

**TOWNSHIP OF BERN
BERKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**

December 5, 2023

SUPERVISORS MEETING

SUPERVISORS PRESENT: Irene Reed, Chairman
Dr. Boyd Wagner, Supervisor
Brian Eveland, Supervisor
Daniel Tobias, Supervisor
Jeffrey Thompson, Supervisor

STAFF PRESENT: Brian Potts, Township Manager
Diane DeJesus, Secretary/Treasurer
Brett Forry, Chief of Police
Timothy Dietrich, Esquire
Kent Morey, Engineer

CALL TO ORDER-PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mrs. Reed called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA

Dr. Wagner moved to approve the Consent Agenda, as presented, which included the minutes of the November 6, 2023, Supervisors Meeting, and to accept the finance report, subject to audit and approve payment of bills on the list, seconded by Mr. Thompson. YES: Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

FINANCE REPORT

Balances as of December 5, 2023: General Fund: \$2,475,216.38, State Account: \$298,038.70, PLGIT: \$71,182.32, Certificate of Deposits: \$569,506.17, Expenses: \$70,902.86. Treasurer's Report accepted subject to audit.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

ORDINANCES/ RESOLUTIONS

Discussion / Approval to Adopt the Resolution for the Bern Township Hazard Vulnerability Assessment & Mitigation Plan Update- Mr. Potts stated the resolution was prepared by the County with Mr. Hinkle's input. Dr. Wagner made a motion to adopt the Resolution for the Bern Township Hazard Vulnerability Assessment & Mitigation Plan Update; Mr. Thompson seconded. YES: Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

TOWNSHIP MANAGER

Mr. Potts provided his report to the Board.

PUBLIC SAFETY & SERVICES

Fire Company

Mount Pleasant provided their report. Terry Royce, Greenfields Fire Chief, provided the report.

Emergency Medical Services

Western Berks provided their report.

Emergency Management

Mr. Hinkle provided his report to the Board.

Discussion / Approval of Appointment to the Blue Marsh EMA Executive Committee- Mr. Eveland volunteered for the Blue Marsh EMA Executive Committee. Mr. Thompson made a motion to appoint Mr. Eveland to the Blue Marsh EMA Executive Committee; Dr. Wagner seconded. YES: Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Police Department

Chief Forry provided his report to the Board.

Discussion / Approval to Adopt Updated Hiring Policies and Procedures- Mr. Thompson made a motion to adopt the updated Police Department hiring policies and procedures; Dr. Wagner seconded. YES: Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Discussion / Approval to Hire Police Officer- Chief Forry requested a motion to approve hiring Officer Brian Johnson with a 12-month probation period contingent upon successful completion of a psychological evaluation and polygraph test. Mr. Thompson made a motion to approve hiring Officer Brian Johnson with a 12-month probation period contingent upon successful completion of a psychological evaluation and polygraph test; Dr. Wagner seconded. YES: Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Discussion / Approval to Send Police Officer to Fire Arson Investigation Seminar- Chief Forry requested a motion to approve sending Officer Christian Lengel to a Fire Arson Investigation Seminar from April 8, 2024, through April 9, 2024. The cost is \$295.00, which is included in the training budget. Mr. Thompson made a motion to approve sending Officer Christian Lengel to the Fire Arson Investigation Seminar; Dr. Wagner seconded. YES: Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

PLANNING/ZONING/CODE ENFORCEMENT

Engineer

Mr. Kent Morey provided his report to the Board.

Planning Commission

Discussion of Berkshire Country Club Land Development Waiver Request- Mr. Potts stated the Planning Commission recommended denying the Berkshire Country Club Land Development Waiver request and to require a Sketch Plan for Record submission instead. Mr. Thompson made a motion to deny the Berkshire Country Club Land Development Waiver request and to require a Sketch Plan for Record submission instead; Dr. Wagner seconded. YES: Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Discussion / Approval of Section 154-30.I(2)(g) Steep Slope Waiver for Stinson Drive Partners Subdivision Plan- Mr. Potts stated the Planning Commission recommended approval of the waiver request. Mr. Thompson made a motion to approve Section 154-30.I(2)(g) Steep Slope Waiver for Stinson Drive Partners Subdivision Plan; Dr. Wagner seconded. YES: Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Discussion / Approval of Section 154-32.I(1) Monument Waiver for Stinson Drive Partners Subdivision Plan- Mr. Potts stated the Planning Commission recommended approval of the waiver request and that the engineer for the Stinson Drive Partners Subdivision Plan will work with Mr. Morey to pick strategic locations. Mr. Thompson made a motion to approve Section 154-32.I(1) Monument Waiver for Stinson Drive Partners Subdivision Plan; Dr. Wagner seconded. YES: Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Discussion / Approval for Chairperson to Sign Salamone Sewer Modules- Mr. Thompson made a motion for the Chairperson to sign the Salamone Sewer Modules; Dr. Wagner seconded. YES: Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Discussion of Barley Snyder Conflict with C&B Development- Mr. Potts stated that the Board could sign a waiver allowing Barley Snyder to review the C&B Development Plan. Mrs. Reed suggested utilizing Atty. Joselle Clearey. Dr. Wagner made a motion to utilize Atty. Josele Cleary to review the C&B Development Plan; Mr. Thompson seconded. YES: Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Time Extensions

None.

Code Enforcement

Mr. Pflum submitted his report to the Board.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

MS4 Stormwater Report

Mr. Potts stated there was nothing to report.

ROAD DEPARTMENT

Mr. Potts provided his report to the Board and informed them that the 2025 Road Project will be switched to 2024 and the 2024 Road Project will now occur in 2025 to allow more time to prepare the roads.

Discussion / Approval to Accept Bid for 2009 Case Backhoe- Mr. Potts stated that the top bid was \$51,400.00 from Boater 2 Be. Mr. Thompson made a motion to accept the bid for the 2009 Case Backhoe; Dr. Wagner seconded. YES: Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Discussion / Approval to Accept Bid for Grapple Bucket- Mr. Potts stated the low bid was \$19,636.00 from Powerco. Inc. Mr. Thompson made a motion to accept the bid for the Grapple Bucket; Dr. Wagner seconded. YES: Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Discussion / Approval of Weed Spraying Proposal- Mr. Potts stated that DeAngelo Contracting Services quoted \$3,845.00 a year for three years to spray weeds around guide rails and signs Mr. Thompson made a motion to approve the DeAngelo Contracting Services weed spraying proposal; Dr. Wagner seconded. YES: Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Discussion of Grader Equipment- Mr. Potts informed the Board that the 1971 grader is having issues and even though it isn't used often it is a very important piece of equipment when it is needed. A new grader would cost approximately \$250,000.00. Repairs could cost \$45,000.00 to \$50,000.00. Renting a grader would cost \$9,702.00 per month and there are only two available to rent in the area. After Supervisor discussion it was decided that Mr. Potts will have the grader's operational value evaluated and investigate grant opportunities.

SEWER/ WATER/ BERN TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY

Mrs. Reed stated there was nothing to report.

SOLID WASTE ADVISORY COMMISSION

Mr. Thompson stated there was nothing to report.

Discussion/Approval to Levy Fines Against A.J. Blosenski- Mr. Potts recommended penalizing A.J. Blosenski for missed recycling collections. Since August of this year 396 collections have been missed with 109 of the misses occurring in November. Per the contract a \$100.00 fine could be charged per missed collection. Atty. Dietrich suggested setting up a meeting with A.J. Blosenski and asking them to provide a detailed plan on how they will rectify the situation. Mr. Potts will set up the meeting.

ADMINISTRATION

Discussion / Approval to Approve 2024 Budget- Mr. Potts stated that the final budget is \$5,535,840.00 which includes a .374 mil overall tax increase. Dr. Wagner made a motion to approve the 2024 Budget; Mr. Thompson seconded. YES: Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. NO: Mr. Tobias. Motion carried.

Discussion of Fire Protection Tax- Mr. Potts stated that after analysis there will not be an increase in the Fire Protection Tax.

Discussion / Approval to Accept Proposal for Auditing Services- Mr. Potts stated he sent out seven requests for proposals to auditing/ CPA companies and only received one quote from Maillie, LLP at a cost of \$18,250.00, \$ 18,900.00, and \$19,600 respectively for three years. Mr. Thompson made a motion to accept the Maillie, LLP auditing service proposal; Dr. Wagner seconded. YES: Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Discussion / Approval of 2024 Meeting Dates- Mr. Thompson made a motion to approve the 2024 meeting dates; Dr. Wagner seconded. YES: Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Discussion of Relocated Public Meetings in 2024- Mr. Potts spoke about needing to relocate the public meetings and tax collections in 2024 due to the building construction project. The County has reached out to Bern Lutheran Church about using their facility for polling. Jami Jamison, Township tax collector, will be collecting taxes on specified dates and time at the church free of charge. The church offered their meeting room to the Township at a fee of \$100.00 per meeting. Reading Airport offered their boarding lounge free of charge. Mr. Tobias made a motion to move the 2024 Township meetings that require relocation to the Bern Lutheran Church at a fee of \$100.00 per meeting; Mr. Thompson seconded. YES: Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Discussion / Approval of Uniform Pension Plan COLA- Mr. Potts stated that this is for an optional 13.4% cost of living increase for the retired police officers. The Board did not act.

Reorganization Meeting: Tuesday, January 2, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, January 2, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.

Mrs. Reed adjourned the meeting at 7:55 p.m. for an executive session. No action will be taken after the executive session.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane DeJesus,
Secretary/ Treasurer