

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Danelle Del Corso called the meeting to order at 6:57 p.m. Other Supervisors present were Bob Strouse, Patti Hartle, David Piper and Chuck Beck. Staff present were Amy Smith, Township Clerk; Ken Soder, Zoning Officer and Corey Rilk, CRPA. Residents & others in attendance: Mark Hartle; Jim Steff, CRCOG; Walt Schneider, CRCA; John Franek, CRCA and Dennis Thomson.

OPENING ANNOUNCEMENTS

More information is available on the website: www.halfmoontwp.us

Ms. Del Corso welcomed Ms. Gembusia as the new Township Manager.

The Township will co-host an Easter Egg Hunt with The Original Brother's Pizza of Stormstown on Saturday, April 4th at 11:30am. The *FREE* event will be held behind the building at 1948 Halfmoon Valley Road and is open to the public. Ms. Gembusia reported more information will be provided once flyers have been provided by Mr. Findley, owner of Brother's Pizza. Ms. Gembusia stated they are looking for volunteers to hide the eggs, parking attendances, and general event help.

Invitations to respond to the 2020 Census will be delivered between March 12-20th. Once you receive that invitation, you can respond online, by phone, or by mail. For more information, please visit www.census.gov. Coronavirus information including how the virus spreads and how to help prevent catching it, are on the CDC website at www.cdc.gov. Ms. Gembusia stated this information helps with the allocation of Federal & County monies.

Riff Raff Days will be held at the Township Maintenance building by Autumn Meadow Park on May 15th from 8:00am to 5:00pm and again on May 16th from 8:00am until 3:00pm.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Mr. Thomson expressed concerns regarding the Hugh Wilson Jr. property. Mr. Thomson stated there has been a dump on the property for a half of a century, a dilapidated trailer and a burned-out cabin. Mr. Thomson stated he has known Mr. Wilson since 1971 and he is a non-resident so he may not have the vested interest as a Township citizen. Mr. Thomson stated Mr. Wilson may be grandfathered and may not have to clean up the dump, trailer or burned out cabin but there are a lot of citizens in the Township who take pride in the Township. Mr. Thomson shared that his property is permanently protected. Mr. Thomson stated he has cleaned up thirteen farm dumps on his property with Clearwater Conservancies help. Ms. Del Corso questioned whether Mr. Thomson is suggesting there may be any potential nuisance problems. Mr. Thomson commented that yes, he feels there is an environmental issue. Mr. Strouse offered to work with Mr. Thomson to reach out to Mr. Wilson to clean up the property. Mr. Thomson stated if nothing happens, he will be a squeaky wheel and will contact the CDT, State Environmental Agencies and the Chesapeake Bay. Ms. Del Corso commented that she appreciates Mr. Thomson bringing it to the Boards attention. Mr. Strouse stated he will reach out to Mr. Thomson to work together with Mr. Wilson. Mr. Thomson stated we are all here as good stewards.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Del Corso stated this is a new format to the agenda and this agenda item is meant for the Board of Supervisors to approve the items on the agenda and if they would like something added they should inform Ms. Gembusia.

- ***MOTION: Ms. Hartle moved to approve the agenda as written; Mr. Strouse seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.***

2. SUBDIVISION/LAND DEVELOPMENT PLANS OR CONDITIONAL USES

Ms. Del Corso commented that this is just a place holder in the event that a Subdivision/Land Development Plan or Conditional Use would come before the board for review.

3. MINUTES

- ***MOTION: Mr. Strouse moved to approve the minutes for February 27, 2020; Mr. Piper seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.***

4. CONSENT AGENDA

Ms. Gembusia explained that a consent agenda is meant to approve items such as the Bills List in one motion. Ms. Gembusia stated she had a brief meeting with the Auditors and there will be a new process that will spell

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everything out cleanly and clearly. Ms. Del Corso commented Ms. Gembusia also provided memos for each agenda item providing information on each item.

A. BILLS LIST

- ***MOTION: Ms. Hartle moved to approve the Bills List dated March 12, 2020; Mr. Strouse seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.***

5. OLD BUSINESS

A. CRCA Presentation and Participation Discussion

Mr. Steff introduced himself as the Executive Director for the Centre Region COG and Mr. Schneider introduced himself as Agency Director of the Centre Region Code Agency (CRCA).

Ms. Gembusia stated the Board of Supervisors directed staff to review the service provided through the Centre Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) and make a recommendation as to whether Halfmoon should consider continuing or discontinuing the service. Ms. Gembusia stated she met with Mr. Steff and discussed the history.

Ms. Gembusia reported the Township pays nothing for the building inspection services as the program is self-sustaining. Residents and builders pay for the service only if needed and pay directly to CRCA so there are no administrative costs to the Township. Ms. Gembusia stated the CRCA's residential building inspections are rated #1 in the state of PA. If a resident's insurance company uses Insurance Rating Office (ISO) ratings to determine premiums, homeowners can save money by having lower property insurance rates. Ms. Gembusia commented that Code currently stores all permits for the Township. If services were terminated, the Township would need to find storage capacity for all building permits and inspection reports. Right-to-know requests regarding building permits are currently handled by CRCA since they are the agency of record. If services were no longer administered through CRCA, the Township would need to respond to these requests. Filing of State, County, and local reports for building permits is also completed through CRCA. These reports would need to be filed by Township staff if services were discontinued. Ms. Gembusia stated she highly recommends staying the Centre Region Code Agency.

Mr. Schneider reported that last July they hired Mr. John Franek specifically to provide the customer service leg to the CRCA, he has no enforcement authority and is 100% strictly there for the customer. Mr. Schneider commented that in the past there were perceptions that the inspectors were difficult to work with but there has been a change made with the hiring of Mr. Franek and how plans are reviewed at the counter for completeness. They have also offered customers to have meeting time with a residential inspector to go over the project plans.

Mr. Steff stated that they started doing sampling surveys and over 95% of responses stated they have had a positive experience. Mr. Steff commented that the CRCA has an oversight of the Elected Officials and meetings are open to the public.

Mr. Thomson commented that he has had experience with the CRCA with replacement of a rental home on his property and although there were some minor frustrations he was treated politely and received quick responses. Mr. Thomson stated he had some frustration with the code itself but understood the requirements. Mr. Thomson commented that he spoke to his brother who lives in a different state and his brother relayed that his is lucky to have that type of service. Mr. Thomson stated it is easier economically, necessary and a useful supportive agency.

Mr. Schneider reported that other Sewage Enforcement Officers do septic system designs to supplement income and the CRCA does not do that so there is no conflict. Mr. Schneider commented that he and Mr.

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Cory Warner are doing most of the work but there is a total of six certified Sewage Enforcement Officers in the CRCA and Ms. Liz Arseniu who does the administration for the Sewage Program has taken a prep course so she understands the background. Mr. Schneider commented there is a level of staffing and cross training.

Ms. Gembusia reported that the Board of Supervisors would have to create a UCC appeals board which is difficult.

Mr. Strouse thanked Mr. Steff and Mr. Schneider for attending.

Ms. Hartle requested that staff provide information on the regional software package. Mr. Schneider stated that the CRCA purchased a software package that is used regionally among the members. Due to the nature of needing a secure server source for the current software CRCA pays for Halfmoon Township to have a separate secure internet connection so Ms. Smith can utilize the software. Mr. Schneider reported the CRCA is in the process of finding and identifying a new software package that Ms. Smith is involved in the research. Mr. Schneider commented it has been narrowed down to two vendors and site visits were scheduled but were delayed due to the Coronavirus outbreak.

Mr. Steff commented that this will be his last Halfmoon Township meeting he will be attending due to his retirement and wanted to state that there will be a time when Halfmoon Township is going to have problems with rental units. Mr. Steff commented that if there ever is a time the Township would decide to enter property maintenance code the CRCA is the best.

Mr. Thomson stated that one of the primary reasons they replaced the rental home was because there was the expectation of the property maintenance code.

Mr. Schneider offered that if any Board member would like to go on an inspection and see what the inspectors do, they are more than welcome and it is an open invitation.

B. Seifert Subdivision Plan and Planning Module Waiver Request

Ms. Gembusia stated Mr. Seifert submitted a one lot subdivision plan and after an initial meeting with staff and discussion regarding the recently passed Zoning Ordinance revisions, has decided to withdraw his submission at this time. Mr. Seifert is requesting the Board hold his submittal fees in lieu of resubmittal fees. Ms. Gembusia commented staff is working with Mr. Seifert since this is the first plan submitted since the revisions were enacted. Ms. Gembusia explained that under the new revisions, frontage to a public road is required so Mr. Seifert would like to approach a neighboring property owner regarding the possibility in purchasing a portion of their property to gain road frontage. Mr. Soder stated there is also a Riparian Buffer issue that staff is requesting the Board consider amending to adopt the DEP regulations. Mr. Rilk commented that Halfmoon Township has more stringent restrictions than DEP and allows septic systems within 50 feet of a stream. The current Riparian Buffer regulations do not allow for septic systems within 100 feet of a stream. The Board requested this be added as an agenda item for a later date.

- ***MOTION: Mr. Strouse moved to waive the resubmittal fees for Mr. Seifert's subdivision plan; Ms. Hartle seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.***

C. Ratification of Vote from Special Meeting of February 5, 2020

Ms. Gembusia reported that the Board had not officially hired her as the Township Manager/Secretary/Treasurer in their motion on February 5, 2020 and should ratify that motion.

- ***MOTION: Mr. Strouse moved to ratify the motion of February 5, 2020 meeting to hire the new Township Manager/Treasurer/Secretary with a starting salary of \$77,500; Mr. Piper seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.***

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D. Appointment of Deputy Tax Collector

- **MOTION:** *Mr. Strouse moved to appoint the Township Manager as the Deputy Tax Collector with a term to expire 12/31/2020; Ms. Hartle seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.*

E. Banking Resolutions and Signatory Card Updates

Ms. Gembusia stated she contacted PSATS and the Auditors and will be initiating new policies. Ms. Gembusia reported that one member of the Board will be approving and initialing each bill to be paid and there will be one Board member who signs the checks along with Ms. Gembusia or Mr. Laird. Ms. Gembusia also stated that whomever cuts the checks will not be the one who signs the checks. This will address segregation concerns and make things cleaner. Mr. Piper stated he would like to have two Supervisors signing checks. Ms. Gembusia commented the Board will receive reports, supporting documentation and everything is being initialed by the Board and provides segregation of duties. Mr. Piper stated he still has concerns and would like to maintain two signatures of Board members. Ms. Gembusia commented that she agrees that there needs to be transparencies and accountability and this will make it 100% transparent and make the audit flawless.

- **MOTION:** *Mr. Piper moved that two Board of Supervisors signatures need to be on the check until the new process can be investigated; Mr. Strouse seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.*
- **MOTION:** *Mr. Strouse moved to approve Resolution 2020-09; A Resolution of the Township of Halfmoon pursuant to the creation of authorized signers and registration of such authorized person with Jersey Shore State Bank for the Halfmoon Township Open Space Future Acquisitions Account; Mr. Piper seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.*
- **MOTION:** *Ms. Hartle moved to approve Resolution 2020-10; A Resolution of the Township of Halfmoon pursuant to the creation of authorized signers and registration of such authorized person with Manufactures and Traders Trust Company for the Halfmoon Township Accounts; Mr. Strouse seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.*
- **MOTION:** *Mr. Strouse moved to approve Resolution 2020-11; A Resolution of the Township of Halfmoon pursuant to the creation of authorized signers and registration of such authorized person with Pennsylvania Local Government Investment Trust (PLGIT) for the Halfmoon Township Accounts; Mr. Piper seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.*

F. Planning Commission Resignation and Alternate Appointment

Ms. Gembusia reported that Ms. Regina Villarreal would like to resign from her position on the Planning Commission and is requesting appointment as an alternate member. Mr. Rilk explained that the Planning Commission was having a hard time getting a quorum together and Ms. Villarreal has a work conflict and this time of year is difficult for her to attend. Mr. Rilk stated with this resignation there would only be five Planning Commission members therefore making it easier to get a quorum because they would only need three members to make a quorum. Mr. Piper questioned whether she would still attend and be a voting member. Mr. Rilk stated Ms. Villarreal would attend as much as she could during her busy season.

- **MOTION:** *Mr. Piper moved to accept the resignation of Planning Commission member, Regina Villarreal, effective immediately; Mr. Strouse seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.*
- **MOTION:** *Ms. Hartle moved to appoint Regina Villarreal as a Planning Commission alternate member, effective immediately, with a term to expire on 12/31/24; Mr. Piper seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.*

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G. Propane Tank Purchase

Ms. Gembusia stated staff researched the costs of purchasing the under-ground tank and what propane rates would be on an owned tank versus a rented tank. The buy-out price for the tank was quoted at \$1,153.28 and the cheapest rate quoted for propane was \$.90 per gallon.

- **MOTION:** *Mr. Piper moved to purchase the tank get the lower price on propane; Mr. Strouse seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.*

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. Joanne Fisher Open Space Preservation Applications

Ms. Gembusia reported she would like the applications tabled until staff had an opportunity to speak with Ms. Fisher regarding her preference to lease versus permanent easement on both applications.

- **MOTION:** *Mr. Del Corso moved to approve tabling the applications until the next meeting; Mr. Piper seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.*

B. Solar Power Purchase Agreement (SPPA) Endorsed Cost Sharing Agreement

Ms. Del Corso stated the cost to the Township would be \$137.00 for their cost share of hiring a consultant and legal fees to research solar power purchasing. Mr. Strouse commented there are fifteen entities participating in the Cost Sharing Agreement and the hope is to purchase generated energy and drive costs down. Mr. Strouse stated Halfmoon Township is the smallest entity so that is why our portion of costs were calculated at .21% but this does not bind us to go forward with a purchasing agreement. Mr. Strouse explained that this study is to see what the price would be to purchase solar power and we can opt out once we know the price. Mr. Piper stated he is okay with the study but questioned whether the solar power would be generated here or off the grid. Mr. Strouse stated that would have to be researched. Ms. Del Corso commented that they could request a follow up for more information.

- **MOTION:** *Mr. Strouse moved to approve the Cost Sharing Agreement for energy consulting services as presented by the Working Group with Halfmoon Township paying a one-time fee of \$137; Ms. Hartle seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.*

C. Discussion on Strategic Planning Session Date(s)

Ms. Gembusia will send out a doodle poll to the Board and staff with dates and times and schedule sessions based on availability.

D. Official Map

Ms. Gembusia stated she was not sure if this was part of the strategic plan or not. Ms. Smith explained that the Official Map was updated but not recorded so the Board should review the map and make any updates or revisions and then go through the public hearing process. The Board requested this will be a future agenda item.

7. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

A. Treasurer's Report

- **MOTION:** *Mr. Strouse moved to accept the Treasurer's Report dated March 12th for the month ending January; Mr. Piper seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.*

Ms. Gembusia stated there were no other reports for Department Reports for this meeting with the exception of the Manager's Report. Mr. Piper stated he would like to see a Public Works Report each month.

B. Tax Collector's Report

C. Building/Code/Zoning Report

D. Public Works Report

E. Manager's Report

Ms. Gembusia stated she has been here two weeks and is very excited to be here. Ms. Gembusia commented that the staff is great and she is more than happy to meet citizens as they come into the office.

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Ms. Del Corso stated she would like to commend Ms. Gembusia for jumping and diving into the deep water with no floaties.

Ms. Gembusia reported the following:

1. Toured the township roads with Roadmaster to learn municipal borders and identify areas of need. Ms. Gembusia reported the roads are impressive compared to where she came from and is hoping to maintain the roads with long term planning.
2. Started an initial review of SALDO with staff and set meeting to continue the review. This will be a process that will require multiple meetings and take a considerable amount of time. The goal is to have staff initially review the SALDO and present the suggested revisions to the Planning Commission for feedback, compiling one red-lined draft version for the Board to review.
3. The tractor that was planned in the 2020 budget for \$46,747.25 was ordered.
4. The ice rink was taken down and staff will be pressure washing the tennis courts for the season.
5. Effective March 16th, Halfmoon Township Board of Supervisors meetings will be televised on Channel 7 at the following times during the six days following a meeting:
 - Saturday at 8pm
 - Monday at 1pm
 - Tuesday at 6am
 - Wednesday at 12:30am
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6. Met with Maher Duessel auditors regarding 2019 audit. Will have report at the next Board meeting.

7. Attended Open Space and Planning Commission meetings.

8. SUPERVISORS' REPORT

Executive Committee – Ms. Del Corso stated an offer was extended for the Centre Region COG Executive Director position and there will be a special General Forum meeting to officially accept the candidate for the position.

Public Services & Environmental Committee – Ms. Del Corso reported there was a follow up on Greenhouse gas and there will be a draft Resolution proposed that will come to the municipalities requesting they commit to doing something listed in the Resolution.

Refuse & Recycling Program – Ms. Del Corso stated although the Township is not part of this program, they are trying to figure out how to get yard/food waste out of the landfills and use composting. Ms. Del Corso reported Penn State will be offering a composting class. Ms. Del Corso stated there will be a survey and requested citizens participate.

UBEH COG – Mr. Strouse commented he attended but there was nothing pertinent to report.

Ad Hoc Facilities Committee – Ms. Hartle reported the committee approved the job description for the Facilities Coordinator earlier this year and the Human Resources Committee will be reviewing the job description. Ms. Hartle stated the position is anticipated to be hired with a start date for this summer. Ms. Hartle reported the committee also discussed temporary fixes to the Millbrook Marsh boardwalk and the committee will be potentially requesting an intern to assess the Patton Township Fire Station, Park Forest Pool and Welch Pool.

Finance Committee – Ms. Hartle reported the Finance Committee approved funds for the sprinkler system in the fields at Whitehall Regional Park. They also approved awarding the bid for the construction project in the Code Offices.

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9. GOOD & WELFARE

Mr. Piper questioned how the Port Matilda EMS (PMEMS) & Port Matilda Fire Company (PMFC) are doing since he knows the PMEMS is in need of financial help. Mr. Strouse stated the PMEMS has received a few generous donations. Mr. Piper requested staff invite Port Matilda Fire Company, Warriors Mark Fire Company and Port Matilda EMS to attend annually for an update.

10. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m. Ms. Del Corso announced there would be an Executive Session held after the adjournment of this meeting to discuss litigation.

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