

HALFMOON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
MEETING MINUTES

MAY 12TH, 2022
PAGE 1 OF 4

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair David Piper called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. (present at Community Center). Other Supervisors present were Bob Strouse (present at Community Center); Chuck Beck (present at Community Center); Ron Servello (present at Community Center) and Patti Hartle (present at Community Center). Staff present were Amy Smith, Township Secretary (present at Community Center) and Brett Laird, Township Treasurer (present at Community Center). Residents & others in attendance: Joe Viglione, CR COG Finance Director (present at Community Center); Tom Majewski (present at Community Center); Peggy Sue Majewski (present at Community Center); Karen Miller (present at Community Center); Michelle Schellberg (present at Community Center); Hyeseon Kim (present at Community Center); Bill Donley (present at Community Center); John Hoover (present at Community Center); Lee Pressler (present at Community Center); Lorin Nauman (present by Zoom); Susan Seybert (present by Zoom) and Jennilyn Vallejera (present by Zoom).

Roll Call: Chairman Piper, present; Vice-Chairman Servello, present; Supervisor Beck, present; Supervisor Strouse, present; Supervisor Hartle, 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. You may also view locally produced programs online at www.cnet1.org
- 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 Secretary, Amy Smith.
- Mr. Piper announced there were executive sessions held May 5th, May 9th & May 10th to discuss personnel. There were no decisions were made.

3. **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

There were no citizen comments.

4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

- **MOTION:** *Mr. Strouse moved to approve the agenda; Mr. Servello seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.*

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

There were no subdivision or land development plans or conditional uses and public hearings. Ms. Smith stated there would be three subdivision plans that would be on the next meeting agenda.

6. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a. April 28, 2022 - Regular Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes

- **MOTION:** *Mr. Servello moved to approve the April 28, 2022, regular meeting minutes; Ms. Hartle seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.*

7. **CONSENT AGENDA**

- a. Approve payment of the Bills List for the period of 04/23/2022 to 05/06/2022 from the following funds:
- (i) General Fund in the amount of \$62,013.94
 - (ii) Open Space Preservation Fund in the amount of \$231.00
- b. Recognize May as Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

- **MOTION:** *Mr. Strouse moved to approve the consent agenda; Mr. Servello seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.*

8. **WORK SESSION TOPICS**

- a. Port Matilda Fire Company by John Witherite/Bob Strouse

Mr. Strouse stated the Port Matilda Fire Company is in dire straits and has been for years. Mr. Strouse added although the fire company has sustained an operating budget annually the fire company needs \$85,000 to catch up their capital budget. Mr. Strouse proposed paying 34% of the \$85,000 needed using the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to help catch the capital budget funds up to date. Mr. Strouse stated on an annual basis the capital budget needs roughly \$150,000 a year to sustain capital budget needs. Mr. Strouse added he feels fundraising is an inconsistent method of income, therefore he proposes altering the fire tax levy from 1.7 mils to 2 mils and possibly taking the remaining .3 mils needed from the general tax fund. Mr. Strouse provided an example of how the change in the tax levy amount would alter a tax bill. Mr. Strouse stated he felt the difference would be an average of \$18.36 to keep the fire company sustainable.

Mr. Servello stated he felt the Port Matilda Fire Company did a good job with the budget they prepared. Mr. Servello commented he felt the current situation was disproportionate and was not currently working in Halfmoon Township's favor. Mr. Servello stated he felt everyone's house no matter the value of the home is equally important. Mr. Servello added he ran some numbers and commented that if you divide the current need of the fire company by the total parcels in all five municipalities that comprise the Upper Bald Eagle Halfmoon COG you get a more proportionate figure of \$73.57 per parcel. Mr. Servello stated this number would decrease to \$55.33 per parcel if you only use the inhabited parcels. Mr. Servello added funds could be achieved by private donation, but donation income needs accounted for in the fire company's budget.

Mr. Strouse commented he felt asking the volunteer firefighters to do fundraising is unfair because most have families and jobs monopolizing most of their time. Mr. Strouse stated he also knows certain fundraising opportunities are not worth the reward for the work and referenced the cancellation of the annual carnival this year.

Ms. Miller questioned if Port Matilda Fire Company would disband who would cover Halfmoon Township. Mr. Piper stated agreements would have to be altered or created with Warriors Mark & Alpha Fire Companies, but the Board currently is in support of funding the Port Matilda Fire Company, the Board just disagrees on how to fund them.

Mr. Strouse stated that some of the other Upper Bald Eagle Halfmoon COG municipalities do not have current contracts with the fire company, so he is in the process of lobbying for contracts and fire tax levies and support of funding with the other municipalities but so far it has not gone over well.

Mr. Donley stated he felt using the ARPA funds would be a great option because not every situation can be saved by raising taxes. Mr. Donley added a County wide reassessment is inevitable and a local tax increase is not the solution.

Mr. Pressler provided a timeline of past financial issues with the Port Matilda Fire Company beginning in 2005. Mr. Pressler added the situation is and always will be a money management issue not a taxation issue.

Ms. Kim questioned how often the fire company needed to purchase a new truck. Mr. Strouse stated that this is an entirely new issue because they have a failing fire truck that still has a financial obligation owed. Mr. Strouse added the current truck has become a money pit and a new truck's estimated cost would be about one million dollars.

Mr. Piper stated the most convenient option would be to throw ARPA funds at the situation, but it is not a permanent solution. Mr. Piper added citizen engagement doesn't seem to be an issue for Warriors Mark Fire Company but in some instances, citizens are not sure what fire company services the area.

Ms. Schellberg questioned why there seemed to be a lack of citizen support.

Mr. Piper responded that historically all the Upper Bald Eagle Halfmoon COG municipalities did not get along. Mr. Piper added perhaps it stemmed from the Port Matilda Borough paying for 100% of the workers' compensation for years prior to the agreement. Mr. Piper stated he felt perception is key in this

HALFMOON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
MEETING MINUTES

MAY 12TH, 2022
PAGE 3 OF 4

situation and it is up to Halfmoon Township and the other municipalities to get the citizen engagement up and running.

Ms. Schellberg stated in the past she had helped another community with fundraising for a local fire company and suggested a pancake breakfast. Mr. Strouse stated he is a member of a group of 15 citizens, and they had thought of using a pancake breakfast as a fundraiser. Mr. Strouse invited any member of the community to join the group or do their part in volunteering. Mr. Strouse added that to volunteer for the fire company you must be a member and fill out their membership form even if it is for fundraising.

- b. Solar Power Purchase Agreement Presentation by Joe Viglione/Bob Strouse
Mr. Viglione presented the Solar Power Purchase Working Group's proposal to prepare an RFP and get feedback for the minimum and maximum percentage of solar electricity the township would potentially purchase through the SPPA. Mr. Viglione stated these figures will be used along with fourteen other entities participating in the RFP to try to get the lowest price.
- **MOTION: Mr. Strouse moved to approve using 50% minimum and 90% maximum non-binding percentages for the RFP to purchase solar electricity through SPPA; Ms. Hartle seconded; Vote 2-3-0; Mr. Strouse, yea; Ms. Hartle, yea; Mr. Piper, nay; Mr. Beck, nay; Mr. Servello, nay; No abstentions; Motion Fails.**

Mr. Strouse requested that Ms. Kim provide her presentation for recognizing May as being Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month since she was not present when it was approved under the consent agenda. Ms. Kim presented the article from the May 2022 edition of State College Magazine where people can view Reporting Hate/Bias Incidents in Centre County. Ms. Kim added to celebrate APIDA Heritage Month the Pan-APIDA will be holding an art exhibit at the Bellefonte Art Museum for Centre County and have a children's story hour at Schlow Centre Region Library.

- c. Administrative Office Renovation/Relocation Project Update by Ron Servello
Mr. Servello provided an update on the renovation and relocation project. Mr. Servello added the addition of the CAT 6 wiring will help the flow and lead to less issues with Zoom. Mr. Servello stated that due to the lead time with the furniture order the move is tentatively slated for August, but it depends on when the furniture arrives. Mr. Servello added the solicitor is reviewing the current rental lease to see if there are any specifications on terminating the lease early.
- d. In-House Road & Drainage Issues by Chuck Beck
Mr. Beck stated he is planning on installing the stormwater pipe on Orchard Road prior to the resurfacing project. Mr. Beck added he is aware of other stormwater issues on Smith Road and Loveville Road and other various smaller projects.
- e. Status of Public Works Personnel by All Supervisors
Mr. Piper stated the Board has held executive sessions to interview the public works laborer candidates and there were some good candidates. Mr. Piper added the Board will be holding an executive session after the meeting to finalize the hiring process.

9. ACTION ITEMS

- a. Banking Resolutions
 - i. Resolution 2022-15 First National Bank Authorized Signers
 - ii. Resolution 2022-16 M&T Bank Authorized Signers
 - iii. Resolution 2022-17 PLGIT Authorized Signers

Mr. Piper stated the banking resolutions that were being approved were changing the amount of required Board signatures from one board member to two board members. Mr. Laird clarified historically Halfmoon had always required two board member signatures and the Treasurer or the Manager for a total of three signatures until recently and this change is just reverting to old practices.

Mr. Beck questioned if all three resolutions were stating the same thing. Mr. Piper confirmed each bank needed its own resolution, and all three resolutions were simply changing the number of required signatures.

- **MOTION:** Mr. Servello moved to approve Resolution 2022-15; A Resolution of the Township of Halfmoon, Centre County, pursuant to the creation of authorized signers and registration of such authorized persons with First National Bank (FNB) for the Halfmoon Township accounts; Mr. Beck seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.
- **MOTION:** Mr. Servello moved to approve Resolution 2022-16; A Resolution of the Township of Halfmoon, Centre County, pursuant to the creation of authorized signers and registration of such authorized persons with Manufacturers and Traders Trust Company (M&T Bank) for the Halfmoon Township accounts; Mr. Beck seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.
- **MOTION:** Ms. Hartle moved to approve Resolution 2022-17; A Resolution of the Township of Halfmoon, Centre County, pursuant to the creation of authorized signers and registration of such authorized persons with Pennsylvania Local Government Investment Trust (PLGIT) for the Halfmoon Township accounts; Mr. Servello seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

10. SUPERVISOR'S REPORTS

Ms. Hartle stated she attended the Facilities Committee meeting, and they discussed the need to clarify who owns the Centre Region COG building after the lease expires in 2028. Ms. Hartle added the issue is the COG owns the land, but the municipalities own the building. Ms. Hartle stated the committee has been working on an addendum to the lease agreement to clarify the issue and the addendum will be coming to the Board for approval. Mr. Piper questioned if the addendum will be coming to a regular Board meeting or a Centre Region meeting. Mr. Hartle confirmed the addendum will be discussed at the Centre Region COG General Forum meeting.

Mr. Servello stated he attended the Land Use and Community Infrastructure Committee, and the discussion was based on the Meek Lane Pump Station and an amendment to the agreement. Mr. Servello added the amendment will be going back to the Centre Region COG General Forum and will be coming back to the Board.

Mr. Servello stated he did not attend the Public Safety Committee because there were no relevant issues pertaining to Halfmoon Township.

Mr. Servello stated he met with Mr. Stephan Rountree regarding tennis court improvements. Mr. Servello stated the tennis court has blacktop issues and damages among other issues. Mr. Servello added Mr. Rountree offered to gather information and provide it the Board regarding the solution to the larger items at a future meeting, but some items could be handled by staff immediately. Mr. Piper added the immediate solutions could be expended from the park maintenance general line item.

11. DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

There was nothing for diversity, equity & inclusion.

12. GOOD & WELFARE


There was nothing for good & welfare.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Piper announced there would be an executive session after the adjournment of the meeting to discuss personnel. There being no further business before the board, the regular meeting was adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

- **MOTION:** Mr. Servello moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:52 p.m.; Mr. Beck seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

Respectfully submitted,


Amy M. Smith,
Township Secretary