

MINUTES

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

LOWER ALLEN TOWNSHIP

REGULAR MEETING

November 25, 2024

The following were in ATTENDANCE:

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Dean W. Villone, President
Jennifer Caron, Vice President
Joshua Nagy
Charles Brown
Joseph Swartz

TOWNSHIP PERSONNEL

Thomas G. Vernau, Township Manager
Rebecca L. Davis, Assistant Township Manager
Steven P. Miner, Township Solicitor
David Holl, Public Safety Director
Alycia Knoll, Finance Director
Isaac Sweeney, PE, Community & Economic
Development Director
Nathaniel Sterling, Administrative Secretary
Renee' Greenawalt, Recording Secretary

President Villone called the November 25, 2024 Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners to order at 6:00 PM. He announced that Proof of Publication for the meeting was available for review. This was followed by prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW EMPLOYEE

Kasha Griva was introduced as the Township's new Billing Specialist in the Finance Department.

MEETING MINUTES

President Villone requested a motion to approve the minutes of the October 7, 2024 Budget Meeting. Commissioner **BROWN** moved to approve the minutes. Vice President **CARON** seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

President Villone requested a motion to approve the minutes of the October 21, 2024 Budget Meeting. Commissioner **BROWN** moved to approve the minutes. Vice President **CARON** seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

President Villone requested a motion to approve the minutes of the November 12, 2024 Regular Meeting. Commissioner **BROWN** moved to approve the minutes. Vice President **CARON** seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: Any item on the agenda.

President Villone advised the audience that if there were any item on that evening's agenda that they wished to comment on, to please indicate as such. Mr. Rick Castranio stated his intention to address Agenda Item 8E.

CONSENT AGENDA:

President Villone stated that any Commissioner, staff member, or anyone in attendance who would like to have an item on the Consent Agenda removed for further discussion could do so at that time. There were none.

Items on the Consent Agenda:

- a. Monthly Department Reports for Community & Economic Development, Facility Maintenance, Fleet Maintenance, Public Works, and Public Safety for October 2024.
- b. Tax Collector's Monthly Report for October 2024.

- c. Check Register of November 15, 2024 in the amount of \$126,643.12.
- d. Check Register of November 22, 2024 in the amount of \$221,160.14.
- e. Payment of Estimate No. 4/FINAL to Kinsley Construction, LLC for labor for the Weis/UMHC Basin Retrofit Project in the amount of \$32,861.44.
- f. Moving Benjamin Peters from probationary to regular full-time status as the Public Works Project Manager, effective December 3, 2024.

Commissioner **SWARTZ** moved to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. Commissioner **NAGY** seconded. With no further discussion the consent agenda was approved by a vote of 5-0.

PRESIDENT

President Villone requested a motion to approve a manual Check Register of November 21, 2024 in the amount of \$1,075.00 to Eckert, Seamans, Cherin & Mellott for legal services.

Commissioner **SWARTZ** made the motion, seconded by Commissioner **BROWN**. The motion passed 4-0, with Vice President **CARON** abstaining.

ANY BUSINESS PERTINENT TO THE TOWNSHIP:

President Villone noted that if anyone wished to speak at that time on any subject, there would be 10 minutes allotted per person to speak at the podium. There were none.

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SLD #2024-02 Kindt Properties

Director Sweeney introduced the item for discussion and possible action, to accept a 90-day extension for the SLD #2024-02 Kindt Properties – 1013 Saint Johns Road Preliminary/Final Subdivision and Land Development Plan. He explained the purpose of the plan is to consolidate three lots into one and includes several improvements to building and driveway. The plan has not been presented yet due to required variance, granted at a recent Zoning Hearing Board.

Commissioner **SWARTZ** offered a motion to approve the extension request, seconded by Vice President **CARON**. The motion passed 5-0.

SLD #2024-05 Capital City Mall

Director Sweeney introduced the item for discussion and possible action, to accept a 90-day extension for the SLD #2024-05 Capital City Mall Preliminary/Final Subdivision Plan. The purpose of the plan is to subdivide the Sportsman's Warehouse from the mall. Staff have met with their engineer and comments have been provided. A plan has not yet been submitted.

Commissioner **SWARTZ** offered a motion to approve the extension request, seconded by Vice President **CARON**. The motion passed 5-0.

SLD #2024-08 Merritts Properties, LLC

Director Sweeney introduced the item for discussion and possible action, to accept a 90-day extension for the SLD #2024-08 Merritts Properties, LLC Preliminary/Final Subdivision Plan. He noted the plan was submitted after multiple code and zoning violations were discovered on the property. The application will be considered by the Zoning Hearing Board in January. If variances are granted, the plan can move forward. If not, the plan will need to be delayed or denied.

Commissioner **BROWN** offered a motion to approve the extension request, seconded by Commissioner **NAGY**. The motion passed 5-0.

SLD #2023-02 Cedar Run Business Park

Director Sweeney introduced the item for discussion and possible action, to accept a 90-day extension for the SLD #2023-02 Cedar Run Business Park Preliminary/Final Subdivision and Land Development Plan. He noted the delay is due to

outside agency permits which should soon be approved.

Commissioner **SWARTZ** offered a motion to approve the extension request, seconded by Vice President **CARON**. The motion passed 5-0.

SLD 2024-12 4107 Rosemont Avenue Final Minor Subdivision Plan

Director Sweeney introduced the item for discussion and possible action for approval of SLD 2024-12 4107 Rosemont Avenue Final Minor Subdivision Plan. A plan was submitted to the Township several months ago and the applicants and staff were instructed to move forward with the subdivision plan. The purpose of the plan is to combine two tracts into one lot consisting of 0.37 acres. It consolidates a small lot to the parent tract of land. Mr. Rick Castranio, the engineer consulting on the project, was in attendance on behalf of the applicant to answer any questions.

Commissioner **NAGY** moved to approve SLD 2024-12 4107 Rosemont Avenue Final Minor Subdivision Plan with the following conditions:

- a) Satisfy all remaining comments listed on Rettew's letter dated November 11, 2024.
- b) Satisfy all remaining comments listed on the Cumberland County Planning Department letter dated October 16, 2024.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner **SWARTZ** and passed 5-0.

PUBLIC WORKS

Ordinance 2024-03 amending Chapter 180, Solid Waste

Director Davis introduced for discussion and possible action, to authorize permission to advertise the proposed **ORDINANCE 2024-03**, amending Chapter 180, Solid Waste, and replacing it with a new Chapter 180, Solid Waste, to comply with current Act 101 Municipal Recycling Requirements. She noted that the comments received from the Cumberland County Solid Waste Authority had been incorporated into the proposed ordinance. She indicated that it could be ready for enactment at the next meeting.

Commissioner **NAGY** moved to authorize permission to advertise, seconded by Commissioner **BROWN**. The motion passed 5-0.

Traffic Calming Policy Steering Committee

Director Davis introduced for discussion and possible action, to authorize permission to begin the process to form a steering committee to develop a Traffic Calming Policy for the Township. She referenced the issues that had been identified by residents along Cedar Cliff Drive and reported that staff have met with local technical assistance representatives who recommended mitigation items that were implemented, as well as the formation of a steering committee, to develop a traffic calming policy.

Commissioners expressed their appreciation for the efforts taken to address the issues of concern.

Vice President **CARON** moved to authorize permission to form a steering committee, seconded by Commissioner **SWARTZ**. The motion passed 5-0.

MANAGER

2025 Fee Schedule

Manager Vernau reported that all fees had been reviewed by staff, and adjustments were provided in the draft document for review. He noted there were no significant changes except for the refuse rate that increased in the three-year contract, as well as the addition of a pond gazebo rental fee. It was also noted there were no significant changes to professional fees. The Board will act on the fee schedule at a future meeting.

2025 Budget

Director Knoll distributed the proposed budget for 2025. She highlighted the projected revenues for 2025 compared to prior years. Next, she highlighted the capital projects list, and it was noted that a copier for the finance department was moved from the 2027 to the 2025 budget. Manager Vernau also mentioned that the non-grant portion of the Beacon Hill park project will be paid for out of the Parks Escrow Fund.

Director Knoll reported that earned income tax revenues are updated monthly and she noted prior year adjustment and delinquent collections.

Manager Vernau presented a summary of each departmental budget, noting that each is required to limit increases to 5% or 7.5% (for public safety). He highlighted some adjustments made since the initial presentation, including moving Adobe licenses out of the 407 Information Services budget to their relevant departments, as well as the reduction of cloud file storage. Additionally, replacement batteries were removed from the budget. The only department with a significant increase is EMS, due to new inclusion of \$80,000 for billing, and \$140,000 in salary increases. Overall, the total expenditures are less than revenue, resulting in a small surplus of \$26,782.

Director Knoll indicated that a new five-year financial plan could be available for presentation to the Board in August 2025.

President Villone said the budget must be tabled and available for public view for twenty days prior to enactment. Addressing potential changes, Solicitor Miner confirmed that small, non-substantive changes could be made prior to enactment.

Commissioner Swartz asked the Board to consider increased funding donation to the Frederickson library, noting the ongoing financial challenges experienced by the library and no increase in the Township contribution over the years. He referenced a recommendation to contribute \$1 per capita, comparable to the funds contributed to the West Shore Recreation Board. President Villone expressed support to increase the contribution now and in future years, but not for a significant increase. Commissioner Nagy noted support for a modest increase. There was additional discussion regarding the existing library tax paid to the county, and the potential to fund the cost for installing a library drop box at the Township building. Vice President Caron noted support to increase the contribution to \$3,000 for the library and to determine the actual costs for a library drop box and consider funding that project as a direct service to Township residents while also helping to offset costs for the library. Commissioner Swartz committed to coordinating with the Frederickson Library director to determine the relevant costs in time for consideration prior to final adoption of the budget in December.

Vice President **CARON** moved to place the 2025 Budget on the table for public view, including a revision to the line item for the Frederickson Library contribution in the amount of \$3,000. Commissioner **SWARTZ** seconded the motion, which passed 5-0.

Vice President **CARON** offered a motion to advertise the 2025 Budget. The motion was seconded by Commissioner **BROWN** and passed 5-0.

COMMISSIONERS REPORTS

President Villone announced the Board would adjourn to executive session following their reports to discuss four items: employee termination, purchase right-of-way, labor negotiations, and litigation issue.

Mr. Vernau thanked all staff for their diligence and efforts in preparing the budget.

Mr. Miner reported that the Solid Waste Ordinance would be on the agenda for the December 23, 2024 meeting.

Commissioner Swartz shared an update from the Recreation and Parks Board, noting they plan to hold a Gardeners Gathering event in the spring and that the board chair is finalizing a letter of support for the Beacon Hill Park project grant. He reiterated appreciation for staff in preparing budgets and noted his pride in serving alongside top-notch public servants for the benefit of Lower Allen Township residents.

Commissioner Nagy echoed sentiments of gratitude to staff for their budget preparations.

Commissioner Brown noted appreciation to Director Knoll and Manager Vernau. He also noted his enjoyment in reading the monthly departmental reports and complimented the new fence at LACP.

Vice President Caron reiterated appreciation for the budget process and wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

President Villone repeated thanks to everyone for all their discipline and efforts in approaching the budget. He asked for clarification on the times for yard waste pick up. Ms. Arnold explained that the contract stipulates that October 31 is the last day of yard waste pick up, which will begin again March 3, 2025. The Township compost facilities located at the public works building are available to residents all year long. She also noted that trash pick-up schedule, also dictated by the contract, specifies pick-up hours are permitted between 7 AM and 7 PM.

EXECUTIVE SESSION & ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned to executive session at 7:35 PM.