

HALFMOON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

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1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Patti Hartle called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Other Supervisors present were Bruce Helms; Ron Servello, Tammy Perkins and Lorin Nauman (by Zoom). Staff present were Amy Smith, Township Secretary.

Residents & others in attendance: Diane Servello; Michelle Schellberg; Will Kawulich; Cliff Neal, Port Matilda EMS; Bill Donley; Tom & Peggy Sue Majewski; Doug & Hilary Kleckner; Karen Miller and Chip & Gail Jones.

Zoom attendance: None.

2. **AGENDA APPROVAL**

- ***MOTION: Ms. Perkins moved to approve the agenda as presented; Mr. Helms seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.***

3. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. Neal, representing Port Matilda EMS, provided an update to the Board. Port Matilda EMS is seeking an EMS Chief with both EMS and administrative experience. Membership remains at approximately 18%, and Mr. Neal encouraged residents to become members.

Mr. Neal added that the station expansion has been completed, adding two bays and additional storage. Current projects include roof replacement, updated mapping, decontamination capabilities, and drainage and walkway improvements. Grants are being pursued to fund these projects without additional township funding.

In addition, upcoming fundraisers include a 5K on October 3, cash bingo on September 13, a soup and sandwich sale on Election Day, and the annual Christmas wreath sale. Mr. Neal noted that staffing and employee costs remain the organization's greatest financial challenges.

Ms. Schellberg requested a municipal facilities update, including clarification on mold testing, the status of the building assessments, and what work and expenditures have been authorized. Ms. Schellberg also questioned whether the proposed Municipal Lane parking improvements are connected to a potential new municipal facility and requested clarification regarding the project's scope, cost, and authorization. Ms. Schellberg asked that no further work or spending on a new facility or expanded park proceed until these questions are addressed.

4. **REPORTS**

Executive Committee: Ms. Hartle stated that at the July Executive Committee meeting they approved a recommendation to the General Forum to discuss and consider action on expanding the Regional Growth Boundary and Sewer Service Area for the proposed Penn State Applied Research Lab campus at Innovation Park. The General Forum subsequently approved the recommendation. The next Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday.

Finance Committee: Ms. Perkins stated the Finance Committee received updates on local and regional economic impacts, with CPI at 3.5%. The Fire Director reported that the old Engine 5 is being sold to Spring Township at a reduced-price following Spring Township's loss of an engine in a fire. Spring Township will make the necessary repairs, with provisions for any future resale proceeds to return to the region.

The Committee also received an update on the Strategic Guide to Services and Investment. Municipalities are encouraged to provide explanations with consensus responses, whether supporting or opposing proposed investments, to provide additional directions to staff.

Public Safety: Mr. Helms stated that the Public Safety Committee also discussed the sale of the old Engine 5. Mr. Helms stated he had asked some questions, and objected to that sale, because I don't think taxpayers are getting the full benefit.

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Mr. Helms stated that the truck was valued at about \$50,000 net. There was never got an actual appraisal on it based on the current conditions. It could be less than that based on standard, but Mr. Helms felt that it should have been sold for the full current market value, not just \$25,000.

Mr. Helms added that Halfmoon Township has no vote in this matter because we're not part of the Central Region Fire Protection, so there's only just comments.

LUSI Committee: Mr. Nauman stated that Tussey Mountain submitted a proposal for approximately 41–42 acres to be included in the Regional Growth Boundary. The proposal includes replacing the existing six-inch sewer line with an eight-inch line to support planned resort improvements, including a conference center, warming shelter, ski school, and patrol shelters. The application was approved for review and forwarded to the General Forum. It will then proceed through COG and the municipalities for consideration.

There was a presentation on AI centers and zoning. Centre Region Planning Agency staff are working on a process to formally document shared or transferred land-use allocations between municipalities, including appropriate legal descriptions.

CCMPO: Mr. Helms stated a meeting has been set on August 26th with staff to complete an evaluation of the PennDot one tool data.

5. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

There were no additional reports provided.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

CA-1 Approval of Minutes

Board of Supervisors Regular Meeting July 9, 2026 (enclosed)
Board of Supervisors Special Meeting July 20, 2026 (enclosed)
Board of Supervisors Special Meeting July 27, 2026 (enclosed)
Board of Supervisors Special Meeting July 28, 2026 (enclosed)

Approval of this item accepts & files the listed minutes of the previous meetings.

CA-2 August 2026 Bills List

August 2026 Bills List (enclosed)

Approval of this item accepts & files the enclosed bills list.

CA-3 Acknowledgement of resignation of Westley R. Layton of Custodian

Acknowledgement of the resignation of Westley R. Layton effective August 10, 2026.

- ***MOTION: Mr. Helms moved to approve the items CA-1; CA-2 & C-3 as listed on August 13, 2026, Consent Agenda; Ms. Perkins seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.***

7. MUNICIPAL LANE STORMWATER MITIGATION PLAN PRESENTATION

As part of the Strategic Plan adopted by the Board of Supervisors on April 9, 2026, the Board commissioned a comprehensive facilities assessment, which included evaluating drainage issues at the Administrative Building.

The Board reviewed a proposed Municipal Lane stormwater and parking improvement project following the July flooding at the administrative building. Mr. Franson explained that the parking lot currently drains toward the building and that the existing underdrains may be clogged, damaged, or no longer connected. Mr. Franson recommended improving the drainage system to capture stormwater before it reaches the building and directing it toward the existing stone-lined swale along Municipal Lane.

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The proposed project includes four stormwater inlets, regrading the parking lot, new piping, curbing and landscaping, and paving the parking area, increasing it from approximately nine existing spaces to 54 spaces. Mr. Franson explained that paving would also reduce the amount of gravel washing into the stormwater inlets. The total estimated project cost is \$175,470, including approximately \$70,000 for stormwater improvements, \$94,000 for paving, and \$11,000 for landscaping.

The Board discussed phasing the project, with stormwater improvements completed first and paving considered at a later date. A smaller initial phase, consisting of two inlets and approximately 130 feet of piping, was estimated at approximately \$35,000 and could address a significant portion of the stormwater flowing toward the building. Mr. Servello emphasized that preventing further water intrusion into the administrative building should be the immediate priority.

Additional options discussed included improving drainage around the building, replacing existing or missing underdrains, evaluating roof runoff, and determining whether piping remains in the existing ditch. Mr. Franson will obtain more detailed site elevations and evaluate drainage options before developing a final scope. Staff will also explore whether the underdrains can be repaired as a short-term, in-house solution.

The Board acknowledged receipt and review of the \$175,470 proposal for planning and budgeting purposes only, with no commitment to proceed with the project or authorize expenditures at this time. Mr. Franson and staff were directed to continue evaluating the proposed improvements and options.

- ***MOTION: Ms. Perkins moved that the Board of Supervisors acknowledge receipt and review of the proposed Municipal Lane Parking Lot Stormwater and Parking Improvements cost estimate, as presented by Franson Engineering and Surveying, with an estimated project cost of \$175,470, for planning and budgeting purposes only, with no commitment to proceed with the project or authorize expenditures at this time, and direct the Township Engineer and Township staff to continue evaluating the proposed improvements and provide any additional information requested by the Board; Mr. Nauman seconded;***

Mr. Servello commented that the lack of functioning drainage in the ditch appears to be contributing to significant water-flow problems. During the recent heavy rain, water cascaded down or hit the stone and backflowed, washing out the road and surrounding area and allowing water to enter the building. The ditch has reportedly been modified over the past couple of years and previously contained a pipe.

Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.

8. APPOINTMENT OF CLEANING SERVICE PROVIDER

As part of the employee review process, the Board will appoint a Review Lead to compile the submitted employee evaluations, identify common themes, highlight any significant differences, and prepare draft final evaluations for the Board's discussion during the September 25 Employee Review Retreat.

- ***MOTION: Mr. Helms moved that the Board of Supervisors appoint Elise's Cleaning Service as the cleaning service provider for Halfmoon Township; Ms. Perkins seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.***

9. EMPLOYEE REVIEW LEAD APPOINTMENT

As part of the employee review process, the Board will appoint a Review Lead to compile the submitted employee evaluations, identify common themes, highlight any significant differences, and prepare draft final evaluations for the Board's discussion during the September 25 Employee Review Retreat.

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Ms. Perkins and Mr. Servello were interested in being appointed as the Review Lead.

The discussion clarified that the review retreat is scheduled for September 25, but all appraisal materials and evaluations need to be compiled beforehand. There was a concern about whether individual review comments would be fully considered during the retreat or whether the lead would simply select common themes and determine which items were included for discussion. It was explained that the evaluations would likely be reviewed and summarized by identifying common themes, but that everyone would still have an opportunity at the September 25 meeting to discuss their individual observations, including points of particular concern or benefit.

Mr. Servello stated he would not be able to commit to the timeline due to unavailability so he would withdraw his interest in Review Lead. It was confirmed that the appraisals for the new evaluations should be submitted to Brett.

- ***MOTION: Mr. Nauman moved that the Board of Supervisors appoint Tammy Perkins as the Review Lead for the 2026 Employee Review Process. The Review Lead will be responsible for compiling the submitted employee evaluations, identifying common themes and any significant differences among the evaluations, preparing draft final evaluations for the Board's review and discussion at the September 25, 2026, Employee Review Retreat, and presenting the finalized evaluations during the employee review meeting; Mr. Helms seconded; Action: Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.***

10. CONSERVATION LEASE TERMINATION AGREEMENT – DANIEL S. & CLAIRE T. DIGMAN (17-004-.026-.0000-)

Halfmoon Township approved a commitment of \$45,000 to partner with the Centre County Agricultural Land Preservation Board (CCALPB) to place the Digman property into the Centre County Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement (PACE) Program for a permanent conservation easement. An advance payment of \$14,392.60 was provided by the Township in 2008. At the time of closing, this advance payment will be deducted from the amount owed by Halfmoon Township, resulting in a final payment of \$30,607.40. The Digman property contains 25.25 acres.

The Digman's have signed an Offer of Acceptance and Agreement of Sale with the Centre County PACE Program. As a requirement of the PACE Program, any other lease on the property must be terminated.

- ***MOTION: Ms. Perkins moved that the Board of Supervisors approve the Conservation Lease Termination Agreement for Daniel S. & Claire T. Digman.; Ms. Hartle seconded;***

Mr. Servello questioned whether converting 99-year leases to permanent easements is financially beneficial, noting that additional payments may not result in savings and could lead to more buyout requests. Ms. Hartle stated that \$132,489 remains on the lease, with \$16,777.06 paid to date, and that the \$30,607 conversion cost, after deducting the advance payment, would eliminate future lease payments and result in savings. Mr. Servello also raised concerns about the time value of money.

Mr. Helms stated his comments reflect what Mr. Servello has stated but added that the advance payment should include interest.

Ms. Perkins stated she supports the termination given the significant amount of money we are saving in terms of our township and open space programs.

Mr. Nauman stated he fully supports the termination of the lease. Mr. Nauman added that permanent conservation easements are intended to remain in perpetuity and are extremely difficult, if not impossible, to terminate. The conversion would therefore provide the township with permanent protection beyond the 99-year lease term while also saving approximately \$100,000 over the remaining life of the lease.

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Mr. Servello questioned the difference between a lease and a permanent easement. Mr. Nauman stated a permanent easement is attached to the property deed and remains in effect in perpetuity, preventing development on the property. A 99-year lease also restricts development during the lease term, but the restriction can expire after 99 years.

Vote 3-2-0; Ms. Hartle, yea; Ms. Perkins, yea; Mr. Nauman, yea; Mr. Servello, nay; Mr. Helms; nay; No abstentions; Motion Carried.

11. RESOLUTION 2026-22; A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF HALFMOON, CENTRE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA AUTHORIZING THE TERMINATION OF AN OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION CONSERVATION LEASE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TOWNSHIP AND DANIEL S. & CLAIRE T. DIGMAN CONCERNING CENTRE COUNTY TAX PARCEL NUMBER 17-004-026-0000-

In order to continue the process of placing a permanent conservation easement on the Daniel S. & Claire T. Digman property through the Centre County Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement (PACE) Program, the 99-year lease currently held on the property through the Halfmoon Township Open Space Preservation Program will need to be terminated by Resolution.

- ***MOTION: Ms. Perkins moved to approve Resolution 2026-22, authorizing the termination of the Open Space Preservation Conservation Lease Agreement between Halfmoon Township and Daniel S. & Claire T. Digman for Centre County Tax Parcel No. 17-004-026-0000; Mr. Nauman seconded;***

Mr. Servello reiterated his concern that the proposed lease conversion does not demonstrate actual savings to the township. He stated that the township would be making another large payment without recovering prior lease payments or interest and expressed concern that this could lead to additional permanent easement buyouts in the future. He requested a financial analysis demonstrating actual savings before supporting the process.

Vote 3-2-0; Ms. Hartle, yea; Ms. Perkins, yea; Mr. Nauman, yea; Mr. Servello, nay; Mr. Helms; nay; No abstentions; Motion Carried.

12. STINE AGRICULTURAL SECURITY AREA (ASA) REQUEST

Greg Stine requested inclusion of a 20.8-acre parcel in Halfmoon Township in the Agricultural Security Area (ASA). The parcel is part of a 56-acre tract spanning two townships and two counties and was submitted with a separate 134.3-acre parcel to the Centre County Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement (PACE) Program. Inclusion in the ASA is a requirement to be eligible for the PACE program.

The Open Space Preservation Board (OSPB) recommended that the Board of Supervisors open the Agricultural Security Area to include the Stine property, tax parcel 17-006-008-0000.

- ***MOTION: Ms. Perkins moved to approve opening the Agricultural Security Area (ASA) to include the Stine property and directs staff to being the process to open the ASA; Mr. Nauman seconded;***

Mr. Servello objected to opening the ASA due to the property being in the open space preservation program because the next step will be to offer payment from Halfmoon Township to put it in the PACE program.

Vote 3-2-0; Ms. Hartle, yea; Ms. Perkins, yea; Mr. Nauman, yea; Mr. Servello, nay; Mr. Helms; nay Motion Carried.

Mr. Helms asked about the purpose of the Agricultural Security Area Committee. It was explained that the committee reviews applications and properties to ensure they meet the required criteria, including soil requirements. The board's action to open the Agricultural Security Area only allows the property to be reviewed; the committee cannot meet until the area is opened. It was also clarified that the process must be advertised and

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that, during the required seven-year review, eligible property owners are notified and given an opportunity to apply. Once a property is included, the owner does not need to reapply.

Ms. Majewski requested a quick description of what an ASA is and if it secures agriculture.

An Agricultural Security Area is a designated area intended to protect qualifying farmland and support the continued use of the property for agriculture. It is part of a state program, and properties must meet established criteria to be included. The designation provides protections for participating farmland, including protections related to government acquisition through eminent domain.

- ***MOTION: Mr. Servello moved to appoint Bruce Helms to Chair the Agricultural Security Area Committee; Mr. Nauman seconded; Vote 5-0-0; Motion Carried.***

13. OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION PROGRAM ORDINANCE REVISION SUMMARY (2026)

In October 2023, the Open Space Preservation Board (OSPB) initiated a comprehensive review of the Open Space Preservation Program Ordinance in response to recommendations from the 2022 Open Space Preservation Five-Year Review Committee and direction from the Board of Supervisors.

Throughout the review process, it became apparent that the existing ordinance, due to numerous revisions over the years, lacked consistency in organization, terminology, and formatting. In addition, several provisions required clarification to improve the readability and administration of the program. The review also included a recommendation to eliminate the advance payment option, which has proven to be administratively challenging and has created complications during subsequent conservation easement transactions.

As a result, the Township Solicitor was directed to conduct a comprehensive review and prepare a revised ordinance that is clearer, more consistent, and better reflects the Township's current Open Space Preservation Program.

Given the scope of the revisions and additions, staff prepared a summary of the proposed changes, which have been provided to the Board for review.

Staff are requesting authorization to proceed with the next step in the adoption process by advertising the proposed ordinance for the required 60-day public inspection period and scheduling a public hearing for the Board of Supervisors' November 12, 2026, meeting.

Ms. Smith explained that the ordinance revision began when the township was considering removing the advance payment option. During that review, staff identified unclear responsibilities for certain costs, definitions that needed clarification, and terminology in the lease that needed to be revised. Because the ordinance had been amended several times and no longer flowed well, the solicitor recommended a comprehensive revision to clarify the language and address these concerns.

Mr. Helms raised several concerns regarding the proposed Open Space Preservation Program ordinance revisions. He questioned the quorum language in Section 163-3A4 and requested clarification on whether a majority of members present could constitute a quorum and confirmed that all board members, including the supervisor, are voting members.

Mr. Helms stated the Open Space Preservation Board must state a goal, i.e., what's the end game/sunset provision. How many acres are to be preserved. Will any development be encouraged. Mr. Helms added that the tax base is frozen.

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Mr. Helms stated under 163-4€(2)(a) regarding subdivision when an advance payment was made, any advance payment made must be refunded and that should include interest.

Mr. Helms stated under 163-5 (B), that lands enrolled PA Clean & Green program should be ineligible for the open space preservation program. Mr. Helms added that the PA Clean & Green program is an open space program.

Mr. Helms stated under 163-6 (C) (1) (b), if a landowner wants to exit the program for a hardship than all sums received to that point including any advanced payment should be refunded with interest.

Mr. Helms stated under 163-6 (C) (2), the township should not be in the real estate business even if for two years. Mr. Helms added that this removes the property from the tax rolls and may incur unknown maintenance costs.

Mr. Helms stated under 163-3 (D), any time a lease is terminated, any advance payment should be refunded with interest.

Ms. Perkins had no comments.

Mr. Servello expressed concerns that the proposed ordinance does not establish a clear limit or long-term plan for the Open Space Preservation Program. He requested an independent financial analysis to determine the current and future costs of the program, including permanent easements, buyouts, and potential cost-sharing with PACE, and to determine whether the program can remain affordable within the two-mill tax.

He also raised concerns about the three-year legal review process and the limited opportunity for the board to review the proposed changes. Mr. Servello reiterated concerns about repeated changes to the original lease program, Clean & Green participation, and the extent of permitted development on preserved properties. He emphasized the need for clear goals, financial safeguards, and taxpayer protections, particularly given the township's declining tax base.

Mr. Nauman had no comments.

Mr. Kawulich questioned how a resident of Ferguson Township is benefiting from the open space preservation program and does not pay taxes to Halfmoon Township. Mr. Kawulich also questioned how this person was also allowed to serve on the Open Space Preservation Board. Mr. Kawulich stated the township should be getting money back on that deal.

Mr. Kawulich stated that he believed Pennsylvania law prohibits a property from participating in two different preservation programs.

Mr. Majewski questioned the number of changes made to the Open Space Preservation Program ordinance and whether the current version still reflects what voters originally approved. Mr. Majewski requested a copy of the original ordinance to compare it with the current version to identify the changes.

Ms. Hartle explained that ordinances are periodically updated as circumstances change, with many of the proposed revisions intended to improve consistency and clarify language.

Mr. Majewski stated that it seems everyone in the R-1 district is paying for the majority of the tax base and there has to be more development.

Ms. Hartle noted that the Open Space Board is developing a strategy using maps and charts to determine future preservation priorities. One goal of reducing the number of leases is to decrease the township's ongoing lease payments.

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Mr. Majewski questioned whether there were any board members who participate in the Clean & Green Program and is enrolled in the Open Space Preservation Program. Mr. Helms stated he participates in the Clean & Green Program. Mr. Nauman stated he participates in both programs.

Ms. Schellberg raised concerns that only a summary of the proposed ordinance was provided and that the full legal document is needed to determine whether this is a new ordinance or an amendment. The concern was that the summary does not show the specific additions, deletions, unchanged sections, or any provisions being repealed or superseded. It was requested that the complete proposed ordinance be published and made available for the public to review before the board votes. It was noted that the summary was included with the board's agenda materials and that the ordinance would be presented for a public hearing.

Ms. Smith stated a draft ordinance is not a public document until the board has approved the ordinance for a public hearing, at which time it becomes available to the public.

Ms. Smith will confer with the Township Solicitor to clarify the quorum language, determine whether the Clean & Green Program is considered an open space or conservation program, and define "hardship" in the ordinance.

14. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the board, the organization meeting was adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

- ***MOTION: Mr. Helms moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:41 p.m.; Mr. Servello seconded.***

Respectfully Submitted,



Amy M. Smith, Township Secretary

