

— THE SMITHFIELD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS —
REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING
AUGUST 9, 2023

A Regular Business Meeting of the Smithfield Township Board of Supervisors was held on August 9, 2023, at the Smithfield Township Municipal Center at 1155 Red Fox Rd, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301, and via Zoom.

Present are Supervisors Jacob Pride, Robert Lovenheim, and Brian Barrett (via Zoom), Engineer Jon Tresslar, and Township Manager Julia Heilakka. Solicitor Ronold Karasek is not present.

Also present are Todd Nemura, Mike Dwyer, Nick Dennis, Holly Dennis, Pam Barrett, Jeff Young, Brian Dunlap, Don DeReamus, Justin Thomas, Tim Werkheiser, Debbie Kulick, Ed Regina, Joe Widmer, and Tim Snow.

1. Chair Jacob Pride calls the meeting to order at 6:00PM. A quorum is present.
2. The Pledge of Allegiance is recited.
3. Announcements – none.
4. Minutes
 - a. Robert Lovenheim motions to approve the minutes from the August 24, 2023 regular meeting, Jacob Pride seconds. Pam Barrett asks if the township spoke to Jon Berkheimer. Lucas DeBartolo replies that the township connected with the president of the Berkheimer Foundation. Pam Barrett believes the township should have spoken to her first. Jacob Pride replies Pam Barrett is not an elected official.

Pam Barrett asks if Robert Lovenheim is all right because nothing he said about why the township did not complete Minisink Park is the truth; wooden decks and parking make no sense. She states that Robert Lovenheim stated that the items she wanted in Minisink needed to be on wooden platforms, and the park could not be there because it is in a floodplain and didn't want to take up parking. Robert Lovenheim states that he thought the project was a good idea; he searched for other sources to get the dinosaur slide done cheaper and couldn't find anything. The item Pam Barrett found was \$35,000 and still needed dinosaur eggs and a play area with a floor of engineered wood or some other material that protects children from falls, which costs a lot of money. The park is in a floodway; there was no place to put it, it cost too much, and that is why the project did not move forward. Pam Barrett states Robert Lovenheim wanted to do his park and he wrote a whole thing about it that does not make sense. Robert Lovenheim replies that was long after and also did not get completed. Pam Barrett states Robert Lovenheim wrote something that was not true.

Jacob Pride asks if this references something in the minutes. Pam Barrett states Julia Heilakka did not give her the minutes. Julia Heilakka states that draft minutes are exempt

from disclosure per Section 708.b.21.i of the Right-to-Know Law. Pam Barrett states Julia Heilakka is so sweet, thank you. Robert Lovenheim states what he said is accurate. Pam Barrett states Robert Lovenheim's comments are all erroneous and all wrong. Vote: Jacob Pride and Robert Lovenheim in favor, Brian Barrett abstains. Jacob Pride asks on what grounds Brian Barrett is recusing himself; he was not absent and must have a reason to recuse himself. Pam Barrett states Brian Barrett is involved in it. Jacob Pride states that all supervisors are. Brian Barrett refuses to vote: minutes accepted.

5. Reports

- a. Solicitor's Report – none.
- b. Engineer's Report – none.

6. New Business

- a. Consider: Consent Agenda.
 - i. Consider: Authorize Advertisement of Budget Sessions.
 - ii. Consider: Resolution No. 530 – Designate PMRS Administrators.
 - iii. Approve: Temporary Construction and Permanent Easement Agreement for Airstrip Rd.

Robert Lovenheim motions to approve the consent agenda, Jacob Pride seconds. No public comment. Vote: Jacob Pride and Robert Lovenheim in favor. Brian Barrett asks if the township should have the audit before meeting for budget discussions. Jacob Pride replies this is to advertise the meetings; the Board will discuss the meetings later. Brian Barrett in favor: motion carries.

- b. [Item d] Pocono Mountain United Way (PMUW) Presentation. Todd Nemura states United Way helps people who are above the poverty line but struggling to make ends meet, also known as Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE). As of 2021, 31% of Smithfield Township residents are ALICE. Todd Nemura discusses services and benefits provides by PMUW and asks the Board to consider a donation of \$2/household for the 2024 budget. Jacob Pride states the township has contributed to PMUW this year and hopes to continue to contribute.
- c. [Item a] Presentation: Suburban EMS. Brian Dunlap discusses lack of funding, service areas, and billing issues related to reimbursement from Medicare and Medicaid; Suburban EMS loses \$100-\$150 per emergency call. Jeff Young discusses sending letters to all communities they serve asking for funding, how fuel and ambulance costs have significantly increased, efforts to reduce expenses, fundraising, employee retention threats, and an in-house education program. Response times from their Stroudsburg

Station are ten minutes to the township building and 15 minutes to the Shawnee Inn. Suburban EMS asks for \$6,883 per month to cover Smithfield Township.

Gary Hoffman states emergency service is a Commonwealth-wide problem. Smithfield Township must consider what level of care should be available; staffing an ALS truck for every call is not practical. The township may consider a chase truck to bolster Suburban's 2 ALS and 2 BLS vehicles during the day shift and 1 ALS and 2 BLS at night. Response times are affected by traffic, weather, and where the ambulance actually is. He can provide a monthly report with response times. Jeff Young states Suburban currently provides ALS and BLS to Smithfield on an as-needed basis.

Robert Lovenheim asks Gary Hoffman if he's seen any innovative solutions to the EMS crisis. Gary Hoffman replies Pocono Mountain Regional EMS is run and governed by municipalities. Robert Lovenheim states Lehman's EMS service is partially subsidized by Pike County. Gary Hoffman states Monroe County does not match funds. Nick Dennis confirms Suburban's plan does not add any additional ambulances to the area. Jeff Young states Suburban is operating at a deficit. Debbie Kulick states both organizations are in the same boat. Nick Dennis states the township will need to raise taxes to pay for ambulance services.

Jeff Young states Suburban does not have the staff to cover Middle Smithfield Township at this time, but should by February 2024. Brian Dunlap confirms there is no joint offer to Smithfield and Middle Smithfield Townships. Jeff Young states if the township does not elect to follow this service, Suburban will still ask for additional contributions.

- d. [Item b] Consider: Emergency Contribution to Bushkill Emergency Corps. Lucas DeBartolo recommends an emergency contribution of \$11,160 to sustain Bushkill EMS. Robert Lovenheim motions to approve the emergency contribution, Jacob Pride seconds. No public comment. Vote: all in favor; motion carries.

Robert Lovenheim states these payments are outside of the township's budget and this situation is becoming a crisis; the Monroe County Commissioners are doing nothing. Jeff Young states grants are a necessity to manage the business. Debbie Kulick thanks the township and states the Commissioners said they would start funding EMS when the townships did. Mike Dwyer states the Commissioners also promised to fund 1/3 of the P25 radio update for emergency services, but seems to find reasons to not pay.

- e. Presentation: Pocono Mountain United Way [see Item 6.b].
- f. Consider: Appoint MCATO Voting and Alternate Voting Delegates. Jacob Pride suggests appointing Robert Lovenheim as the voting delegate and Julia Heilakka and Lucas DeBartolo as alternate voting delegates. Robert Lovenheim motions to approve the MCATO voting and alternate voting delegates, Jacob Pride seconds. No public comment. Vote: all in favor; motion carries.

- g. Discuss: Act 167 Updates. Jon Tresslar states the Board still needs to discuss the buffers on lakes and ponds. After discussion, the Board decides to keep the buffer at 50ft, as it is in the current ordinance.
 - h. Discuss: Budget Meeting Dates. Jacob Pride states budget meetings began October 16th last year and he would like to start earlier. Julia Heilakka asks that budget meetings not be on the same day as regular meetings. The Board discusses and then decides to hold budget meetings at 10:00AM on October 4th and 18th, and November 1st and 15th.
7. Board Of Supervisors Report – none.
8. Bills: \$197,265.50 (General Fund: \$197,265.50 - Liquid Fuels Fund: \$0 - Escrow Fund: \$0). Robert Lovenheim motions to approve the bills, Brian Barrett seconds. No public comment. Vote: all in favor; motion carries.
9. Public Comment
- a. Tim Snow asks if there is an update on the Wellness Center. Julia Heilakka replies the zoning officer's investigation is still pending.
 - b. Joe Widmer states he purchased property on Joel Street and Milford Rd (Parcel 16.7.1.52). The lot is a commercial property, has an HOP, and can be built on. He has until August 25th to move his trucks out of Stroud Township, and needs a place to park them, but the zoning officer has stated that a lot must have a building before vehicles can be parked there. Jacob Pride or Robert Lovenheim will talk to the zoning officer.
 - c. Tim Snow states six cars were broken into in Delaware Water Gap Borough.
10. Robert Lovenheim motions to adjourn, Jacob Pride seconds; meeting adjourned at 7:21PM.

Minutes recorded by Julia Heilakka

Respectfully submitted:



Julia Heilakka, Assistant Secretary