

WALKER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
October 4, 2023

Supervisors – Keith Harter
James Heckman
Deborah Zimmerman

Township Engineer - Don Franson

Zoning Officer - Mike Lesniak

Secretary - Sue Wagner

Guests:	Pam Rogers	Tim Meyer	Leah Burd
	Jeffrey Seymour	Warren Miller	Chris Roan
	Rich Poorman	Denise Poorman	Rod Beard
	Dennis McDowell	Chris Harter	Chris Miller
	Matthew Brungard	Kris Little	Tom Little
	John Glick	Doug Corman	

Supervisor Harter called the October 4, 2023 meeting to order at 6:07pm in the Walker Township Municipal Building.

Pledge of Allegiance: Chairman Harter led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of September 6, 2023 Minutes: Supervisor Heckman made a motion to approve the September minutes as presented; motion second by Supervisor Harter. Motion approved by all.

Agenda Items:

- John Sepp, Penn Terra Engineering presented the Board with the PennDOT HOP and the final plan for Shady Lane Estates – Phase 1. The plan was approved by the Centre County Planning Commission. The plan shows the streets in Phase 1 will be hooking up to PennDOT’s storm drain coming across East College Avenue. Penn Terra is suggesting the Home Owners Association (HOA) take responsibility for the maintenance of the storm drain, not be the Township. Supervisor Heckman made a motion to approve the HOP; motion second by Deborah Zimmerman and approved by all. Supervisor Heckman made a motion to sign the Final plan for Shady Farm Estates – Phase One after receipt of Parks and Rec Fee-in-Lieu in the amount of \$100,000.00; motion second by Keith Harter and approved by all.
- Warren Miller, Spring Benner Walker Joint Authority (SBWJA), said he received notification from PA DEP requesting SBWJA meet in their office in Williamsport to open some initial discussion on the Walker Township Act 537 plan update. They also requested that one or more of the Walker Township Supervisors attend this meeting for an initial discussion and planning session. No date has been set.

GUESTS:

- Leah Burd, Walker Township representative for Centre County Tax Committee, received notice the contract with the State College Borough and Centre Tax Agency for collecting Earned Income Tax ends this year and is up for renewal. She will be attending the meeting on Thursday, October 5, 2023. The Board had no comment regarding the contract.
- Chris Roan, Walker Township Fire Company chief, addressed the Board about receiving a request to burn down a house at 120 Hecla Rd, Mingoville. The Fire Company is asking for approval from the Supervisors. Supervisor Harter made a motion to approve the Fire Company to conduct a state certified controlled burn; motion second by James Heckman and approved by all three Supervisors.
- Chris Harter, President of Walker Township Fire Company, presented the Board with the Fire Company’s 3rd Quarter Financials. He said upcoming activities include Fire Prevention with Marion Walker and the Amish School. The annual gun drawing will be on October 21st at the Fire Station.

ENGINEER REPORT:

- Engineer Franson continues to work on finding a project for the 2022 Centre County Liquid Fuels money.
- Mr. Franson reported he has set the property pin at the corner of Forest Avenue and Hemlock Street. Mr. Poorman asked what will be done next. After discussion, the supervisors agreed to have Mr. Franson put a project proposal together which will include lowering the pipe along Hemlock Street and installing a pipe along Forest Avenue to connect to the existing inlet. Mr. Franson will proceed with obtaining a Highway Occupancy Permit as the next step. The project will go out to bid in the Spring of 2024.
- No updates were provided for the site distance concern with the corner of Cemetery Lane and Zion Back Rd.

Solicitor Report:

- Solicitor Miller prepared the resolution for the amendment for the Schedule of Fees. Supervisor Harter made a motion to approve Resolution 23-481 amending the Schedule of Fees for Road Occupancy Permits; motion second by Deborah Zimmerman. James Heckman said no. Motion carried 2-1.
- Supervisor Heckman made a motion to authorize Solicitor Miller to advertise Walker Township will be using Baker Tilly as their CPA for the 2023 Audit; motion second by Keith Harter and approved by all three Supervisors.
- A Public Hearing was held for John and Elsie Glick who own the property located at 126 Hoy Rd. They wish to have the property changed from Agriculture District to Commercial District. Supervisor Harter made a motion to deny the request; motion second by James Heckman and approved by all three Supervisors. Supervisor Zimmerman made a motion to hold a Public Hearing for amending the Zoning Ordinance to allow Contractors Shop and Yard with Conditions in the Agricultural District; motion second by James Heckman and approved by all three Supervisors. Supervisor Heckman made a motion to authorized Solicitor Miller to advertise a Public Hearing will be held on November 1st at 5:30pm for allowing Contractors Shop and Yard with Conditions in the Agricultural District; motion second by Deborah Zimmerman and approved by all.
- Solicitor Miller provided a copy of a Walker Township subdivision plan from 1979 which shows a small lot given to Walker Township Water Association. Solicitor Miller and Supervisor Heckman researched and could not come up with a Deed from the Township to the Water Association for the lot. This discussion was tabled.

ZONING:

- Zoning Officer Lesniak reported there were 5 Zoning Permits in the month of September.
- Mr. Lesniak informed the Board the State is considering creating laws to allow Hydrogen Harvesting. There is not a lot of information available but something the Board should be aware of.
- Vacation rentals are becoming more frequent in the Township and he suggests the Board may want to consider adopting an Ordinance for them.

ROADMASTER:

- Supervisor Harter said at the Nittany Valley Joint Planning Commission (NVJPC) meeting discussion was held regarding some changes the Centre County Metro Planning Organization (CCMPO) is considering. One of those changes is limiting the technical committee to 5. The concern NVJPC has is that will take the representation from us smaller municipalities. Supervisor Heckman made a motion to send a letter to CCMPO stating Walker Township is opposed to downsizing the Technical Committees; motion second by Deborah Zimmerman and approved by all three Supervisors.
- Porter Township contacted Supervisor Heckman with a complaint there are 1 to 5 individuals riding motorcycles in Woodland Park and raising cane. Supervisor Heckman will contact Lt. Justin Jones with Rockview State Police to see if he can be of assistance.
- Fall leaf collection will begin Monday, October 16, 2023.

Parks and Rec:

- Leah Burd representing the Parks and Rec Board said they are concerned about some pieces of playground equipment deteriorating. Engineer Franson will look at it and give a report to the Parks and Rec Board to help in their decision how take care of the matter.
- TC Transport removed all the mulch from the Compost area. Mrs. Zimmerman contacted Bellefonte Borough regarding sharing the cost of buying a grinder to help maintain the brush in the compost area, but Bellefonte Borough is purchasing their own grinder and not interested. Discussion was held regarding the additional signage to be added to the Compost Area..

Supervisor Harter made a motion to amend the agenda to include Parks and Recs recommendation to accept the Soccer Facilities Agreement; motion second by Deborah Zimmerman and approved by all.

- Supervisor Zimmerman made a motion to sign the Soccer Facilities Agreement; motion second by Keith Harter and approved by all.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Correspondence was received regarding how Walker Township would like invoiced for the T-467 Bridge Replacement project. Supervisor Heckman made a motion to pay for the whole year for 2022 and receive quarterly invoices thereafter; motion second by Keith Harter and approved by all three Supervisors. The Township has not received the \$100,000.00 from the County towards this project and once received the Board will reevaluate the payment plan.
- Discussion was held to hold a budget meeting in November. No date has been set.
- Supervisor Harter made a motion to hold Halloween Tuesday, October 31st rain or shine; motion second by Deborah Zimmerman and approved by all.

OLD BUSINESS:

- At the September 6th meeting, Supervisor Harter provided the names of 5 grants available to the Fire Company. There was a difference of understanding between the Fire Company and Supervisors in the Fire Protection and Funding Agreement Section 1.7 (Grants) and Section 2.5 (Support of Grants). Solicitor Miller read the Sections and said it means the Fire Company when given grant opportunities from the Township should make reasonable effort to apply for the grants if they are indeed beneficial for them.
- Chris Miller, Treasurer of the Walker Township Fire Company (WTFC) asked the Township to match funds for the Volunteer Fireman Forestry Grant in the amount of \$3,126.00. Supervisor Zimmerman made a motion to give WTFC \$3,126.00 for their request; motion second by James Heckman. Keith Harter abstained. Motioned passed 2-1.
- After receiving the American Rescue Funds grant monies, the Township received requests from Spring Benner Walker Joint Authority (SBWJA), East Nittany Valley Joint Municipal Authority (ENVJMA), Walker Township Water Association (WTWA), and Walker Township Fire Company (WTFC) to consider giving them financial assistance for ongoing projects and expenses. Supervisor Heckman made a motion to give SBWJA \$40,000.00, ENVJMA \$40,000.00, and WTWA \$40,000.00. There was no second and the motion died on the table. Supervisor Harter made a motion to give SBWJA, ENVJMA, and WTFC each \$40,000.00 and the remaining (currently \$4,013.74) stays in the Township; motion second by Deborah Zimmerman. James Heckman said no. Motion passed 2-1.
- At the August meeting it was determined there is no Right-of-Way Agreement with the WTWA for their water line along Zion Back Road by the New Parking lot. Supervisor Heckman made a motion to authorize Solicitor Miller to draw up a Right-of-Way Agreement; motion second by Deborah Zimmerman. Keith Harter said no. Motion passed 2-1.
- Discussion was held regarding volunteers for the Fire Company Joint Operating Committee. It was decided each volunteer should fill out a form regarding any affiliation with the Fire Company and the Township. Solicitor Beard will send an example the County uses that can be critiqued to fit the needs of the Fire Company and Township. Supervisor Zimmerman and WTFC President Chris Harter will come up with names to bring to a meeting to act on.
- The Walker Township Water Associates Hydrant Agreement was tabled for future discussion.

OTHER BUSINESS:

- The estimated Liquid Fuels Allocation for 2024 is \$183,317.29 and the Turnback Allocation is \$3,360.00.

Supervisor Heckman made a motion to approve the September 2023 General Fund Paid Bills in the amount of \$85,553.11; motion second by Keith Harter and approved by all.

Supervisor Harter officially resigned as Chairman of the Board effective October 4, 2023. Supervisor Heckman made a motion to accept Supervisor Harter resignation as Chairman of the Board; motion second by Deborah Zimmerman. Keith Harter abstained. Motion carried 2-1.

Supervisor Zimmerman nominated James Heckman to fill the Chairman position till the end of 2023; motion second by James Heckman and approved by all.

Supervisor Heckman made a motion to adjourn the meeting; motion second by Deborah Zimmerman and approved by all.

Meeting adjourned at 9:23pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan L. Wagner

Keith E. Harter

James B. Heckman

Deborah L. Zimmerman