

HALFMOON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
MEETING MINUTES**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 Chuck Beck (present at Community Center); Ron Servello (present at Community Center); Tammy Perkins (present at Community Center) and Patti Hartle (present at the Community Center). Staff present were Amy Smith, Township Secretary (present at Community Center); Brett Laird, Township Treasurer (present at Community Center) and Chuck Beck, Township Roadmaster.

Residents & others in attendance (In-person): Dan & Donna Hughes; Gina Motter Mike Moyer, Port Matilda Fire Company (PMFC); Josh Witherite, PMFC; John Witherite, PMFC; Sheena Goyne, PMFC; Mike Evanko; Dave Crow; Rose Ann Hoover; Michelle Schellberg; Gail Jones; and Girish Kirimanjeswara.

Residents & others in attendance (Zoom): Brian Hoffman, Bruce Helms & Lenore Foster.

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.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Evanko requested the Board consider adding this item to a future agenda to assist a resident of 184 Gensis Drive who is required to install a sprinkler system into their new home based on a Subdivision Plan note. Mr. Evanko added that the installation of the sprinkler system would cause undue hardship to the resident. Mr. Piper questioned if there was a dry hydrant currently installed. Mr. Evanko stated that there was not but that could be a potential option for alleviation. Mr. Servello questioned how far along the house was and if the sprinkler system could still be installed. Mr. Evanko stated that the sprinkler system could still be installed.

Ms. Perkins questioned how many homes were already built with the same sprinkler requirement. Mr. Evanko stated three and all had already installed the sprinkler systems. Mr. Piper stated the board would have to seek legal advice and that their hands may be tied but would look into the matter.

Ms. Michelle Schellberg questioned, as an owner of one of the three other houses, how the house in question was able to begin building without a sprinkler system plan being completed. Ms. Schellberg continued that she felt the ordinance in front of the board tonight had no solid basis to be approved.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **MOTION: Mr. Servello moved to approve the regular meeting minutes of March 14, 2024; Ms. Hartle 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.

- i. Ratification of the Bills List for the period of 03/09/2024 to 03/22/2024 from the following funds:
 1. General Fund in the amount of \$16,641.11
 2. Fire Protection Fund in the amount of \$23,550.00
 3. Open Space Preservation Fund in the amount of \$50.00
- ii. Ratification of the Bills List for the period of 03/23/2024 to 04/05/2024 from the following funds:
 1. General Fund in the amount of \$33,617.06

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

6. PORT MATILDA FIRE COMPANY - ADMINISTRATION DISCUSSION

Mr. Moyer stated himself and other members of the Port Matilda Fire Company were present tonight to dispel rumors they have been hearing regarding the management of the company, in particular with the Treasurer situation. Mr. Moyer added that Nittany Brokerage was their Treasurer.

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Mr. Servello clarified he thought Mr. Brian Hoffman was the Treasurer and Ms. Patti Bennett of Nittany brokerage was the Bookkeeper.

Mr. Moyer stated that Mr. Hoffman collected and sorted the bills and Ms. Bennett paid the bills and played more of the Treasurer role.

Mr. Servello questioned if per the agreement everyone was comfortable that Ms. Bennett met the parameters of the agreement between the Port Matilda Fire Company and Upper Bald Eagle-Halfmoon COG. Mr. Servello also requested an update on when or if an audit was being completed per the agreement.

Mr. Moyer stated the audit was to be completed after peak tax season.

Mr. Josh Witherite added he agreed with Mr. Servello that clarification at the next Upper Bald Eagle-Halfmoon COG meeting would be useful and requested Ms. Smith to place that on the next agenda.

Mr. Moyer questioned at the last meeting the Chair had used the words "slush fund" and he wanted to know what exactly he was referring to with the term.

Mr. Piper stated he did not remember using the term, but he was referring to the past financial issues of the fire company. Mr. Piper added his only concern was whether the municipal funds were being spent well.

Mr. Moyer stated the fire company cannot purchase anything using municipal funds without the approval of the Upper Bald Eagle-Halfmoon COG, which even includes grant funds that are placed in the municipal fund. Mr. Moyer added that is why the fire company wanted to dispel any rumors of misappropriation of funds. Mr. Moyer continued he felt the issues may be caused due to the fact they were receiving late charges on bills due to an internal issue that was corrected, and all current issues are handled.

Mr. Piper stated that it was not his intention to imply anything and apologized for any misconceptions it may have caused.

Mr. Moyer commented that it was not just a Halfmoon Township issue, the fire company planned on attending a meeting of all five participating municipalities to dispel any and all rumors.

Mr. Hughes questioned what document Mr. Servello was reading from at tonight's meeting.

Mr. Servello responded it was the agreement between the Port Matilda Fire Company and the Upper Bald Eagle-Halfmoon COG. Mr. Servello read the agreement in its entirety.

Mr. Hughes requested a copy of the agreement and questioned if the current board was comfortable with an agreement that had not been updated since 2014.

Mr. Servello stated he was comfortable with it, but he could not speak for the other municipalities involved.

Mr. Josh Witherite requested Ms. Smith place the agreement as a discussion item on the COG agenda for the next meeting.

Mr. Piper stated that because Mr. Moyer was already at the podium it made sense to move the ordinance discussion ahead on the agenda unless there was any objection from the board.

The board all stated they were comfortable with the change.

7. ORDINANCE 2024-01 EMERGENCY RESCUE SERVICE ORGANIZATION INVOICING

Mr. Piper questioned if the Port Matilda Fire Company was currently allowed to bill for services.

Mr. Moyer stated that currently they could bill insurance companies, however when the bill is sent by their 3rd party invoicing vendor the claims can be denied if this ordinance is not passed in that particular township. Mr. Moyer added the fire company bills insurance companies for all vehicle incidents but would like assistance in billing the individual in cases where the involved parties do not reside within the coverage area of Port Matilda

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Fire Company. Mr. Moyer concluded why should the taxpayer be paying for an incident of someone who lives outside the coverage area or out of state.

Mr. Servello stated that plan seemed to make sense but did not feel that was how the current ordinance reads.

Mr. Piper questioned how lucrative the billing may become for the fire company.

Mr. Josh Witherite stated a recent incident on I-99 where traffic control and oil dry was used made earned the fire company \$2,788.43 that they planned on placing in a newly created Money Market Account earning 5% interest. The intent of the Money Market Account was to save for capital purchases.

Mr. Piper questioned what the percentage of non-payments was.

Mr. Moyer stated they currently see a 40% positive return.

Mr. Servello stated he was concerned only by the fact that insurance companies are governed by Federal and State laws so would the ordinance hold any weight legally.

Mr. Moyer stated the ordinance was requested by the 3rd party billing company for assistance in dealing with the insurance companies.

Ms. Hartle questioned if other local municipalities had passed a similar ordinance.

Mr. Moyer stated Harris Township had passed an ordinance to assist Boalsburg Fire Company and he recommended the township have their solicitor draft an ordinance. Mr. Moyer added the ordinance in front of the board currently was an ordinance prepared and passed by Taylor Township.

Mr. Servello stated he felt the new ordinance needed to be more specific on the type of incident.

Ms. Perkins stated she agreed with Mr. Servello that the current ordinance is too broad.

Mr. Piper added there were certain sections pertaining to the fee schedule he had questions on.

Mr. Moyer stated the fee schedule is a uniform fee schedule that spans across five different states.

Ms. Perkins requested staff obtain copies of other ordinances from municipalities to assist in drafting a new ordinance.

Ms. Hartle questioned if there seemed to be a higher success rate with the ordinance than without.

Mr. Josh Witherite stated that the fire company has had payments withheld due to the lack of an ordinance.

Mr. Servello requested staff obtain drafts for discussion at the Board's next meeting to begin the process but felt the current ordinance was rushed.

Ms. Perkins agreed.

Mr. Piper thanked the fire company for attending and asked if there was anything else they'd like to add.

Mr. Jose Witherite added the Outdoorsman's Raffle tickets were freshly printed and would be available soon and the Trout tournament begins tomorrow, and the kitchen was open for food beginning at 3 p.m. Friday and continuing at 3 a.m. Saturday.

8. AWARD 2024 ROAD RESURFACING PROJECTS

- **MOTION: Mr. Servello moved to approve the award of the 2024 Road Surfacing Projects to the lowest overall bidder, Glenn O. Hawbaker, Inc.; Ms. Perkins seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.**

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9. TOWNSHIP REPORTS

Staff reports were provided and there were no additional comments.

10. AUTHORITY, BOARD, AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

There was nothing further reported.

11. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the board, the regular meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

- **MOTION:** *Mr. Servello moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m.; Mr. Beck seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.*

Respectfully submitted,



Amy M. Smith,
Township Secretary

