

approved

**LOWER MOUNT BETHEL TOWNSHIP  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MINUTES – AUGUST 5, 2024 @ 7:00 P.M.**

**CALL TO ORDER** - The August 5, 2024, regular meeting of the Lower Mount Bethel Township Board of Supervisors was held at 6984 S. Delaware Drive, Martins Creek, Pennsylvania, 18063 Martins Creek, PA, 18063. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson DeBerardinis at 7:00 p.m. In attendance were M. DeBerardinis, S. Disidore, C. Cook, D. Ascani, J. Smethers, M. Mastrogiovanni, P. North and J. Coyle on zoom. There were approximately 7 members of the audience present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – July 15, 2024. MOTION** by J. Mauser, second by C. Cook to approve the minutes as submitted. Vote: 5-0.

**COURTESY OF THE FLOOR**

**N. Palmeri – Pickleball lessons:** Nicole reported as of 7/23/24, we have had 19 people contact the office interested in signing up for lessons. The cost of the instructor is \$400.00 for 3 weeks. The 1<sup>st</sup> session would run from August 17<sup>th</sup> – September 7<sup>th</sup>; 2<sup>nd</sup> session September 7<sup>th</sup> – September 21<sup>st</sup>. We should charge \$40.00 per person to cover the cost. The Pickleball courts will need to be posted they are closed for lessons on those days from 9-11 a.m. In the future we could consider a resident / non-resident rate. Payment will be upfront and there will be no refunds. S. Disidore said that it is a good idea, that will ensure they show up. Susan asked if the courts could accommodate 10 people at a time. Nicole said it can with a 10-person maximum for lessons.

**Farmers Market:** Nicole indicated the Farmers Market will be held on Saturday, 9/14/24 from 10-1 p.m. at Centerfield. We will be ordering 150 mums from the Flower Box at \$4.00 each. Nicole asked permission to buy a pretzel warmer to use at all our events, she priced them at \$399.00, but we can check with Co-Stars for a better price. **MOTION** by M. DeBerardinis, second by J. Mauser to approve purchase of the mums for the Farmers Market in the amount of \$600.00 and approve purchase of the pretzel warmer up to \$400.00 and charge \$40.00 per person for pickleball lessons for each session. D. Ascani asked that the Pickle ball Instructor name the Township as an additional insurer. Nicole said yes, she will provide the insurance and we will also have the participants sign a waiver. Vote: 5-0.

**Movie Night:** Nicole indicated movie night will be held on Friday, October 11<sup>th</sup> (rain date October 12<sup>th</sup>) at Pacchioli field. The movie that will be shown is Shrek, the cost is approximately \$400.00 for the license. The Fire Company will be giving out popcorn.

**Community Day:** Nicole indicated we will be moving Community Day out to Riverton and are combining with the Fire Company's "May Day". There are a lot of logistics to figure out, Community Day will be held earlier in the day and then phase into May Day.

**SUBDIVISIONS / ZONING – None.**

**Resolution 2024-11** - A Resolution to Support All Actions to Safely Open and Maintain All Lanes of Interstate 80/Route 611 Delaware Water Gap Corridor. Tara was present and gave some background information. Tara reviewed page 3 of the Resolution with the Board.

**MOTION** by M. DeBerardinis, second by D. Ascani to adopt Resolution 2024-11 supporting all actions to safely open and maintain all lanes of I-80 / Route 611 Delaware Water Gap Corridor. Vote: 5-0. Tara asked if anyone would like to attend the next virtual meeting. J. Smethers will attend and S. Disidore will check her schedule to see if she's available. Vote: 5-0.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

**1. Hunting Permits – 2024/2025 Season** – J. Mauser mentioned in the past were able to hunt on a portion of Talen's property. Since Talen will not allow hunters on their land, we should open up hunting to the public on Township properties. **MOTION** by M. DeBerardinis, second by J. Mauser to open up the hunting permits at the Meadows and JMT to the public, with no reporting necessary. Vehicles are to be parked along public roadways or in lots. Parking is only permitted by the pavilion on De Pues Ferry Rd. and North Parking lot. No other parking on De Pues Ferry Rd. or Martins Creek Belvidere Hwy. Vote: 5-0. D. Ascani recommended additional signage be placed stating archery hunting by permit only, call the office for further information. Signs to be placed at the North Parking lot, Welcome Center, ballfield and Meadows.

**2. Discussion/Authorize Township Solicitor to Amend Ordinance 2011-06 to Add Act 115 Revisions** –Jen contacted Maria Bentzoni for guidance, but Maria did not feel she was qualified to give the township a legal opinion on it as far as using open space funds for maintenance of properties not acquired with Open Space funds. She also reached out to Scott Coburn at PSATS, and is waiting to hear back from him. J. Mauser suggested J. Smethers reach out to Lorne Possinger from DCNR. D. Ascani asked if we could retroactively use the 25% of Open Space funds we already expended for maintenance. J. Mauser didn't believe so. S. Disidore thought it would be once we update the ordinance. Tabled.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Northampton County Public Safety Grant** - Jen explained the maximum grant amount is 20k. with a match of \$1 cash for every \$2 granted. The match funds would come from the fire tax account. **MOTION** by M. DeBerardinis, second by J. Mauser to authorize J. Smethers to apply for the grant for the fire company turnout gear. Vote: 5-0.

**2. Discussion - Acquisition of a Conservation Buffer Around the Centerfield Building** - J. Smethers, J. Coyle & D. Ascani met with Kerry Blum regarding his timber harvest permit on his land near Centerfield. He acquired all the proper permits and is logging 1.11 acres. They briefly discussed the possibility of acquiring a small conservation buffer around Centerfield School utilizing Open Space funds for either an easement or fee simple acquisition. D. Ascani noted he just wanted to have access to hunt. The Board didn't think it was necessary to pursue the conservation easement. Dave suggested we look into other vacant properties the Township could purchase.

**3. Right to Know Request Policy** – J. Smethers explained this is regarding anonymous requests and FOIA Buddy. They are anonymous requests and suggested we have a policy in place for these requests. **MOTION** by S. Disidore, second by J. Mauser to authorize J. Smethers to do a draft policy that includes the Township will not fulfill anonymous Right to Know requests. Vote: 5-0. This will be on the BOS September 9<sup>th</sup> agenda.

**4. Riverton Gate Replacement** – J. Mauser indicated he had a conversation with Jeff Larrison concerning a new gate at Riverton. A larger gate at the current location would provide easier access for major events. Jeff would also like the soil pile removed.

F. Heitzman indicated he has extra steel and can make the larger gate; it only needs an extra 4 feet. Fred will also see when he has time to move the dirt pile to the back field.

**CORRESPONDENCE** - All Correspondence is located in the Township office.

**APPROVAL OF THE BILLS - MOTION** by M. DeBerardinis, second by S. Disidore to pay the bills in the amount of \$129,717. 73. Vote: 5-0.

## **REPORTS**

**Township Engineer Report** - J. Coyle reported the elevation and drainage study was completed at the Martins Creek – Belvidere Hwy. site and the letter needs to go out to Penn DOT. Hopefully Penn DOT will move forward. J. Coyle, J. Mauser and M. DeBerardinis will meet with Penn DOT at the site once they set up a meeting. Justin indicated there will be a Planning Commission Meeting in August to review a Lot Line Adjustment. Justin met with the Blum property owner, they are working on the grading plan to stabilize the slope. The Blum's have hired S. Policelli to do another survey.

**Township Solicitor Report** - Written report was submitted. Paul gave an update on the Ordinance to establish a "public trust". The Terpstra Agricultural Conservation Easement Acquisition and are waiting for a response from Maria Bentzoni to request a site visit to review the property and status of the easement. J. Smethers mentioned on the Terpstra matter they are changing the acreage & preservation.

**Chairman's Report** – None.

### **Board Members Reports**

**D. Ascani** – Dave asked that we receive more detailed reports from the Zoning Officer.

**J. Mauser** – John reported the trails and parks are in good shape, the road crew is doing a great job.

**C. Cook** – No report.

**S. Disidore** – No report.

**Township Manager Report** - J. Smethers reported she received information and a price for "Text My Gov" and interactive text friendly communication alert system like code red. The cost is \$2,500.00, more than were paying for Code Red. Jen doesn't recommend spending the additional funds for something we don't need. **MOTION** by J. Mauser, second by M. DeBerardinis to stay with Code Red. Vote: 5-0. Jen indicated the cinder shed contracts are signed, engineering and construction are expected at the end of October and will take 4-5 weeks. The QRS truck payment is going out tomorrow, Jason Swanson is moving forward with electrical work at Gravel Hill Road, the price quote included internet. The baby changing stations were installed. Jen is getting proposals for cameras to be installed at Centerfield by the tennis and building.

**Road Department Report** – F. Heitzman reported they fixed the cross pipe at 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. and Howell Rd. They fixed the pipe that settled on Miller Road, filled in the washout on Upper Mud Run Rd. He is waiting for it to settle before putting millings and black top. They cleaned up some trees at Riverton, brush mowed the ballfield, replaced the bearings on the mower and worked on the pipe at Del Haven, they dug it out and put more materials.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – None.

**ADJOURNMENT** - The Board of Supervisors Public Meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Mastrogiovanni, Township Secretary - Lower Mount Bethel Township