

HALFMOON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
MEETING MINUTES

MARCH 24TH, 2022
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1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair David Piper called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. (present at Community Center). Other Supervisors present were Bob Strouse (present at Community Center); Chuck Beck (present at Community Center) and Ron Servello (present at Community Center). Staff present were Denise Gembusia, Township Manager (present at Community Center); Amy Smith, Township Secretary (present at Community Center); Brett Laird, Township Treasurer (present at Community Center); Township Solicitor, Zachary Rice (present by Zoom) and Township Engineer, Don Franson (present at Community Center). Residents & others in attendance: John & RoseAnn Hoover (present at Community Center); Bruce Helms (present at Community Center); Michelle Schellberg (present at Community Center); Doug & Hilary Kleckner (present at Community Center); Tyler Reese, PMFC (present at Community Center); John Witherite, PMFC Chief (present at Community Center); Josh Witherite, PMFC President/Assistant Chief (present at Community Center); Don Tice, PMFC (present at Community Center); Ginger Breon (present at Community Center); Tammy Perkins (present at Community Center); Tom Majewski (present at Community Center) Irene Schaperdoth (present at Community Center), Virginia Squier (present at Community Center); Susan Seybert (present at Community Center); Bill Reifel (present at Community Center); Donna Reifel (present at Community Center); Kristen Taylor (present at Community Center); Sharon Rovanssek (present at Community Center); Daniel Perkins (present at Community Center); Karen Miller (present at Community Center); Becky Brooks (present at Community Center); Rene Day (present at Community Center); Lorin Nauman (present at Community Center); D. Christine Bracken-Piper (present at Community Center); Corey Dillon (present at Community Center); Lara LaDage (present at Community Center); Jennilyn Vallejera (present at Community Center); Hyeseon Kim (present by Zoom); Emily Dillon (present by Zoom); Jodi Brown (present by Zoom); David Allgeier (present by Zoom); Daniel Digman (present by Zoom); Craig Bowser (present by Zoom); David Graeber (present by Zoom); Erin Mullen (present by Zoom); Mark DeSandre (present by Zoom); Shawn Kauffman (present by Zoom); Amy Paster (present by Zoom); Delton Shadow (present by Zoom); Elizabeth Siegelman (present by Zoom); Klaus Keller (present by Zoom); Joel Catalano (present by Zoom); JB Leve (present by Zoom); Erin Garthe (present by Zoom); Cindy Walk (present by Zoom); Barbara Hughes (present by Zoom); Margaret Brant (present by Zoom); Donna Hughes (present by Zoom); Wayne Foster (present by Zoom); Colin Zarzycki (present by Zoom); David Crow (present by Zoom); John Krajcovic (present by Zoom); Melissa Krajcovic (present by Zoom); Kerry O'Melia (present by Zoom); Melissa Stine (present by Zoom); Bill Donley (present by Zoom); Tena Ishler (present by Zoom); Mike Manahan (present by Zoom); Charles Simons (present by Zoom); Susan Kolbe (present by Zoom); Richard Graham (present by Zoom); Connie Jones (present by Zoom); John Knouse (present by Zoom); Lena Sheaffer (present by Zoom); Karen Brown (present by Zoom); Lyn Gotwalt (present by Zoom); William Smith (present by Zoom); Susan Person (present by Zoom); Kacee Burke (present by Zoom); Reed Moyer (present by Zoom); Cheryl Barr (present by Zoom); Larry Jump (present by Zoom); Jeffrey Pogue (present by Zoom); Audra Simpson (present by Zoom); Jeff Daub (present by Zoom); Tonya Pick (present by Zoom) and Cathleen Brown (present by Zoom).

Roll Call: Chairman Piper, present; Vice-Chairman Servello, present; Supervisor Beck, present; Supervisor Strouse, present; Supervisor Hartle, not present.

2. **OPENING ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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

- This evening's meeting is being LIVE recorded on C-NET's YouTube channel. A direct link for the stream of tonight's meeting is: <https://youtu.be/IK-gNRS-3Fs>
- The township is asking for resident's email addresses for important updates and notices. To sign up, visit www.halfmoontwp.us and click on the CONTACT US button on the homepage.
- Volunteers are needed for open positions on various committees and boards. If you are interested in volunteering, please visit the township website, or contact the manager.

3. **AGENDA AMENDMENT**

Mr. Piper requested that a motion be made to move the Port Matilda Fire Company presentation and Township Engineer presentations to the beginning of the meeting.

- **MOTION: Mr. Strouse moved to amend the agenda to move the Fire Company Presentation and the Township Engineer presentations to the beginning of the agenda; Mr. Servello seconded; Vote 4-0-0; Motion Carried.**

4. **PORT MATILDA FIRE COMPANY PRESENTATION**

Chief John Witherite stated he would like to start attending the meeting quarterly to provide an update.

Chief Witherite provided an incident report for 2021 and a first quarter municipal call volume report for 2022. Chief Witherite also provided an incident personnel roster.

Chief Witherite stated he has worked with Ms. Gembusia and others to prepare a ten-year Capital Budget. Chief Witherite commented that revenues come from grants, fundraising, the Upper Bald Eagle Halfmoon COG (municipal funds) and Fireman's Relief. Chief Witherite reported that they were not able to purchase equipment and gear last year that equated to \$54,001.00. Chief Witherite stated that they will need \$35,099.35 for equipment and gear for 2022. Mr. Strouse commented that it is important that the Fire Company has the equipment and gear that they need. Ms. Perkins questioned how much the Fire Company received from the fundraiser mailer. President/Assistant Chief Josh Witherite stated they received about \$42,000 last year from the fundraiser mailer. President/Assistant Chief Witherite thanked everyone who provided a donation. President/Assistant Chief Witherite stated those funds helped purchase a new building, so they were able to move the smaller apparatus inside and which made response times quicker and built a brush truck. President/Assistant Chief Witherite reviewed the other fundraisers that are offered that include meat drives, bingo, festivals, and gun raffle.

Mr. Piper requested the Fire Company compile a list of needs and wants and come back to the Board for review.

Chief Witherite commented that the implementation of the fire tax helped with allocating monies toward equipment. Chief Witherite questioned whether the ARPA monies the township will receive could be allocated to the Fire Companies to purchase equipment. Mr. Piper stated that it could be investigated. Mr. Strouse commented that the ARPA monies are not budgeted for anything right now and he would propose that \$83,007 should be allocated to the Fire Company. Chief Witherite reminded Mr. Strouse that there should also be an allocation made to the Warriors Mark Franklin Fire Company. Ms. Gembusia commented that the final rule on the ARPA money can be used for loss revenues for specific items but cannot be used toward pensions or debt. Mr. Piper requested that Mr. Strouse also discuss with the other members of the UBEH COG the possibility of using some of their ARPA monies toward the Fire Company. Mr. Strouse stated that because Halfmoon Township is the larger municipality in the UBEH COG it should be noted that we would pay more than the others. Mr. Servello questioned how often there is a shortfall of funds and commented if there is a deficit there each year must be another way to make up for that deficit. Mr. Strouse commented that the fire tax Halfmoon Township implemented helped but it is not enough, and they have been discussing the implantation of a fire tax with the other UBEH COG member municipalities. Mr. Strouse stated the fire tax helps the Fire Companies know what the amount of money is they will be receiving from the municipalities each year.

5. TOWNSHIP ENGINEER PRESENTATIONS

A. SMITH ROAD

Mr. Franson stated he completed deed research and there have been twenty-two subdivisions along Smith Road. Mr. Franson commented that different rights-of-ways (ROW) have been established throughout these subdivisions. Mr. Franson stated there are places where Smith Road has a 33' ROW with 16 ½' on feet on each side from the center line and other places where there is a 25' ROW and then some other variable widths. Mr. Franson commented that Smith Road is not centered on the ROW. Mr. Franson stated because of these variables it makes some places along Smith Road tight for widening. Mr. Franson commented Smith Road had some drainage issues from Cornfield Lane to Buffalo Lane that should be addressed. Mr. Franson stated there are some areas along Smith Road that there are some trees that would need to be removed or there would need to be an easement that would need to be obtained to be able to widen the road. Mr. Franson commented there would be areas that you could widen but it would transition the road to different widths and would also increase speeds. Mr. Franson stated he would not recommend transitioning the width. Mr. Strouse questioned whether there would be any compensation needed if there was encroachment on properties along Smith Road. Mr. Franson explained that he has experienced in the past that most citizens are willing to give a 3-5' easement for \$1.00 because the township is not taking the land, it is just an easement. Mr. Franson commented he does recommend addressing the stormwater issues from Cornfield Lane to Buffalo Lane. Mr. Franson discussed using a sod swale versus a stone swale.

B. PAULS LANE

Mr. Franson explained that due to the way the Pauls Lane dips the plow trucks are not getting the snow off completely and it stays icy. Mr. Franson stated there are no defined swales and the road is in bad shape. Mr. Franson commented he recommends adding this to the road plan for 2023. Mr. Franson added that from Pauls Lane to Lutz Lane there needs to be larger stone placed within the swale that should also be addressed.

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Ms. Gembusia commented that there was an issue with the download of the CSV file for Pauls Lane so therefore it was not originally included in the top five of the worst roads within the township.

C. ORCHARD ROAD

Ms. Gembusia stated she met with Ms. Perkins and Mr. & Mrs. Warner regarding water flow issues on Orchard Road. Ms. Gembusia stated after this meeting she met with Mr. Franson to try to address these issues prior to placing new pavement on Orchard Road. Mr. Franson evaluated Orchard Road and found that there were some issues with obstructed inlets and outlets and an area where an inlet needs to be moved back and reformed. Mr. Franson stated there is also a headwall that needs to be rebuilt and an area where there needs to be a determination where an inlet/outlet pipe is located near Cherrywood Way. Mr. Franson commented there are also some drainage repairs needed at the intersection of State Route 550 and Orchard Road that need to be addressed. Mr. Piper questioned whether there could be a drainage pipe placed at the low area on Orchard Road to help address the water flow issues. Mr. Franson stated that may help. Ms. Gembusia commented that the ARPA monies are eligible to address the drainage issues and pave Orchard Road. Ms. Gembusia stated the paving project is not set to begin until July so the Board could address the drainage issues prior to the paving being completed.

- **MOTION:** *Mr. Servello moved to accept the paving bid from HRI, Inc. for Doe Drive and Orchard Road in the amount of \$128,628.50; Mr. Beck seconded; Vote 4-0-0; Motion Carried.*
- **MOTION:** *Mr. Servello moved to direct the Township Engineer to complete an evaluation and bid specs to move forward to address the drainage issues; Mr. Beck seconded; Mr. Franson commented that this may come in under the contracted bid requirements and may only require three phone quotes; Vote 4-0-0; Motion Carried.*

6. DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

There was nothing reported.

7. CITIZEN COMMENTS *(for non-agenda items)*

Mr. Strouse stated during the February 24th meeting, he made an off the cuff remark that disparaged Ms. Steele and her accomplishments during her tenure as Halfmoon Township manager and commented that Ms. Steele has his sincere apology.

Mr. Strouse stated that he would like to issue an apology to resident Jim Shore who came to the meeting on March 10th to address his concerns over why his road was not plowed. Mr. Strouse commented that Mr. Shore was owed an apology right then and there, yet the Board remained silent, so he would like to apologize for both not getting the road plowed and not issuing the apology that night. Mr. Strouse added that he would also like to thank Mr. Shore for plowing the road so his neighbors could safely enter their homes.

Mr. Strouse commented that he would also like to apologize to his fellow Board members, staff, and citizens for at times for raising his voice in an unprofessional manner and promises that he will strive to do better in the future.

Mr. Strouse stated lastly, he would like to apologize directly to Ms. Gembusia for the ill treatment she has received by some of the members of this Board and some members of this community and is truly sorry she had to experience this.

Mr. Perkins stated he has some concerns that agenda items were not being completed and were being pushed off to the next meeting.

Ms. Squier commented that she agrees and that the Board has put off approving a job description for the Roadmaster and a Roadmaster needs to be hired. Mr. Servello agreed that a Roadmaster needs to be hired and is a priority.

Ms. Vallejera stated she would like to thank Mr. Servello for his transparency. Ms. Vallejera questioned what is more important than hiring a roadmaster. Ms. Vallejera commented the Board needs to answer questions and share thoughts and planning.

Ms. LaDage suggested starting the meetings earlier in the evening.

Mr. Piper stated his goal is to lower taxes, fix the roads and get out of debt.

Ms. Gotwalt commented that the Board has all gone against their duties and not doing what is best for the members of the community.

8. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

- **MOTION:** *Mr. Piper moved to approve the agenda with the exception of the items already discussed; Mr. Servello seconded; Vote 4-0-0; Motion Carried.*

9. SUBDIVISION/LAND DEVELOPMENT PLANS OR CONDITIONAL USES AND PUBLIC HEARINGS

- a. Halfmoon Acres Preliminary Subdivision Plan (Plan #2021-02), *plan expires April 1, 2022*
 - i. 30-Day Time Extension Email, dated March 15, 2022
If accepted, plan would expire May 1, 2022

- **MOTION:** *Mr. Strouse moved to accept the 30-day time extension for the Halfmoon Acres Preliminary Subdivision plan to now expire May 1, 2022; Mr. Servello seconded; Vote 4-0-0; Motion Carried.*

10. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. February 24, 2022 – Regular Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes
- b. March 10, 2022 - Regular Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes

- **MOTION:** *Mr. Strouse moved to approve the regular meeting minutes of February 24, 2022 & March 10, 2022; Mr. Servello seconded; Vote 4-0-0; Motion Carried.*

11. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Approve payment of the Bills List for the period of 03/05/2022 to 03/18/2022 from the following funds:
 - i. General Fund in the amount of \$5,225.74
 - ii. Park & Recreation Fund in the amount of \$5,999.24
 - iii. State Highway Liquid Fuels Fund in the amount of \$2,760.85
- b. Centre Region Building and Housing Code Board of Appeals Reappointments (MEMO)
Ryan Solnosky, *term April 1, 2022 to March 30, 2025*
Alan Popovich, *term April 1, 2022 to March 30, 2025*
- c. Appointment of David Neil Pick to Halfmoon Township Planning Commission, *term to expire 12/31/2025*
Letter of Interest & Resume
- d. Acknowledgement of Manager resignation, effective March 31, 2022

- **MOTION:** *Mr. Servello moved to approve the Consent Agenda; Mr. Beck seconded; Mr. Strouse read each consent agenda item; Vote 4-0-0; Motion Carried.*

12. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Board of Supervisors 2022 Workplan and 2023 Priorities
 - i. Board Discussion and Ranking on Each Member's Priority Matrix
 1. 2021 – 2026 Strategic Plan
 2. Historical Information Regarding Priorities & 2022 Workplan Calendar

Mr. Servello stated he completed the priority matrix but would like to provide more detail and discuss the strategic plan. Mr. Piper suggested having a work session at the second meeting in April. Mr. Strouse

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commented the strategic plan has already been completed and feels it is a waste of time for the Board to go back and discuss and make possible changes. Mr. Piper stated the Board has already just had to change the strategic plan with the addition of Pauls Lane. Mr. Servello commented that there are high priorities and would like the opportunity to look at the strategic plan and make possible changes. Mr. Strouse commented that after March 31st the township will be down to two staff members and does not feel this is a good use of time. Mr. Servello stated he is willing to work on the priorities, but they need to be discussed. Mr. Strouse commented the number one priority is getting staff hired. Ms. Squier stated she is worried because grants are due by the end of June. Mr. Servello commented that he is committed to working on getting grants. Mr. Servello added that he is well aware that there is a need to hire staff but wants to look at the job descriptions and have them in place before hiring for these positions. Ms. Gembusia stated there were forty applications received for the public works position and the job was offered to two applicants, but it was turned down by both applicants. Ms. LaDage thanked Mr. Servello for talking to the citizens.

- **MOTION: Mr. Servello moved to post the Roadmaster position; Mr. Beck seconded;** Ms. Gembusia stated she is updating the Roadmaster position to get quality applicants; Mr. Servello stated he would like to see the current job description and was not sure there is a need for a Road Director or Road Superintendent; Ms. Breon suggested talking to other colleagues to look at their job descriptions; Ms. Perkins commented that the job description needs to be done and out ASAP; **Mr. Servello withdrew his motion.**
- **MOTION: Mr. Servello moved to meet with Mr. Beck to work on the Roadmaster job description to present at the next meeting;** Ms. Gembusia stated she already had the information; Mr. Beck agreed to help; **Mr. Beck seconded; Vote 4-0-0; Motion Carried.**

b. Discussion Regarding Public Meeting Protocol & Policy

- i. Draft Resolution on Public Meetings
- ii. PSATS December 2021 Article on Public Comment Policy

Mr. Servello stated he read through the Resolution and would like more flexibility for public comments. Solicitor Rice commented that this is just a template that was put together that references Roberts Rules of Order that is designed to cover a number of procedural items and is just a starting point. Mr. Servello questioned what the process was to amend this Resolution if necessary. Solicitor Rice commented that any amendment would be done by Resolution.

- **MOTION: Mr. Servello moved to approve Resolution 2022-14; A Resolution of the Township of Halfmoon establishing rules and regulations regarding conduct of public meetings; Mr. Beck seconded; Vote 4-0-0; Motion Carried.**

c. Move Administrative Offices to 100 Municipal Lane

- i. Municipal Building Alterations Proposal Withdraw Letter from Design Architect Mike Siggins

- **MOTION: Mr. Servello moved to volunteer to develop a plan with the approval of the Board to contact vendors to get pricing and come up with a concept for arranging a professional office space; Mr. Servello added any electrical additions could be added once the office has been prepared for the move; Mr. Beck seconded;** Mr. Servello reviewed his experience history and added that he is qualified and capable of developing this plan for no charge to the township; Mr. Strouse commented that a Professional Architect had already completed this work but withdrew his proposal due to the Boards behavior; Mr. Servello stated the letter received from the Professional Architect was unprofessional; Strouse questioned whether it is a conflict of interest for Mr. Servello since he is a sitting Board member; Solicitor Rice stated since Mr. Servello is not being compensated there is no conflict of interest; Mr. Strouse questioned whether building a cubical farm versus building walls may pose security issues; Solicitor Rice commented that as long as the building itself is secure, there are no security issues; Ms. Breon offered her services to help Mr. Servello with this project; **Vote 3-1-0; Mr. Servello, yea; Mr. Piper, yea; Mr. Beck, yea; Mr. Strouse, nay; No abstentions; Motion Carried.**

- d. Possible Sale of Epson Projectors in Community Center Meeting Room (MEMO)
- **MOTION:** *Mr. Servello moved to sell the Epson Projectors in the Community Center Meeting Room to the State College Borough; Mr. Beck seconded; Vote 4-0-0; Motion Carried.*

Ms. Day commented that Mr. Servello came into a hornet's nest and appreciates his willingness to discuss items.

- e. State College Little League Request for Field & Equipment Agreements
- Email from Corey Dillon, dated March 9, 2022

Mr. Dillon stated he would like to discuss how to handle maintenance issues and the maintenance of the fields. Mr. Dillon provided drafted versions of agreements that were being considered a few years ago but were not signed. Mr. Piper questioned whether there was anything in those agreements that caused Mr. Dillon concern. Mr. Dillon commented that he could have their Solicitor review them. Mr. Servello suggested having the Township Solicitor review the agreements too. Mr. Strouse commented the Board did want to make sure there were times blocked off for citizens to use the fields too. Solicitor Rice stated that he has not seen the old agreements but has reviewed newer agreements and it may be possible to merge an old version with a new version to cover maintenance and field responsibilities. Mr. Piper suggested that Mr. Dillon bring the agreement back to the Board after Little League Solicitor review. Mr. Dillon commented if there is anything Little League can do to help to let him know.

13. NEW BUSINESS

- Fire, EMS, Library Quarterly Update and Reports
Ms. Rovansek stated last year there were 9,512 physical items circulated not including electronic checkouts. Ms. Rovansek reported that in January and February 2022, there have been 1,639 physical items circulated. Ms. Rovansek stated in 2021 there were 1,749 items returned to drop box located at Brothers Pizza and 3,835 items returned to the Uni-Mart. Ms. Rovansek reported that in January and February 2022, there have been 231 items returned at Brothers Pizza and 758 returns at the Uni-Mart. Ms. Rovansek reported that Schlow Library has refreshed the website and those changes were made based on public feedback. Ms. Rovansek commented that Schlow Library can also be followed on Instagram.

Ms. Rovansek stated that when her children were young, they frequented the public library often and provided examples of items her children were able to utilize due to frequenting the library. Ms. Rovansek commented that you can walk into the public library for free. Ms. Rovansek encouraged the Supervisors to think about how important Schlow Library is and would be ashamed if the Board pulled out of it. Ms. Rovansek encouraged the Board to take a tour and see what is there. Mr. Strouse thanked Ms. Rovansek for highlighting the value of Schlow Library.

14. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

There were no questions on the Department Reports.

15. SUPERVISOR'S REPORTS

There were no reports provided.

16. GOOD & WELFARE

Ms. Squier thanked Mr. Servello for his patience, willingness to listen and thoughtful discussion. Ms. Squier requested a reorganization of the Board and that Mr. Servello step up as Chairman.

- **MOTION:** *Mr. Strouse moved to reorganize the Board to select a new Chairman and Vice-Chairman; No second; Motion Fails.*

Ms. Hyseon Kim reported she was appointed as a non-voting member for the Parks and Recreation Governance Special Committee. Ms. Kim stated there was an organization meeting in February and the first official meeting was held on March 23, 2022. Ms. Kim reported that most discussions focused on what the Authority Board responsibilities are for administering operations and capital projects approved by the COG General Forum. Ms. Kim stated the Authority Board responsibilities and the duties have expanded into high-level oversight of the operations and capital projects in the following; Centre Region Senior Center; Millbrook Marsh Nature Center; two

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community swimming pools; leasing from the COG the lands of the three regional parks for financing, capital projects(development) and operations; leasing the Interim Parks Maintenance Facility while the Authority proceeds to develop and operate a new centralized maintenance facility as part of Whitehall Road Regional Park; operations for leased sports fields at 3 elementary schools; acting as the official grant and donation conduit for all regional facilities and for designated municipal parks/programs (Remembrance Trees, Gift Benches, etc.); providing policy oversight of CRPR agency staff, programs and facility operations within the established framework of the Centre Region COG; with consultation of staff, determining operating fees, policies and procedures, and to provide for future responsibilities as authorized by the COG General Forum.

17. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the board, the regular meeting was adjourned at 10:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Amy M. Smith,
Township Secretary



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