

FORKS TOWNSHIP, NORTHAMPTON COUNTY
Board of Supervisors

10-19-2023

Regular Meeting Minutes

The regular meeting of the Forks Township Board of Supervisors was held on Thursday, October 19, 2023 at the Forks Township Municipal Building, Easton, PA. Chairman O'Neil opened the meeting at 7:01 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
Donna M. Asure, Township Manager
Mark Roberts, Director of Public Works
Mike Friel, Chief of Police
Kacee Stout, Director of Finance
Rachel Sulzbach, Director of Parks & Recreation
Michael Vinci, Fire Chief

Swearing in of police officers

Chief Friel stated that tonight they will be swearing in three police officers, Shawn Hummer – Captain; James Parsons – Patrol Officer and Jason Rosenberg – Patrol Officer. Magisterial District Judge Robert Weber was present to swear in the officers to their positions.

Each officer took their oath of office and thanked the police department, Chief Friel and the board for the opportunity to serve Forks Township.

J. O'Neil speaking on behalf of the board, thanked all the police officers present for this ceremony and stated what a fantastic job they do for our community and that the township could not be prouder of them all.

Supervisors Comments:

J. O'Neil, Chairman – none

T. Corallo, Vice-Chairman – none

T. Hughes, Sec't/Treasurer – none

K. Keegan, member – none

D. Turner – none

Announcements:

J. O'Neil announced that an executive session was held on Tuesday, October 10th after budget work session for personnel issues as well as an executive session held tonight, October 19th at 6:00pm also for personnel issues.

No action was taken in the executive session.

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Public Comment: (non-agenda items) –

Robert Parella – 3089 Corey Terrace - Mr. Parella asked if a developer has plans approved for one type of use and then has signs out to lease it how does the township know that the plan that was approved is correct. D. Turner responded that this is some of the issues when a developer comes into the township with a spec building. There are traffic studies done using the worst case scenario for that type of use. If when they come into the township for fit out permits to complete the inside of the building once they know what a tenant needs then it would be up to zoning and building codes to make sure what was approved on the plan still is viable for the use being presented. If not, the developer may need to produce additional plans and studies.

Mr. Parella stated that he has contacted Lafayette College geology department for assistance with maps containing underground streams and rivers. J. O’Neil stated that Gilmore & Associates had looked into the request and at a minimum the project to install this type of system would be at least \$12 million dollars. Mr. Parella stated he would let the board know what he finds out from Lafayette Collete.

Presentations:

2022 Audit - Zelenkofske Axelrod, LLC

Rachael Gougher and Jeff Weis, from ZA presented the 2022 audit. Mrs. Gougher discussed various sections of the audit for the board. There is a material weakness in the audit which is that the township does not value their capital assets. ZA understands that the township has entered into a contract with a company to complete this study which should alleviate this weakness in the 2023 audit. The board had no questions and thanked ZA for adding the meeting.

J. O’Neil stated that for the record, the board of supervisors acknowledged receipt of the 2023 audit.

Department Head reports

Fire –

- Report on Drive
- M. Vinci reported to the board that he did confirm that Glick does hold their prices once a contract is signed. He stated that he spoke with Allentown and they do have a different vendor, the vendor is much higher in cost and they do not offer to hold the price.

Police –

- Report on drive
- Officers responded to various types of calls with the volume being slightly less than September 2022
- They will be participating in various holiday functions between now and the end of the year.

Firearms training –

Chief Friel spoke to the board about hosting firearms training at the township range. It would be two times in 2024 and Forks would be able to send a few officers for free to the training. The board spoke about the needed insurance and protection for the township.

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by D. Turner to authorize the township solicitor to draft an indemnification agreement with VIGR for the firearms training, have VIGR supply the township with a contract for review by the solicitor and provide all agreed upon insurance documents to the township. Under discussion, once executed the documents will be on a future agenda for execution. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes; D. Turner, yes; J. O’Neil, yes. Motion carried.

Fiscal –

- Report on the drive

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- Portnoff currently has collected approximately \$17,000 in delinquent utilities. Fiscal will send a new "batch" of delinquent accounts to Portnoff at the end of the year.
- Utilities is going through a new billing cycle and it is going somewhat smoother than last time
- PLGIT cards have been mailed and once here, and the policies executed, the debit card account in Fidelity can be closed.
- There are line item adjustments on the agenda tonight. K. Stout is hopeful that next year there will be a policy that a line item cannot go into the negative with an expenditure prior to moving the money needed for the purchase.
- Total interest for 2023 is \$347,000 with \$137,000 of that money for the general fund

Parks & Recreation –

- Report on drive
- R. Sulzbach stated that Big Rig Roundup was a success, trunk or treat is October 27th and the tree lighting is December 3rd

Public Works –

- Report on drive
- M. Roberts reported they have been very busy dealing with a large sink hole on Quail Court, line painting, and in house paving
- Yard waste collection which is now done in house went very smoothly
- Leaf collection has begun

Zoning –

- Report on drive

Solicitor –

- Nothing additional

Engineer –

- No report

Township Manger –

- Report on the drive
- The 2023 MMO payment has been made and the 2024 MMO calculations have been timely submitted
- Working with the grant writer and Gilmore & Associates on finding any and all grants for Frutchey Hill
- The foreign fire insurance is in this week's bill run and will be placed in the fire company mail bin in the morning

Hearings: none

Invited Guest Reports:

Board Reports:

Planning Commission – no report

FBA – D. Turner reported on upcoming events.

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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 – 10/10/23
- FP Finance (postage machine) - \$119.00 – 10/10/23
- Verizon - \$ 2,027.86 – 10/17/23

All in favor. Motion carried.

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by K. Keegan to approve vouchers payable received through October 16, 2023, in the amount of General Fund - \$ 528,766.14; General Capital Fund - \$ 115,328.46; Utility Fund - \$ 18,899.64; Utility Capital Fund - \$ 315.00; Recreation Capital Fund - \$ 21,302.84; State Liquid Fuels Fund - \$ 19,188.30; Escrow Fund - \$ 27,253.18. All in favor. Motion carried.

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by K. Keegan, to ratify the gross payroll for the pay period ending October 8, 2023, in the amount of \$ 164,710.44. All in favor. Motion carried.

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by K. Keegan to approve purchase order #2958 to Reading Fire Equipment, co-stars #012-E22-265, in the amount of \$ 15,406.16, for four sets of uniforms, to be paid from the fire department allocation. All in favor. Motion carried.

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by K. Keegan to approve purchase order #2960 to H&K Group, Inc costars #5610-36, in the amount of \$13,968.81 for the inhouse paving of Gollub Park to be paid from the General Capital Fund. All in favor. Motion carried.

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by K. Keegan to amend PO #2708, originally approved January 20, 2022, to Five-Star, now Ascendance Trucks, for the purchase of an International 10-ton dump truck, for an additional \$14,365.00 increase to the cost of the chassis, to be paid from the General Capital Fund and authorize the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors to execute the agreement. All in favor. Motion carried.

T. Hughes reported, for the record, that the foreign fire insurance, in the amount of \$130,443.69 was paid in today's bills, the required form 706B has been submitted to the state and the check will be given to the Forks Township Relief Association tomorrow in the township mail bin.

T. Hughes made a motion seconded by K. Keegan to authorize the township manager to advertise for the intention of appointing a CPA firm to conduct the 2023 audit. Under discussion T. Hughes asked if we had to go out for proposals for an auditor every year. D. Asure responded that per the second class township code, the board must advertise their intent to use a CPA. We currently have a contract with Zelenkofske Axelrod, LLC to conduct the 2023 and the 2024 audits. All in favor. Motion carried.

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by K. Keegan to authorize approval of the line-item adjustments to properly allocate funds within various lines within various departments and funds as recommended by K. Stout, Director of Finance. All in favor. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

Minutes

D. Turner made a motion, seconded by K. Keegan to approve the minutes of the October 5, 2023, work session of the board of supervisors. All in favor. J. O'Neil abstained due to absence. Motion carried.

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D. Turner made a motion, seconded by K. Keegan to approve the minutes of the October 10, 2023, budget work session of the board of Supervisors. All in favor. Motion carried.

D. Turner made a motion, seconded by K. Keegan to approve the minutes of the October 16, 2023, budget work session of the board of Supervisors. All in favor. T. Corallo abstained due to absence. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS –

SALDO updates -

T. Corallo made a motion, seconded by T. Hughes to authorize the township solicitor to send the draft ordinance which contains updates to the Forks Township SALDO to the appropriate agencies and to advertise for a public hearing. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes; D. Turner, yes; J. O'Neil, yes. Motion carried.

T. Corallo made a motion, seconded by T. Hughes to authorize the township solicitor to advertise an amendment to the solid waste ordinance adding penalties for non-payment of fees. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes; D. Turner, yes; J. O'Neil, yes. Motion carried.

Road dedication – Riverview

L. Pereira explained that we have not yet received the documents necessary to proceed with this action and asked that the board table this request at this time.

T. Corallo made a motion, seconded by D. Turner to table action on the resolutions necessary to accept the dedication of various roads within the Riverview development. All in favor. Motion carried.

TAG Grant

D. Asure explained that this grant was applied for to provide gas and oil leak detection equipment to the fire company. The grant that was awarded was only half that had been applied for. The vendor has submitted a revised quote and the township is working with the appropriate agency to follow correct procedures and order the equipment.

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by D. Turner to ratify the execution of the TAG grant in the amount of \$33,700.00 for the purchase of gas and oil pipeline detection equipment for use by the fire company. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes; D. Turner, yes; J. O'Neil, yes. Motion carried.

Human Resource Generalist -

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by T. Corallo to authorize the township manager to advertise for a part time Human Resource generalist to begin as soon as possible. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes; D. Turner, yes; J. O'Neil, yes. Motion carried.

Moving permits – rescind Chapter 118 of zoning ordinance

D. Asure explained that the board had discussed rescinding the ordinance whereby the township collects \$5.00 from those moving out of the township or to a second location within the township. Many people do not comply with this ordinance as they are not aware of it. It brings in less than \$200 per year.

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by T. Corallo to authorize the township solicitor to prepare an ordinance and advertise for a hearing to rescind Chapter 118 – Moving Permits, of the Forks Township code of ordinances. 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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Personnel –

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by D. Turner to increase Glenn Patterson and Jhon Montero to Laborer II, \$29.31/hour, effective October 23, 2023, contingent upon completing the pesticide exams during the week of October 16, 2023. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes; D. Turner, yes; J. O’Neil, abstained. Motion carried.

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by T. Corallo to approve the hiring of Lauren Brodt as part time community center monitor for approximately 17 hours per week with an hourly rate of \$15.00 per hour, with no benefits, effective Monday, October 23, 2023, as recommended by Rachel Sulzbach, Director of Parks and 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

K. Keegan made a motion, seconded by T. Corallo to adjourn the meeting at 7:57pm. All in favor. Motion carried.