

SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

July 28, 2015 – 7:00 P.M.

SPECIAL MEETING

Solebury Township Hall

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING

Attendance: Paul Cosdon, Chairman, James Searing, Vice-chair, Robert Heath, Jr., Edward McGahan, Jr. and Helen Tai. Dennis H. Carney, Manager, Gretchen K. Rice, Assistant Manager, Michele Blood, Finance Director, Matthew McHugh, Esquire for the Township Solicitor, and C. Robert Wynn, Township Engineer were also in attendance.

Approval of Minutes – June 8, 2015

Res. 2015-101 – Upon a motion by Mr. Heath, seconded by Mr. McGahan, the Minutes of June 8, 2015 were approved as written and posted.

Abstaining: Mr. Searing due to absence from meeting.

Announcements/Appointments

Res. 2015-102 – Upon a motion by Ms. Tai, seconded by Mr. McGahan, the following appointments were unanimously approved:

- 1. Pattie Beans-Clark to fill a vacancy on the Board of Parks and Recreation for a term expiring December 31/2015;**
- 2. Michael Richardson and Frank Nasssetta as resident members to the Aquetong Spring Advisory Committee;**
- 3. James Searing as a member and as Chairman of the Township Environmental Advisory Council for the remainder of 2015.**

Supervisor Comment

- Having recently been the victim of a home burglary while out of town, Ms. Tai expressed her appreciation and gratitude to Corporal Jonathan Koretzky and Detective Roy Ferrari for their professionalism and kindness in handling the situation, and to those unknown strangers who were instrumental in keeping her dog safe until her return.
- Mr. McGahan thanked Mr. Searing for volunteering to serve as Chair of the Environmental Advisory Council.
- Mr. Searing noted that the Road Rally recently sponsored and organized by the Parks and Recreation Board was an excellent event enjoyed by all participants.
- The Board noted the recent passing of long-time resident Clara Coan.
- Mr. Cosdon read a prepared statement into the record regarding the barn at Rolling Green Farm at the corner of Aquetong Road and Route 202. A copy of the statement is attached to these Minutes.

Public Works Facility – Discussion and consideration to award bid.

The Chair presented historical information spanning 20+ years regarding potential locations considered by previous Boards for constructing a new public works facility. The Board members discussed and commented on reasons why a new facility is being proposed, including but not limited to longevity of equipment, employee work conditions, and need for additional space in order to continue to provide the level of service that township residents have come to expect.

The Chair, having attended the 2015 annual PSATS conference, stated that numerous vendors and representatives from surrounding municipalities had also been consulted on the type of facility that would be most beneficial.

Mr. Searing noted that the current Board had determined in 2014 and again in 2015 that a new public works facility had ranked as the #1 and #2 priority for the Township and funding has already been secured for the project.

The Board members discussed base bids received including different alternates that resulted in 8 different options, each specifically including or excluding various alternates.

Ms. Tai stated that the original budget of \$2.7 million included architecture, site engineering, construction of the new building, demolition of the existing building and construction of police locker rooms as well as the construction of the new salt building. The proposed \$2.817 million bid includes only site engineering and construction of the new building; of the \$2.7 million budget, only \$2.075 million is budgeted for these two items. There will be additional expenses for paving and landscaping which will increase the cost.

Ms. Tai recommended that the bids not be awarded and recommended the Board take a step back and reconsider the project as to size, design and location.

Kevin Morrissey noted he was impressed with the history of the project, adding however that he felt there was still a level of uncertainty involved on the part of members and encouraged the Board not to move forward at this time.

John Francis addressed the Board regarding a cost-benefit analysis of the project.

Carolyn Brillman opined that the building was too close to the school.

Eric Allen agreed that a decent storage area is required but the numbers that came in are all too high.

John McDevitt expressed his concern to the Board on multiple levels and encouraged the Board to consider other options.

Gloria Shimpkin thanked the Board for the time and effort expended to date but questioned the urgency in awarding the bid.

Bill MacDowell commented on the number of options presented while adding that based on his experience, heated floors are very practical.

Ronald Ewer commented that having attended every meeting except one over the past two years, he has every confidence that the Board has looked at ways to cut expenses and spread the costs out for the project. He encouraged the Board to move forward with the entire project and not to walk away from it now.

Res. 2015-101 – Upon a motion by Mr. McGahan, seconded by Mr. Heath, it was agreed to move forward with the Public Works Facility Project and award the bids as detailed under Option 8 (copy attached) on the Bid Result spreadsheet as presented.

Opposed: Ms. Tai and Mr. Searing

Motion passes.

Public Comment – No additional public comment was offered.

Adjournment

Res. 2015-102 – Upon a motion by Mr. Heath, seconded by Mr. McGahan, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
Gretchen K. Rice
Assistant Manager
Secretary/Treasurer

Paul Cosdon, Chair of Solebury Board of Supervisors Comments at the July 28 2015 Board of Supervisors Meeting

Rolling Green Farm

In the past couple of days, the Board of Supervisors and the Township administration has received information of the displeasure expressed by residents regarding Rolling Green Farm on the corner of Route 202 and Aquetong Road.

The administration learned of the work performed by Rolling Green's installation of a giant sign on the side of the barn announcing a 10 day event. This prompted residents to inquire whether this was to be a continuing situation and raised questions regarding the barn's use and traffic control in the area.

Their displeasure is over the necessary steps township administration has taken in rectifying the situation that the owner brought upon himself in the use of, and modifications made to the barn.

The use of the barn for charitable activities is a permitted use in the RB zoning district. However, it is a conditional use that must be presented to our planning commission. Their recommendation is then passed to the Board for its approval.

This was not done.

Furthermore, building permits are required for the interior work. Electrical and plumbing work was done without them.

Water was supplied to the barn and septic waste was deposited into an existing system that had not been inspected or approved by the Bucks County Dept. of Health. This is a violation of County law, not the township. Without proper inspection, septic waste could be deposited in the Aquetong Watershed and flow from Aquetong Rd. to the Delaware River.

Rolling Green Farm is a preserved property. The preservation of our township has been overwhelmingly supported in three referendums, our comprehensive plan survey, and included in the comprehensive plan. Depending upon interpretation of the existing easement, the use may or may not be permitted.

The Township's administration does not pick and choose to whom violation notices are issued and penalties assessed. Nor do they selectively choose which ordinances are followed. They all are administered equally. Recent examples include:

Should the administration have ignored the destruction of trees on preserved land so that the landowner could have a better viewscape?

Should they not have issued a stop work order to a construction company for performing excavation work without a grading permit or storm water plan?

There has also been a situation where a resident tied into their neighbor's septic system. Should this have been ignored?

These are only three examples of pursuit of violations of township ordinances in the past year. All situations that the administration becomes aware are addressed.

In front of you is a copy of our ordinances. I can safely say that no one either on this board or in our administration knows all of these regulations by heart.

Over two years ago, we hired a building inspector who is available five days per week to assist residents in construction projects. Gretchen Rice is available for questions regarding zoning issues.

Notices asking residents to come to the township with questions prior to the initiation of projects to inquire as to the necessity of permits have appeared in every Solebury Messenger since January of 2009 and as recently as this past Spring.

If this had been done in the case of Rolling Green, we would not be having this discussion.