCCD Law Enforcement Support grant in the amount of \$116,373.00 for the purchase of mobile data computers and license plate readers and authorize the board of supervisors to execute the required documents. Under discussion, Ed Reagan asked if this grant contained the required software necessary for this system. The township manager will look into this. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes; D. Turner, yes; J. O'Neil, yes. Motion carried.

COPS Grant –

T. Corallo made a motion, seconded by D. Turner, to ratify the submittal of a federal COPS grant and authorize the Chairman of the board of supervisors to execute all documents, in the amount of \$23,000.00 for a two-year software subscription for the police department to enhance training record keeping and documentation for the accreditation process. Under discussion the board asked what this was for. They were informed that this is software to assist in tracking training and other information for

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the accreditation process. There is no township match, that the grant had already been submitted and there will be ongoing costs going forward if the grant was received that would have to be added to the annual budget. The board discussed making these decisions prior to the submittal of a grant which the township manager acknowledged will be the process going forward. The board asked if the grant could be rejected if awarded due to the continued budgeting requirements in the future and they were informed that they would be able to do that. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes; D. Turner, yes; J. O'Neil, yes. Motion carried.

Personnel –

K. Keegan made a motion, seconded by T. Corallo to correct the rehiring date of the following seasonal workers to be Saturday, May 13, 2023, rather than Monday, May 15, 2023, as approved at the April 20, 2023, board of supervisors meeting -

- John Castrovinci
- Connor Michel

Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes; D. Turner, yes; J. O'Neil, yes. Motion carried.

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by T. Corallo to rehire Antoine Elias as a seasonal workers effective Monday, June 12, 2023, at a rate of \$15.25/hour with no benefits as recommended by the Director of Parks & Recreation. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes; D. Turner, yes; J. O'Neil, yes. Motion carried.

Public Comment- none

D. Turner made a motion, seconded by T. Hughes to adjourn into executive session for personnel and possible litigation issues at 8:19pm. J. O'Neil announced that the board would not reconvene. All in favor. Motion carried.