

HALFMOON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
MEETING MINUTES

DECEMBER 14TH, 2023  
PAGE 1 OF 4

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 Rose Ann Hoover (present at Community Center); Patti Hartle (present at Community Center); Ron Servello (present at Community Center) and Chuck Beck (present at Community Center). Staff present were Chuck Beck, Public Works Lead (present at Community Center) and Derrick Reese, Public Works Laborer (present at Community Center).

Residents & others in attendance (In-person): Gail Jones, Tim & Liz Spicer, PMFC; Mike Moyer, PMFC; Jordan Mansberger, WTAJ; Tammy Perkins, Sharon Rovanseck, Delton & Mary Ann Shadow, Cliff Neal, Port Matilda EMS; Dave Crow, PMFC; Karen Miller, Donna & Dan Hughes, Bruce Helms, Andy Merritt, Lorin Nauman, Virginia Squier, Scott Flory, PMFC; Tom & Peggy Sue Majewski and Dave Allgeier.

1. **OPENING ANNOUNCEMENTS**

a. **More information is available on the website:** [www.halfmoontwp.us](http://www.halfmoontwp.us).

This evening's meeting is being LIVE recorded on C-NET's YouTube channel.

2. **AMENDMENT OF AGENDA**

- ***MOTION: Ms. Hoover moved to remove the line-item Diversity, Equity & Inclusion and incorporate it within Public Comments from this agenda and moving forward; Mr. Beck seconded; Vote 4-1-0; Mr. Piper, yea; Mr. Servello, yea; Ms. Hoover, yea; Mr. Beck, yea; Ms. Hartle, nay; No abstentions; Motion Carried.***
- ***MOTION: Ms. Hartle moved to remove the line-item Open Space Preservation Board Ordinance Recommendations & Refund Recommendation from the agenda due to the absence of Amy Smith, Open Space Administrator; Mr. Piper seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.***

3. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Ms. Squier stated she was saddened by the removal of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion from the agenda. Ms. Squier stated that the relationships with other townships in Centre County have tanked and she blames Ms. Hoover and Mr. Servello for this.

Ms. Squier reflected on the many cultures and religions that hold celebrations during this time of year.

Ms. Rovanseck expressed her support for Schlow Library and encouraged future Boards to consider rejoining the Joint Articles of Agreement.

Ms. Miller stated she opposes the decrease in funding for the fire department and it struck by how little support the fire company and ambulance service receives. Ms. Miller commented that every citizen in Halfmoon Township pays equally for roads and road maintenance and every citizen in Halfmoon Township should be paying equally for fire and ambulance service. Ms. Miller requested the board reinstitute the fire tax and add an emergency tax so emergency services can remain viable in Halfmoon Township.

Ms. Hughes stated her family has personally used both emergency services and encouraged the board to fully fund them.

Ms. Spicer discussed an incident that occurred at the Port Matilda Fire Company on March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Ms. Spicer continued she felt the incident occurred and was not acted upon appropriately due to poor leadership within the fire company and there are continued issues with a member who has been terminated from the PMFC.

Ms. Majewski stated that she felt other libraries around Centre County are forgotten because the focus has been discussing funding for Schlow Library.

Mr. Majewski thanked a majority of the Board for being good stewards of the taxpayers' money and guardians of tax increases. Mr. Majewski stated he has concerns about how the fire company is spending money, so he appreciates Mr. Servello and fellow board members for watching out for the tax monies.

**HALFMOON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
MEETING MINUTES**

**DECEMBER 14TH, 2023  
PAGE 2 OF 4**

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- **MOTION: Mr. Servello moved to approve the regular meeting minutes of November 9, 2023; Mr. Beck seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.**

**5. CONSENT AGENDA**

- a. The following items listed on the Consent Agenda portion of the agenda may be approved with a single motion by a member or if a member of the public requests that an item be removed from the Consent Agenda for a question or further discussion.

- a. Ratification of the Bills List for the period of 11/04/2023 to 11/17/2023 from the following funds:

1. General Fund in the amount of \$11,982.63
2. Open Space Preservation Fund in the amount of \$50.00

- b. Approval of the Bills List for the period of 11/18/2023 to 12/08/2023 from the following funds:

1. General Fund in the amount of \$59,026.98
2. Open Space Preservation Fund in the amount of \$1,113.00

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

**6. RESOLUTION 2023-34 AGRICULTURAL SECURITY AREA SEVEN YEAR REVIEW PUBLIC HEARING**

Ms. Hoover provided a review of the revisions to the 2023 ASA noting that there were thirteen (13) properties added to the ASA, two properties were eliminated due to fact that they no longer qualified and the remaining properties were retained for a total of 89 properties and 5,830.65 acres. Mr. Piper opened the public hearing at 7:27 p.m. There were public comments. Mr. Piper closed the public hearing at 7:28 p.m.

- **MOTION: Mr. Servello moved to approve Resolution 2023-34; A Resolution of the Board of Supervisors of Halfmoon Township, Centre County, Pennsylvania, amending the Agricultural Security Area; Mr. Beck seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.**

**7. RESOLUTION 2023-35 HALFMOON TOWNSHIP 2024 BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING**

Mr. Piper opened the public hearing at 7:29 p.m.

Mr. Merritt stated that on November 7<sup>th</sup> the Halfmoon Township voters sent a message to this Board. Mr. Merritt added that the message was that they have had enough of the attack on common sense, enough of the attack on literacy by defunding the library and enough of the attack of volunteer fire companies that are staffed by volunteers. Mr. Merritt stated he only hoped the message was received because tonight the Board votes on a budget that decimates library funding and may harm the volunteers that serve the community. Mr. Merritt continued that the fire company budget was created by experts, professionals who know the costs to fund the necessary life-saving equipment and training. Mr. Merritt stated that Chief Witherite is an expert, and he trusts Chief Witherite. Mr. Merritt added that Chief Witherite's budget was sent to another professional firefighter for review who stated that there was nothing in PMFC's budget that was out of line for a fire company the size of PMFC. Mr. Merritt stated instead of experts the budget was decided by Bureaucrats who cancelled numerous meetings in lieu of meeting with the experts. Mr. Merritt added that on August 22<sup>nd</sup> the Bureaucrats decided the coverage area was 38% and therefore the township would only pay for 38% of the budget requested. Mr. Merritt added that when sirens tone not just 38% of the firefighters show up and instead is funding another fire company who did not request funding from Halfmoon Township. Mr. Merritt stated the good news is that it is not too late, this board can provide the funding determined by the experts. Mr. Merritt stated it is \$0.03 per day and for a resident it is \$10.00 per year to fully fund the \$30,000.00 deficit and it would be even less if the Board would rescind the motion to fund a fire company who did not even ask for funding. Mr. Merritt stated for one member of the board it is your last vote, how do you want to be remembered trusting the professional experts or the Bureaucrats.

Mr. Majewski stated that Ron Servello at an Upper Bald Eagle COG meeting gave a detailed account of the PMFC funding for this year and the past five years. Mr. Majewski stated although he did not remember the specific numbers, he remembered that Halfmoon Township had doubled its funding in those five years. Mr. Majewski stated his concern was when he asked the other municipalities for the same information, they could not

**HALFMOON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
MEETING MINUTES****DECEMBER 14TH, 2023  
PAGE 3 OF 4**

provide the answer. Mr. Majewski stated the funding of PMFC seems to fall on Halfmoon Township, where the other municipalities are waving off the requests.

Ms. Perkins stated that for the record she would like a status update on if the other municipalities have agreed to the 38% funding formula presented by Mr. Laird. Mr. Servello stated he could not speak about the other municipalities' budgets. Mr. Perkins stated she did not need specifics she was asking if the formula had been brought up to and discussed with any or all the other municipalities. Mr. Piper stated that he discussed the formula individually with other supervisors. Mr. Servello stated that it had been discussed at the Upper Bald COG as well and has been provided to them. Ms. Perkins questioned if there had been any resolution amongst the townships and whether they accepted it. Mr. Servello stated that he did not know if the other municipalities had approved it, but he doubted it. Mr. Piper stated that he spoke with two supervisors from two different municipalities who stated they are small, and the formula would financially harm them. Mr. Piper added that he told Chief Witherite that Halfmoon would provide the money that it promises but cannot speak for the other municipalities. Mr. Servello provided a chart from 2018 that was agreed upon at the Upper Bald Eagle COG during the funding of the previous truck loan. Mr. Servello stated that the formula was drafted though 2028 and that Worth, Taylor and Huston Township were still following this chart and that Port Matilda Borough voted to provide 2 mils in lieu of the formula. Mr. Servello added that if Halfmoon were to continue to follow the 2018 formula, the funding of 2024 would have been roughly \$68,600.00 which is less than the budgeted \$72,200.00 in the current budget. Ms. Perkins questioned how much the operating costs were in 2018 due to the large difference in inflation between 2018 and 2023 and if the formula kept up with those costs. Ms. Hartle stated that she thought the 2018 formula only used a 1% increase for inflation. Mr. Servello stated that the \$72,200.00 is 38% of the total budget that was agreed to between Chief Witherite and Mr. Laird of \$190,000.00. Ms. Perkins stated that her understanding was that Chief Witherite had taken the numbers from Mr. Laird and then spoke with other members involved and the numbers increased from \$190,000.00 to \$250,000.00. Mr. Servello stated he felt the opposite happened and the number was decreased from \$250,000 to \$190,000.00. Ms. Hartle stated the 2018 chart was a starting point for discussion and just increased 1% every year. Mr. Servello stated that it increased more than 1%. Ms. Hartle questioned if the \$250,000.00 budget was approved by the PMFC Board and then presented to the Upper Bald Eagle COG. Mr. Hartle added that she felt there were process issues that needed to be addressed. Mr. Servello stated that if you looked at the 2024 projections for funding, Halfmoon Township is scheduled to pay 49.5% of the appropriated amount. Mr. Servello stated that it can be stated other municipalities do not have the money, but the formula was based on proper weighting. Mr. Servello added that Mr. Laird utilized some of the similar weighting factors to the Centre Region COG and the formulas were accepted by all five members of the Board at one point.

Mr. Crow stated that the PMFC budget was brought to Mr. Laird, and he helped Chief Witherite get the budget organized more amendable to the township and the fire company was appreciative of that. Mr. Crow continued that Chief Witherite brought the budget back to be finalized by the PMFC Board and the Board identified some missing items causing the budget to increase. Mr. Crow added that Chief Witherite had provided the budget back to Mr. Laird, but certain decisions had already been made. Mr. Crow stated that the budget has become more than just operating, it allows for capital savings as well and continues to be worked on for future years. Mr. Crow provided the example of planning for the Engine Tanker replacement in eight to ten years. Mr. Crow added that PMFC appreciates working with Halfmoon and agrees they shouldn't carry the entire load but should remain a leader and not a follower. Ms. Hartle questioned if the PMFC Board did indeed approve of a budget what the Municipal Contribution line item ended up being. Mr. Crow stated that specifically he did not remember but it would be closer to the \$250,000.00 amount.

Mr. Hughes stated last Spring he decided to volunteer for the fire department, obviously not as a fire man but for fundraising. Mr. Hughes added he attended six BINGO meetings and the raffle and wanted to point out being a volunteer is not necessarily fun. Mr. Hughes stated that a normal BINGO runs from 4 PM to 10:30 PM and sometimes will only profit \$1,000.00 and the raffle is a twelve-hour commitment. Mr. Hughes stated that the same volunteers are also some of the same people running the calls and working their own jobs. Mr. Hughes added he was disturbed that no Halfmoon Township supervisor attended the raffle and thanked the volunteers.

Ms. Miller stated she wanted to point out that the fire company assists the EMS on calls. Ms. Miller added that they are all volunteers, and she was appalled by how this particular Board has treated the fire company and the EMS as well as Chief Witherite.

Mr. Piper closed the public hearing at 7:52 p.m.

HALFMOON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
MEETING MINUTES

DECEMBER 14TH, 2023  
PAGE 4 OF 4

- **MOTION:** Mr. Servello moved to approve Resolution 2023-35; A Resolution of the Board of Supervisors of Halfmoon Township, Centre County, Pennsylvania, adopting the budget of the Township for fiscal year 2024; Mr. Beck seconded; Ms. Hartle questioned if the budget could be amended to meet the \$250,000.00 PMFC request. Mr. Piper stated the budget could be decreased at this time but not increased. Ms. Hartle stated that Mr. Laird informed her the budget could be increased by 25% without readvertising. Mr. Piper questioned if the funding was altered, where would the extra funding be pulled from. Mr. Piper added that he felt this problem was larger than the budget and referenced the success of Alpha Fire Company and Warriors Mark Fire Company. Mr. Servello stated that PMFC, based on the previous years' tax return, had a surplus and is projected to do the same this year. Mr. Servello added that the municipalities fund the purchase of the fire trucks, so he felt the funding was sufficient given those facts. Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

8. RESOLUTION 2023-36 2024 REAL ESTATE TAX LEVIES

- **MOTION:** Mr. Servello moved to approve Resolution 2023-36; A Resolution of the Board of Supervisors of Halfmoon Township, Centre County, Pennsylvania, pursuant to the establishment of a Real Property Tax for fiscal year 2024; Ms. Hartle seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

9. RESOLUTION 2023-37 TRANSFER FROM GENERAL FUND TO CAPITAL RESERVES

- **MOTION:** Mr. Servello moved to approve Resolution 2023-37; A Resolution of the Board of Supervisors of Halfmoon Township, Centre County, Pennsylvania, approving the transfer of \$150,000.00 unencumbered General Funds into the Capital Reserve Fund; Ms. Hartle seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

10. AWARD BITUMINOUS & AGGREGATE FY 2024

Mr. Beck provided a brief overview of the bid results and stated that due to healthy competition there was an unexpected decrease in pricing.

- **MOTION:** Mr. Servello moved to award the bituminous & aggregate bids to the lowest bidders; Mr. Beck seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

11. 2023 PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT LINE-ITEM BUDGET TRANSFER

Mr. Beck stated due to the recently approved 2024 pricing and in an effort to spend funds in the most effective way possible the Public Works Department was requesting the board transfer \$7,000.00 obtained from line item 438.25 Road Maintenance Repairs to 430.24 Public Works General Operating Supplies. The transfer will fund a project of utilizing concrete wall blocks to build a storage area to stockpile materials at lower costs when available.

- **MOTION:** Mr. Servello moved to approve the 2023 Public Works Department line-item budget transfer of \$7,000.00; Ms. Hartle seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

12. TOWNSHIP REPORTS

There were no additional comments or reporting.

13. AUTHORITY, BOARD, AND COMMITTEE REPORTS


Mr. Piper stated that all reports are available online by using the links within the individual meeting agendas.

14. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the board, the regular meeting was adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

- **MOTION:** Mr. Servello moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:06 p.m.; Mr. Beck seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Amy M. Smith,  
Township Secretary

