

**MINUTES  
WORCESTER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
BUSINESS MEETING  
WORCESTER TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY HALL  
WEDNESDAY, JULY 26, 2023- 7:00 PM**

**CALL TO ORDER**

**The meeting was called to order at 7:01PM**

- **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- This meeting is being video recorded for broadcast
- The Board of Supervisors held an executive session on July 13<sup>th</sup> to discuss Real Estate

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**ATTENDANCE**

All three Supervisors were present.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

The Township Manager announced the meeting was being recorded for future broadcast.

The Township Manager also announced the Board of Supervisors met in executive session on July 13<sup>th</sup> to discuss Real Estate. No decisions were made at that meeting.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**OFFICIAL ACTION ITEMS**

1. Consent agenda

Vice Chair Lou Betz motioned to approve the consent agenda that includes the following items:

- i. Treasurer's Report and other Monthly Reports for June 2023;
- ii. bill payment for June 2023 totaling \$459,145.41; and
- iii. June 2023 Business Meeting minutes

**Supervisor Quigley seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.**

2. Resolution 2023-15

Wendy McKenna, Esq., summarized Resolutions 2023-15 and 2023-16, which are related. The documents are necessary in order to execute documents in lieu of condemnation. This is required simply because the properties are assessed under Act 319.

Chair DeLello asked Ms. McKenna to summarize what Act 319 was, for the audience. She explained it is a tax benefit for certain properties with agricultural uses. Since these properties have frontage being

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partially taken as part of the Valley Forge Road Improvement Project, and have an Act 319 assessment, a Resolution is necessary to ensure the tax credit is preserved.

3. Resolution 2023-16

**Supervisor Betz motioned to approve the resolutions 2023-15 and 2023-16 related to the Valley Forge Corridor Improvement Project. Supervisor Quigley seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.**

4. Motion

- A motion to authorize execution by the Township of the Valley Forge Road Corridor Deeds of Dedication and Temporary Construction Easements signed by Natural Lands Trust.

**Ms. McKenna shared that the Township was awaiting the return of the County Conservation District approvals before voting on this motion. The motion was tabled.**

5. Motion

Ms. McKenna summarized the properties appealing assessment. She shared the sums are very small, and the Township follows the School Districts lead in such assessment appeals. The total of both appeals totaled around \$16.00.

1. Christina Marie Inc. – 3415 Germantown Pike
2. 3008 Property Holdings, LCC. – 3008 Germantown Pike

**Vice Chair Betz motioned to approve the motion for the above-named properties. Supervisor Quigley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

6. Motion

Mr. Jim Thompson, President of the Worcester Historical Society, provided a brief presentation about the Dutchie Church, the subject of the potential land purchase.

Supervisor Quigley asked Mr. Thompson why the Historical Society did not approach the Township first when they decided to sell the building. Mr. Thompson shared a few anecdotes about past Boards not wanting to take on the financial cost of the Dutchie Church. Mr. Quigley shared that he was frustrated when he heard about the sale in passing and expressed a desire for better communication going forward. Mr. Thompson offered apologies for the oversight and reiterated his excitement that the Church will become a Township asset. Mr. Quigley thanked Mr. Thompson for his work and for his family's work over the years.

Supervisor Quigley asked about the financial stability of the Historical Society and if there were any restrictions on the sale of Historical Society assets. The Board and Mr. Thompson briefly discussed the Historical Society's plans for the revenue from the sale. Mr. Thompson shared the Historical Society's Board of Directors is discussing investing some of that money back into improvements for the Dutchie Church.

Supervisor Betz asked if it would be possible for the Township to have a first right of refusal for historical assets sold in the future. Chair DeLello asked Ms. McKenna to summarize the sale process. She shared the sale price is \$159,000 and has a due diligence period for the Township to inspect the property. Mr. Quigley shared that he was ready to move forward with the sale process without delay. Mr. Halbom shared the Township does have some minimal inspection requirements required by law.

**Vice-Chair Betz motioned to authorize execution of an agreement of sale for the purchase of the Dutchie Church on Valley Forge Road. There was no public comment. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### 7. Ordinance 2023-01

Ms. McKenna summarized the ordinance is required to authorize the School District to hire crossing guards in lieu of the Township, as required by The Second-Class Township Code. This is necessary to accommodate zoning relief recently provided to the 7<sup>th</sup> Day Adventist Church, nearby Methacton High School. The School District would be responsible for the cost of employing the crossing guard/s.

Mr. Halbom summarized the plan for the beginning of the school year. He shared the School District, Township, and Fire Police had been in discussions to provide interim paid crossing guard services, if necessary.

Mr. Betz asked if conditions could be placed on the agreement to allow for Township intervention if necessary. Mr. Halbom explained added conditions could not be placed on the zoning relief.

Chair DeLello thanked Supervisor Betz for his work his focus and work resolving the issue. Mr. DeLello summarized the various efforts the Township has made to support the School District in resolving the parking issue, including investments in added parking on the campus, and line striping along Germantown Pike.

Mr. Betz summarized the history of parking around the Church and a recent conversation with the School Superintendent. Mr. Betz expressed frustration about the past dealings with the school and student parking. He expressed concern that the parking issues could persist.

Mr. Quigley offered that the Township has done everything within its power to assist, but this is a School District issue. He offered appreciated for Mr. Betz efforts, but shared he felt the School District and School Board should be accepting responsibility for the issue.

Vice-Chair Betz motioned to approve Ordinance 2023-01 authorizing the Solicitor to prepare and advertise an ordinance for the Methacton School District to Hire School Crossing Guards. Mr. Quigley seconded the motion.

Jim Mollick (Worcester) offered public comment, asking about the fines that Mr. Betz had mentioned earlier. Mr. Betz stated there were fine letters sent to the Church citing zoning violations related to student parking at the church. Jim asked who filed the complaint to the Township regarding the student parking. Mr. Betz stated the Superintendent had filed the complaint to the Township. Mr. Betz asked Mr. Halbom research the matter. Dr. Mollick asked the Township Manager if records existed pertaining to the matter. Mr. Halbom stated he was unsure and encouraged Dr. Mollick to file a Right to Know request and he would research the matter.

Dr. Mollick shared the School District had recently authorized \$10,000 for a crossing guard. He offered that, if any gap existed, that the School District could pay for the services of the Fire Police out of their \$3 million surplus. Mr. Halbom responded stating that, essentially, that was the current understanding between the School District and the Township. Mr. Betz shared several anecdotes regarding past school parking which demonstrate inconsistencies.

**Vice-Chair Betz motioned to authorize the solicitor to prepare and advertise an ordinance for Methacton School District to hire School Crossing Guards. Supervisor Quigley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### 8. Ordinance 2023-02

Mr. Halbom shared that speed limits on Township-owned roads are limited by ordinance that is occasionally updated, like this evening. The ordinance contemplates changing speed limits on Landis Road (25mph between Skippack Pike and Potshop Road), Kriebel Mill Road (35 mph between Water Street and Fawn Drive), and Hollow Road (between Mill Road and Skippack Pike). He shared that Landis Road will also include a variety of safety improvements to coincide with this year's road program. He offered that additional roads may be added later.

Mr. DeLello asked to clarify the advertisement requirements. Mr. Halbom shared the advertisement would have to be made at least sixty days prior, but more than seven days, within enacting the ordinance. Mr. Halbom shared that the Township has the right to sign any residential street a 25mph zone, but in speaking with residents a 35mph zone was preferred on Hollow Road and Kriebel Mill Road. He shared a traffic study is being performed to verify a 35mph zone is appropriate for both roads.

Vice-Chair Betz motioned to authorize the solicitor to prepare and advertise an ordinance to update certain speed limits. Mr. Quigley seconded the motion.

Jim Mollick offered public comment regarding Landis Road. He asked if there were plans to incorporate specific features requested by a resident, Mr. Diesel, who lives on Landis Road. Mr. Halbom replied that he had met with Mr. Diesel to review the traffic improvements proposed by the Traffic Engineer. He shared that Mr. Diesel had asked for a parabolic rise in the road; however, engineers determined that feature was not appropriate for the site. They instead suggested a speed control device that utilizes an audible rumble strip and painted lines that give drivers the illusion a speed bump is ahead, thereby slowing traffic. He shared the rumble strip is removable and was apparently designed to make noise in the vehicle, but limit noise in the neighborhood. Mr. Quigley offered that, in many circumstances, the Township is unable to provide for specific outcomes but the Township does its best to work through those constraints and move in the right direction.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Supervisor Quigley asked about the status of the bridge that is out at Kriebel Mill Road. Chair DeLello replied the Township had requested a memo about a year ago outlining options. He also shared this item will be discussed by the Board and staff during Capital Budget talks soon.

Supervisor Betz shared that he had spoken with Representative Bradford's office about grant support for the project. Supervisor Betz expressed concern about the process allowing for student parking around the school. He expressed support for repealing the no parking ordinance on Kriebel Mill Road to increase parking capacity.

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Supervisor Quigley asked about the progress of the apartment complex at Germantown and Valley Forge Road (BET Investments, Dubner Property). He shared there has been no update provided to the Township since the notices of violation were issued by PADEP, MCCD, and the Township.

Supervisor Quigley asked if Chair DeLello wanted to summarize the development along Rt. 73 (Bellflower, formerly Zacherczuk). That plan was a “by right plan” meaning, it complied with the Township’s ordinance without need for any variances. The 14 homes are located on a site with roughly 30 acres. Mr. Quigley responded to concerns voiced about traffic in the area from residents. He shared that he was in the area several times recently and didn’t notice any onslaught of traffic coming from the development. Chair DeLello offered that, while sometimes counterintuitive, Traffic Engineering is a science that governed by regulations that benefit everyone.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

William McGrane (Stump Hall Road, Worcester) offered public comment about issues related to invasive species in the area that are being confused for Milkweed. There are invasive species in the same family that are harmful to people, and livestock. He shared he’s seen the species at Heebner and many other local open spaces and parks. He encouraged the Township to look into mitigation efforts.

Christine Steer (Worcester) raised concerns about the Township’s communication with residents. She shared several meeting videos are missing from the website. She asked about social media presence, weekly emails, and other platforms. He shared the Twitter account appears closed, and the Facebook page has not been recently updated.

Mr. Halbom replied that two meeting videos were unavailable following their recording. He also shared the Peek at the Week was still being shared weekly and encouraged Ms. Steer to sign up for the Peek at the Week again. Mr. Halbom committed to investigate other items mentioned by Ms. Steer following the meeting. Mr. Quigley shared that, while the technology is helpful, the minutes are the official meeting recording. He thanked the staff for their efforts.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**The meeting was adjourned at 8:33PM.**

### UPCOMING MEETINGS

Planning Commission – June 27, 2023 (7:30 PM) - **Cancelled**

Zoning Hearing Board – August 30, 2023

Board of Supervisors – August 16, 2023 (Work Session @ 6:30PM, Business Meeting @ 7:00PM)

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