
MINUTES

AUGUST 10, 2020
Regular Public Meeting

Board of Commissioners

Township of Whitehall

A. CALL TO ORDER

- 1) The regular Public Meeting of the Whitehall Township Board of Commissioners was called to order at 7:11 p.m. on Monday, August 10, 2020 held virtually via WEBEX, with the following in attendance:

COMMISSIONERS

Philip J. Ginder, President
Joseph J. Marx, Jr., Vice President
Thomas Slonaker, Secretary
Jeffrey J. Warren
Charles G. Fisher
Randy Atiyeh
Michael D. Dee

TOWNSHIP PERSONNEL

Michael P. Harakal, Jr., Mayor (Absent)
John D. Meyers, Deputy Mayor
John F. Gross, Esq.,
Township Solicitor
Michael Marks, Police Chief
Frank Clark Engineer
Lee Rackus, PZ&D
Colleen L. Gober, Tax Collector
Larissa Bruder, Executive Secretary

The meeting was formally opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and a note of thanks given to all serving in the Armed Forces, First Responders, Healthcare Workers, Grocery Store Workers, and Municipal Staff who are all seeing the community through this hard time.

President GINDER read the statement on fair housing as required.

President GINDER made a statement that an Executive Session was held at the CWSA Meeting Room regarding legal issues on August 5, 2020 at 6:00pm with the attendance of six Board Members and Attorney Jack GROSS.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner ATIYEH moved, seconded by Commissioner WARREN to approve the Minutes of the following meeting:

Regular Public Meeting – July 13, 2020

Seven Commissioners were present and voted “yes” with one correction. Motion carried.

B. COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

No one was present to address the Board.

C. **PUBLIC HEARING AND VOTING ON ORDINANCES**

1. BILL NO.14-2020

TITLE: AN ORDINANCE DEFERRING THE REQUIRED INSTALLATION OF SIDEWALKS ALONG THE QUARRY STREET FRONTAGE OF 3434 N. FRONT STREET FOR A DISTANCE OF APPROXIMATELY 190 FEET AS REQUIRED IN CHAPTER 21, SECTION 21-16 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP. (DEVELOP)

President GINDER read Bill No. 14-2020 to the Board.

Discussion ensued with Michael Houston, engineer for the project, regarding the possible placement of sidewalks along with the widening of the roadway. It was determined that sidewalks shall be installed, with an agreement from the private property owner whose property will be included in the installation of the sidewalks, and also that where the sidewalks end there will be a taper installed so that there is not a drastic drop-off.

Commissioner MARX moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner FISHER. Seven Commissioners were present and 7 voting “no”. Bill No. 14-2020 was denied.

2. BILL NO. 23-2020

TITLE: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 15, SECTION 37 OF THE 2006 CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP, ESTABLISHING 75 FT NO PARKING ZONES ALONG E. COLUMBIA STREET AND CENTER STREET AT THE IRT XWALK APPROACHES IN THE TOWNSHIP OF WHITEHALL, LEHIGH COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA. (DEVELOP)

President GINDER read Bill No. 23-2020 to the Board.

Commissioner WARREN moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner FISHER. Seven Commissioners were present and 7 voting “yes”. Bill No. 23-2020 was approved.

3. BILL NO. 25-2020

TITLE: AN ORDINANCE DEFERRING THE REQUIRED INSTALLATION OF SIDEWALKS ALONG THE JOAB ROAD FRONTAGE OF 3645 & 3655 MUNICIPAL DRIVE AS REQUIRED IN CHAPTER 21, SECTION 21-16 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP. (DEVELOP)

President GINDER read Bill NO. 25-2020 to the Board.

Commissioner MARX moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner DEE.

Rob Piligian, surveyor for the applicant, advised the applicant will be extending sidewalks on Municipal Drive, but since there are no other sidewalks in Terrace Acres, the deferral request is being proposed for Joab Road. Mr. Piligian noted the sidewalk deferral for the Municipal Campus from last year stated that there are no sidewalks in the adjacent neighborhood and it would also exceed the ADA limits

on grade. Commissioner's SLONAKER & FISHER both expressed concerns of not installing sidewalks when there is the opportunity to do so. Mr. PILIGIAN also noted that Terrace Acres cannot be further developed so there is a very small possibility that there would be an opportunity in the future to have sidewalks mandated to be installed throughout.

Seven Commissioners were present and 4 voting "yes" and 3 voting "no" (FISHER, WARREN & SLONAKER). Bill No. 25-2020 was approved.

F. PUBLIC HEARING AND VOTING ON RESOLUTIONS

1. RESOLUTION NO. 3129

TITLE: A RESOLUTION GRANTING THE MAYOR THE AUTHORITY TO EXECUTE A REIMBURSEMENT AGREEMENT WITH PENNDOT FOR WINTER TRAFFIC SERVICES WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP OF WHITEHALL, LEHIGH COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA. (ADMIN/BOC)

President GINDER read Resolution No. 3129 to the Board.

Commissioner DEE moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner WARREN.

Commissioner WARREN questioned whether PennDOT responded to the request for clarification of why Lehigh County/Whitehall Township gets the lowest reimbursement per road mile. Jack MEYERS indicated he has been corresponding with PennDOT but has not received a response back.

After discussion, motions were withdrawn and Resolution No. 3129 was tabled.

2. RESOLUTION NO. 3130

TITLE: A RESOLUTION CONDITIONALLY APPROVING THE MINOR SUBDIVISION/LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN OF 3645 & 3655 MUNICIPAL DRIVE, INDEX #1967-20.

President GINDER read Resolution No. 3130 to the Board.

Commissioner FISHER moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner MARX.

Seven Commissioners were present and voting "yes". Resolution No. 3130 was approved.

3. RESOLUTION NO. 3131

TITLE: A RESOLUTION APPROVING INTERIM ACT 537 IN A PORTION OF WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PENNSYLVANIA SEWAGE FACILITIES ACT (P.L. 1535, NO. 537)

President GINDER read Resolution No. 3131 to the Board.

Commissioner MARX moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner DEE.

Commissioner MARX thanked Lee RACKUS and Dave HARLEMAN of CWSA for all the work that was entailed in this project.

Seven Commissioners were present and voting “yes”. Resolution No. 3131 was approved.

4. RESOLUTION NO. 3132

TITLE: A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE SUBMISSION OF AN APPLICATION FOR TRAFFIC SIGNAL APPROVAL AND AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SUBMIT SUCH APPLICATION.

President GINDER read Resolution No. 3132 to the Board.

Commissioner DEE moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner ATIYEH.

Seven Commissioners were present and voting “yes”. Resolution No. 3132 was approved.

G. OTHER

At this time, President GINDER read a statement from James MOLINARO, resigning from his tenure on the Planning Commission. President GINDER noted that Mr. MOLINARO was appointed to the Planning Commission in January of 1992 and has served these 28 ½ years continuously. He served many years as Chairman and Vice Chairman on the Planning Commission. Mr. MOLINARO did an exceptional job. Thanks to Jim and stay well, best of health and happiness. Jim, it was a job well done.

Commissioner MARX noted his appreciation to Mr. MOLINARO for his years of service as he served with him on the Planning Commissioner for a number of years and did an exceptional job and he will be missed.

Commissioner ATIYEH noted that Mr. MOLINARO’s kind of dedication is the kind that has kept this Township strong.

Lee RACKUS noted that Jim was a great leader to the Planning Commission, he helped develop the Township into a great community. Along with Jim there are a lot of great members on the Board who are dedicated to the Township.

Commissioner SLONAKER echoed the same statements of everyone previously.

Frank CLARK noted that Jim had a guided hand and was always the voice of reason. He will be missed and has been a great asset to the Board and Community.

1. MOTION – to appoint Jonathan Bolton from an alternate to a regular member on Planning Commission to complete the term vacated by James Molinaro term to expire December 31, 2021.

Seven Commissioners were present and voted “yes”. Motion carried.

H. REPORTS OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Commissioner WARREN gave kudos to the work that the Whitehall Copley Hunger Initiative has been doing and also gave a shout out to Ann Chickilly and Eric Segan that have established the

community garden at the Prydun Farm which have been providing produce since the beginning of July to the Hunger Initiative. It has been a tremendous success and it looks like a good possibility of it expanding. There is a grant opportunity opening up this fall, and asks the Board consider a resolution to endorse a non-matching fund grant to the DCED to help with improvements at the Farm to help the gardening project succeed.

Commissioner FISHER noted that with school possibly opening, he wants to emphasize to keep wearing masks and social distancing so that are numbers don't increase as have happened in other states. Thank IRT for cleanup after recent storm and also thanked the IRT to clear the trail and improvements they made. Volunteers are always needed for IRT as well. Shout out to Tony Cocca and parks and rec staff for getting deck boards fixed by the quarry ponds in the Parkway. That area of the Parkway is a treasure in the Township. Be safe to all

Commissioner ATIYEH wanted to thank all emergency responders during the last flooding event. Looking for volunteers for the Park and Rec to help with keeping the Parks going.

Commissioner DEE encouraged people to adhere to not driving through flooded roadways – do not drive around barricades. You are endangering yourself and the people who come out to rescue. The IRT committee is always looking for volunteers, please consider donating some time to help keep the trail maintained. One of the biggest fundraisers for the IRT is coming up - Saturday August 22nd 10K Annual Run/Walk starting at the Coplay Pavilion and will end at the Kilns. Support the IRT.

Commissioner MARX thanked the following for all their efforts during the recent storm: John Rackus and Public Works, Police Department and EMA, Fire Police, and the Fire Dept. especially Station 40 who performed six water rescues on call for over 18 hours that day. He questioned Frank CLARK regarding the solar panels that the CWSA would like to donate and if they can get moved to the Township, if we are going to utilize them. Frank CLARK will look into a location that they can possibly be relocated to.

Commissioner SLONAKER recognize that Bridge Street has been restored so the residents can now utilize it as it had been previously. He also questioned when will fencing be placed at the retention ponds on S. Church Street. Frank CLARK is taking it up with the owner of the development.

Commissioner GINDER thanked Frank CLARK for all efforts to get Bridge Street finished. He also thanked Public Works for their efforts during the storm.

Treasurer GOBER advised that the last year and half did not go as expected with not having a full staff for a long period of time. She performed the tasks that she felt were the most important. Now that the department is back to being fully staffed and as soon as she receives all the needed information, the reports that are being asked for will be provided to the Board.

I. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION – Commissioner DEE moved, seconded by Commissioner ATIYEH to adjourn the meeting at 8:33 p.m.