

**WALKER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**  
**March 6, 2024**

**Supervisors** – **James Heckman, Chairman**  
**Zane Sherman, Vice Chairman**  
**Keith Harter**

**Solicitor** -- **John Miller III**

**Township Engineer** - **Don Franson**

**Zoning Officer** - **Justin Dashem**

**Secretary** - **Sue Wagner**  
**Asst. Secretary-** **Angel Emery**

**Guests:** **See Attachment**

Chairman Heckman called the March 6, 2024 meeting to order at 6:00pm in the Walker Township Municipal Building.

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Chairman Heckman led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approval of February 7, 2024 Minutes:**

- Heckman motioned to approve the February 7, 2024 minutes as presented, Supervisor Harter requested a wording change as the voting for the Fire Company Joint Operating Committee was not adopted. Solicitor Miller recommended it be changed to “there was not further discussion on the recommendation and it was used for approving the three residents.” **On a motion by Harter and second by Heckman, motion passed to change the wording in the minutes 3-0.**
- Sherman opened discussion regarding how the meeting minutes should be taken to follow the Sunshine Act and brought up concerns that there are items being requested to be in the minutes that should not be there. Since there is no policy within the township regarding the contents of minutes, the Sunshine Act should be the standard according to Sherman. There was no discussion from the other Supervisors. **On a motion by Harter and second by Heckman, motion passed to approve the minutes with the change 2-1, with Sherman voting no.**

**AGENDA ITEMS:**

- Nittany Valley Joint Recreational Authority (NVJRA)- Cindy Kunes, Co-Chair of NVJRA, presented their plans to re-apply for another DCNR grant for Kepler Pool as well as various other grants they intend to apply for. The first grant that was awarded had to be relinquished as COVID-19 put the project on hold. Recommitment of the \$37,500 that has already been provided was requested, as well as a letter of support for their grant. Kunes introduced a member of the Sting Rays swim team who addressed the board emphasizing the importance of Kepler Pool re-opening. There was conversation amongst the board with input from meeting guests regarding the use of Kepler Pool by Walker Township residents. **On a motion by Harter and second by Sherman, motion passed to recommit the \$37,500 and send a letter of support backing the grant 3-0.**
- Cindy Kunes spoke on the Park and Rec agenda item, change order for additional excavation at playground, and explained that there was additional concrete that needed to be removed and that was the reason for the additional \$2,500 which will be paid by the open space account. **On a motion by Sherman and second by Harter, motion passed to approve the change order of \$2,500 3-0.**

**Spring Benner Walker Joint Authority (SBWJA)**-

- Warren Miller presented the Park Master Plan with a right-of-way request with two different alignments possible for sewage lines to be placed to the Mingoville pump station. Sherman requested another set of stakes showing the other alignment possibility.

**GUESTS:**

- Chris Harter, from the Walker Township Fire Company (WTFC), presented a letter requesting the ability to purchase an in-house cascade system, using the funds the Township gives them per the Fire Protection and Funding Agreement. WTFC is requesting authorization from the board to use the funds towards the in-house cascade system, which will cost no more than \$65,000 installed. **On a motion by Heckman and second by Sherman, motion passed to allow the Walker Township Fire Company to use the money out of the apparatus fund for the in-house cascade system with a cap of \$65,000 3-0.**
- Heckman reported that the WTFC is going for a Homeland Security grant with Miles Township, Gregg Township, Millheim, Centre Hall, and Boalsburg for new radios. **On a motion by Heckman and second by Sherman, motion passed to send a letter of support for the grant to the fire company should they need it 3-0.** Harter suggested that they get Glenn Thompson involved, Cindy Kunes, field representative/District Scheduler for PA -15 reported that they would be happy to help with any grants that the fire company wishes to pursue.
- Heckman suggested, while discussing the fire company, that the operating committee set a date for a reorganization meeting to set the guidelines for how it will operate. April 9<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> were the dates discussed, the township will wait to see if those dates will work for the fire company and the residents appointed before advertising.
- Rick Snyder spoke on the issues with permitting that they are currently having regarding their new business at the old Jersey Shore State Bank. Dan Mattern, engineer for Snyder's, addressed the board regarding Walker Township being an opt out Township. Being an opt out township requires the Department of Labor and Industry to perform the building code inspections and provide the building permits for commercial businesses. Mattern urged the township to consider opting in and presented all the requirements that the township would need to follow to become an opt in township. The board tabled the discussion until April.

**ENGINEER'S REPORT:**

- The Zion Back Road project was discussed, Deerhaven Phase 4 has been received which prompted review of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which was signed in 2011. There were some improvements recommended for this project at that time per the traffic study that was completed. One improvement was the addition of a deceleration lane at SR64 to turn on to Zion Back Road, that was to be built when lot 102 was approved. The township had requested assistance in widening Zion Back Road as well, S&A agreed to help fund the widening up to \$200,000. It was requested that the agreement be amended to delay putting in the turning lane until there is a structure built on lot 102. **On a motion by Harter and second by Sherman, motion passed to consider amending the Memorandum of Understanding to allow the deceleration lane to be built later with the approval of PennDOT 3-0.**
- Tony Fruchtl and Justin Dashem presented Deerhaven Phase 4 plans and discussion ensued. **On a motion by Heckman and second by Sherman, motion passed to conditionally approve plans with Don Franson's review and county review 3-0. On a motion by Heckman and second by Harter, motion passed to approve and sign the Memorandum of Understanding 3-0.** Fee-in-lieu recommendation could not be acted on because county comments have been received. Discussion opened about how the agenda should be done under the new rules, as the secretaries were led to believe that the agenda was fine the way it was. After reviewing the Sunshine Act, Solicitor Miller determined all items be laid out specifically so that they can be acted on without question. All plans on the current agenda will be tabled until next month.
- Franson presented the Authorization of Agent form for 404 Forest Avenue. **On a motion by Heckman and second by Sherman, motion passed to approve the Authorization of Agent for 404 Forest Avenue 2-1 with Harter voting no.**
- No action was taken on the proposed changes to Ordinance 210 and it was tabled until April.
- The surety reduction for Deerhaven 2B and 3B was presented and explained by Franson. **On a motion by Sherman and second by Heckman, motion passed to conditionally approve the surety reduction with Don Franson's review 3-0.**
- Franson briefly spoke on the Solar Power Purchasing Agreement (SPPA) but has not seen the plan so a representative may attend the April meeting for further explanation.

**SOLICITOR REPORT:**

- Solicitor Miller presented the conditions for the Elmer Glick conditional use application. **On a motion by Heckman and second by Sherman, motion passed to approve the conditions presented 3-0.**
- The Cornerstone Farm License was discussed, the township secretary has called the renters multiple times with no response. The payment was due December 31<sup>st</sup>, and payment has not been received. **On a motion by Heckman and second by Harter, motion passed to have Solicitor Miller send a letter letting the renter know that they have defaulted on the contract and the agreement is being terminated 3-0.**
- Solicitor Miller presented the Comcast Franchise Ordinance. **On a motion by Harter and second by Sherman, motion passed to allow John Miller III to advertise so that the ordinance can be adopted 3-0.**

**ZONING:**

- There were 12 zoning and one HOP issued for February 2024.
- Taylor Subdivision- No action taken. Harter recommended that the engineers that are doing the subdivision plans, ask to be on the agenda and make sure to let the township secretary know every item they need action on is listed. The engineer for the project would be able to answer any questions that the Board of Supervisors may have for the plan they are representing, leaving nothing to question.
- Shady Farm Solar Project- No action taken.
- Mingoville I and II- No action taken.

**ROADMASTER:**

- Harter spoke briefly on the proposed road projects for 2024, he is waiting for estimates from Matt Kenepp of PennDOT.
- **On a motion by Harter and second by Sherman, motion passed to hire Gregory Burd, with a start date to be retroactive to Monday, March 4, 2024 3-0.**
- The intersection of Sand Ridge Road and Snyderstown Road was addressed as there is a lot of loose stone and it is a safety hazard, especially with motorcycles being out. It is set to be cool patched before the weekend.

**Parks and Rec:**

- There was discussion about portable toilets at the park until the bathrooms can be opened. Harter reported that Parks and Rec or the ball team always took care of that if they felt there was a need for one before the bathrooms were opened.
- **On a motion by Harter and second by Sherman, motion passed to approve the facility use agreement for Nittany Valley Little League and conditionally approve the facility use agreement with Bellefonte Soccer with Parks and Rec approval 3-0.**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- Zane Sherman will be the new Nittany Valley Planning Commission Representative effective immediately.
- The Board was asked to give the Secretaries direction on how they would like the minutes done as there was a lot of back-and-forth last month. **On a motion by Heckman and second by Sherman, motion passed to do the minutes as they have always been done 3-0.**
- The Ironman competition will be Sunday, June 30, 2024.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

- Walker Township Water Association Hydrant Agreement is an ongoing discussion at this time.
- Signs for the compost area were reviewed, it was decided to order the signs as they were originally designed.
- The handbook has not been updated yet, no action taken.
- Harter called Worker's Compensation to inquire whether they would cover if someone was injured because of their facial hair, the answer he received was inconclusive.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

Heckman made a motion to approve the February 2024 General Fund Paid Bills in the amount of \$ 174,279.35 and Treasurer's Report; motion second by Sherman and approved by all.

Meeting adjourned for Executive Session at 9:00 p.m.

Executive Session to discuss personnel matter- regular meeting called back to order at 9:18 p.m.

**On a motion by Heckman and second by Sherman, motion passed to adjourn at 9:22 p.m. 3-0.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Angel Emery and Susan Wager

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Keith E. Harter

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James B. Heckman

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Zane E. Sherman