

SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
September 15, 2015 - 7:00.M.
Solebury Township Hall

MINUTES

Attendance: Paul Cosdon, Chair, Robert Heath, Jr., Edward McGahan, Jr. and Helen Tai. Dennis H. Carney, Manager and Jonathan J. Reiss, Solicitor were also present.

Absent: James Searing

The meeting was called to order followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Bills Payable – September 10, 2015

Res. 2015-119 - Upon a motion by Mr. Heath, seconded by Mr. McGahan, the list of Bills Payable dated September 10, 2015, was unanimously approved as prepared and posted.

Approval of Minutes – August 18, 2015

The Chair noted the Minutes should reflect a meeting with DEP in August and not September.

Res. 2015-120 - Upon a motion by Ms. Tai, seconded by Mr. Heath, the Minutes of August 18, 2015 were unanimously approved with revision.

Approval of Minutes from DEP meeting of August 19, 2015 – Tabled

Approval of Minutes – September 1, 2015

Ms. Tai noted some spelling corrections needed.

Res. 2015-121 - Upon a motion by Mr. Heath, seconded by Mr. McGahan, the Minutes of September 1, 2015 were unanimously approved with revision.

Announcements

- The Board announced an executive session prior to the meeting related to litigation.

Appointments

- The Board clarified that James Searing was appointed to the Environmental Advisory Board for a term ending December 2016.

Res. 2015-122 - Upon a motion by Ms. Tai, seconded by Mr. Heath, it was unanimously agreed to appoint Ron Moule and John Francis to the Environmental Advisory Council without compensation, for terms expiring December 31, 2015.

Supervisor Comment

- The Chair commented on the pending retirement of Ann Irwin, Executive Director of the Bucks County SPCA after leading the organization and working tirelessly for the protection of animals and their humane treatment.
- The Chair acknowledged receipt of a Petition from 157 Solebury residents on the new public works facility. A copy of the Chair's comments is attached to these Minutes.
- Mr. Heath commented on the Petition and noted that he is personally reaching out to residents on the list.
- Mr. McGahan commented on the Petition and felt it was political in nature, adding that he did not believe the new facility was a problem.

Public Comment

- Karl Varnai of 103 Sunset Drive, informed the Board of a fundraiser being held for a wheel chair lift at the Free Library of New Hope and Solebury and requested that the information be posted on the Township website.

OLD BUSINESS

Traffic Ordinance - The Board previously authorized preparation of an amendment to the Traffic Ordinance to provide for the establishment of a 35 mph speed limit on Reeder Road and the multi-way stop condition (5-way) at Street Road, Lower Mountain Road and Pineville Road.

Res. 2015-123 - Upon a motion by Mr. Heath, seconded by Mr. McGahan, it was unanimously agreed to authorize advertising the Traffic Ordinance Amendment for adoption on October 20, 2015.

Recommendations to the Aquetong Spring Advisory Committee - The Chair opened the discussion by asking for input from Administration and Board members on ideas for the Aquetong Spring Park.

Mr. McGahan expressed concern about the rapid growth on the lake-bed near 202 and suggested that one focus of the Committee should include potential uses of the Judy house.

Mr. Heath opined that the primary concern should be on streambank and lake stabilization followed by the areas nearest the Judy house and the spring.

Ms. Tai suggested that the Board select a consultant to give advice and direction on the project, and also expressed concern that the entire site should be studied from many aspects, including stabilization, trails, education, signage and building uses.

Mr. Cosdon inquired as to when access to the site might be available to allow for installation of a trail.

Following discussion an initial list of recommendations was created with the understanding that the list may be revised or expanded.

Recommendations:

1. Lake & Stream Restoration
2. Access & Parking near the Judy House
3. Informal Master Plan
4. Signage
5. Trails
 - a. Judy House
 - b. Lake area
 - c. Lower section below Dam
6. Pavilion and Picnic Area

NEW BUSINESS

Minimum Municipal Obligation - 2016 Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) - The administration informed the Board of the pension plans' anticipated financial obligations for 2016. This notification must be provided to the Board no later than the end of September.

Res. 2015-124 - Upon a motion by Mr. McGahan, seconded by Mr. Heath, it was unanimously agreed to acknowledge receipt of Solebury Township's 2016 Minimum Municipal Obligations for the Township Pension Plans as follows:

Non-Uniform Pension Plans - \$72,235

Police Pension Plan - \$382,265

SUBDIVISIONS/CONDITIONAL USES/LAND DEVELOPMENTS - No applications were reviewed.

Public Comment

- CeCe Brillman addressed the Board concerning a Right-To-Know request she had submitted and the response received that redaction might be required, expressing concern about transparency. The Township Solicitor responded to Ms. Brillman's comments.

Adjournment

Res. 2015-125 - Upon a motion by Mr. Heath, seconded by Mr. McGahan, the meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
Dennis H. Carney
Manager

Response to Petition
Sept. 15, 2015
As delivered by Paul Cosdon, Chair

I would like to acknowledge the receipt by the Board of Supervisors of a petition signed by 157 residents of the Township.

The petition reads: "A hugely expensive new public works building project has been approved by 3 Supervisors without regard to actual final costs and disregarding the well-founded concerns of Solebury residents. We demand a true and complete accounting be made public and the Board respectfully and faithfully acts in accord with the voice of the citizens they serve."

A true and accurate accounting of the costs associated with the public works building has been available since this Board started the process almost 2 years ago.

At each of our public meetings, there is a list of bills payable available for residents to examine and time is allotted prior to the Board's acceptance for questions relating to it by both Supervisors and residents. All costs related to this project that have been paid have been on previous lists, including tonight's approval of removing trees and payment to our architect. To my recollection, no questions have been asked.

In addition, a section of our budget is titled Capital Projects. This section has included associated costs for the project in previous budgets including 2015, and the one we are working on for 2016. The proposed budget is a public document and is also available.

All associated information that has been available to the Supervisors is also available to residents. A file containing all information pertaining to the public works project has been maintained and is available during normal business hours. If anyone wishes to examine any of it, a "Right-To-Know" form should be completed. If copies are requested, associated costs will apply.

The file contains minutes of meetings, preliminary and final plans, and information relating to the bid process. Additional documents will be added as the project moves forward.

Minutes of previous meetings and work sessions where discussions took place are also available on the Township website.

This building is not "hugely" expensive. Yes, the bids came in higher than anticipated, but still within a workable framework. When completed, it will be far less expensive than the \$6 million building the previous administration recommended. It was rejected by the previous Board because the Township could not afford it. We were in the midst of a recession and the Township was nearly bankrupt.

Since then, through the diligence of this Board in reducing our debt obligations, watching our expenses, and being prudent in planning for the future, we are now in a position to where we can now afford it without an additional need for a tax increase.