

LEHIGH TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

May 24, 2022

- I. CALL TO ORDER. The Lehigh Township Board of Supervisors held their second monthly meeting on Tuesday, May 24, 2022, at 7:00 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
David Hess
Jerry Pritchard
Phil Gogel
Mike Jones
Attorney David Backenstoe
Alice Rehrig

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

- A. Minutes of May 10, 2022. Cindy Miller made a motion to approve these minutes. Phil Gogel seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

III. APPROVAL OF BILLS.

- A. General Fund Checks 25800 to 25829. Cindy Miller made a motion to approve the bills. Phil Gogel seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

- IV. CANDIDATES FOR RECREATION BOARD. Two individuals, Adam Ash and Tammy Hess, submitted their names for consideration to the Recreation Board. Phil Gogel made a motion to appoint Tammy Hess to the Recreation Board. Cindy Miller commented the candidate should introduce themselves and speak before a motion is made.

Tammy Hess

Ms. Hess was born and raised in Lehigh Township and is currently living in the Township. She saw the opening for the Recreation Board in the Gazette and thought she could be a good candidate for that. She is secretary at Blue Mountain Fish and Game and they helped at the Tree Lighting this past Christmas. She thought that was a really nice thing to do for the Township and would like to see more of that type of stuff go on.

Phil Gogel questioned what other things she does at Blue Mountain Fish and Game. Tammy Hess indicated they just had Day at the Lake for Disabled and Handicapped people from all around the Lehigh Valley. They run children's parties, egg hunts, basket socials, kids Christmas Parties. They have had Girl Scout and Boy Scout Troops there to

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learn from members of the club for their merit badges. They do a lot of community items and she thought she could bring some of that knowledge to the Recreation Board for the benefit of the Township.

Cindy Miller questioned what the reason was that Ms. Hess really wants to be on the Recreation Board. Ms. Hess commented she would like to be able to help out the Township, the residents, and the community. She would like to try to bring more community activities; we haven't had items like National Night Out for two years. She did see there will be a movie night. She would like to see more things like that and get more involved.

Cindy Miller questioned where Ms. Hess saw recreation in five to ten years. Ms. Hess commented she would hope that we could keep improving our current parks; provide more services to the community, to the kids, and keep expanding on that.

Jerry Pritchard questioned how often Ms. Hess visits the parks in general. Ms. Hess commented with COVID that hasn't been much they have gotten out to do. Even at the Club, they are just starting to get back into the swing of things. When the Fire Company had their community days at Indiantrail Park, she would go. This is something she would like to see get going again. She would also like to see the parks kept up with. Indiantrail Park has some of the oldest features in the Township. The playgrounds need to be kept up with and kept safe for the kids.

Mike Jones noted Jodiann Heck was ServSafe certified when she left the Board. Is this something that Ms. Hess would consider? Ms. Hess commented that is a possibility. She also knows they need to update theirs at the Club.

Adam Ash

Mr. Ash grew up in the Township and has lived in the Township all his life with the exception of the 10 years when he was in the military. He is active in the Legion, VFW, and was ServSafe qualified through a church's mission where they do outreach for emergency relief for hurricanes and stuff like that. When he gets involved in something, he is all in. He is in the Honor Guard with the Legion and VFW. Recently he was voted in as vice president for the home association of the VFW and working on turning that around from being negative by several hundred dollars a month to being profitable. He knows the Recreation needs financing, whether it be fundraising or whatever it needs because at the end of the day one of the things we need to do to improve the parks is to come up with the funds to improve them. He knows it is not easy to come to the Board of Supervisors to ask for money because that is like asking everyone in the Township to pay and not everyone uses the parks, playgrounds or ballfields. If we are able to host events such as movie night or community days, which we need to get going again,

because it is a huge money maker. He has heard from the individuals who had run it that it is too hard to find volunteers. He believes it can be done if you get the word out that we need people. You can't necessarily have someone out there every day, but you can find people who are willing to come out for four or eight hours on one day. He is really good at finding people who can donate just a little bit of time and with that, it generates huge amounts of resources for organizations. He was able to raise \$30,000 while he was in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. With Community Days, he believes we could raise at least \$10,000 which is a good chunk of what the Rec Board asks for each year to keep the parks going. He believes we are underutilizing certain assets we have. You need to find people and get them trained in what we need to run facilities. If you do, you will be able to raise funds and increase the facilities that we do have. With more money, you can do more things.

Phil Gogel questioned why Mr. Ash didn't put all his accomplishments into his application. Adam Ash commented he didn't feel the need to because he was going to be at the meeting to answer questions. Phil Gogel commented he doesn't agree with the interview process in public. Some people are better suited to be workers and do a good job. Not everyone presents well. If you put in an application and include your accolades and accomplishments, you can better judge a person and what they can do. Hearing this, Mr. Ash has excellent skills and qualifications. He personally believes Mr. Ash would be better served on a different Board like he explained to Mr. Ash earlier. He would like to see him on a different Board. He has an idea where he could really shine, although he believes he could shine anywhere because he puts his heart and soul into it. He just thinks he should be on a different Board as they discussed. Mr. Ash noted there were no openings on the other boards. Phil Gogel commented there will be openings in time. People come and go on boards. Adam Ash commented he didn't include any of the additional information in his letter because when he asked what was required or needed to be submitted, it was just something that says you are applying and submitting to be on the Rec Board.

Jerry Pritchard commented he has been going to Recreation meetings for 20 years either as a citizen or member of the Board. A lot of people come on the Board with good intentions. When it comes to implementing the intentions, they disappear. He believes Mr. Ash wants to do everything he says he wants to do in his heart, but pulling it off is not as easy as he is explaining it. He would like to raise \$30,000 or even more, but it is not as easy as that. Getting on the Rec Board is more than I can raise all this money. He's seen the Rec Board with almost no budget and he's seen them with plenty of money. Whomever is selected to be on the Rec Board, he hopes they stay because otherwise, Sandy Hopkins ends up pulling the weight. Adam Ash commented that is true. \$30,000 doesn't just appear. He worked about two weeks, every waking moment when he wasn't on watch or doing repairs on a vital system, he was on the decks selling

tickets, raffles and everything he could come up with to raise the funds. It doesn't just materialize; there is a lot of sweat equity that goes into it to make the rubber meet the road. That is why it is important to have the right people there.

Cindy Miller questioned where Mr. Ash sees recreation in the next five to ten years. Mr. Ash commented he would like to see Bryfogle as having more facilities there. He believes it would be a good place for the Veteran's Memorial that was discussed at a previous meeting. He believes this should fall under their purview, at least in part. He believes we could turn Bryfogle into a magnet for communities surrounding Lehigh Township. We could pull families in from Walnutport, Slatington, Palmerton, Lehighon, Laurys Station and Northampton similar to what is in Laurys Station. They have a really nice facility with a playground and ballfields. A lot of people are going to that playground right now. If we have Bryfogle being that beacon and have the traffic, instead of only making \$150 running the concession stand, it may be a \$600 day. With a \$600 day, you could pay someone \$10 per hour to run the stand for eight hours. \$80 out of \$600 is not so bad. You could be open six or seven days a week. \$500 per day less expenses could clear \$300 per day over the summer. \$300 per day for 100 days will give you \$30,000 in income. Some of the other parks could use drainage put in, such as Delps Park, so it doesn't have to be closed in the spring. The soccer field that is at Danielsville Park serves the purpose, but it really is not a soccer field. He believes we can turn the parks into something that really draws more people and gets more rentals and creates more revenue so that we can do more to maintain them. We need to put some real work into getting to the point where we have the crowds coming in and people say, Lehigh Township has a really nice place over there and we can book that one. He wants Lehigh Township to be the answer where people want to go. He believes we can get things to where they can be really great again and be the be all, end all. That is what our community should be and wants. He believes we can be there again.

Mike Jones commented the refreshment stand is being run by volunteers. He doesn't know that you would get someone to volunteer seven days a week. Cindy Miller commented she believes he is suggesting that further down the road, someone could be paid to run the stand. Jerry Pritchard noted youth sports numbers across the country are down. They are so far down that some schools are dropping JV teams. If the youth sports were up, you would see the concession stand opened every day, but they are not. He would love to see teams come here, but they are not. Cindy Miller noted we lost the group that used to come here; there are organizations out there.

Sandy Hopkins commented she doesn't look at the Recreation Committee as being the fundraiser for the Township. She believes if the Recreation Committee is going to be out there selling tickets and such, it becomes a different type of board. If the Board wants a fundraising board, okay, but that's what you need to ask for. The Rec Board has been Recreation, running on a dime, rarely go out and ask the Supervisors for extra budget

money because they know everything is pinching, it is not just recreation. They have had a lot of volunteers and she is looking for someone to volunteer with her and not just show up for meetings. It great to have great ideas and she is willing to accept them, but they are still running on a dime and doesn't see the Rec Board as being a fundraising committee. As a taxpayer, if the Rec Board is doing all kinds of fund raising, she would have to question why her taxes wouldn't be taking care of things. Yes, they have received funding through the Lions, but that is a community organization who decided to contribute towards recreation and parks. She looks at the primary goal of the Rec Board is to keep recreation going. They have the YMCA doing YOGA without charge and last year they did a summer camp for the kids and hopefully can do that again this year. She runs the stand when she sees it will be profitable, but she also has a family. To get a lot of people in Bryfogle, you need to understand it is not that big. Delps Park has 40 acres. If we are going to develop a park, we may want to consider doing it there. She is not saying Mr. Ash doesn't have a talent for fundraising, but how many hamburgers do you want to flip or stand there and fry hamburger for the chili and stand in the cold to hand out free food. She thought it was great that they were able to hand out free food. The Rec Board donated things on their own as did Blue Mountain Fish and Game and the Lions. The Rec Board felt they wanted to keep it that way for their community. She is looking for someone to help her flip the burgers and volunteer with the other items and reporting of problems. She reports issues to Frank Zamadics and he has been a gem in taking care of things this year.

Phil Gogel commented his motion to appoint Tammy Hess to the Recreation Board. David Hess seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

V. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Cherryville Intersection. There was no updates on the completion of the Township's portion of the intersection. Alice Rehrig noted that a field meeting between Brian Gasda of Lehigh Engineering and Brian Boyer of PennDOT was scheduled yesterday, but she hasn't heard anything of the outcome.
- B. Maintenance Building. There were no updates on the grants for the Maintenance Building.
- C. Township Railroad Bed Property H2 19 1. Michele and Steve Dotta provided the Board with a letter from their realtor outlining the comps that were used to establish the value of \$500 for this railroad bed. Cindy Miller made a motion to sell parcel H2 19 1 516E to Michele and Steve Dotta at a price of \$500. Jerry Pritchard seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried. After 30 days, Attorney Backenstoe will prepare quick claim deed.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Comp Plan Meeting. Alice Rehrig has heard from four of the five Planning Commission members. Two members can be available on June 23 and three members can be available on June 30. Mike Jones and Jerry Pritchard may not be able to make the 30th and Cindy Miller wouldn't be able to make the 23rd. Phil Gogel suggested holding the meeting the same night as a Planning Commission meeting. Cindy Miller noted they would need to set a time limit on the Comp Plan because the Planning Commission would need to take care of any other business they have for the meeting.

David Hess commented he was upset at the last Comp Plan meeting. The Planners never notified Alice Rehrig that they wouldn't be able to make the meeting. He doesn't believe it is fair to Cindy Miller who is on Planning and the residents who were looking for answers. Cindy Miller noted two of the Planners said upfront they couldn't make it. Alice Rehrig commented she was notified the day of the meeting that an additional member wouldn't be able to make the meeting. Cindy Miller commented the purpose of the meeting was to have a workshop between both groups, both that is not what it was. David Hess commented three members were in the audience at the first meeting so they knew it was coming up. Mike Jones questioned why they didn't say anything at that time. Cindy Miller commented it was not a workshop and no one specifically asked them anything. The Board took over the meeting. Phil Gogel commented if one of them had positive input, he is certain any one of the Supervisors would let them speak up. Cindy Miller commented they were being attacked that night. Phil Gogel commented just because he pointed out issues with the plan, you have a problem. Cindy Miller commented that is not why. You basically insulted them and attacked them. When the Planners are treated that way in a meeting, they are not going to speak up. Phil Gogel commented things were brought out that were questionable and last meeting the Board hammered some of that stuff out.

Cindy Miller questioned what the next meeting is going to be; will it be a workshop? Phil Gogel commented he believes the Planners should be up front and the Board on the side determining whether or not they agree. David Hess commented it needs to be a workshop. Mike Jones commented they need to be upfront so they can answer the questions of why things were done. Once the questions are answered, the Board can move forward. Phil Gogel commented the Board was put under fire from day one. In his opinion, it was done wrong. It should have been done like Mike Jones said.

David Hess questioned what will be done with the advertising. Phil Gogel commented he believes all the Planners should be present to answer the questions. You don't want someone on vacation who had the idea for changing a certain

portion or segment to not be there. Whomever suggested that specific change should be there to answer the questions of why. The Board still doesn't have the answer of why. In the section that he is referring to, there is only one parcel that is undeveloped. Everyone else in that section had the opportunity to develop their property under Village Residential and now that one parcel doesn't; he doesn't feel they have the opportunity to develop their property in that manner if it is being changed to Agricultural Rural Residential. Now that person is out and they don't get to develop their property the way that everyone else had the opportunity to. David Hess commented he doesn't want to keep advertising and spending Township money to keep having the workshop and not getting anything done.

Jerry Pritchard commented we paid Charlie Schmehl to do this and now we are at a point where we are picking and choosing. He understands people want to get the best value out of their property, they should, but he doesn't think every individual can pick and choose zoning. That is out of control and what is happening at these meetings. If we keep looking at what everyone wants for their lot, we will never get this completed. Mike Jones commented we can't just look at certain residents and properties. We need to look at the Township as a whole. Barry Haydt commented people want to know why it was done a certain way. Mike Jones commented the Board was given the map and the plan, but there was no detailed explanation as to why things were done the way they were. Cindy Miller did answer some of the questions, but she is only one of the five.

Katherine Mack commented she knows some people are upset that the Planners were not at the meeting, but has anyone communicated with them to let them know your feelings. She believes if these feelings exist, it should be expressed formally by the Board. Also, if you have a workshop, you need to have parameters set up for what the differences are between a workshop and just a question and answer session. What do you want the workshop to look like? You need to formulate that ahead of time. If it is just a question and answer session, is that what you want it to look like? Mike Jones commented he wants the question and answer, but he also wants the ability for the Board to be able to move on things. Katherine Mack commented there needs to be parameters set up on how you want the meeting conducted. The audience was a free for all and it was not a good setting.

Marc Kacsmar commented the parameters of the meeting should be set up in the advertisement, stating the purpose of the meeting, so everyone comes in knowing what is happening at the meeting.

Jerry Pritchard questioned who we would send letters out to this time. Cindy Miller questioned if we need to send letters. Mike Jones noted there were about

the same number of people at the second meeting as were at the first meeting. Most of them were the same people; a few new faces. Cindy Miller commented there were 250 letters sent out and there may have been 50 people at the meeting. David Hess commented he doesn't want to keep spending the money to send letters and advertised and not get this done. Cindy Miller commented the important issues should be able to be hammered out at the workshop, but at the same time, she doesn't know why we would send letters out again to 250 people. Mike Jones commented he doesn't believe we need to send letters again. Katherine Mack commented it was stated at the meeting that they would be sent out. Mike Jones commented he thought the Board didn't know if they were sending out letters or not. David Hess commented he believes if another letter is sent out then it should state they need to follow up on the website for future meetings. Cindy Miller commented we should have had a sign in sheet at the meeting then people who were at the meeting, could have been notified. Alice Rehrig commented she does have the name and address of the individual who specifically stated they needed to be notified. Jerry Pritchard questioned at what point in time do we say that people know this is going on so we don't keep having to send notifications. He agrees with David Hess, we need to get to a point of closure on this stuff. Adam Ash commented he would definitely recommend a sign in sheet where people could list their email addresses and they can be emailed for subsequent meetings. Cindy Miller questioned if we are going to send out another 250 letters. Mike Jones commented he knows one lady kept asking, but doesn't know if a decision was made. Alice Rehrig commented she doesn't recall if a commitment was made to sending out the letters; she wasn't that far in completing the minutes from the meeting. David Hess commented he hates to see the office staff spending the time and money to send letters when they could be doing something else. Phil Gogel noted we keep paying Charlie Schmehl to come to the meetings. Cindy Miller commented we have a contract with him. It is part of his contract. Marc Kacsmar commented if a mailing does get sent out, it should state that this is the final mailing and that they should check the website. If you don't have access to the internet, then call the office. Cindy Miller commented there needs to be some ownership by the residents. If they are truly interested, they will find out. The rumor mill works wonders in the Township. Randy Braun questioned if it would be better to send out a post card rather than a letter. Alice Rehrig commented she doesn't know if postcards would go through the printers or copier. Also, if all the Planners are expected to be at the meeting, the dates in June will not work so we will need to look into the end of July or August. The Board agreed to push the meeting to either the end of July or August on a date when all the Planners can make it. Cindy Miller commented it also needs to be stated that they must attend; it is not an option.

Charlie Perich commented if there is going to be a workshop on the Comp Plan, why not have residents submit their concerns before the meeting so you have an idea as to how much you will have for the meeting. Maybe some of the questions can be filtered before they come to the Board. Cindy Miller commented the letter could state that any concerns or questions should be submitted by a certain date.

- B. Manager's Report. Alice Rehrig had received a request from the residents in the area of Birch Road, by the Hills of Greenock, to have No Parking signs installed. There has been a problem with the contractors and the residents parking along Birch Road which causes people to go into the opposite lane at the crest of the hill. Cindy Miller questioned if this is something temporary during the construction or is it happening all the time. Alice Rehrig commented it is a combination of both. She also spoke with the Chief and asked him to watch the area because if they are parking along the road, obstructing a lane of travel, they should be able to be ticketed. Mike Jones suggested installing temporary no parking signs and see if that helps. Once the temporary signs are posted, it may give the residents the idea that parking can not take place along Birch Road.

The Police Department has been able to arrange a Movie in the Park night at Danielsville Park on June 17. It will be a free community event for the movie.

For the next meeting, Alice Rehrig will try to have some type of requirements put together for the ranges. There have been two to three applications submitted. She has been able to get confirmation that the NRA will come out and do an inspection of a private range, but has not been able to reach anyone as far as what the cost would be. She also was able to get ordinances from other townships and they refer back to the NRA manual, but the sections they refer to do not match to the manual she has, most likely because the ordinances may be older. Cindy Miller commented she believes Fire Arm Owners Against Crime also does range inspections. They may be easier to get a hold of than the NRA.

The Office of the State Fire Commissioner chose the Lehigh Township Fire Company to be the focal location of this year's Firefighters Safety Standdown Week. They are looking to have representation by local legislators on June 21 at 1:00 p.m. when this take place. There should be additional information coming in the near future.

The Road Paving Project is out for bid and the bid will be before the Board at the next meeting for award.

Alice Rehrig also received a call from a resident at 328 Long Lane Road regarding the drainage swale that is owned by Northampton County. Several

years ago, the Township acted as a facilitator between the resident at 322 Long Lane Road and the County to have some improvements made to the swale. Now, the other neighboring property at 328 Long Lane Road, would like to have the swale replaced with a pipe. The only involvement the Township has with this swale is that it collects all the water from Long Lane Road. The Board agreed that the closing of the swale is a private matter between the resident and the County and it would be their responsibility to have the proper studies and engineering done to replace the swale with a pipe.

PennDOT has the plans for the Route 248 Signal Upgrade Project available on their website for Public Comment. We have added a link on the Township that will take people to the PennDOT website. The project is to adjust the signal timing, add pedestrian crossings, and redesign the intersection of Route 248 and 145 to eliminate the right hand turn ramp and make it more of a traditional intersection. Cindy Miller commented that staking that is being proposed will only accommodate two tractor trailers or four cars. Janet Scheets questioned if they took the amount of accidents into consideration. Mike Jones commented that the Township did try to offer comments on the redesign as well as trying to get the water situation taken care of, but were told the drainage is not part of this project. They really were not taking the Township's initial comments into consideration.

1. Projects and Grants. Alice Rehrig provided the Board with a list of possible projects for COVID relief funding as well as upcoming grant applications. She is looking for feedback from the Board as to which items they would like to target for grant funding since the applications will be due over the summer into fall. She also wanted to make the Board aware that if they spend more than \$750,000 on one year, they will be required to have a single audit done which will roughly cost an additional \$15,000 over the current audit. It was also noted that some of the items on the list pertain to the new maintenance building. Phil Gogel questioned if those items were purchased, must they be put in use. Alice Rehrig commented if the project is the purchase of an item, it wouldn't necessarily have to be put into use at that moment. The list includes items from the Capital Improvements Plan that are scheduled for replacement over the next few years as well as some other items that were discussed, but not necessarily included in the plan. It was agreed that further discussion would take place at 6 PM on June 14.

- C. Solicitor's Report. Attorney Backenstoe had nothing additional to report.

- VII. PUBLIC COMMENT. Linda Roman commented there is tree along Cinchona Road that is in danger of falling onto the roadway or a rental home depending upon which way it falls. The owner of the property does not take care of the property the way he should. The Board will have Frank Zamadics check into the tree and if it is something the Township would take care of, he will. If not, the Zoning Officer will send the property owner a letter.

Randy Braun questioned who is responsible for the building at the Treichlers Complex. He was there recently and heard animals running in the roof. Mike Jones commented it is LTAA and he will let Brad Kratzer from LTAA know about this.

Katheryn Mack questioned the status of the zoning appeals for the individual with all the cars parked outside of the fence and the Karafam property. Attorney Backenstoe commented with regard to the individual with the cars, he has entered an appearance on behalf of the Township. It is up to them to list the matter for a hearing. Karafam has filed an appeal which is pending. The Township talked to them a little bit about the issues with it and it is before the Courts as well.

Kathern Mack wanted to thank the Township for the benches that were installed at the dog park and the grass looks great.

- VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION. The Board went into Executive Session to discuss a matter of pending litigation. No action was taken.
- IX. ADJOURN. Phil Gogel made a motion to adjourn. Cindy Miller seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.