

## LEHIGH TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

September 10, 2024

- I. CALL TO ORDER. The Lehigh Township Board of Supervisors held their regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, September 10, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was held at the Lehigh Township Municipal Building, 1069 Municipal Road, Walnutport Pa. 18088. Chairman Mike Jones called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance and roll call.

Present: Cindy Miller  
Janet Sheats  
Jerry Pritchard  
Mike Jones  
David Hess  
Attorney David Backenstoe  
Alice Rehrig  
Mike Muffley  
Scott Fogel  
Frank Zamadics  
Liz Amato

## II. INTERVIEWS FOR TAX COLLECTOR

- A. Interview with Helen Miller. Hellen Miller has been a resident of the Township for 11 years. She has a lot of interest in the Township and County. She has worked in Trenton, New Jersey for a long time and would like to bring something home. She saw the position and felt it was a good position for her and she could be involved in the community more. It is something that she believes she is very capable of doing. She was worked part time over the years at LNC Tax Services preparing tax returns and keeping accounts for a lot of companies in the area. In her current job, she is a senior litigation specialist with Cenlar FSB and reviews loans in foreclosure, but non-routine foreclosure meaning there is probate issues, title issues, and things of that nature. She works between their legal team and the legal teams in the states that are handling the loans and the collectors. There are a lot of documents that go back and forth each day, making sure appropriate documents are filed and sent, working with fees and fee requests. Prior to that she ran the collections call center for Cenlar who is the second largest mortgage servicer in the United States. She has worked with loans in default and current. She has been with Cenlar for about 10 years. She believes she can bring a lot to the position. It is something she would be capable of keeping up with and the accounts squared away and records in order. It is something that she is very used to.

How do you work under pressure because there will be incoming taxes and backlog taxes that need to be straightened out? Ms. Miller, while working for LNC, had

clients who would bring boxes of receipts in that would need to be reconciled prior to them being able to do their taxes. All files had to be reviewed and data entered for checking accounts, savings accounts, and credit card to make sure all the information was up to date in order for them to move forward with their preparing their taxes for the year.

What interests you about the role of being a tax collector? Ms. Miller commented every year when she receives her taxes, she looks at them and thinks they look interesting and wonders what is involved. Having learned what is involved, the role becoming available, and reading up on tax collection, it is something that she has been thinking about off and on for a while. Being a grandmother of eight, at some point, she is going to retire from her current role and do something closer to home. She has been working since she was 14 years of age and hasn't stopped and doesn't think she will when she retires from her current job. She wants something that will keep her busy, closer to home, and more involved with the community. Her son is involved with politics and talks to her about it and she's interested and wants to become more involved in the community. She is not as involved as she would like to be.

Have you given any thought as to how you are going to transition into the position and are you able to work with the outgoing tax collector? Ms. Miller knows there are some issues out there where there may be taxes that need to be paid or reconciled. She would obviously want to work with the outgoing tax collector to review the records to make sure they go back, look at bank accounts, statements, and receipt to balance everything out to make sure that everything is on point, and look at what has been paid to make sure there is proper documentation. She is certain she would have questions about what is being done now, what are the systems that are in place. She has been through transitions at her current employment and will be able to adapt to it.

How fast do you think you will have your office up and running if appointed to the position? Ms. Miller thought it may take her a month or two to be in a good position to be able to review everything and get her contacts in order should she have questions so that she is doing the job to the standards that she believes would be required of that position, which she believes would be very high.

According to the tax collector rules, the collector needs to be available three days during the last two weeks of discount. Will you be able to be available? Ms. Miller will be able to be available. She has the time to be 100 percent available to the role. She also has the nice ability to be 100 percent remote with her current position and has the flexibility in her job. There are a lot of things that she can do at various times of the day.

Board of Supervisors Minutes  
September 10, 2024

What do you see as the biggest challenge facing this position? Ms. Miller commented she believes it would be making sure the taxes that were not paid are following the proper procedures, contacting the homeowners to make sure they are aware of what is due and making sure everything is needed to make sure we are collecting the taxes, and the follow up with that. When people are escalated or upset, you need to work through that with them and meet them with an understanding, help them to understand what is needed regardless of what it is, whether it's documentation or payment.

Where do you see yourself in the future as tax collector? Ms. Miller commented as she transitions out of her current full time position, this is what she would be doing and what she would be looking forward to; it would be a nice place to be. She is at no point to just sit back and do nothing; she needs to be busy, working, and thinking.

Where did you find out about the job? Ms. Miller's husband saw the ad and told her about it and she thought she would apply for the position.

Have you had any other positions in the Township? Ms. Miller did not.

Have you ever set up an office on your own as a 1099 or subcontractor? Ms. Miller did not. She knows there is a lot to do and has connections to help her.

Do you see any reason that you would not be able to post a bond or pass a background check? Ms. Miller did not see a reason. She had to pass a background check to help at the school.

Have you ever been audited in the past by the IRS or otherwise? Ms. Miller was not.

What do you think a reasonable time table would be to deposit the funds you receive? Ms. Miller would deposit them within 24 to 48 hours. She would not want to carry anything like that around. She would want to make sure it gets where it is supposed to be. People's homes are important to them and taxes are a big part of that. Not everyone understands escrows and taxes; you don't want to mess with people's money. She would want to make sure everything is in the bank and everything is accounted for.

Have you thought about electronic payments? Ms. Miller commented she does like electronic payments and are the way to go, but not everyone is prepared to do that.

There will be 4,800 real estate bills and 8,000 per capita bills that will need to be stuffed and sent out. Ms. Miller commented she would be able to get them out.

Ms. Miller commented she has thought about the job and looks at it as giving back to the community. She knows it will take time, effort, and focus and something she looks forward to. She is not looking to make this short term. She is aware that she will need to run a campaign for the future.

- B. Interview with Suzanne Hawke. Suzanne Hawke has been a resident of the Township for 55 years. She was raised in Danielsville and participated in LTAA softball growing up. She went to Northampton High School which is where she took the business curriculum and had her first exposure to accounting. It sparked her interest and she ended up going to Air Products and they put her through night school and she completed her Bachelors Degree in Accounting at Muhlenberg College. Throughout her career at Air Products, she was exposed to multiple areas of accounting. As they would restructure and move them around, she was exposed to distribution accounting, R & D Accounting, Contract Accounting, Business Area Accounting, and General Ledger Accounting. She also went to the SAP IT team with her experience and they rolled out the SAP system and traveled to various regions for migration and implementation of the SAP tool. Throughout the SAP implementation, she was supporting the accounting and finance team. Once this was completed, she went back into the accounting pool and started to help implement bolt on tools to help businesses improve their businesses. With the experience that she has with the integration of the various systems and the accounting, she thinks she is a good candidate for this role, especially in the interim period, because to her, even though the accounting is important, you still want a tool to use that is simple and a process that can be repeated and get you the outcome that is needed. She did speak with Mary Trexler and she explained what she was using and that it was a homegrown system, possibly Excel.

How do you do working under pressure, there is backlog that needs to be straightened out? Ms. Hawke commented she is aware there is still some reconciliation that needs to be done. That is the most important part because you need a good starting point.

How long do you expect it to take you to get your office up and running? Ms. Hawke does have a place within her home for an office.

Cindy Miller noted there is a whole process that a tax collector needs to go through. They have to take training, do a background check, get bonded, designate a deputy tax collector. The **Tax Collectors' Association** website outlines the process and also recommends software to use. It will take at least a month to complete everything. Suzanne Hawke commented she wouldn't be here if she didn't think she could complete what needs to be done as soon as possible. She also believes it is important to understand what Mary Trexler had to be transferred over.

Board of Supervisors Minutes  
September 10, 2024

How do you feel about handing the individuals who may be disgruntled for one reason or another? Ms. Hawke commented over her career, she has had to deal with disgruntled employees at times with projects. It is a lot of pressure and she is used to it with getting projects done on time.

Ms. Hawke commented she spoke with Mary Trexler to try to get an understanding of what she is using and what she does. She knows that Mary Trexler is using a homegrown system and is not recommending it. Ms. Hawke can't say that she knows everything that Mary Trexler does. She would want to get an understanding of what she is doing and then maybe make a suggestion of a tool that could be useful.

Will you be able to commit the three days per week during the last two weeks of discount? Yes, she could take vacation.

Will you be able to accommodate someone who wants to come to your home to pay taxes? Ms. Hawke commented she could; you can always make arrangements and have flexible hours. She works from home a lot and would be able to make arrangements for people. She has done a lot of juggling with her job and being flexible and is used to multitasking.

Are you looking to only be here for the next year and a half or are you looking towards the future? Ms. Hawke commented with Mary Trexler's retirement, it is an opportunity to get involved in the role without putting someone out of a job and campaigning against them. It's an opportunity to see what the job is all about. She is 65 and will be able to retire when ever she wants so if it works out, she may run and campaign.

Why didn't you run for this before? Ms. Hawke commented Mrs. Trexler has been doing the job for 30 some years. She wouldn't run against someone to put them out of a job; it's just not her.

What interests you in the role of tax collector? Ms. Hawke commented she has always liked working with numbers and it got even more intricate, not just doing debits and credits. Things are always changing. She enjoys that.

Do you feel comfortable with residents coming to your home to pay taxes? Ms. Hawke commented she does; she would also consider a drop box.

What about on-line payments? Ms. Hawke commented it would make sense and be willing to work with the Township, but she is also a believer in paying in person to get the receipt stamped.

What do you think would be the biggest challenge in this role? Ms. Hawke commented she believes the challenge will be getting a good starting point and understanding where the records stand and having accurate records to start.

What do you do if the records are not accurate? Ms. Hawke commented you would start with the discrepant issue and then work from there.

Any reason you wouldn't be able to post a bond or pass a background check? Ms. Hawke indicated that shouldn't be an issue.

Have you ever been audited by the IRS or otherwise? Ms. Hawke was not.

What is a reasonable time table in depositing the funds that are received? Ms. Hawke commented she knows it is revenue and would want it deposited as soon as possible. You also don't want money sitting around accumulating.

- C. Interview with Danielle Bowers. Danielle Bowers has lived in Lehigh Township for 7 ½ years. She is currently employed part time as a veterinary technician. She is looking to do this position as a full time job to replace her current part time role. From what she heard, the past will be difficult to bring it up to speed and is willing to put in the time that is needed to get it where it needs to be. She is involved with the community, part of the PTA at the Elementary school and has all the clearances for that. She is also a firefighter and EMT for the area. She does not have the accounting background, but has done some research and knows that you need to take a course which will include the accounting basics and preparing you for tax collections which she will complete within 60 days to become a qualified tax collector for Lehigh Township. She is very into computers; she has a college GPA of 3.97. She would be a life long learner if it wasn't so expensive.

How do you do under pressure as there is some backlog to be worked on? Ms. Bowers is detail oriented and a very organized person. She feels that would benefit to getting the backlog organized and where it needs to be and everything reconciled.

How do you feel about the transition from the previous tax collector? Ms. Bowers commented as long as she has people on her side so that if she has issues, she can reach out for help. If Mary Trexler is willing to share her knowledge and help reconcile what needs to be done, she feels it would be best for the community to get it up to date. If several people are willing to help to get it there, she is willing to do what it takes.

What is Mary Trexler is not willing and there is no one there? Ms. Bowers commented she will figure it out. She is a problem solver.

Do you know how to build your own program or data base? Ms. Bowers commented she does not know in detail, but has a friend who works for Google and if she has to, she can reach out. She also heard Cindy Miller was a prior tax collector and if she was willing, she would take on some of her knowledge. If not, she would find resources to help her.

How do you feel about people coming to your residence to drop off taxes? Ms. Bowers does not have a problem with that. She currently has two spare rooms, one with a desk and computer in it.

What sparked your interest to become tax collector and are you willing to run a campaign to continue? Ms. Bowers saw it advertised on the Lehigh Township Community Page on Facebook, but what sparked it the most is she likes data entry and this would allow her to not only fix problems of the past, but start something more up to date for the future and to make sure something like this didn't happen again. Even if she didn't win a campaign, she could pass the knowledge on to someone else. If the community wanted on line payments, she would be willing to look into it. As far as campaigning, she would be there.

What do you think will be the biggest challenge for this position? Ms. Bowers believes it would be fixing the problems of the past. She doesn't know what was left for anyone and believes there probably are some items that need to be caught up to speed.

Do you foresee any problems in posting a bond and doing a background check? Ms. Bowers commented she needs to have a background check with what she does.

Have you every been audited by the IRS? Ms. Bowers has not been; she has done her own taxes for the past 24 years.

Do you understand the time that it will take to stuff envelopes and hold hours the end of discount. Ms. Bowers commented this will be her full time commitment to do that.

- D. Interview with Paula Meckes. Paula Meckes has been a resident of Lehigh Township for 20 years. She recently just started going to college for accounting. She is at a point in her life where she wants to better herself and improve on what she does at her job now. She saw the ad on Facebook and thought it would be an interesting and challenging job to pursue.

Do you see yourself as self-motivated? Ms. Meckes commented she does.

How do you work under pressure? Ms. Meckes currently works at a used car dealership in the Township. She has a lot of responsibilities. She does accounts payable, accounts receivable, customer service, title work, contracts to go to the banks for financing. When she started at the job, the previous person wasn't keeping up with it so she needed to catch up on what was fallen behind plus continue on with the daily duties. She does well with working under pressure. She is good at time management and getting things done in a timely manner. When someone purchases a vehicle at a dealership, there is a time frame that the State gives you to get the paperwork into them.

What do you feel is a reasonable time to make the deposits? Ms. Meckes commented it would be as soon as possible, within 24 to 48 hours depending upon how much you have.

How do you plan on going about bringing this up to where they need to be, getting to that starting point. Ms. Meckes commented you should go back as far as you can to reconcile everything. It will be very time consuming. If you can't go back to everything, take what you can reconcile and go on from that. As you find out what problems there are, you can correct them as you go.

Will you be setting up programs to make sure everything is right there when you need it? Ms. Meckes commented she believes that will be the best way.

Are you able to have a home office? Ms. Meckes will be able to.

Will your current job interfere with any of the mandatory hours that are required during the discount period. Ms. Meckes commented it would not. With the job she does, she can make up her hours.

Are you able to be bonded and pass a background check? Ms. Meckes currently is bonded as a notary.

Have you ever been audited by the IRS or anyone else? Ms. Meckes was not.

What do you think will be your biggest challenge? Ms. Meckes commented the biggest challenge will be getting into the position and trying to get all the backlog done and accounts up to date. Once all of that is complete and processes set up, things will get easier; you will know what changes need to be made to what was previously done to make your job more efficient.

What is your long term goal with the position? Ms. Meckes long term goal would be to remain as the tax collector, but with going to college, she would also like to have her own business doing taxes.



Board of Supervisors Minutes  
September 10, 2024

Do you plan on running for election if you are appointed to the position? Ms. Meckes commented she doesn't know how, but would be willing to figure it out.

Jerry Pritchard made a motion to appoint Suzanne Hawke as Tax Collector to fill the remaining term. Cindy Miller seconded the motion. A resident questioned if there was also a 5<sup>th</sup> candidate. Mike Jones commented the Board held a public meeting on Friday because the other candidate couldn't make this meeting because of being out of the country. Herb Eiden questioned how involved the Board of Supervisors will be with the tax collector's function. He understands that it is independent, but the ultimate goal would be to come up with a system that is compatible so that if someone transcends or you get a different person, it will make the transformation easier. Cindy Miller commented she understands what is being said, but by law, the position is independent of the Township. It is their own business and they get to set it up. If someone wanted to do on line payments, they could work with the Township to get it on the Township's website or something like that, then the Township would work with them to do that. Mr. Eiden questioned with the 60 day course, does the County has the ability to tell you how they want the information. Cindy Miller commented, no. The Tax Collector is an elected position. The Pennsylvania Tax Collector Association runs the classes; they are on-line classes. It is totally independent. Mr. Eiden commented it could be confusing if everyone is sending information in a different manner. Linda Roman commented she listened to all the candidates and Helen Miller and Suzanne Hawke impressed her, particularly with their backgrounds. How did the Supervisors come up with Suzanne Hawke over Helen Miller? Jerry Pritchard commented the Board listened to all five candidate and needed to select from them. Cindy Miller commented the Board had resumes from all the candidates and asked them questions. Janet Sheats commented all the candidates interviewed very well. Jerry Pritchard, Cindy Miller, and David Hess voted aye. Janet Sheats and Mike Jones were opposed. Motion carried.

Mike Jones commented he voted nay because when Ms. Hawke was asked if she was going to run, she was unsure. Janet Sheats commented that was her thought as well. Cindy Miller commented whether or not someone was going to run or not should have no bearing on getting this position and cleaning up this mess. It is going to take a lot of time to clean it up and we need a ~~clear~~ seasoned professional to do it. David Hess commented he was impressed that Suzanne Hawke reached out to Mary Trexler. To him, it was important to have someone working with Mary Trexler to move forward. Suzanne Hawke commented she understands that the next term will be running a campaign. If she says yes, she will campaign, someone could still run against her. Mike Jones commented he understands, but is hoping that it will be consistent for the next few years.

III. CONDITIONAL USE DECISION, BWC HOKENDAUQUA CREEK LLC, AGENT FOR MICHELLE MCBRIDE CASALE, SEEKING TO CONSTRUCT A PRINCIPAL SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEM AT 3367 PHEASANT DRIVE NORTHAMPTON.

- A. Executive Session for Deliberation. The Board went into Executive Session for the purpose of deliberations pertaining to the conditional use application of BWC Hokendauqua.
- B. Announcement of Decision. Jerry Pritchard made a motion to grant the conditional use approval of BWC Hokendauqua Creek LLC subject to the following conditions:
1. The applicant must comply with all the general conditions set forth in Zoning Ordinance Section 180-128.C, in particular paragraphs 1 through 14.
  2. The applicant must comply with all the specific conditions set forth in Zoning Ordinance Section 180-107.
  3. The applicant shall provide sufficient Financial Security pursuant to Section 180-107.d.2.i to decommission the ground array for the solar energy system should that be necessary. That security must include the cost for both engineering and design of a NPDES permit as well removal of the entire and complete structure. The form must be in an amount approved by both the Township Solicitor and Township Engineer.
  4. The applicant must prepare a decommissioning plan prior to the issuance of any permits. The decommissioning plan shall include, but is not limited to:
    - a. The estimated life span of the project.
    - b. Define the conditions upon which the decommissioning will be initiated such as the end of ownership, non-occupation of the facility for a period in excess a year or a preidentified end date.
    - c. Identification of the party responsible for decommissioning.
    - d. Statement defining how modifications will be made at the start of the decommissioning process.
    - e. Description of any agreement made with the landowner regarding the decommissioning, such as if there are decommissioning issues, will the landowner also be responsible.
    - f. Decommissioning task and timing which shall include:
      - (1) removal of all equipment structures, fencing, roads, and foundations.

- (2) renovations to the subject property returning the same to the condition in which is existed prior to the solar development.
  - (3) time frame for the completion of the decommissioning activities.
  - g. The detailed decommissioning cost estimate must be prepared by knowledgeable and independent party and may or may not include any salvage value depending upon the nature of the cost estimate received.
  - h. They must provide a proper form of financial security.
5. The applicant must comply with Zoning Ordinance Section 180-107.D.4 in that any glare from the solar farm must be directed away from any adjoining properties.
  6. The installation of the solar energy system shall conform to the extent applicable to the Pennsylvania Uniform Construction Code regulations adopted by the PA Department of Labor and Industry and to applicable industry standards including those of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI).
  7. Manufacturer's data certification and design compliance shall be submitted with the Land Development Application.
  8. The design of the solar energy system shall, to the extent reasonably possible, use colors, textures, screening and landscaping that will blend the facility into the setting of the existing environment.
  9. The applicant shall demonstrate any reasonable efforts that have been taken to avoid interference or disruption with the of loss of television, telephone, radio, or other similar signals which could occur as a result of the solar energy system.
  10. The applicant shall mitigate any dust associated with the project.
  11. The applicant shall be subject to Moore Township approvals through Zoning and SALDO for site access prior to any approvals from Lehigh Township.
  12. The applicant must submit a subdivision and lot annexation plan and land development plan and receive approval according to the Township's Zoning Ordinance, SALDO, and Municipalities Planning Code.

Janet Sheats seconded the motion. David Hess, Jerry Pritchard, Mike Jones, and Janet Sheats voted aye. Cindy Miller was opposed. Motion carried.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

- A. Minutes of August 27, 2024. David Hess made a motion to approve these minutes. Janet Sheats seconded the motion. Cindy Miller noted an omission in the minutes on Page 20. In the last paragraph, it was mentioned to the Tax Collector that the records be available by September 10, 2024. The Tax Collector was at the meeting and agreed to have the records available by September 10<sup>th</sup>, and that is not reflected in the minutes. All voted aye with the noted correction.
- B. Minutes of September 6, 2024. David Hess made a motion to approve the minutes. Janet Sheats seconded the motion. David Hess, Mike Jones, Janet Sheats, and Jerry Pritchard voted aye. Cindy Miller abstained as she was not in attendance at the meeting. Motion carried.

V. APPROVAL OF BILLS.

- A. General Fund Checks 28059 to 28092. Cindy Miller made a motion to approve these bills. David Hess seconded the motion. Jerry Pritchard questioned the bill to Northeastern Security. Alice Rehrig commented it was for the gate at the yard waste site. All voted aye. Motion carried.
- B. State Fund Checks 1610. David Hess made a motion to approve these bills. Janet Sheats seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

VI. PLANNING RELATED ITEMS

A. Plans for Approval

1. CMH Homes Lot Consolidation Plan. Tyler Freed with Mease Engineering was present to represent this plan. The applicant owns two undersized parcels on West Mountain View Drive and is looking to combine the two lots into one lot which will be one acre in size and utilize the new lot to build a single family dwelling. All the items in the Township Engineer's review letter of August 12, 2024, are a will comply except for Item #8 pertaining to Recreation Land Fees. They are requesting a waiver of this item since they are consolidating the lots and not creating new lots. Mike Muffley noted these two lots were part of a previous subdivision and the recreation fees were not paid at that time.

Cindy Miller made a motion to not approve the waiver of SALDO Section 147-28 pertaining to Recreation Land Fees. David Hess seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried. The Recreation Fee will need to be paid.

Cindy Miller made a motion to grant conditional final plan approval subject to the applicant complying with the items in the Township Engineer's letter dated

August 12, 2024, and the Planning Commission's recommendation letter dated August 27, 2024. David Hess seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

2. Top of the Mountain Estates Major Subdivision. Mark Leuthe was present to represent this plan. The overall plan layout has been around for many years. In December 2023, the Board denied the plan because the applicant at that time did not meet the conditions of approval in a timely manner. There is now a new buyer of the project who is willing to complete the process. This new submission is the same as what was previously approved by the Board. Since this is a new plan submission, they will need to have the previous waiver of SALDO Section 147-18.D that was granted for the radii for the cul-de-sac approved again.

Cindy Miller made a motion to grant a waiver of SALDO Section 147-18.D regarding the radii. David Hess seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Cindy Miller made a motion to grant this plan conditional preliminary/final plan approval subjected to the applicant complying with the items in the Township Engineer's letter dated August 8, 2024, the Sewage Enforcement Officer's letter dated August 7, 2024, and the Planning Commission's letter of recommendation dated August 27, 2024. David Hess seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

- B. Engineer's Report. Mike Muffley reported the Haberern Plan was before the Planning Commission at their meeting on September 9, 2024. They received conditional approval from the Planning Commission and will be coming to the Board for their approval.

The concrete pads for the fueling station are complete. As previously reported, we are waiting for the tanks to be manufactured and delivered. The lead time on delivery was 14 to 16 weeks from when the order was placed. The vendor did meet with Frank Zamadics and Alice Rehrig to go over the particulars on the pumps and record system.

VII. DEPARTMENTAL/ORGANIZATIONAL REPORT

- A. Recreation Report. Sandy Hopkins reported the Rec Board is getting ready for the tree lighting which is scheduled for December 7<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. The tree has been ordered, the juggler confirmed, the Blue Mountain Fish and Game and the Lions Club will be participating as they did in the past. There are few items that still need to be completed.

Katherine Mack questioned if the process for developing plans for the park has started. Cindy Miller commented that was temporarily put on hold because there were too many things that the Township was dealing with. This will be put back on the agenda shortly.

- B. Public Works. Frank Zamadics reported the chip seal project has been completed and he has also contacted the line painters to come in. We are on the list for the work to be done, but we don't have a date yet. Once a date is set, it will only take a day to complete.

Rick Hildebrand requested the stop bars at Wood Drive and Blue Mountain Drive be repainted at this intersection and others where the stop bars are faded.

Sandy Hopkins questioned who was responsible for the hole that is located at West Mountain View Drive and Route 145. Frank Zamadics commented both of the roads are State Roads located in the Borough of Walnutport. Walnutport Borough has been speaking to PennDOT over the past two years. PennDOT will be taking care of the repair.

- C. Zoning Report. Liz Amato reported there were 50 new permit applications received in August, 32 permits were issued and three new complaints were received.

There were two appeals before the Zoning Hearing Board in August. One was for two principal uses which was denied and the other was for a relief from the front yard setback for an addition which was approved.

The Ad Hoc Committee is closing in on completing the zoning ordinance updates. The first version of the final draft will be provided at the September 25, 2024, meeting. Once it is completed by the Ad Hoc Committee it will go to Planning Commission for their review and then to the Board of Supervisors for review and a hearing. Once the zoning ordinance is completed, they will begin working on SALDO.

- D. Police Report. Chief Fogel reported they are in the process of getting their UCR reports up to date. With the implementation of the new RMS system, they got behind and are in the process of getting everything caught up.

Chief Fogel provided the Board with the year over year stats from 2018 through 2024. The activities and calls for service have been relatively consistent. With the new RMS system, there will be more detailed reporting which will give a better accounting of the activities of the department. The crashes have been starting to tic

back up since where they were during COVID. The arrests have been trending down over the past few years. He believes this is attributed to officers being out in the community and being seen. The traffic enforcement is starting to pick back up. It dropped during COVID, but now with the new officers being trained and out on the road, there is an increase in the traffic enforcement.

This weekend they, along with multiple other agencies, will be participating with Pedal for the Future which is sponsored by the State Police. The Department is sponsoring two children with bicycles and helmets. Two of our officers will be taking them to one of the County parks.

On November 22, 2024, there will be an American Red Cross Blood Drive. Interested individuals can schedule through the Red Cross.

The Department is planning on doing Shop with a Cop this year. It has been a number of years since they did this between Kmart closing and COVID. They have worked out some solutions as to how they can make it work. Chief Fogel has been speaking with area Chiefs between here and Carbon County. They are trying to set up a large one day event for multiple departments to take out kids for Shop with a Cop. It is works out how they hope it to, there could be six or seven other agencies participating.

They are also looking at doing another toy drive in December. They will have boxes in the Police Station and the Municipal Building. They are also hoping to be able to do a drive through drop off as well.

Chief Fogel requested a brief Executive Session with the Board. No action will be required.

David Hess questioned how the new officers and cadet are doing. Chief Fogel commented they are doing very well. The cadet in the Academy is doing well. The other new officers are also doing very well. Two of the officers will be coming off probation in October and then the other two officers will be coming off probation in July.

- E. Municipal Authority Report. Carl Sharpe did not have anything particular to report. He and the Authority's secretary signed the new note for the water system. He knows Attorneys Andres and Backenstoe are continuing to work on finalizing everything.
- F. Fire Company Report. Rick Hildebrand reported the Fire Company currently has responded to approximately 350 calls. They are projecting the year end total to be around 500.

They are currently lining up activities for the fall which includes fire prevention and Halloween. So far, they are scheduled to go to the pre-schools and the elementary school for fire prevention activities.

They are also still dealing with apparatus dilemmas with repairs. It has gotten to the point where they are starting to take some grant money to cover apparatus repair.

Jerry Pritchard questioned if they noticed any changes with the fund drive since the implementation of the fire tax. Rick Hildebrand commented it was reported at their monthly meeting that the donations are about at the same level as they were before.

1. Approval of Fire Company Activity. The Fire Company would like to participate in the Battle of the Fire Fighters Competition at the Walnutport Canal Days. In order for there to be workers comp coverage for the individuals participating, the Board of Supervisors would need to approve the activities. Rick Hildebrand commented the participation in this event provides for training and practice of their skill sets. David Hess made a motion to approve the participation in the Battle of the Fire Fighters at the Walnutport Canal Days. Jerry Pritchard seconded the motion. Cindy Miller questioned if this is an activity that the Fire Company could do without going through the Township. Her concern is that if someone gets hurt, it falls under workers comp. Jerry Pritchard commented they will be taking their equipment to the event. Cindy Miller questioned if this will fall on workers comp if someone gets hurt. Rick Hildebrand commented it would. David Hess commented they are there representing the Fire Company. Rick Hildebrand commented they have been participating in the Canal Days for many years. At one point, they had a scene set up when they did the Haunted Woods. If they are with the Fire Company for any function or activity, they are covered on workers comp because you are part of the department. Janet Sheats commented when the list of activities was approved by the Board in January, they were told they needed to notify the Board of activities that would come up. Cindy Miller commented she understands that, but does the Board want them to participate in a competition whereby someone could get hurt and have it fall under workers comp. Janet Sheats questioned if there is anything being done in the competition that is outside the scope of being a firefighter. Rick Hildebrand commented the competitions are usually all fire response type of drills. All voted aye. Motion carried.

#### VIII. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Maintenance Building. Alice Rehrig reported the building passed the final inspection of the physical items of the building. As part of the required documentation, there is one document that needs final review and approval. The final paving is scheduled to take place around September 21<sup>st</sup>.



B. Ordinance for Adoption

1. Ordinance 2024-5, Amending the Zoning Map by Rezoning 6.8 Acres on the Northern Side of Old Main Street from General Commercial (GC) to Agricultural/Rural Residential (ARR). Cindy Miller made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2024-5. David Hess seconded the motion. Janet Sheats questioned where the property was located. Cindy Miller commented it is the field on the left side of Old Main Street before you go up the hill. A resident questioned if Old Main Street will be extended to exit onto West Mountain View Drive. It currently is a dead-end road. Cindy Miller commented it will not be extended to West Mountain View Drive. All voted aye. Motion carried.

- C. Yard Waste Regulations. Alice Rehrig provided the Board with an updated form to be used with the access cards for the yard waste site. The annual fee has been added, a place to include license plate numbers and driver's licenses, and a statement that we will be taking a copy of a driver's license when someone applies. Janet Sheats questioned if by adding the plate number, will that restrict individuals from being able to enter the site. Cindy Miller commented if there is going to be multiple vehicles then each vehicle should have its own card so we can track what vehicles are going in and out of the site. Mike Jones commented we can't charge for each vehicle. Cindy Miller commented that is the only way we can track and make sure our residents are the ones using the site. You can't see who is utilizing the site by watching the cameras. Jerry Pritchard commented one application should cover multiple vehicles. Whoever applies for the card would be the one responsible for the card. Cindy Miller commented if you want the technology to work, the only way is to track it by the vehicle looking at the license plate and connecting it to the license. Do we want technology to work for us or us work for technology? She talked to technology and we should be able to enter all the information and track it. If someone does not have an application and a registered vehicle in the system, the gate will not open. Jerry Pritchard commented one applicant should be able to register more than one vehicle and not charge them for a card for every vehicle. Alice Rehrig commented the cards will identify who is entering into the site. The individual who applies for the card will be responsible for what comes into the site.

Wendy Kleintop wanted to clarify if she would be able to use the site. She is a resident of the Township but all of their vehicles have their name on it. The Board commented they discussed that at the last meeting. They are going to try allowing the resident with a business vehicle to enter the site for a year and see how it goes. Jerry Pritchard commented the yard waste generated by someone's residence would be okay, but what is generated by the business cannot be brought to the site. Mike Jones commented if they start seeing repeated multiple trips, it will get questioned.

Marc Kacsmer commented if it is one car per applicant, what happens if someone is using a utility trailer. Mike Jones commented you would need to provide the license plate of the trailer.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Pine Run Construction, Payment Application #1. Cindy Miller made a motion to authorize Payment Request #1 in the amount of \$100,035. Jerry Pritchard seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.
- B. Manager's Report. Alice Rehrig commented the budget process will be starting at the next meeting and questioned if the Board wanted to start the meeting early to work on the budget. The Board agreed that the meeting would start at 6:00 p.m. and with the budget being the first item of discussion. Alice Rehrig also provided the Board with a copy of the Capital Improvement Plan for the Board to review for the budget discussions.

Northampton Regional Emergency Squad provided the Township with a copy of their audit. It will be on file in the Township Office if someone wants to review it.

Alice Rehrig also requested an Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter related to collective bargaining.

Katherine Mack commented the agenda for the special meeting was not posted on the website. Alice Rehrig commented the entire advertisement was posted on the home page of the website. Katherine Mack commented it was not under the agenda section for the Board of Supervisors. Alice Rehrig commented since the meeting was a special meeting, she posted it on the home page so that it could be seen right when someone went onto the website because it was a special meeting and people may not think of looking under the regular meeting section.

- C. Solicitor's Report. Attorney Backenstoe reported he has been working through the transcript and exhibits for the BWC conditional use which was approved tonight. He is also preparing the brief for the Poplar Solar exclusionary zoning appeal.

Jerry Pritchard questioned if a former Board member is in the audience as a citizen, are they still bound by the confidentiality rules of an Executive Session? Attorney Backenstoe commented if someone is in an Executive Session and receives confidential information, that needs to stay with them once they are off the Board. For example, if someone is off the Board, they could not disclose legal advice that was given during an executive session.

- X. PUBLIC COMMENT. A resident of Mangrove Drive commented she and her neighbor have filed complaints about some of their neighbors and was questioning the status of them. Their neighbors were squatting in the home before they actually bought the property, then they had a fire because they were running a generator next to a retaining wall because they had not power. Since there was no electricity, they had no water to put the fire out. Now they are building an extension on a building without a permit. They do what they want without being held accountable. Liz Amato commented she filed citations for all of the violations on the property with the Magistrate. She is waiting for a court date at the Magistrate's office, unless they plead guilty and pay the fines. The resident questioned how they can follow up with this. Liz Amato commented once the citations are processed through the court, they will appear on the PA Docket website or they can call the office to see if there is an update. Diane Muthard commented there has been a little bit of progress and does appreciate that. She also noted that there are potholes developing on the roads in Pennsville.

Wendy Kleintop commented there was a successful flag wave on August 24, 2024, at ABC Heating and Air. There will also be another flag wave and Trump Rally at 11:00 a.m. on September 29, 2024, at Lorah Farms and a junk car race will take place at 2:00 p.m. Paul Nikisher commented this is a local activity and hopes people will come out to support it.

Monica Brown commented she knows the newsletter will be coming out shortly and feels it would be a good time to address who the new tax collector is and advising the residents of the facts of what has transpired, and who they need to contact if there is a problem or an issue that needs to be resolved. This will help resolve all the rumors that are going around. Cindy Miller commented Monica Brown had contacted her about this and she has already written an article. There was no article in the newsletter that went for print; the newsletter is currently on hold. She provided the Board with a copy of the article and is asking the Board for approval of the article she wrote by Friday. Jerry Pritchard commented he would like to see the matter of the tax collector put behind us. Janet Sheats questioned if everything still goes to Mary Trexler? Cindy Miller commented yes, she is not relieved of her duties at this point. David Hess questioned why a three page article needs to go in the newsletter when there was a public statement made at the meeting. Cindy Miller commented not everyone attends the meetings. David Hess commented the Board already made a statement that is in the minutes. Cindy Miller commented it wasn't the Board's statement. She made a statement. Jerry Pritchard commented he thinks it can be consolidated instead of page after page. Monica Brown commented people don't know what is going on. They only know the tax collector resigned. As a Township, the Board needs to address what they have done for the people of the Township and let them know what has transpired, why it all happened, and stop all the rumors. People are taking sides. The facts need to be stated and that the Township

took action. Jerry Pritchard commented this needs to be separated and not be personal attacks. Cindy Miller commented what she wrote was not an attack. It is all factual. Jerry Pritchard commented he believes whatever goes in the newsletter can be shortened. David Hess commented he doesn't believe it needs to be three pages. Janet Sheats agreed. Janet Sheats commented there are rumors out there about everything. Do we want to publish everything that was stated versus factual. Monica Brown commented there were problems, people getting reported to the County who shouldn't have. You need to let the people know you have done your job to protect the people to resolve the situation. You have tried to hope they would resolve themselves and they didn't which is how you ended up where you are now. Let the people know you have worked on their behalf to resolve the problems. That is when it will stop. Jerry Pritchard commented he thinks the Board should review what is going in the newsletter and if all is well, so be it. David Hess commented he would like it shortened. Cindy Miller commented if the Board wants to shorten it and make recommendations, it is a starting point. We need to direct the residents as to what is happening during the transition period. The Board needs to determine a cut off date by working with the tax collector as to when that transition will be completed. If it is something that comes up that is prior to that date, it goes to the previous collector and anything after that date goes to the new collector. The Board needs to work with the new person to figure this out so the residents are not confused. The previous tax collector, by law, is not relieved of their duties. They are responsible for whatever they had to do in office. The new person coming in should not have to take on the burden of the audit that came out and take flack from the residents which is why she feels something needs to be in the newsletter to clear things up. David Hess questioned how the Board will be able to vote on something they just received. It should have been emailed to them before the meeting. Cindy Miller commented just send an email with the recommendations. Rick Hildebrand commented he believes the new collector will be able to do what she needs to, but he thinks the cart is getting ahead of the horse because she hasn't taken her classes yet or received her certifications. Mike Jones questioned why this couldn't wait until the next meeting. Cindy Miller commented she doesn't know if the publisher can hold off that long. Alice Rehrig commented it can be held; it would delay when the newsletter is received by the residents. Cindy Miller commented this is important. We have a new tax collector and residents will need to know where to go, what the office hours are going to be. It is the Board responsibility to report that to the community. Janet Sheat commented how do we do that at this point. We don't know what the hours will be or when she will be ready. Why are we documenting it in black and white until she has taken the oath? David Hess questioned if this is something that needs to be voted on at a meeting. Attorney Backenstoe suggested the Board review it and get the comments and edits back to Cindy Miller by Friday. If someone really objects to it and doesn't want it put in the newsletter, then wait until the next meeting. If the edits are minor in nature and editorial in nature, then put it in the newsletter. Sandy Hopkins commented she believes the residents deserve an explanation

as to what happened with Mary Trexler. You can't just cover up everything. There are all kinds of rumors going on out there as to what has happened and what is going on. Publish something in the newsletter that is graceful enough to say, this is what happened and give them a basis as to what happened. The information pertaining to Suzanne Hawke can be worked out. The residents need an explanation from the Board. The tax collector is the biggest explosion going on in the Township right now. David Hess commented he agrees, but doesn't believe it should be three or five pages long. Cindy Miller commented it is basically what she previously read. If we don't have the particulars about the tax collector, we can at least say at our September 10<sup>th</sup> meeting, Suzanne Hawke was appointed as the interim tax collector and details will be forthcoming. Janet Sheats commented she would agree with that. Jerry Pritchard commented he thinks we can streamline the details and give them the truth. Linda Roman commented people don't need to know everything, but they do need to know that we have a new tax collector coming in. Something needs to be put out there, but it doesn't have to be extensive. Jerry Pritchard commented once you put something out there you can't take it back. He thinks the Board should look over what Cindy Miller is proposing, streamlining it, and if it is good, let it fly.

- XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION. The Board went into Executive Session to discuss personnel and collective bargaining matters. No action was taken.
- XII. ADJOURN. David Hess made a motion to adjourn. Janet Sheats seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.