

THE SMITHFIELD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING
FEBRUARY 28, 2024

A Regular Business Meeting of the Smithfield Township Board of Supervisors was held on February 28, 2024, at the Smithfield Township Municipal Center at 1155 Red Fox Rd, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301, and via Zoom.

Present are Supervisor Michael Albert, Engineer Jon Tresslar, Administrative Coordinator Dyana Salvi, Conservation & Recreation Director Alex Jackson, and Township Manager Julia Heilakka.

Attending through via Zoom are Supervisors Jacob Pride, Robert Lovenheim, and Solicitor Ronold Karasek.

Also present are Vicky Ozgun, Joann Norris, Nate Oiler, Alice Olemick, Jean Turn, Tim Snow, Kristine Karol, Pat Owens, Janice Medwick, and Dennis Dumas.

Chair Jacob Pride calls the meeting to order at 6:01PM. A quorum is present.

1. The Pledge of Allegiance is recited.
2. Minutes
 - a. Jacob Pride motions to approve the minutes from the February 7, 2024, regular meeting, with spelling corrections made. Robert Lovenheim seconds. Vote: all in favor; minutes accepted.
3. Announcements
 - a. River's Edge Bike Park Committee Meeting will take place at 6:00PM on March 6, 2024. This is an open public meeting and will be held in the Municipal building.
 - b. An Executive Session was held on February 16, 2024, from 5:00PM to 6:00PM regarding personnel.
 - c. An Executive Session was held on February 22, 2024, from 6:32PM to 6:34PM regarding personnel.
 - d. A Standing Executive Session was held on February 28, 2024, from 5:30PM to 5:50PM regarding personnel.
 - e. The Renaming the Creek Campaign is accepting comments through March 15, 2024, to Alex Jackson - alex@smithfieldtownship.com. Alex Jackson stated that the stakeholders met and have suggested the name change from S*mbo Creek to Paemasing Creek, with The Lake Valhalla Association suggesting the change from Little S*mbo Creek to White Tail Creek. The historical context derives from Susan Klepp's 2012 speech, which is

posted on smithfieldtownship.com. Alex Jackson is collaborating with the Historical Association to invite federally recognized tribes provide input towards the name change.

4. Bills & Obligations

- a. Consider: 2/28/2024- General Fund: \$171,441.82- Escrow Fund: \$1,250.00.

Jacob Pride motions to approve the bills, Robert Lovenheim seconds. Michael Albert clarifies a bill used to repair a township vehicle. No public comment. Vote: all in favor; motion carries.

5. Reports

- a. Solicitor's Report- Ronold Karasek states that he is collaborating with Robert Lovenheim on researching road safety ordinances. Vicky Ozgun asks for more information regarding the ordinance. Michael Albert discusses the need for updating roads to meet safety standards, and Julia Heilakka states that the ordinance is posted on smithfieldtownship.com for public review.
- b. Engineer's Report- Jon Tresslar states that Airstrip Road is currently under construction. The Post Office Bridge will be discussed under old business.

6. Consent Agenda

- a. Consider: Approve Updated 2023 Eligibility List for Shawnee Fire Co.
- b. Consider: Ratify Advertisement of 2024 Spring Cleanup Bid.
- i. Julia Heilakka states that the Spring Cleanup dates are from May 15-18, and will be held at 1155 Red Fox Rd, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301, from 8:00AM-5:00PM. Once the bid is approved, a list will be provided of which items are acceptable. Jacob Pride states that this will be posted on smithfieldtownship.com.
- c. Consider: Award Seeding Quote for Township Fields to Primrose Landscaping.
- d. Consider: Accept 2022 Draft Audit.
- e. Consider: Hire Finance Director.
- i. Jacob Pride states that Bonnie Winters has accepted the Finance Director position.

Jacob Pride motions to approve the consent agenda, Robert Lovenheim seconds. No public comment. Vote: all in favor; motion carries.

7. Presentation: BCRA Water Service. Postponed to the March 27, 2024, BOS meeting.

8. Old Business

- a. Consider: Approve Green Mountain Drive Bridge ROW Appraisals.

Jacob Pride stated that Jon Tresslar provided information for the Right of Way during the meeting on February 7, 2024, and reviewed with Missy Hutchison. Robert Lovenheim motions to approve the appraisal, Jacob Pride seconds. No public comment. Vote: all in favor; motion carries.

- b. Consider: Formation of Smithfield Township Economic Development Committee

Michael Albert is planning to meet with Middle Smithfield Township Director of Economic Development. Jacob Pride motions to table the committee discussion, Robert Lovenheim seconds. No public comment. Vote: all in favor; motion carries.

Joann Norris asked for details regarding the Green Mountain Drive appraisal. Jacob Pride clarified that the discussion is for any changes made to the bridge. Jon Tresslar stated that there is a right of way across the bridge which is 33 feet wide; portions of the bridge fall outside requirements. For the township to legally work on the bridge, additional right of way is needed. Joann Norris asks about the property owners of the bridge, and what changes are being made. Jon Tresslar clarifies that the bridge will remain intact although repair work is needed. The property owners have been notified. The bridge is historic; it is over 100 years old.

- c. Discuss: Post Office Bridge RD Barriers/Closure

Michael Albert states that he has received feedback from Jon Tresslar regarding the bridge. Jon Tresslar states that it is a stone arch bridge that is losing stone. PennDOT has inspected the bridge and is pushing for the township to either repair or close it. PennDOT has recommended the use of traffic reflectors to limit and maintain access to the bridge. The bridge has a 3-ton weight limit. Jon Tresslar recommends the use of the reflectors, and states that the bridge is maintaining conditions. The property owner surrounding the bridge is interested in ownership. Jacob Pride states that there was an attorney representing the property owner, however no movement has been made. Ronold Karasek states that there has still been interest in the bridge by the property owners as of January 31, 2024. Robert Lovenheim states that no forward movement will be made until there is discussion from the surrounding property owner. Ronold Karasek will reach out to the property owner's attorney to move forward.

9. New Business

- a. Discuss: Shukaitis Sketch Plan

Presentation by Nate Oiler and Alice Olenick. They are presenting a sketch plan for a 17.5-acre property located on Franklin Hill Rd. Currently there are two homes on the property, and they are proposing to create 5 lots. There would be 3 new lots, and 2 would be created for existing homes. The conservation subdivision allows for a smaller lot of 40,000 square feet. This allows for flexibility of lot dimensions for depth and width. There is a request for a t-turnaround as opposed to a cul-de-sac, which would allow room for emergency vehicles and delivery trucks. There is also a request for a gravel road as opposed to pavement.

Robert Lovenheim discusses recently visiting the property and addressing concerns related to groundwater. Jon Tresslar states that there is limited groundwater running from across the road; an easement may be required. Permission is not required from the wetland owner relating to the property. Jacob Pride states that he encourages the flexibility of the conservation subdivision yet believes that the gravel roads should be up to public standard; preventing the need to update roads in the future. Jon Tresslar and Robert Lovenheim agree the road should be paved and brought to public standard. Michael Albert clarifies the ordinance, to which Nate Oiler discusses the terms that the road of the first lot will be separate from the other four. A minor subdivision would include 4 lots, making this subdivision unique. Discussion of Jon Tresslar's Level Engineering Letter from November 17, 2023, occurs. This states that because there are 5 lots, it counts as a major subdivision.

Jacob Pride states that he is against the approval of a gravel road. Alice Olenick states that this road will be regulated and well maintained. Michael Albert clarifies the acre requirement for the conservation subdivision as stated by Alice Olenick.

Jean Turn discusses the changes in stormwater runoff if this road is paved. Nate Oiler refers to the stormwater plan management. Jon Tresslar discusses that the responsibility of stormwater runoff, and the rate will stay the same. Janice Medwick clarifies the financial responsibility of road paving would be on the subdivision.

b. Discuss: Draft Public Road Safety Ordinance

Robert Lovenheim motions to table the Road Safety discussion to the March 27, 2024, meeting, Jacob Pride seconds. No public comment. Vote: all in favor; motion carries.

c. Discuss: Local Share Account Grant Application

Julia Heilakka states that each year the grant opens from July 1 to September 30. Now is when the township begins preparation for submission. Discussion of where the funds will be distributed needs to take place. Jacob Pride states that the grant is typically awarded of about \$100,000. It is encouraged to use the funds for public improvements.

Robert Lovenheim motions to table the grant application discussion, Michael Albert seconds. No public comment. Vote: all in favor; motion carries.

d. Consider: Shawnee Fire Co. Radio Request- \$4,497.71

Julia Heilakka states that the emergency center is asking for \$4,497.71 to use towards their remaining cost of improving radios. The township agreed two years ago to split the cost between 20% for Middle Smithfield, 70% Smithfield, and 10% Delaware Water Gap Borough. Delaware Water Gap is unable to provide funds, and Shawnee Fire Company has asked Smithfield to provide the remaining funds of \$4,497.71.

Jacob Pride suggests using the fire tax to reimburse this expense. Ronold Karasek clarifies balancing funds and agrees that the township could extract the fire tax reimbursement.

Jacob Pride motions to approve the Fire Company Request, Robert Lovenheim seconds. Tim Snow questioned the use of radios, and Julia Heilakka states they are currently in use. Vote: all in favor; motion carries.

e. Consider: PMVB Match Commitment Letter

Alex Jackson discusses the draft submission of the Pocono Mountain Visitors Bureau. This includes the revitalization of a disk golf course at Rivers Edge, along with the addition of BBQ grills for Minisink and Waterfront Park.

Robert Lovenheim motions to approve the letter, Jacob Pride seconds. Kristine Karol clarifies the location of disk golf pathways. Vote: all in favor; motion carries.

f. Consider: Appoint Members of the Environmental Advisory Council.

- i. Brett Cartwright to a term expiring on 1/2/2027.
- ii. Pat Owens to a term expiring on 1/4/2027.
- iii. Eric White to a term expiring on 1/4/2026.
- iv. Mitch Bowyer to a term expiring on 1/5/2026.
- v. Planning Commission Member, James Munet to a term expiring on 1/6/2025.
- vi. Supervisor Member, Michael Albert to a term expiring on 1/6/2025.
- vii. _____ to a term expiring on 1/6/2025.

Alex Jackson states the members that have expressed interest in joining the EAC. This council will be held on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00PM. Jacob Pride discusses the date change of the appointed members on the agenda and notes the current vacant position. Pat Owens recently attended the We Conserve PA event. Kristine Karol clarifies dates for expiration terms.

Robert Lovenheim motions to Appoint Members, Jacob Pride seconds. No public comment. Vote: all in favor; motion carries.

- g. Consider: Schedule Work Session on Ch.27 Reforms on Residential Uses, Hotel Uses, Definitions & Parking

Jacob Pride advises the Board to decide on a date to discuss matters. The work session date is set for March 20, 2024, at 4:00PM.

Michael Albert motions to approve the Work Session, Robert Lovenheim seconds. No public comment. Vote: all in favor; motion carries.

10. Public Comment

- a. Janice Medwick asks for updates on Michael Ellis and his illegal business located in Lake Valhalla. Julia Heilakka states that Michael Ellis has been issued two certified mail letters from the township, which includes two Enforcement Notices. Once the post office confirms that he has received the letter, the 30 days begin. Janice Medwick advises the use of sending the mail certified and non-certified, to ensure that Michael Ellis receives the letters. Dennis Dumas is the neighbor of Michael Ellis and asks for action to take place. Discussion among the board takes place regarding the official penalties that Ellis will face. The Conservation Department gave Ellis a deadline of March 5, 2024.
- b. Kristine Karol discussed oversight of personnel. Michael Albert discusses how the Zoning Officer reports information. Julia Heilakka clarifies the internal information that is accessible to staff, as well as information that is shared with the public. Kristine Karol references Zoning Ordinance 187 that requires the Zoning Officer to provide monthly reports. Julia Heilakka states that the township is working to create a formalized reporting system. Pat Owens asks for the procedure when dealing with personnel who have received complaints. Ronold Karasek clarifies that the Zoning Officer enforces ordinances according to the law. The Zoning Officer is an independent position.
- c. Kristine Karol discusses the procedure of a Right to Know request with Julia Heilakka.

Robert Lovenheim leaves the zoom session at 7:56PM.

11. Michael Albert motions to adjourn, Jacob Pride seconds; meeting adjourned at 8:03PM.

Minutes recorded by Dyana Salvi

Respectfully submitted:



Julia Heilakka, Township Secretary
Smithfield Township