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# **MINUTES**

**APRIL 11, 2022**  
**Regular Public Meeting**

**Board of Commissioners**

**Township of Whitehall**

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**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, April 11, 2022 held virtually via WEBEX, with the following in attendance:

**COMMISSIONERS**

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

**TOWNSHIP PERSONNEL**

Michael P. Harakal, Jr., Mayor  
John D. Meyers, Deputy Mayor  
John F. Gross, Esq.,  
Township Solicitor  
Michael Marks, Police Chief  
Frank Clark, Engineer, KCE  
Lee Rackus, PZ&D  
Tina J. Koren, Tax Collector  
Larissa Bruder, Executive Secretary

President MARX read the statement on fair housing as required.

The meeting was formally opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and a moment of silence will follow to honor our men and women in uniform and our first responders and the people of Ukraine.

President MARX noted that an Executive Session was held on March 10, 2022 and March 15, 2022 at the Coplay Whitehall Sewer Authority for legal and personnel issues.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner GINDER moved, seconded by Commissioner ROMAN to approve the Minutes of the following meeting:

Regular Public Meeting – March 14, 2022

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

**B. COURTESY OF THE FLOOR**

Rob PILIGIAN of 415 Oakwood Drive, Whitehall thanked the Board for holding an in person meeting. In light of the recent lawsuits against the Township, he questioned if rates have been increased by the Township’s insurance carrier. Deputy Mayor MEYERS indicated that there was

an increase of 10% for the public officials policy. Mr. PILIGAN asked that since L&L is discussing changes to the Treasurer's office, a provision be included to restrict any elected official from being related. Commissioner GINDER advised that for the time being those discussions have been tabled, but thinks that issue is well worth noting. Attorney Gross was instructed to look into how that legally could be accomplished. Treasurer KOREN added that she hopes with new leadership in that office, the structure will not be changed. Commissioner ROMAN reiterated that as well.

Joanne Koury of 1251 Davies Drive addressed the Board with concerns regarding litter issues on and around MacArthur Road and the Fullerton area near commercial properties. She also stated concern over the state of the Jefferson Playground facilities and hopes that the Township can provide something for the children and older adults in that community. During a lengthy statement by Ms. Koury she started speaking about neighbors nation of origin, President MARX stopped her from commenting further.

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

1. BILL NO. 8-2022 (SECOND HEARING)  
TITLE: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ARTICLE XXXVI, PERSONNEL RULES AND REGULATIONS, SECTION 1-212 (RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS) TO PROVIDE FOR UPDATED GEOGRAPHICAL LIMITATIONS FOR ALL PERSONS EMPLOYED BY THE TOWNSHIP OF WHITEHALL.

President MARX read Bill No. 8-2022 to the Board.

Commissioner FISHER moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner WARREN.

Seven Commissioners were present and voting "yes". Bill No. 8-2022 was approved.

2. BILL NO. 9-2022  
TITLE: AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF A PROPOSAL FOR THE PURCHASE OF A 2022 FORD F600 4X4 CAB AND CHASSIS SINGLE AXLE DUMP TRUCK FOR THE PUBLIC WORKS BUREAU OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WHITEHALL, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 3.20 OF THE HOME RULE CHARTER WHICH REQUIRES AUTHORIZATION OF ACQUISITIONS IN EXCESS OF \$25,000 BY ORDINANCE (PUBLIC WORKS)

President MARX read Bill No. 9-2022 to the Board.

Commissioner GINDER moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner ATIYEH.

Seven Commissioners were present and voting "yes". Bill No. 9-2022 was approved.

3. BILL NO. 11-2022  
TITLE: AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF A PROPOSAL FOR CONSTRUCTION OF 2022 CDBG ADA HC RAMPS CONCRETE CURB AND SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS IN WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP, CONTRACT NO. 2022-02 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 MARX read Bill No. 11-2022 to the Board.

Commissioner GINDER moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner FISHER.

Seven Commissioners were present and voting “yes”. Bill No. 11-2022 was approved.

4. BILL NO. 12-2022  
TITLE: AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF A PROPOSAL FOR THE PURCHASE OF A 2022 FORD F250 4X4 PICK UP TRUCK FOR THE RECREATION BUREAU OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WHITEHALL, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 3.20 OF THE HOME RULE CHARTER WHICH REQUIRES AUTHORIZATION OF ACQUISITIONS IN EXCESS OF \$25,000 BY ORDINANCE (RECREATION)

President MARX read Bill No. 12-2022 to the Board.

Commissioner WARREN moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner ATIYEH.

Seven Commissioners were present and voting “yes”. Bill No. 12-2022 was approved.

**D. PUBLIC HEARING AND VOTING ON RESOLUTIONS**

1. RESOLUTION NO. 3197  
TITLE: A RESOLUTION CONDITIONALLY APPROVING THE LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN OF BUILDING ADDITION FOR TEAMSTERS, LOCATED AT 3614 LEHIGH STREET, INDEX # 1997-22.

President MARX read Resolution No. 3197 to the Board.

Commissioner GINDER moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner SLONAKER.

Seven Commissioners were present and voting “yes”. Resolution No. 3197 was approved.

2. RESOLUTION NO. 3198

TITLE: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SUBMIT A GRANT APPLICATION TO LEHIGH COUNTY FOR SECURING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT FUNDS FOR THE REMOVAL OF ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS FOR THE 2022 APPLICATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT. (DEV)

President MARX read Resolution No. 3198 to the Board.

Commissioner FISHER moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner WARREN.

Seven Commissioners were present and voting “yes”. Resolution No. 3198 was approved.

3. RESOLUTION NO. 3199

TITLE: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO A SIDEWALK MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT WITH PENNDOT FOR SR 1004 RACE STREET BRIDGE AND TO EXECUTE THE APPLICATION ON BEHALF OF WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP (ADMIN/BOC)

President MARX read Resolution No. 3199 to the Board.

Commissioner GINDER moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner ATIYEH.

Seven Commissioners were present and voting “yes”. Resolution No. 3199 was approved.

4. RESOLUTION NO. 3200

TITLE: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP TO APPLY FOR GRANT FUNDING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES FOR A FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR THE JEFFERSON STREET RECREATION CENTER AND TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWNSHIP MAYOR TO ENDORSE ALL DOCUMENTS PURSUANT TO THIS GRANT. (RECREATION/ADMIN)

President MARX read Resolution No. 3200 to the Board.

Commissioner WARREN moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner ROMAN.

Seven Commissioners were present and voting “yes”. Resolution No. 3200 was approved.

5. RESOLUTION NO. 3201

TITLE: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TOWNSHIP TO APPLY FOR GRANT FUNDING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES FOR A WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP PARK AND RECREATION COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE AND TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWNSHIP MAYOR TO ENDORSE ALL DOCUMENTS PURSUANT TO THIS GRANT. (RECREATION/ADMIN)

President MARX read Resolution No. 3201 to the Board.

Commissioner ROMAN moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner WARREN.

Seven Commissioners were present and voting “yes”. Resolution No. 3201 was approved.

***E. OTHER***

1. MOTION - to approve the appointment of Scott Cope to serve on the Whitehall Township Environmental Advisory Council, term expiring December 31, 2025.

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

2. MOTION - to approve the appointment of Carl Kocher to serve on the Whitehall Township Environmental Advisory Council as an Alternate, term expiring December 31, 2025.

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

3. MOTION - to approve the appointment of Phyllis Ward to serve on the Whitehall Township Environmental Advisory Council as an Alternate, term expiring December 31, 2025.

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

4. MOTION - to approve the appointment of Michael Dee to serve on the Whitehall Township Industrial Commercial Development Authority, term expiring December 31, 2027.

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

5. MOTION - to approve the appointment of Michael Dee to serve on the Whitehall Township Traffic Advisory Committee.

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

6. MOTION - to approve the appointment Jason Szewczak to serve on the Whitehall Township Planning Commission, term expiring December 31, 2025.

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

7. MOTION - to approve the appointment Donald Keeney to serve on the Ironton Rail Trail

Oversight Committee as the Alternate representing Whitehall Township.

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

***F. REPORTS OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS***

Commissioner ATIYEH noted he attended the last Park and Rec Meeting with all areas being represented except for Fullerton, which was disappointing to see considering the issues that are going on at that park. He also stated that he finally got to tour the Police Building and it was nice to see the energy of the employees working in a modernized facility and thanked the Chief for the invitation.

Commissioner WARREN advised that on April 23<sup>rd</sup> the Historic Preservation Society is having a historic walking tour of Hokendauqua area – reservations are required.

Commissioner SLONAKER encourage residents to go out and pick up trash in their area.

Commissioner FISHER noted that on March 27 EAC did a cleanup along Mechanicsville Road and picked up numerous bags of trash. They are trying to encourage retail establishments of better cleanup of their businesses. Eagle Scout Projects will be installing bird boxes in the Parkway next month. Representatives from The Lehigh County Districts Boy Scouts will be present next month on the importance of scouting program and the dilemma they are facing.

Commissioner ROMAN offered to volunteer his time in trying to manage the panhandling situation in various areas of the township and asked Chief Marks to see if the State Police can help. Chief Marks commented that the State Police do what they can at the interchanges and it is up to the local business owners to contact the Police if they want them removed. Mr. ROMAN’s intention is to try to direct people where they can get help.

Commissioner GINDER asked if some type of notification can be put out to the area residents of the Jefferson Street Pool to inform them of the situation. He also thanked Treasurer KOREN for her timely, legible and understandable reports.

President MARX announced that next month’s BOC meeting will be held again at the CWSA meeting room. He also mentioned that he is making arrangements to have the aerial fire engine available to be viewed by the Board and residents, possibly at an upcoming meeting. President MARX also noted that an Administrative Committee is being formed to bridge the gap between the Board and Administration.

At this time, Ken SNYDER suggested to the Board that this Committee come up with a plan and goals as to what they see happening moving forward with many Township issues. He feels that there are serious issues with how the Township is being managed and suggested that the Board should be holding the Mayor accountable.

Mayor HAKAKAL noted that interviews are being conducted for an opening in the Treasurer’s office. The Rotary Club is helping spruce up the Grist Mill and Grim Homestead gardens. On April 8<sup>th</sup> he visited many residents delivering Meals on Wheels. He had a quarterly meeting with

the Manager of Home Depot regarding the improvement of keeping that area litter free. He participated in the previously mentioned Mechanicsville Road cleanup day. Met with Washington Prime Group regarding the Whitehall Mall property. He also met with Chief Nelson regarding obtaining a grant through DCED for an evaluation of the Fire Dept.

Ken SNYDER questioned the status on the Mayor being reappointed to the LVPC. The Mayor advised that the matter is before the County Commissioners and an answer should be provided by the end of the month. If the Mayor is not considered, Commissioner Ginder has advised he would apply for that position.

Treasurer KOREN advised that she submitted February's report. There was a person hired for the vacant position, but unfortunately she is already leaving for another job. They are trying to fill that position as quickly as possible. They are getting caught up with the back log of mail. She noted that they are doing approximately 250 transactions per day with 3,770 receipts documented for March. She is also working on an electronic method for filing for a moving permit.

**G. ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION – Commissioner GINDER moved, seconded by Commissioner ATIYEH to adjourn the meeting at 9:32 p.m.