

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

Phone (570)386-4507

Fax (570)386-5851

**Regular Meeting - ANNEX
Monday, November 4, 2024 @ 6 PM**

Present at the Meeting

Anthony Prudenti – Chair
Glenn Hummel – Vice Chair
James Akins – Supervisor (absent)

Karen Wittig – Treasurer
Katie Orlick – Secretary (absent)
Jeremy Frable – Road Master
Mike Begis – ARRO Consulting, Inc.
Paul Datte – Solicitor

I. General

A. Tony Prudenti called the meeting to order at 6:03PM with the Pledge of Allegiance & Introduction.

B. Public Comments on Agenda Items Only

Tim Houser – wanted some clarification on what the Board plans to give the Ambulance Association annually. He asked about the annual \$35K that is given to the Ambulance Association and wanted to know if the new truck payment was included in that amount. Chairman said yes. The new Truck payment would be around \$33,221. Chairman said we would pay that for the next 5 years to the bank.

Jodi Mulcahy – West Penn Pike – said her well went dry. She also said her neighbor’s well went dry too. She has concerns about the amount of water that is being extracted. Chairman said the Township does not regulate water extraction. It is regulated by the Delaware River Basin Commission. Ms. Mulcahy asked the Board of Supervisors if they plan to get any regulations for water extraction. Chairman said we have new regulations for anyone that would come into the Township that wants to water extract today. However, the companies that already have been extracting do not fall under the most recent Ordinance.

Chairman said this is the worst drought in 20+yrs. Streams are going dry and tonight at 12PM there will be a burn ban in effect. People are concerned. The Township is doing some drought relief, which consists of a tanker truck filled with water for anyone that lives in the Township and is in need of water. Chairman said we also will be having bottled water brought to the Township for anyone that is in need in our Township. Ms. Mulcahy asked the Chairman if we could ask the water extractors to back off from withdrawing all the water they pull in a day. Chairman said we could ask. He also said they do have a drought plan. Ms. Mulcahy asked if the Township could ask them to back off more for the community. Chairman said we could do that. Glenn Hummel feels with the lack of rain he does not know if we could truly contribute that her well has gone dry from the water that is being taken out of the mountain. Glenn Hummel said if you go to the Lehigh River that is the lowest it has ever been.

Jodi Mulcahy said she understands the whole drought situation but her concern, she is asking they could cut back a little more. Chairman said we would ask them to cut back.

Tim Houser expressed his feelings on the drought. He said his streams that feed his pond are at its lowest point. If we do not get rain soon his fish may die that he has in his pond. He did say he is not against Water Extraction but when it is so dry, he would hope they would cut back on what they are pulling out. He feels when it is this dry; they should be mandated to stop pumping ground water. Tim Houser said the Reservoir at Tumbling Run is drying up. Someone should be in contact with the DRBC. Tim Houser said he sympathizes with her and feels they should hold back. Glenn Hummel said even if we ask them to cut back from water withdrawal, what about the other companies that do the same thing. Tim Houser feels our legislators should step in. Jodi Mulcahy said some companies' regulations are different from others. She spoke to Mike Kovach from DRBC. Mike came to her house and measured and now she will be monitoring her well. Ms. Mulcahy said after she was in contact with the DRBC, Jay Land came to her house and measured her well. She knows what DRBC measured and what Jay Land measured. She will continue monitoring her well. She is having someone come to her house to see if she is recouping any water at all. She has not turned on a facet in her house since last Friday. Chairman asked how deep her well was. She said 110ft. Chairman said he is at 420ft. Chairman spoke about the different river basin commissions and he said there are at least three in our county. Chairman said we could ask the extraction companies in our Township during this terrible drought to reduce the amount of water they take out. Chairman said we should go to our Legislators to see if they could help in this situation. Tim Houser said that maybe we could have Attorney Datte to look into it. He believes there was an agreement with Jay Land that if a well goes dry that he would drill him or her a new well. Attorney Datte said he would have to look into it. Jay Land told Ms. Mulcahy that her well is not in his watershed restrictions.

C. Review of the Minutes – October 7th & 15th, 2024.

Chairman called for a motion to accept the meeting minutes from October 7th & 15th, 2024. Glenn Hummel made the motion to accept the minutes from October 7th & 15th, 2024. Chairman seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 2-0

D. Treasurer's Report – October 2024 – Chairman called for a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report for October. Glenn Hummel made the motion. Chairman seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 2-0

E. Approval of Bills – October 2024

Chairman called for a motion to approve and pay the bills for October. Glenn Hummel made the motion to approve and pay the bills. Chairman seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 2-0

F. Solicitor's Report

1. Attorney Datte said he sent an email with the draft of an agreement for Atlas Park to the Board. He asked them to review and let him know if they had any comments. Attorney Datte said he does have the signed deed in hand but did not want to record it until the agreement is squared away.

2. **Zoning Ordinance Status – Charlie Schemhl** – he is supposed to give us a status report. Chairman asked about the Solar Ordinance. Chairman said we need to do it sooner than later.

II. Land Use – NONE

III. Operations

A. Engineer/Zoning Monthly Report – October 2024

Chairman asked about the Technical review for Atlas Park. Mike Begis said he would follow up with the secretary. Chairman called for a motion to accept the Engineer's monthly report. Glenn Hummel made the motion. Chairman seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 2-0

B. Code Enforcement Monthly Report – October 2024

Chairman called for a motion to accept the Code Enforcement Officer's monthly report for October 2024. Glenn Hummel had concerns with the properties on the code report that are going up for sheriff sale. Attorney Datte said the code violations are still enforceable. The property is still in the owners hands. Attorney Datte said if you keep citing them and nothing is being done then you could file legal action to cause them to correct the issue, an equity action. Glenn Hummel made the motion to accept the code report. Chairman seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 2-0

C. Sewage Enforcement Officer's Monthly Report – October 2024

Chairman read the sewage enforcement officer's report. The report consisted of 2 New Permit App., 5 Test Probes, 7 Interim Inspections, 2 Perc Test, and 2 Site Evaluations. Well Report there were 2 new well permit, 2 Design Review and 2 Site Evaluation. 1 Malfunctions was reported. Chairman called for a motion to accept the Sewage Enforcement Officer's Report. Glenn Hummel made the motion to accept the Sewage Enforcement Report for October 2024. Chairman seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 2-0

D. Road Department's Monthly Report –October 2024

Chairman read the Road Department's Monthly report. The report consisted of General Maintenance to the Township Building & Equipment, Paved Mill Drive, Fixed Street Signs along Township Roads, Paved Mill Drive, Cleaned Bridge Beams and painted them on Water Wheel Rd., Installed Pipes & Rip Rap on Arrow Rd. (Dirt & Gravel Project), Mowed Grass along Township Rds. , Painted Turn Lanes & Crosswalks on SR309, Paved bad spots on Walnut Lane and attended ESM Training for Dirt and Gravel & Low Volume Rds. In Dubois. Chairman also read the Maintenance Report. Glenn Hummel made the motion to accept the Road Dept.'s monthly report. Chairman seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 2-0

E. Police Department Report – October 2024

Chairman read the Police Report. The Police Dept. had 4,999 miles patrolled 104 total citations & warnings, 12 motor vehicle accidents and 108 Total calls.

Chairman called for a motion to accept the Police Report. Glenn Hummel made the motion. Chairman seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 2-0

F. Fire Company Monthly Report – October 2024

Chairman read the Fire Company's Monthly Report. There were 26 calls answered. The calls consisted of 9 Motor Vehicle Accidents, 2 Wires/Trees Down, 2 Landing Zones, 1 Move Up Assignment, 1 Structure Fire, 6 Brush Fires and 5 Automatic Fire Alarms. The Fire Dept. had their Monthly Business Meeting, Breakfast, Andreas Halloween Parade Kitchen & Cash Bingo. They also did Training, Building Maintenance, Halloween Parade Prep, Driver Training & Hose Line Drills. Chairman called for a motion to accept the Fire Company's Monthly Report. Glenn Hummel made the motion. Chairman seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 2-0

G. Ambulance Monthly Report – October 2024

Chairman read the Ambulance Monthly Report. The Ambulance Report consisted of 388 calls year to date. October had 33 total calls. 28 West Penn, 1 Tamaqua, and 3 East Brunswick Township. The outcomes of the calls were 13 Treated and Transported BLS, 6 Cancelled, 2 Dead at Scene - Resuscitation Not Attempted – No Transport, 1 Refused Treatment, 1 Standby, 1 Stand by- Public Safety, Fire or EMS Operational Support Provided and 8 Treated, Transported, with ALS. Receiving Hospitals were 4 St. Luke's Miners, 1 St. Luke's Carbon, 12 Lehigh Valley Carbon, 3 St. Luke's Geisinger. The calls consisted of back pain, breathing problems, chest pain, diabetic problem, falls, fire, medical alarm, traffic accidents, poison, patient evaluation, sick, diabetic person, laceration, and fainting. Chairman called for a motion to accept the Ambulance Report. Glenn Hummel made the motion. Chairman seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 2-0

Chairman called for a motion to adopt Resolution # 27 of 2024, The board agrees to make an appropriation to the Penn Mahoning Ambulance Association of at least \$35K per year for 5 years and would make the annual truck payment to the Bank directly. Glenn Hummel made the motion to approve Resolution #27 of 2024 for the Ambulance. Chairman seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 2--0

IV. Old Business

A. LSA (Local Share Account) Grant Award Announcement – This grant was for Paving the Way for the Future – Asphalt Paver Project! We received the LSA Statewide Grant Award in the amount of \$290,360 for a new LeeBoy 8520C Asphalt Paver. Chairman thanked Dane Watrow, Senator Dave Argall and most of all Jamie Barton. Jamie Barton not only wrote us a letter of support for us but he physically went and spoke with them directly.

V. New Business

A. J.E. Morgan Memorial Park – Lawn Service & Fields – Fertilization and preparing roots for winter. \$892.50. Chairman said it should be done so people could use the fields. Glenn Hummel agreed. Glenn Hummel made the motion to hire Natural Lawn of America to do the late fall fertilization for \$892.50 to our fields at the Morgan Park. Chairman seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 2-0

VI. Correspondence

A. Chairman read a letter from Senator Argall thanking us for opening our Township Office Parking Lot for the License Plate Exchange. The Board also thanked Sgt. John Kaczmarczyk for his assistance with the event.

VII. Business from Anyone on the Board

A. Chairman said we spoke about the water tanker. He wanted everyone to be aware that we conducted some police interviews and happy to report we have candidates for a new police chief and the full time position.

B. Wreaths Across America – Chairman announced the event. Glenn Hummel explained the event. He said sponsor a wreath today to be placed on a Veteran's grave at Sky View Memorial Park on Dec. 14th.

C. Chairman said tomorrow is Election Day! Please Vote!

VIII. Public Comments on General Items

Delroy Haas – asked what time the polls open. Chairman said 7AM.

Mr. Haas asked the Board if they could have the Police remove the speed trailer on Zion Stone Church Rd.

Carl Greves – said he heard the house on West Penn Pike is finally demolished. He thanked whoever was responsible for it. The Board said Tim Houser pushed for it to happen. Tim Houser said finally after 15 years. Carl Greves said everyone is nervous about their well going dry.

Ellen Troxell – she is a resident for 43 years. She referenced a news article from last month's meeting. She said it was about reducing the speed limit on Cold Spring Rd. She said her road is 5 miles long. In 43 years, she has never had the speed limit posted on her road. Chairman said then it is 55MPH. He said if it is not posted the speed limit is 55MPH. Ms. Troxell did some research on the different speed limits on numerous roads that surround her area. She could not understand why the speed limits are so different. She stated that the Township was looking to reduce the speed limit on Cold Spring Rd. to 25MPH, at the suggestion of one resident. She said is that all it takes to get a speed limit changed is one resident and why change it to 25MPH. Chairman said 25MPH is the speed we could change it to without doing a traffic study, as long as it meets the specification. Chairman said we cannot just choose what we want the speed to be. Ms. Troxell said this was at the request of one resident. Ms. Troxell did not agree with the change of the speed limit to 25MPH. She said Pine Hill Rd. is 45MPH. She would like to know the difference between those two roads. (Pine Hill & Cold Spring) The resident that asked to change the Speed Limit does not live on Cold Spring Rd. Ms. Troxell questioned then why is he complaining. Chairman said he was a concerned citizen. Ms. Troxell said the Township would be spending \$1300 for signs when it would be unenforceable. She feels that is like throwing money out the window. It is 5 miles long. She said we are one of the biggest Townships in PA and we would be enforcing a 5-mile stretch for a 25 MPH speed limit that one resident requested. She feels it is a huge waste of Township's money. She feels that 25MPH is extreme. Glenn Hummel said we did not make any decisions about the speed limit. She said that the Chairman said we would look at it in the new budget. We did not make any decisions. Chairman said anyone could make a request. It does not mean that the request will be acted upon.

Ms. Troxell said she came here to ask questions. Is it a done deal? Could the speed limit be something other than 25MPH? Does it only take one person to get a change?

Chairman said it takes one person to have a concern looked at. Chairman said we look to see if it is feasible. Road Master, Board of Supervisors and our Attorney take a look into it to make sure we are within the law. There are many factors.

Ms. Troxell said there should be something major that happened to warrant such a drastic speed reduction. Glenn Hummel said the concern is for public safety. Ms. Troxell said she would like the residents on Cold Spring Rd. to have a say in this matter. Attorney Datte explained the residential district. If the Board would agree to change the speed limit, then we would have to adopt a Resolution. There is a difference in Urban & Rural Speed Limits. If you do not see a speed limit, sign posted, in urban areas the speed limit would be 35MPH. If the speed limit in a rural area were not posted then it would be 55MPH.

Valerie Coombe thanked the Board of Supervisors for helping with the Ambulance Truck loan.

Tim Houser – glad to see a burn ban was put in effect. He feels it should have been two months earlier. He congratulated Road master on the great job on Mill Drive.

Jodi Mulcahy - asked about a guiderail being installed on SR 309. She thanked the Board for allowing her to speak about her water situation.

Bob Stabler – he agrees with Ms. Troxell 100%. Mr. Stabler drove on Zion Stone Rd. at 25MPH and said it is almost impossible to drive 25MPH for 5 miles. He also asked about someone breaking off his flags off his mailbox. He asked if it was happening throughout the Township or was it just his mailbox.

IX. Executive Session – None

X. Adjournment

Chairman called for a motion to adjourn at 7:27PM. Chairman made the motion to adjourn. Glenn Hummel seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion was carried. 2-0

Transcribed By:

Katie Orlick - West Penn Township Secretary