
MINUTES

JUNE 14, 2021
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, June 14, 2021 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
John D. Meyers, Deputy Mayor
John F. Gross, Esq.,
Township Solicitor
Michael Marks, Police Chief
Tom Deily, Engineer, KCE
Lee Rackus, PZ&D
Colleen L. Gober, Tax Collector - Absent
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.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

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

Regular Public Meeting – May 10, 2021

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

B. COURTESY OF THE FLOOR – no public comment.

C. PUBLIC HEARING AND VOTING ON ORDINANCES

1. BILL NO. 11-2021

TITLE: AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF A PROPOSAL FOR THE COPLAY CREEK STREAM BANK RESTORATION PROJECT EROSION

AND SEDIMENTATION CONTROL PLAN 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 GINDER read Bill No. 11-2021 to the Board.

Commissioner WARREN moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner MARX. Commissioner WARREN verified the limits of the work and asked if there is flexibility of the plantings. Joe D'ONOFRIO of American Engineers Group there be a little but what was chosen is specific for riparian buffer and also MS4 regulations must be kept in mind. President GINDER gave thanks to John RACKUS for all the time and effort put into this project.

Seven Commissioners were present and voting "yes". Bill No. 11-2021 was approved.

2. BILL NO. 18-2021

TITLE: AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE TERM OF EXISTENCE OF THE WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY FOR AN ADDITIONAL PERIOD OF TIME EXPIRING ON DECEMBER 31, 2070 TO ENABLE THE CONTINUATION OF ITS MISSION AND TO ENABLE LONG-TERM FINANCING TO CARRY OUT ITS STATED GOALS.

President GINDER read Bill No. 18-2021 to the Board.

Commissioner DEE moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner FISHER.

Seven Commissioners were present and voting "yes". Bill No. 18-2021 was approved.

3. BILL NO. 19-2021

TITLE: AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF A PROPOSAL FOR PAVEMENT PRESERVATION WORK, BID 2021-06 FOR THE PUBLIC WORKS BUREAU, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 3.20 IN THE HOME RULE CHARTER WHICH REQUIRES AUTHORIZATION OF ACQUISITIONS IN EXCESS OF \$25,000 BY ORDINANCE. (PUBLIC WORKS)

President GINDER read Bill No. 19-2021 to the Board.

Commissioner FISHER moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner SLONAKER.

Seven Commissioners were present and voting "yes". Bill No. 19-2021 was approved.

E. PUBLIC HEARING AND VOTING ON RESOLUTIONS

1. RESOLUTION NO. 3161

TITLE: A RESOLUTION FOR SEWAGE FACILITIES PLAN REVISION FOR NEW LAND DEVELOPMENT OF DENNIS MAKOVSKY, 4724 HOFFMAN DRIVE, WHITEHALL PA. (DEVELOP)

President GINDER read Resolution No. 3161 to the Board.

Commissioner MARX moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner ATIYEH.

Seven Commissioners were present and voting “yes”. Resolution No. 3161 was approved.

2. RESOLUTION NO. 3162

TITLE: A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WHITEHALL, LEHIGH COUNTY REQUESTING A GRANT FROM THE PENNSYLVANIA COMMONWEALTH FINANCING AUTHORITY’S GREENWAYS, TRAILS AND RECREATION PROGRAM FOR THE IRONTON RAIL TRAIL TRAILHEAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT.

President GINDER read Resolution No. 3162 to the Board.

Commissioner DEE moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner FISHER.

Seven Commissioners were present and voting “yes”. Resolution No. 3162 was approved.

3. RESOLUTION NO. 3163

TITLE: A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WHITEHALL, LEHIGH COUNTY REQUESTING A GRANT FROM THE PENNSYLVANIA COMMONWEALTH FINANCING AUTHORITY’S WATERSHED RESTORATION AND PROTECTION PROGRAM FOR THE COPLAY CREEK STREAMBANK RESTORATION PROJECT.

President GINDER read Resolution No. 3163 to the Board.

Commissioner SLONAKER moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner DEE.

Commissioner WARREN verified the location of work with John RACKUS.

Seven Commissioners were present and voting “yes”. Resolution No. 3163 was approved.

4. RESOLUTION NO. 3164

TITLE: A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE STIPULATION OF SETTLEMENT BY AND BETWEEN JC PENNEY PROPERTIES INC. AND THE LEHIGH COUNTY BOARD OF ASSESSMENT APPEALS, LEHIGH COUNTY, THE WHITEHALL-COPLAY SCHOOL DISTRICT AND WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP.

President GINDER read Resolution No. 3164 to the Board.

Commissioner SLONAKER moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner MARX.

Seven Commissioners were present and voting “yes”. Resolution No. 3164 was approved.

F. REPORTS OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Commissioner DEE noted that the National Drug Take Back Day on April 24, 2021 was a huge success as over 35,200 lbs was collected in the state of Pennsylvania. The response in Whitehall was overwhelming and thanked all who participated. Another Take Back day is schedule for October 23rd. The Hunger Initiatives Summer Feeding Program will be starting on June 16th with the goal of feeding over 500 children. The Initiative feed over 233 people last week. Kudos for all they do for the community. Donations are always needed.

Commissioner FISHER still urges people to get vaccinated even though the rates have dropped significantly, it is still out there. He also advised that volunteers are always needed for various committees and programs and that the EAC had a very successful clean-up day on May 15th and another is planned for June 19th.

Commissioner ATIYEH questioned the activeness of the School Relations Committee. Mayor noted that he had a meeting with the new superintendent – Dr. Steckel and once he has settled in we can certainly get back to having those meetings. Gave thanks for going above and beyond to Chief Marks who met with the family that had a mental health crisis.

Commissioner WARREN announced the Township was awarded \$59,634 for the restoration of the Mickley Prydun Farm which should cover Phase 1 – Building Envelope. He thanked Senator Boscola, Representative McNeill for their support and Mick Dee for keeping us in the loop on the available grants. He asked Frank CLARK on the status of Mechanicsville Rd sidewalk. Mr. CLARK advised that they are in need of 2 signatures and soon as those are obtained they will be ready to go.

Commissioner SLONAKER questioned Frank CLARK on the status of the elongation of the left turning lane on MacArthur Road in front of WAWA. Mr. CLARK advised that we are the mercy of PennDOT. Commissioner SLONAKER is grateful that the lane at Center Street has been completed. He thanked Jack MEYERS, Debi BOWMAN and Chief MARKS for all the work put into getting refund of PPE monies.

Commissioner MARX advised that the Township has a dire situation with the low volume of volunteer firefighters and the safety of our citizens. The devastating residential fire that took place earlier today could have turned into a loss of life. He believes it is imperative that a solution be determined as soon as possible.

President GINDER asked Deputy Mayor MEYERS if he had an opportunity to put together the financial statement that he requested for the first half of the year. Jack MEYERS advised that he would like to wait till the end of June and will have a statement for him by the July BOC meeting. President GINDER asked of the status of the haul road agreement. Attorney GROSS noted that the agreement has been going back and forth between himself and the other parties' attorney and it is a work in progress. President GINDER asked Frank CLARK of the Lehigh Avenue repairs and Mr. CLARK advised that the detour signs are being placed tomorrow advising that road will be closed beginning Monday June 21st. Mr. CLARK also advised that the situation regarding the 72" pipe is moving along smoothly and all parties are cooperating. President GINDER stated that he felt it best to wait until September to make decisions about having meetings in person. He also noted to the Board members that he would like to place Grant Info Procedures before the L&L Committee next month. He would like to see a process put in place so that grants can be tracked and the full Board notified when there is one being submitted. Mayor HARAKAL was questioned of the status of the requested Recreation Reports that were asked to be submitted to the Board. The Mayor noted his apologies and will make sure that they are sent by the July meeting.

Mayor HARAKAL apologized for missing the 26th Annual American Flag Retirement Ceremony at the Hokendauqua American Legion. He also noted the upcoming Electronics/Recycling Event to be held on June 26th from 9-12 at the Middle School Parking Lot. Much work goes into this event which is mostly run by the EAC and can always use volunteers. The Mayor met with the manager at WalMart regarding the litter issue on the property and he has seen an improvement already. The EAC has sent a letter to the Home Depot regarding the litter issue there. The Mayor attended the Harley Davidson Ribbon Cutting Ceremony. He also announced the hiring of an additional Codes Inspector and a Tax Office Clerk. The Mayor has attended meeting regarding the Cementon Bridge Replacement discussing lighting and utility work contracts. He also noted that the D&L Trail will be at grade.

The Mayor, on behalf of the Treasurer, stated that her reports were sent out yesterday to the Board.

G. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION – Commissioner FISHER moved, seconded by Commissioner DEE to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m.