

TOWNSHIP OF BERN
BERKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

December 3, 2024

SUPERVISORS MEETING

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

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

CALL TO ORDER-PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

CONSENT AGENDA

Dr. Wagner made a motion to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Mr. Thompson.
YES: Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

FINANCE REPORT

Balances as of December 3, 2024, General Fund: \$2,607,234.16, State Account: \$4456,890.52, PLGIT: \$75,372.56, Certificate of Deposits: \$597,313.37, Expenses: \$69,068.56. Treasurer's Report accepted subject to audit.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

ORDINANCES/RESOLUTIONS

Discussion/Approval of Statewide Local Grant Assessment Resolution for Police Vehicle –
Mr. Potts stated that this is to apply for a Statewide Grant to purchase a 4x4 Chevy Tahoe.

Mr. Thompson made a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Dr. Wagner. YES: Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

TOWNSHIP MANAGER

Mr. Potts gave an update as to where we are with the Yard Waste Facility. Mr. Potts would like to delay sending out the information to the Township residents until we hire someone to fill the vacant position in the Township office.

Mr. Potts stated that we are doing interviews at this time, but it will not be until February that we will bring it to the Board for their approval.

Mr. Potts also reported on where we are with the construction project at the Township Building.

PUBLIC SAFETY & SERVICES

Fire Company

Greenfields Fire Company – Brent Wisniewski read the monthly report.

Mt. Pleasant – Supervisors have the report.

Union Fire Company – Supervisors have the report.

Emergency Medical Services

Western Berks - Supervisors have the report.

Northern Berks - Supervisors have the report.

Emergency Management

Supervisors have a copy of the report.

Mr. Hinkle reported that he will be on a teleconference through PSATS next week with the new state-wide coordinator for public safety.

Mr. Potts stated that the township has a burn ban in place and since it is not on the agenda to lift the ban it will be on next month's agenda.

Police Department

Supervisors have the monthly report.

Discussion/Approval to send Sergeant to POSIT Training – Chief Forry requested approval to send Sergeant Edwin Noll to POSIT Training. Mr. Thompson moved to send Sergeant Noll to POSIT Training, seconded by Dr. Wagner. YES: Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Discussion/Approval to send Officer to Fire Training - Chief Forry requested approval to send Officer Christian Lengel to Fire Training. Mr. Thompson moved to send Officer Christian Lengel to Fire Training, seconded by Dr. Wagner. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Discussion/Approval of Schuylkill Valley Elementary School MOU – Chief Forry explained that this is done every year, due to having bus routes in the township. Mr. Thompson moved to approve the Schuylkill Valley Elementary School MOU, seconded by Dr. Wagner. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Discussion/Approval of Schuylkill Valley Middle School MOU – Chief Forry stated that this is the same as the previous MOU except it for the Middle School. Mr. Thompson moved to approve the Schuylkill Valley Middle School MOU, seconded by Dr. Wagner. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Discussion/Approval of Schuylkill Valley High School MOU – Mr. Thompson moved to approve the Schuylkill Valley High School MOU, seconded by Mr. Eveland. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Discussion/Approval of Schuylkill Valley Berks/Shelter Care MOU – Chief Forry stated that Schuylkill Valley provides services for the children that are in the Shelter Care.

Chief Forry explained what the MOU's cover.

Mr. Thompson moved to approve the Schuylkill Valley Berks/Shelter Care MOU, seconded by Dr. Wagner. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Discussion/Approval to Ratify LSA Grant Support to BCERT Letter – This is to purchase equipment through BCERT.

Mr. Thompson moved to ratify LSA Grant Support Letter, seconded by Dr. Wagner. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Planning/Zoning/Code Enforcement

Engineer – The Supervisors received a copy of the report.

Planning Commission

Discussion/Approval of Noll Pallet & Lumber Sketch Plan for Record – This is a lot line adjustment, and the Planning Commission recommended approval of the plan, subject to the November 8, 2024, Engineers review letter.

Dr. Wagner moved that the Supervisors approve the Noll Pallet & Lumber Sketch Plan for Record, subject to the Engineers Review Letter of November 8, 2024, seconded by Mr. Thompson. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Discussion/Approval of Building H Escrow Release – Mr. Morey recommended that \$143,500.00 be released from the Building H Escrow Fund.

Dr. Wagner moved that the Supervisors approve releasing \$143,500.00 from the Building H Escrow Fund, seconded by Mr. Thompson. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Discussion/Approval of S&L Mechanical Escrow – Mr. Morey recommended that \$38,971.00 be released from the S&L Mechanical Escrow leaving a zero balance in the account.

Dr. Wagner moved that \$38,971.00 be released from the S&L Mechanical Escrow fund, seconded by Mr. Thompson. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Time Extensions

None required.

Code Enforcement – The Supervisors have a copy of the monthly report.

Stormwater Management

Nothing to add.

Roads – The Supervisors have a copy of the monthly report.

Sewer/Water/Bern Township Municipal Authority – Nothing to report.

Solid Waste Advisory Commission – Nothing to report.

Administration

Discussion/Approval of 2025 Budget – Mr. Potts stated that it is a balanced budget, and it does include a tax increase. Mr. Potts stated that if your property is assessed at \$100,000.00, it will cost an additional \$80.00. Mr. Thompson moved to approve the 2025 budget, seconded by Dr. Wagner. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Discussion/Approval of Animal Rescue League Agreement – The cost is the same as last year. \$2.50 per capita minus the population counts from the Heim and the Prison. Dr. Wagner made a motion to approve the Animal Rescue League Agreement for 2025, seconded by Mr. Thompson. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Discussion/Approval of Real Estate Tax Refund to 2480 Riverview Avenue – The property owner received approval from the Pennsylvania State Veterans Commission that his property goes to tax free. His refund for his Township Property Tax would be \$493.80. Dr. Wagner moved that we refund the property owner \$493.80, seconded by Mr. Thompson. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Discussion/Approval of Hirneisen Change Order #3 – This is the last change order to settle out all the allowances that were included in the bid amount. This is for extras that had to be done to bring the building up to code. The total credit for this change order is \$837.65. Mr. Thompson moved to approve Change Order #3 in the amount of \$837.65 to be refunded to Hirneisen, seconded by Dr. Wagner. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Discussion/Approval of 2025 Meeting Dates – Mr. Thompson questioned the August meeting date change. The change is due to National Night Out being the first Tuesday in August, so the meeting was changed to Monday, August 4th. Mr. Thompson moved to approve the advertisement for the 2025 Meeting Dates, seconded by Dr. Wagner. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Discussion/Approval of Uniform Pension Plan COLA – We did not receive the paperwork from Univest.

Discussion/Approval to Send Solicitor to Zoning Hearing – This is for the Carriage House application. Mr. Potts stated that they want to continue the use that is presently there and to add several other types of businesses. Mr. Pflum stated that they would need a variance for some of the business that they propose to put in place. Dr. Wagner questioned the status of the original items that were to be done to the facility.

Mr. Potts stated that this would be a different owner. Mr. Pflum stated that the new Land Development Plan would clean up all the issues that were never done by the original owner. There were also questions regarding the construction warehouse that is proposed and also if the buildings that are still there were going to be used for venues, how does the proposed construction warehouse fit into that. Retail Uses would be six days a week and the place for venues would be primarily on the weekends.

Dr. Wagner stated that the Supervisors should send the solicitor to the Zoning Hearing.

Atty. Dietrich stated that it would be useful if the developer would put in writing what commitments they are willing to make as conditions to zoning relief.

Mr. Potts recommended that the Supervisors vote to send the solicitor to the Zoning Hearing and that the Supervisors provide a list to the solicitor to convey as much information that they would like to see for this project to move forward to the Zoning Hearing Board.

Dr. Wagner suggested that a committee of two Supervisors be set up to make the list of what they would like to see for this project to move forward. Dr. Wagner and Mr. Thompson will be on the committee.

Dr. Wagner moved that the Supervisors approve sending the Solicitor to Zoning Hearing, seconded by Mr. Thompson. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

Discussion/Approval to Hire Independent Contractor at \$18.00/Hour – Mr. Potts stated that the Secretary from BTMA has offered to help out when the Secretary is on vacation.

Mr. Thompson moved to approve the hourly rate of \$18.00 for the independent contractor, seconded by Dr. Wagner. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

The Reorganization Meeting will be held on Monday, January 6, 2025, at 6:30 PM and the Supervisors Meeting will be held on January 6, 2025, at 7:00 PM.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

An Executive Session was held at 7:45PM to discuss a personnel matter and there will be no action taken at the conclusion of the Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Reed adjourned the meeting at 7:50pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane DeJesus, Secretary/Treasurer