

FORKS TOWNSHIP, NORTHAMPTON COUNTY
Board of Supervisors

7-20-2023

Regular Meeting Minutes

The regular meeting of the Forks Township Board of Supervisors was held on Thursday, July 20, 2023 at the Forks Township Municipal Building, Easton, PA. Chairman O'Neil opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m., followed by 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, Engineer
Donna M. Asure, Township Manager
Mark Roberts, Director of Public Works
Kacee Stout, Director of Finance
Rachel Sulzbach, Director of Parks & Recreation
Mike Vinci, Fire Chief

Disaster Declaration –

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by T. Corallo to ratify the disaster declaration for the flooding of July 16, 2023. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes; D. Turner, yes; J. O'Neil, yes. Motion carried.

Supervisors Comments:

J. O'Neil, Chairman –

J. O'Neil thanked all who were involved with the storms of July 16, 2023, which caused flooding as never seen before in Forks Township. There were water rescues done during this incident and he complimented all on their actions.

J. O'Neil stated that an issue was raised at the last meeting concerning insurance requirements to use township facilities. He wanted to clarify that although it was posted on Facebook that the board of supervisors were denying Forks Township kids from using our fields. This was not the truth. We have required teams to name Forks Township as additionally insured to protect the township and the taxpayers of Forks. Working with our insurance company and the FTAA, the FTAA will name Forks Township as additionally insured as the primary user of the field when hosting a game with an away team.

Greg Smith, 1420 Newlins Road W thanked the board for working on this issue and finding a resolution.

T. Corallo, Vice-Chairman – none

T. Hughes, Sec't/Treasurer – none

K. Keegan, member – none

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D. Turner –

D. Turner wanted to echo the sentiments of Chairman O’Neil and thank all who helped out during the recent flooding.

D. Turner stated that he wanted to revisit and have discussion on the flooding issues throughout the township. Yes this was an unusual storm with far more water than normal but the board should revisit studies done by Gilmore & Associates as well as HRG and see if some of the action items can actually be done now. He stated that there had been discussion on a bridge across Kesslersville for residents of Penns Ridge. The township had residents who had no way out of their developments. The township needs to look at areas where the water starts by the industrial area. We need to revisit the idea of a regionalized detention basin. Though Public Works inspects the culverts, inlets and outlets, perhaps it needs to be done on a more regular basis. Discussion followed concerning basins, the size of the drainage area and how to proceed. The board asked that this be placed on a workshop agenda for discussion.

Announcements:

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

Public Comment: (non-agenda items) –

Matt Menkowski – 1141 Vera Drive – Mr. Menkowski spoke to the board about the water issues near Bushkill. He also asked if Ben Jon Road was going to go through to Zucksville and Mittman Road to Meco Road. The board informed him that those roads will not be connected.

Lori Simms – 425 Meco – She stated to the board that the water starts above the Klein Farm.

Gloria Miller – 423 Meco – asked the board why the handicap parking spaces were blocked off on the one side of the building. She was informed that there was construction going on and for safety the parking area was blocked off.

Department Head reports

Fire –

- Report on Drive
- Went over the report
- Spoke to board about the recent flooding and the number of water rescues
- Asked the board to clarify whether the Fire Chief was a township employee. That position is not an employee.

Police –

- Report on drive

Fiscal –

- Report on the drive
- Spoke to the board about the number of accounts turned over to Portnoff. Due to this people are coming in to pay their utility bills.
- The new utility software is up and running and the first billing was just completed.

T. Hughes complimented K. Stout on bringing in additional money to the township. The township has already made \$260,000 in interest so far this year, which is \$199,000 more than made in 2022.

Parks & Recreation –

- Report on drive

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- The new gazebo has been installed with the assistance of public works and looks great
- The old gazebo has been moved to Mecco Park
- Lions Park has been cleaned up and looks very nice.

Public Works –

- Report on drive
- Company will be starting line painting soon
- Road paving project for 2023 is out for bid. Will be on the August 3rd agenda
- The Ramblewood retrofit, to comply with MS4 requirements took a very big hit during the storm. It will be very costly to replace on all the grass and landscaping that was lost.

Zoning –

- Report on drive

Solicitor –

- Nothing additional other than items on the agenda.

Engineer –

- Provided a report of all open project to the board
- This can be used by the new zoning administrator to have a starting point

Township Manger –

- Report on the drive
- Bids awarded to County Waste and we are working on the contracts to move forward
- We will need to discuss with the board the process for taking in yard waste and white goods
- The Klein family has requested to add a little more than 78 acres to the Agriculture Security Area. This will be on the August 3rd agenda
- On August 2nd we have invited land owners to open meetings to discuss the benefits of the county farmland preservation program
- Three requests for proposal have been sent out for open space
- Working with PW's to put together dollar amounts of storm damage for the township. We have contacted the grant writer to see if there are any grants available to assist

Hearings: none

Presentations –

2509 Bushkill Drive Minor Subdivision

Michael Gula represented the project which involves 2509 Bushkill Drive and 26 Creek Court. There is no building they are just redrawing the property lines to add property to 26 Creek Court from 2509 Bushkill Drive.

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by T. Corallo to grant conditional/final approval for the 2509 Bushkill Drive Minor Subdivision plan conditioned upon meeting all the conditions in the Gilmore & Associates review letter dated June 28, 2023. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes; D. Turner, yes; J. O'Neil, yes. Motion carried.

Invited Guest Reports:

Board Reports:

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Planning Commission – Matt Menkowski spoke on behalf of the planning commission. He stated that the planning commission will be reviewing the text amendment for the Industrial Designation District at their next meeting. He reminded the board there is a joint work session in August.

D. Turner asked Mr. Menkowski if the planning commission has begun to review various sections of the zoning ordinance. Mr. Menkowski stated no but perhaps that should be a discussion with the Chairman of the planning commission.

FBA – D. Turner reported there was no meeting in July

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 – 7/11/23
 - FP Finance (postage machine) - \$119.00 – 7/18/23
 - Verizon - \$ 1,610.00 – 7/18/23
- All in favor. Motion carried.

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by K. Keegan to approve vouchers payable received through July 18, 2023, in the amount of General Fund - \$ 233,600.72; General Capital Fund - \$ 475.00; Utility Fund - \$ 73,913.97; Utility Capital Fund - \$ 8,824.23; State Liquid Fuels Fund - \$ 23,127.65. Escrow Fund - \$ 34,199.77. All in favor. Motion carried.

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by K. Keegan to ratify the gross payroll for the pay period ending July 16, 2023, in the amount of \$ 177,243.69. All in favor. Motion carried.

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by K. Keegan to ratify and amend change order to PO 2893 to Condition One Commercial for roof repairs on three flat roofs, with a change order totaling \$12,800.00 making the total contract \$87,800.00. (originally approved at \$75,000.00). All in favor. Motion carried.

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by K. Keegan to approve purchase order #2910, to Exeter Supply Co., Inc, in the amount of \$ 9,253.00, for sewer risers, to be paid from the Utility Fund. All in favor. Motion carried.

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by K. Keegan to approve purchase order #2911, to Exeter Supply Co., Inc, in the amount of \$ 11,100.00 for 27.75 feet of pipe to be used to replace drainage pipe on Farragut Street, to be paid from the Utility Capital Fund. All in favor. Motion carried.

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by K. Keegan to ratify the opening of two CD’s at unity bank as follows –

- \$400,000.00, 11-month CD at 5% from the Recreation Capital Fund
- \$500,000.00, 11-month CD at 5% from the General Fund

All in favor. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

Minutes

K. Keegan made a motion, seconded by T. Hughes to approve the minutes of the July 6, 2023, work session of the Board of Supervisors. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes; D. Turner, yes; J. O’Neil, yes. Motion carried.

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Gas Stations in the TC District –

J. O'Neil stated that the planning commission had reviewed items that could possibly be implemented as conditions if the use of gas station was added to the Town Center District.

The board reviewed the memo, prepared by Shawn McGlynn, zoning officer and discussed by the planning commission. The planning commission made recommendations from that memo such as not allowing a 24-hour operation, the need for berms and buffers, and requirements to discourage 18-wheel trucks from using the site. Steven Weiner, developer, discussed the various items being considered. He suggested that not selling diesel is not an option, but the board could place a restriction on High flow commercial diesel pumps which is what the large trucks would need to use.

Robert Bubb – Beddel Lane – Stated that he lives right behind this property and 24/7 would make no sense. The lights would shine into his home and the noise would not be conducive to a residential area.

Steve Fanicase – 2863 Lenape Way – stated that he did not believe that Chubby's would be hurt by allowing this use at this corner.

The new owner of Chubby's said that they want to serve the customers to the best of their ability and have done so for many years. This is why when they were selling, they kept it in the family.

Matt Menkowski – 1141 Vera Drive – stated that he voted against this project as a planning commission member. The township needs to look 20 years from now and see where we will be at.

Lori Simms – 425 Mecco – read a prepared statement to the board opposing this use at this corner due to noise, traffic and danger to children using the recreation path.

Gloria Miller – 423 Mecco – stated she and her husband have been residents for years and have been a part of the community and fire company.

The board asked the township manager to place this on an upcoming agenda for further discussion.

NEW BUSINESS –

Riverview West Letter of Credit Reduction -

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by T. Corallo to approve the request for a reduction in the letter of credit for Riverview West Phase 4, in the amount of \$167,450.72 as recommended by Gilmore & Associates. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes; D. Turner, yes; J. O'Neil, yes. Motion carried.

Legacy at Sullivan Trail –

T. Corallo made a motion, seconded by T. Hughes to ratify the signing of the M-950AA's and the TE-160's for the Legacy at Sullivan Trail land development project HOP submissions for stormwater, sidewalks and traffic control on Uhler/Sullivan Trail. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes; D. Turner, yes; J. O'Neil, yes. Motion carried.

Victaulic Guest House release of LOC –

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by T. Corallo to approve the release of the letter of credit for the Victaulic Guest House project in the amount of \$ 67,296.45. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes; D. Turner, yes; J. O'Neil, yes. Motion carried.

Public Comment- none

K. Keegan made a motion, seconded by D. Turner to adjourn the meeting at 9:05pm. All in favor. Motion carried.