

**West Penn Township Board of Supervisors
27 Municipal Road
New Ringgold, PA 17960**

Phone (570)386-4507

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**Regular Meeting
Monday, December 4, 2023**

Present at the Meeting

Anthony Prudenti
Timothy Houser
Glenn Hummel

Karen Wittig – Treasurer
Katie Orlick – Secretary
Mike Begis – ARRO
Paul Datte - Solicitor

I. General

A. Tony Prudenti called the meeting to order at 6:00PM with the Pledge of Allegiance & Introduction.

B. Public Comments on Agenda Items Only - None

C. Review of the Minutes – November 6th & 20th, 2023.

Chairman called for a motion to accept the meeting minutes from November 6th & 20th, 2023. Tim Houser made the motion. Glenn Hummel seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 3-0

D. Treasurer’s Report – November 2023

Chairman called for a motion to accept the Treasurer’s Report. Tim Houser made the motion. Glenn Hummel seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 3-0

E. Approval of Bills – November 2023

Chairman called for a motion to pay the bills. Tim Houser made the motion. Glenn Hummel seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 3-0

F. Solicitor’s Report

1. SR309 Blight Property – Attorney Datte said we were contacted by the Schuylkill County Landbank & the grants CDBG office in Schuylkill County. The property is 2056 West Penn Pike. We have been seeking this property for quite some time. Wells Fargo Bank has foreclosed it. Wells Fargo is interested in transferring the property to the Township. The Township has been interested in this property for demolition purposes for ten years. Wells Fargo seems to be interested in transferring the property in the way of a donation to the Township. They may even cover some of the costs involved with this. We are trying to set up a call with Wells Fargo Bank to discuss this transaction. If the Township acquires this property, we may be able to use the County Program for Demolition to clear the property. Chairman asked Attorney Datte if this would be done at no cost to the Township. Attorney Datte said that is our intent. The Township would then own the vacant lot. There would be a lien placed on the property for the cost of demolition. There are some limitations on what we can do with it after a certain period. Attorney Datte recommends we do it. Glenn Hummel asked if there are any other liens on this property. Attorney Datte suggests we do our own title search. Attorney Datte said in a foreclosure proceeding as long as they do it right, all subordinate liens are discharged from the property. Attorney Datte recommends we get a title search on the property. Tim Houser said he gladly would make the motion to pursue this. Glenn Hummel seconded the motion in honor of Tim Houser’s motion and it is finally being completed. All in favor. Motion was carried. 3-0

Attorney Datte said the only other thing he has to report is the Jake Brake Ordinance. Attorney Datte said there is a requirement that we get written approval from the Department of Transportation. Attorney Datte will look into it. He was asked to have an Ordinance to adopt that would have a general banned on Jake Brakes on any road in the Township; however, it may not be that easy. Glenn Hummel made the motion to accept the Solicitor's Report. Tim Houser seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 3-0

II. Land Use – Mike Begis from ARRO Consulting, Inc. said the Planning Commission reviewed the Davis Minor Subdivision Annexation Plan and recommended to the BOS to approve it. Chairman called for a motion to conditionally approve the Davis Minor Subdivision Annexation contingent on all comments being satisfied from ARRO Consulting's letter dated November 28, 2023, SEO and Schuylkill Planning. Tim Houser made the motion. Glenn Hummel seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 3-0
Chairman called for a motion to adopt Resolution 27 of 2023, conditionally approving the Davis Minor Subdivision Annexation Plan. Glenn Hummel made the motion. Tim Houser seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 3-0

III. Operations

A. Engineer/Zoning's Monthly Report – November 2023

Chairman asked Mike Begis from ARRO Consulting, Inc. if he had anything to report for the month of November. Board did not have any questions on the Zoning Monthly Report. Chairman called for a motion to accept. Tim Houser made the motion. Glenn Hummel seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 3-0

B. Code Enforcement Monthly Report – November 2023

Chairman asked if the Board had any questions with the Code Enforcement Officer's report. Chairman called for a motion to accept the code enforcement monthly report. Tim Houser made the motion. Glenn Hummel seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 3-0

C. Sewage Enforcement Officer's Monthly Report – November 2023

Chairman read the sewage enforcement officer's report. The report consisted of 2 New Permit Application, 9 Interim Inspections, 2 Test Probes, 5 Perc Tests, 2 Design Reviews, 3 Site Evaluation, 6 Subdivision Plans & 0 Malfunction Concern. Chairman called for a motion to accept the Sewage Enforcement Officer's Report. Glenn Hummel made the motion. Tim Houser seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 3-0

D. Road Department's Monthly Report – November 2023

Chairman read the Road Department's Monthly report. The report consisted of General Maintenance to the Township Building & Equipment, installed plow markers along Township Roads, Installed pipe & culvert boxes on Retreat Rd., Cleaned leaves out of ditch lines with turbine blower, Installed culvert box and pipe on Birch Crossing, Patched holes on Dirt Roads with 2A Mod., Cleaned rocks and trees off Walking Trail and Patched holes on Twp. Roads with Cold Patch. Chairman read the maintenance report. Chairman called for a motion to accept the Road Department's Monthly report. Glenn Hummel made the motion. Tim Houser seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 3-0

E. Police Department Report – November 2023

Chairman read the Police Report. It consisted of 5,237 miles patrolled, 244 Total traffic Citations & Warnings, 9 Motor Vehicle Accidents and 212 Total calls. Glenn Hummel asked if the Police Report included the calls with the Ambulance. Chief Bonner said, yes any calls for service. Chairman called for a

motion to accept the Police Department's monthly report. Tim Houser made the motion. Glenn Hummel seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 3-0

F. Fire Company Monthly Report – October & November 2023

October consisted of 14 Total Calls answered, 4 Motor Vehicle Accidents, 1 wires/tree down, 1 Automatic Fire Alarm, 2 Medical Assist, 1 Fire Police Call, 1 Carbon Monoxide, 1 Unknown Type Fire, 2 Structure Fires and 1 Brush Fire. The Fire Dept. had their monthly breakfast & business meeting. They also participated in the Andreas Halloween Parade & monthly Bingo. Their training for the month included Search & Rescue, Ladders, Halloween Parade Prep, Vehicle Maintenance & Pump Operations. Tim Houser asked Jeff Bradford if they are called out for every accident. Jeff Bradford said they do not. The Fire Dept. would be called out when there are unknown injuries and entrapment. Chairman called for a motion to accept October's Fire Dept. monthly report. Tim Houser made the motion. Glenn Hummel seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 3-0

November consisted of 15 Total Calls answered, 2 Motor Vehicle Accidents, 4 wires/tree down, 1 Automatic Fire Alarm, 3 Medical Assist, 1 Fire Police Call, 2 Carbon Monoxide, 0 Unknown Type Fire, 1 Structure Fires and 1 Brush Fire. The Fire Dept. had their monthly breakfast & business meeting. They also had a Designer Purse Bingo & monthly Bingo. Their training for the month included Driver Training & Gear Drills, Equipment Awareness & Gear Drills, Air Packs and search techniques and Vehicle Maintenance. Chairman called for a motion to accept the November monthly report. Tim Houser made the motion. Glenn Hummel seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 3-0

G. Ambulance Monthly Report – November 2023

Chairman read the November Ambulance Monthly Report. The November monthly report is as follows: 30 Total Calls for Unit 935. 372 Total Calls Year to Date. Municipalities included 2 New Ringgold, 2 Tamaqua and 26 West Penn Township. The receiving Hospitals included 7 LVHN Carbon, 3 LVHN Cedar Crest, 2 St. Luke's Geisinger, 1 Lehigh Valley, Schuylkill East, and 3 St. Luke's Miners. The calls consisted of Fall Victims, Lift Assist, Traffic Accidents, Stroke, Sick, Unknown Problems, Patient Evaluation, Stroke, Fainting, and Hemorrhage/Laceration. Chairman called for a motion to accept the November Ambulance Monthly Report. Glenn Hummel made the motion. Tim Houser seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 3-0 Glenn Hummel said to Val Coombe, president of the Ambulance, that they are doing a great job and they really picked up the pace. Val Coombe said they are grateful to have the Police Dept. & the Fire Dept. help with services when they can. Chairman agreed. The Board of Supervisors thanked the Ambulance Association for their service.

IV. Old Business – None

V. New Business

A. Park Commission ADA Swing – Scot Dietrich & Karissa Brothers attended the meeting on behalf of the Park Commission. They discussed the plans for the ADA Swing. Glenn Hummel asked if the sides all away around would, be safe sloped. He also asked what the starbursts represent on the plan. Scot Dietrich said that yes, it will be safe sloped and the starbursts are pine trees. Tim Houser discussed drainage at the park with Scot Dietrich especially at the pavilions. Scot Dietrich set it will not affect the pavilions at all. Mike Begis from ARRO Consulting asked about the path and our intent of putting in a path with CDBG funds. If we use the path that is proposed by the Park Commission, it may run into trees. Chairman asked if we could do the Park Commission's recommendations with another years funding from CDBG. Mike Begis said we could probably tie that in somehow. Scot Dietrich said the Park Commission is waiting for fill from the Road Department to put around that area.

Tim Houser said at our last meeting we approved a \$1000 donation to help with the water system. Tim Houser asked how the progress was going for the water system. Scot Dietrich said that they are working on it. They have to get DEPs approval before they start anything. Tim Houser asked Scot once it gets started let us know where to send the check too. Chairman also congratulated Karissa Brothers on being the first Lion's female President.

B. Chairman called for a motion to adopt Resolution #28 of 2023, revising the Community Block Grant Program for 2019. We have to reallocate funds from one project to another. Tim Houser made the motion. Glenn Hummel seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 3-0

VI. Correspondence

Chairman read minutes from ESRC meeting.

VII. Business from Anyone on the Board

A. Chairman said the Fire Chief called us and said he found out that the Volunteers that help with our fundraisers are currently not covered under our workers comp policy. The Secretary contacted the insurance carrier to find out if they were covered and if not what do we have to do to have them covered. They are not covered. However if we want them to be covered there would be an additional cost of \$1300. Premium is based on population. Attorney Datte explained that the law changed in 2020. Attorney Datte said we could get coverage on necessary operational support for an additional cost. These would be the people that help with fundraisers and that kind of thing. As long as the person is actively involved with fundraisers, they would be covered if the board agrees to add this coverage to the policy.

Tim Houser asked if the Fire Department has risk assessment at the Fire House. The Fire Chief said there are age restrictions from the Department of Health & their insurance on who can operate the Slicer or the Fryers. Chairman called for a motion to add the \$1300 annually to the Fire Dept. Workers Comp Policy to protect the people that help with the fundraisers, for necessary operational support. Tim Houser made the motion. Glenn Hummel seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 3-0

B. Recycling is closed Friday, December 8th.

C. Tim Houser thanked everyone that he has worked with in the last couple of years. He has spent 19 years on the Board of Supervisors and lived in the Township all of his life. He has seen tremendous change in the Township. He commends all of the people that have donated so much time in the Township to make it better. Supervisors that he worked with through his years were Miles Kistler, Charles Wertman, Willis Helfrich, Curtis Houser (which is his father), Richard Arner, Robert Stegmeier, Al Martinez, Ed Dudley, Randy Troxell, David Ziegler, Ernest Deem, James Dean, and Jimmy Akins, along with Tony Prudenti and Glenn Hummel. Tim Houser said no one knows what it is like unless you sit on this side of the table. Some decisions that are made does not sit well with some of our taxpayers. However, Glenn Hummel has said often, we are guardians of your tax dollars. Some others he would like to mention, Lion's Club members, they are the reason why we have such a beautiful park at Zion's Stone. Willis Zehner, Ernest Gurskey, Francie Deem, Arlin Hill the Secretary, he loaned the Township money, interest free until tax money came in. Chester Snyder fixed our equipment and did a lot for this Township. Richard Breiner with Breiner Excavation did a tremendous amount of work with this Township and never charged us. Tim Houser said they were old timers. He said that this Board along with himself helped maintain the lowest tax base in the area and he is proud of that. Tim Houser wished the Board good luck in the future and it has been a pleasure serving you. Thank you!

VIII. Public Comments on General Items

Art Sterling -spoke about the Jake Brakes on trucks. He asked the Board not to spend a whole lot of money on it because with the technology of trucks coming out, they are not being made loud anymore. They are not putting straight pipes on trucks anymore to make them loud. The old trucks will fade out and that would not be a concern anymore. Chairman said that Art Sterling was the gentleman that hauled the big blocks for us and donated his time & had his company donate the use of his truck. Chairman thanked Art Sterling for doing that for the Township.

Valerie Coombe – asked if the Ambulance Association if their volunteers are covered under the Township’s Workers Comp. Policy? Attorney Datte said no because we do not pay for the Ambulance’s Workers Comp. Chairman said we cannot pay for any of the Ambulance’s Workers Comp. because they have paid employees. They would be responsible for covering their operational support. Glenn Hummel suggested a fundraiser to the Ambulance Association.

IX. Adjournment

Chairman called for a motion at 6:58PM. Tim Houser made the motion. Glenn Hummel seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 3-0

Transcribed By: Katie Orlick

West Penn Township Secretary