
MINUTES

July 10, 2017

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 7:00 p.m. on Monday, July 10, 2017, in the Public Meeting Room of the Whitehall Township Municipal Building, 3219 MacArthur Road, Whitehall, PA, with the following in attendance:

COMMISSIONERS

Phillips M. Armstrong, President
Dennis C. Hower, Vice President
Thomas Slonaker, Secretary
Jeffrey L. Dutt
Philip J. Ginder
Joseph J. Marx, Jr.
Linda K. Snyder

TOWNSHIP PERSONNEL

Edward D. Hozza, Jr., Mayor
John D. Meyers, Deputy Mayor
Chuck Fonzone, Township Solicitor
Lee Rackus, PZ&D
Frank Clark Engineer
Michael Marks, Police Chief
Patricia Sweeney, Executive Secretary

The meeting was formally opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and a moment of silence for our veterans who lost their lives in service to our country.

President ARMSTRONG read the statement on fair housing as required.

2) **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a) Commissioner DUTT moved, seconded by Commissioner MARX to approve the minutes of the following meeting:

Regular Public Meeting – June 12, 2017

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

B. COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

Martha LIEBERMAN, 333 Ridge Street, Emmaus, coordinator for Project Lifesaver of Lehigh Valley, stated the program helps to keep those who suffer from autism, Alzheimer’s and other cognitive disorders safe, gives families peace of mind and helps Police Departments complete a search usually under 30 minutes. The person wears a bracelet with a chip every day, is waterproof, if they wander the police have the chip number and activate it thru radio frequencies, not GPS. Batteries are replaced, not recharged, does not require a cell phone. Lifetime cost for the bracelet is \$350 with no monthly fee. It cost ~\$5,000 for a Police Department to join the program which includes 2 ½ days of training and 2 complete sets of equipment. An option is a cost of \$1,000 which covers the training but borrow the equipment from South Whitehall. Mayor HOZZA asked who pays the bracelet fee. Ms. LIEBERMAN stated family members or thru donations as Allentown did for 39

bracelets but she did receive a grant for one Alzheimer bracelet per department, currently have six departments in the Lehigh Valley. She has been involved full time since May, 2013 and has had calls from people in Whitehall who want the program. Mayor HOZZA asked if she had any estimates per community of what the autistic number is, with a negative response. Commissioner HOWER asked what we would get for \$5,000 and how would they get the word out to the residents if the Township made this investment. Ms. LIEBERMAN stated the department would get two receivers and two transmitters and they get the word out by going to meetings, word of mouth and thru the Police Departments. President ARMSTRONG asked how the Police Department would feel about adopting this program. Police Chief MARKS stated he feels it is worthwhile program but needs to fit into the budget scheme. Mayor HOZZA asked if any of the communities utilize their service clubs like the Lions or Rotary, with an affirmative response. President ARMSTRONG stated the IRT may have an autistic walk on September 24th and maybe can coordinate it as a fundraiser to help this program. Commissioner DUTT stated it would be good for them to have a booth at the festival and also to speak at our Senior Center. Commissioner HOWER suggested to go with the \$1,000 to get it going and then see if we need to buy our own equipment. Commissioner SNYDER asked who the individuals would be monitoring the equipment. Chief MARKS stated it would be through the supervisors of the department. Commissioner HOWER suggested doing a motion to approve the \$1,000 and to put it on the budget agenda for next year. Mayor HOZZA asked her to provide some type of contract.

Uelitza BATISTA, 785 Mohawk Street, Allentown, stated she supports Project Lifesaver because her son was the 5 year old autistic boy that drowned in the Lehigh Canal.

Sheryl BARTHOLOMEW, 3109 N. Third Street, Whitehall, stated her 16 year old son, Jeffrey Young, is a high functioning autistic who take offs, is scary when she can't find him, has to call the police for help and feels Project Lifesaver would be most beneficial for him. Her son is very vocal but does not understand time recollection.

Rob PILIGIAN, 415 Oakwood Drive, Whitehall, stated with the increased traffic westbound on Fairmont Avenue due to the 5th Street Bridge being out as well as the on ramps being closed temporarily, asked if the combined right lane at MacArthur Road and Fairmont can be designated as a right turn only as traffic backs up particularly on Fridays and Saturdays when people want to go straight across to the Home Depot and fears it will just get worse during the holidays. Mayor HOZZA stated he would reach out to Penn DOT to see what can be done.

C. PULBIC HEARING AND VOTING ON ORDINANCES

1. BILL NO. 22-2017 (Second Reading)

TITLE: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER XXVII OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP, ZONING, §27-81, INDUSTRIAL ZONE REGULATIONS, SUBSECTION 27.81 A, WITH RESPECT TO PERMITTED USES. (Legal and Legislative)

President ARMSTRONG read Bill No. 22-2017 to the Board.

Commissioner GINDER moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner HOWER. There were no questions or comments.

Seven Commissioners were present and voted “yes”. Bill No. 22-2017 was approved.

2. BILL NO. 23-2017

TITLE: AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF A PROPOSAL FOR PURCHASE OF TWO HURST HP EXTRACTION TOOLS FOR THE FIRE DEPARTMENT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 3.20 IN THE HOME RULE CHARTER WHICH REQUIRES AUTHORIZATION OF ACQUISITIONS IN EXCESS OF \$25,000 BY ORDINANCE. (FIRE)

President ARMSTRONG read Bill No. 23-2017 to the Board.

Commissioner MARX moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner DUTT.

President ARMSTRONG asked what happens to the old ones. Fire Chief Dave NELSON stated they will try to trade them in but will probably be disposed of as they are over 10 years old, are 5000 psi tools, do not cut thru the cars we have today, the new ones are 10,000 psi tools.

Seven Commissioners were present and voted “yes”. Bill No. 23-2017 was approved.

3. BILL NO. 24-2017

TITLE: AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF A PROPOSAL FOR PURCHASE OF A 2017 FORD F-250 PICK-UP TRUCK FOR THE DEVELOPMENT BUREAU, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 3.20 IN THE HOME RULE CHARTER WHICH REQUIRES AUTHORIZATION OF ACQUISITIONS IN EXCESS OF \$25,000 BY ORDINANCE. (DEVELOP)

President ARMSTRONG read Bill No. 24-2017 to the Board.

Commissioner GINDER moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner MARX. There were no questions or comments.

Seven Commissioners were present and voted “yes”. Bill No. 24-2017 was approved.

D. PULBIC HEARING AND VOTING ON RESOLUTIONS

1. RESOLUTION NO. 2983

TITLE: A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE REFUND OF PENSION CONTRIBUTIONS, PLUS ACCUMULATED INTEREST FROM THE POLICE PENSION FUND TO FORMER POLICE OFFICER MARK C. NICOSIA. (ADMIN)

President ARMSTRONG read Resolution No. 2980 to the Board.

Commissioner SLONAKER moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner GINDER. There were no questions or comments.

Seven Commissioners were present and voted “yes”. Resolution No. 2983 was approved.

E. OTHER

1. Commissioner MARX moved, seconded by Commissioner SLONAKER to approve the appointment of Curtis CHRISTMAN as a member of the Whitehall Township Fire Police.

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

2. Commissioner SNYDER moved, seconded by Commissioner DUTT to approve the appointment of Theresa NAPOLI as a member of the Whitehall Township Fire Police.

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

3. Commissioner SLONAKER moved, seconded by Commissioner GINDER to approve the appointment of Scott LIPSON as Solicitor for the Building Code Board of Appeals at a rate of \$125.00 per hour.

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

4. Commissioner HOWER moved, seconded by Commissioner DUTT for the Board of Commissioners to authorize and approve the Joint Stipulation Settlement Agreement arising from the original formal complaint filed by Whitehall Township to the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission in May of 2005 concerning the condition of the retaining wall north of the Race Street Bridge in the area between Bridge and Fairview Streets. The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation expended \$1.8M to build a buttress wall and made other repairs to the retaining wall which has resulted in Penn Dot requesting clarification of future responsibility of maintenance of the wall. At this time Lehigh County, the Bureau of Investigation and Enforcement for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and Whitehall Township have agreed to a resolution and the Mayor and President of the Board of Whitehall Township Commissioners shall authorize such an agreement by executing the same on Page 9 subject to the terms of said agreement.

Commissioner GINDER asked that the names of the Mayor and Board President be added to the signature page. It was noted before terms can be discussed as they could change, the judge needs to give approval.

Seven Commissioners were present with six voting “yes” and Commissioner SNYDER voted “no”. Motion carried.

5. Commissioner SLONAKER moved, seconded by Commissioner MARX to approve the appointment of Colleen GOBER as Deputy Tax Collector for the Township of Whitehall.

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

F. REPORTS OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS

1. Commissioner DUTT stated a meeting was held regarding the development of a Historic Preservation District, looking at the former Thomas Iron Works residential part of Hokendauqua, can regulate a Historic Preservation District from having no regulation all the way up to what nails you can use on a roof. A meeting will be set up in September for the residents of that neighborhood to discuss the likelihood of this happening and how much they would like to regulate the area to preserve the integrity of the neighborhood.

Commissioner DUTT stated the Senior Active Lifestyle Center is doing very well, averaging 10-20 people per activity on a daily basis Tuesday thru Friday from 9 am to 2 pm, getting new people, programs are expanding, invited people to come and visit, lunch is served around 11:30 am and he will be volunteering thru the summer.

2. Commissioner HOWER asked who the Boy Scout was in the audience. Noah Mattson of 5433 Hasadahl Road, Orefield, stated his Troop is 110 and he is a First Class scout.
3. Commissioner SLONAKER asked when the auditors will be giving their presentation. Deputy Mayor MEYERS stated they asked how detailed the Board wants the presentation to be and can be here next month.
3. Commissioner GINDER asked if anybody was caught on Bridge Street regarding the trash problem. Chief MARKS stated the trash dumping has slowed down, if not stopped and had officers out several nights for about 2 weeks which may have been a deterrent.

Commissioner DUTT asked since our electronics recycling was so successful, if there was any way to have it twice. Mayor HOZZA stated it takes volunteers and already have a confirmation date for next year. President ARMSTRONG noted even if you hold it four times a year, there are certain people who will just throw. Commissioner SLONAKER noted the sofas, bed springs, etc. are coming from people from other areas. Mayor HOZZA noted residents who read the newsletter know they are allowed 2 bulk items per week.

Commissioner GINDER asked for an updated lists of the Boards and Commissions.

4. President ARMSTRONG stated he was asked by Ray BIEAK of the IRT about the parking lot at the Trailhead and if the Township was going to expand it. Mayor HOZZA stated there is a plan but it has to remain stone.

President ARMSTRONG noted the police presence on MacArthur Road and feels it is working.

5. Mayor HOZZA stated there will be a free outdoor movie, UP, this Saturday at 8:30 pm at the Grim Homestead. The MacArthur Towne Center will have 2 new tenants moving in and one tenant relocating. The former Sleepy's southbound on MacArthur will house the DXL Men's Store, the former Casual Male from across the road and the former Sports Authority at the Whitehall Square Shopping Center will have a new tenant.

Penn DOT has informed the Township they will be doing a reconstruction project, milling and repaving, on South Church Street from Route 329/Main Street down to Route 145/MacArthur Road at night.

Mayor HOZZA stated it took 9 years with a DCNR grant and a Penn DOT match, but construction for the Jordan Greenway Trail Project will begin next week by the contractor Flyway with a cost of \$1.7M all paid for by grant monies, will include a trail along the Jordan Creek in Whitehall Township behind the White Castle, underneath Route 22 with a new pedestrian bridge being installed over the Jordan, the trail will pick-up at the "Glen Solt" Bridge on Mickley Road, come into the Lehigh County Park property, eventually connect into South and North Whitehall Townships and end at the Lehigh Valley Zoo and Trexler Game Preserve. It will start in the City of Allentown at Jordan Meadows, the park behind Central Catholic High School, with every municipality responsible for the construction and

maintenance of their section. It is similar to the IRT and hopes to have a ribbon cutting in December.

G. OATH OF OFFICE

Police Chief Michael MARKS stated he is pleased to introduce our 44th Police Officer Michael GODFREY who was hired on January 16, 2017, graduated from the Police Academy on June 30th, was also a previous attendee of the Sheriff's Academy, so is well versed in many different aspects of the law and is looking forward to having all the new men and women who have been hired over the past couple years patrolling the streets of Whitehall for years to come with dedication, honor and integrity. Chief Marks welcomed him into the Whitehall Police Department and his family into ours. He noted it isn't always the easiest profession but feels it is one of the most rewarding, the oath he is about to take is a solemn oath, is one that is the foundation for the badge and the duties he will be sworn to protect in this community.

Police Officer Michael GODFREY was given the oath of office by Notary Public Patricia SWEENEY. Mayor HOZZA presented Officer GODFREY with his badge and welcomed him to the Whitehall Township family.

H. ADJOURNMENT

1. MOTION – Commissioner MARX moved, seconded by Commissioner DUTT to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m.