

West Penn Township Board of Supervisors

27 Municipal Road

New Ringgold, PA 17960

Phone (570)386-4507

Fax (570)386-5851

Regular 10AM Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, June 18, 2024

Present at the Meeting

Tony Prudenti – Chairman

Katie Orlick - Secretary

James Akins – Supervisor (absent)

Paul Datte – Solicitor

Glenn Hummel – Vice Chairman

Mike Begis – ARRO Consulting

Karen Wittig – Treasurer

Herb Woodring – Asst. to Board

Jeremy Frable – Road Master

I. General

A. Tony Prudenti, Chairman, opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and Introductions at 10:02AM.

B. Chairman called for a motion to pay the monthly bills. Glenn Hummel made the motion to approve the bills from last month. Chairman seconded the motion to pay the monthly bills. All in favor. Motion was carried. 2-0

C. Chairman called for a motion to approve the Treasurer's report for the month of May. Glenn Hummel made the motion. Chairman seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 2-0

II. Public Comment on Agenda Items Only – 5 Minute Time Limit - NONE

III. Land Use - NONE

IV. Old Business

A. Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance – Status

Attorney Datte emailed Charlie Schmehl of URDC about potential Zoning Ordinance amendments to address for the following, including suggested definitions, regulations and zoning districts either by right or special exception.

- Tiny Homes
- Data/Technology Centers/Services
- Glamping

Attorney Datte said Charlie Schmehl's response was for **Tiny Homes**:

Tiny homes – Most tiny homes are not allowed in PA, as permanent homes because they do not meet the UCC or the HUD Manufactured Housing Code. Most tiny homes are built to be used as seasonal homes in campgrounds, and they do not meet code requirements for wind resistance, winter insulation, electrical capacity, etc. If a home does meet the UCC or the HUD code, then the minimum size per dwelling unit in the zoning ordinance applies. I think it is 500 square feet for a one bedroom or efficiency. Attorney Datte referred to 801.C Minimum size of Dwelling in the Zoning Ordinance. Glenn Hummel said 500 sq. ft. is good with him. Chairman said he was thinking more like 750 sq. ft. Attorney Datte recommended the 500 sq. ft. so anything more than that would qualify. Chairman and the Board agreed to keep it at 500 sq. ft.

Data Centers – These uses involve use of tremendous amounts of electricity and can be loud. They look like very large warehouses, but with fewer windows, taller fences, and no loading docks. A huge complex is being built right now next to the Salem nuclear power plant in Luzerne County by Amazon. I do not think they fit within West Penn Township, but we could make sure they are listed in an industrial district with large setbacks to address the noise. Artificial intelligence is increasing the demand for these facilities, which used to be limited to along major internet trunk lines, such as in Northern Va. Some of

these facilities are also used for cyber currency mining, but they are looking for cheap electricity. Attorney Datte said he would ask Charlie Schmehl to have definitions and setbacks for the Industrial District for the Board if they agree that is something they want in the Ordinance. The Board agreed to have that in their Ordinance

Glamping – We can write provisions for glamping if desired. They are usually very low density camping sites, such as at the edge of a farm property that includes woods. They are usually allowed in more locations than campgrounds, but at a much lower density, such as one campsite on average per 5 acres. The main provision is a large setback from existing homes, to address noise and smoke from campfires. Glenn Hummel asked what districts Glamping should be allowed. Chairman read a definition he found about Glamping. Attorney Datte said we are just trying to establish regulations we are not outlawing it. Chairman is good with one every 5 acres. Attorney Datte said he would ask Charlie Schmehl to get back to us with definitions and recommendations for Glamping.

Charlie Schmehl also provided the Board with a reference to solar. Glenn Hummel’s concern was about the proximity of the solar panels in the back of the property. Glenn Hummel said they now have siding solar as well. Would that restrict someone for doing the siding panels? He does not agree with someone saying they could only put solar in the back of their home unless they could prove that the best spot was in the front. Glenn Hummel said that how could someone restrict where they put their solar on their property. Those restrictions are hard for him to swallow. Attorney Datte said he could either eliminate that or tweak it a little bit. Board agreed to have Charlie Schmehl give us recommendations about that. Chairman said he thinks we missed have some provisions for food trucks in our Ordinance. The Board agreed that food trucks would need to be addressed as well.

V. New Business

A. Chairman called for a motion to adopt Resolution #19 of 2024, Fair Housing Resolution. Chairman explained why we would need to adopt the Fair Housing Resolution every year. We receive money from the State for Housing and this Resolution states that we will not discriminate when providing these funds.

Glenn Hummel made the motion. Chairman seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 2-0

VI. Business from anyone on the Board – NONE

VII. Correspondence

A. Chairman spoke about a Farm Market Voucher Program. He said that the Vouchers would be available Wednesday; June 19th, 10AM-Noon for eligible Schuylkill County older adults, 60 and older that fall within the income guidelines or anyone enrolled in the WIC Program would qualify. They would be distributed at the Municipal Building. The Farm Vouchers could be used at certain farm stands in Schuylkill County to purchase produce.

B. Tuscarora Grain Co. LLC informed the Township they were going to host a small meeting of people in June at the Mill and in one of the fields they farm on Dairy.

VIII. Public Comment on General Items

Delroy Haas – asked if the dwelling that the board spoke about earlier in the meeting needed a heated floor. Karen Wittig said Attorney Datte referred to heated floor when he spoke about section 801.C Attorney Datte clarified it was not a heated floor but a heated floor area meaning heat in the building.

Carl Greves – expressed his concerns about the Tiny House thing. He feels we need to have it worded correctly or someone could say this is not a Tiny house it is a Glamp and the requirements would be different. He feels that if they are not worded correctly they may have an overlap.

Glenn Hummel thanked Ron Zimmerman from CDBG, Mike Begis from ARRO Consulting and Jeremy Frabie about how nice the Morgan Park is coming along. The new ADA path is beautiful. Chairman agreed and thanked them as well. Mike Begis said he would be contacting DCNR to close the grant. New tables are assembled and down at the park under the other pavilion.

Chairman said Recycling would be closed Thursday, June 20th and Friday June 21st . It would reopen on Monday, June 24th.

IX. Executive Session – NONE

X. Adjournment

A. Chairman called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:30AM. Glenn Hummel made the motion. Chairman seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 2-0

Transcribed by:

Katie Orlick

West Penn Township Secretary