

**SOUTH STRABANE TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS REGULAR MEETING**

May 23, 2023

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The May 23, 2023 Regular Meeting of the South Strabane Township Board of Supervisors (“Board”) came to order at 7:06 p.m. in the Meeting Room of the Municipal Building (550 Washington Road, Washington, PA 15301).

The following were present:

Board of Supervisors	Bracken Burns, Chair; Mark Murphy, Vice Chair; Russell Grego; Richard Luketich; and Bob Weber.
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Absent	None
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Also Present	ZHB Chair Art Sullivan; Township Manager Brandon Stanick; Police Chief Drew Hilk; Fire Chief Jordan Cramer; Township Solicitor Megan Patrick; Township Engineer Rob Horvat; and Stenographer Sheila Rozanc.
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2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Burns led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Burns stated the Board allocates a period of time during this item for those individuals who would like the opportunity to address the Board on any matter. Each person addressing the Board of Supervisors is asked to limit their comments to a maximum of three (3) minutes.

Mr. Michael Gomber, resident on Meyers Rd., expressed his concern for his neighbor’s new concrete driveway not needing a permit from the Township. He said he has been battling this issue with his neighbor for the past two years. The driveway has caused water problems, impacted his garden and put debris in his yard. He noted when he asked if a permit was granted he was told that there was no permit to issue for the neighbor’s work.

Chair Burns stated a meeting will be set up with Mr. Gomber and the Township to see if we can resolve the issue.

Mr. Jeffrey Bull, resident on S. Main St., expressed his concern with the Police pension being paid late and the penalties that will result. He then stated the Tanger Blvd. streetlights should have been part of the TIF and provided by the developer. Chair Burns advised the Tanger Blvd. right-of-way was taken by the Township and the lights are within the right-of-way and are failing. Mr. Bull expressed his preference the Board require development to improve Berry Rd. and to reinstall the No Right Turn sign at Old Mill Blvd.

An unidentified resident expressed concern residents weren't made aware of the new fire tax and inquired where this new tax money is going.

Mr. George Rowan, resident on Flint Dr., expressed concern for the recent traffic accident involving a fire truck on I-70. He stated he would like to donate money toward the purchase of a HAAS Alert device for the Department.

Chief Cramer thanked Mr. Rowan and stated that South Hills Chrysler has partnered with the Fire Department and is purchasing several of these devices for the Department's fire trucks. Chief Cramer then reviewed the accident in question and additional information regarding the HAAS Alert system, a system that notifies oncoming traffic of any emergency responses prior to traffic coming on to the scene.

Ms. Judy Panasik, resident on Green Crescent Dr., stated Tanger is still responsible for the road until the TIF expires and Tanger should pay for the streetlights. She noted that residents on Berry Road have never asked for Berry Rd. to be closed. In addition, she stated that the Township does not have to do what the Transit Authority wants and why would the Township want a non-profit organization taking valuable land.

Ms. Linda Rumbaugh, resident on Barale Ln., stated she is against the closure of Berry Rd., as well as the Transit Facility development along Berry Rd.

In response to a question from Ms. Marcia Deeb, resident on Fox Dr., Fire Chief Cramer stated the Township did submit an LSA grant to assist in paying for the new truck. The application was not accepted because of the long lead time to authorize the purchase of the truck; it was a purchase already made according to the LSA criteria. Ms. Deeb inquired if the Township could apply for the LSA again. Township Engineer Horvat noted the Township could, but not for the purchase of the fire truck. Chief Cramer stated there are other grant and financing programs available that the Township will be pursuing.

Mr. Jeffrey Bull, resident on S. Main St., stated he got involved with the Township as an opponent to the TIF and now is involved because of the termination of the South Strabane Sanitary Authority. The outlet mall has given South Strabane an eyesore on I-79. The Champion Christian Center is not about religion, it's about the TIF. Mr. Bull concluded his statements and pointed at Mr. Thomas Lonich (resident on Davis School Rd.) seated in the audience and stated he has created most of the problems we deal with today.

Ms. Charlene Scuvotti, resident on Pine Valley Rd., in reference to her recent request for public information, inquired of the costs associated with the Manifold Force Main Project. She also inquired of the certificate of deposit and if those funds were indeed the Sanitary Authority's. Township Manager Stanick advised the information being referenced is not available for review at the moment and invited her to reach out at a later time if she would like understand the information. He also reported the CD had come from the Sanitary Authority.

4. CONSIDERATION OF MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Murphy moved to approve the December 13, 2022 Budget Meeting Minutes, April 18, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes and the May 8, 2023 Special Meeting Minutes. Mr. Luketich seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

5. **FINANCIAL BUSINESS**

The purpose of this memorandum is to transmit the following for consideration by the Board of Supervisors:

- Payroll: \$ 130,311.85 (pay date of April 21, 2023)
- Payroll \$ 135,620.16 (pay date of May 5, 2023)
- Payroll \$ 132,406.80 (pay date of May 19, 2023)
- General Fund: \$ 666,452.03
- Liquid Fuels Fund: \$ 8,285.19
- Sewage Enterprise: \$ 1,515.27
- Escrow: \$ 16,428.21

Total Expenditure: \$1,091,019.51

Overtime costs for the period include:

- Police: \$ 6,233.50
- Fire: \$ 448.33
- Public Works \$ 0.00
- **Total OT:** \$ **6,681.83** (pay date of April 21, 2023)

- Police: \$ 3,459.84
- Fire: \$ 1,342.64
- Public Works \$ 0.00
- **Total OT:** \$ **4,802.48** (pay date of May 5, 2023)

- Police: \$ 10,494.29
- Fire: \$ 78.36
- Public Works \$ 0.00
- **Total OT:** \$ **10,572.65** (pay date of May 19, 2023)

General Fund:

- AmeriServ Trust (2022 MMO) \$399,868.00
- AmeriServ Trust (2022 Funding Deficiency Interest) \$ 34,656.17
- MRM Trust Worker's Compensation (Third Installment) \$ 64,572.84
- Municipal Employees Insurance Trust \$ 52,507.48

Mr. Murphy moved to approve the payroll for the periods April 2, 2023 through April 15, 2023, April 16, 2023 through April 29, 2023 and April 30, 2023 through May 13, 2023 and bills for the period April 15, 2023 through May 19, 2023. Mr. Luketich seconded the motion.

Mr. Murphy noted the total amount payroll being paid for the previous three pay periods and inquired why the Police Pension payment hadn't been made yet. Mr. Stanick stated payroll is always first priority; however, this is representative of cash flow coming in over the last three pay periods which isn't representative of cash on-hand at any one time.

The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND RECOGNITION

Chair Burns announced the Board met in Executive Session on May 23, 2023 to discuss personnel matters, potential litigation and ongoing litigation in regards to the Scuvotti Land Use Appeal (Docket No. 2022-4648).

Mr. Weber reported that it is National Public Works Week. He expressed his gratitude for the work of the Public Works Department and recognized each crew member: Public Works Director Russ Grego, Jeremi Bardella, Code Hamill, Kevin Montgomery, Gary DeNunzio, Jim Ross, Joe Rush and Dave Oller, who has served 45 years in the Department. The audience applauded in recognition of the outstanding work of the Public Works Department.

Mr. Stanick announced he will be resigning as Township Manager as he has accepted a position with Findlay Township. The audience applauded in recognition of Mr. Stanick's public service.

7. TOWNSHIP REPORTS & PRESENTATIONS

Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Report

Chair Burns, stated the Board of Supervisors allocates a period of time during this item for comments regarding the topic of stormwater. Each person addressing the Board of Supervisors is asked to limit their comments to a maximum of three minutes.

There were no comments from the Public.

Secretary/Treasurer's Report

Mr. Stanick reported the following was transmitted to the Board through the Secretary/Treasurer's Report:

Minutes and Agendas:

- a) Green Team Meeting Minutes – March 9, 2023;
- b) Zoning Hearing Board Meeting Minutes – March 13, 2023;
- c) WEWJA Regular Meeting Minutes – March 27, 2023;
- d) Zoning Hearing Board Meeting Minutes – April 10, 2023;
- e) Green Team Meeting Minutes – April 13, 2023;
- f) Zoning Hearing Board Agenda – May 8, 2023; and
- g) Green Team Meeting Agenda – May 11, 2023.

Reports and Publications:

- a) Finance Report - April 2023;
- b) Fire Department Report – April 2023
- c) Building Department/Code Enforcement Report – April 2023;
- d) Police Department Report – April 2023;
- e) Tax Collector's Report & Interim Collection Only – April 2023;
- f) Animal Control Monthly Report – March and April 2023;
- g) Township Engineer's Report – May 23, 2023;
- h) OR Legal Notice regarding Public Hearing for Freedom Transit – May 1 and May 8, 2023;
- i) DODGE Data & Analytics – April 2023;
- j) PennDOT, Moving Forward Newsletter – Spring 2023;

- k) Freedom Transit E-Newsletter – May 2023;
- l) “What is going on with the new plantings” – Flier for Community Park;
- m) Observer Reporter article, “Wash. Co. awards largest contract thus far for broadband expansion” (w/attachment) – May 19, 2023; and
- n) Property Beautification Awards Flier.

Correspondence:

- a) Letter dated April 18, 2023 Freedom Transit, Executive Director Sheila Gombita, regarding Local Match Funding;
- b) Letter dated April 19, 2023 from a resident regarding the increase of taxes;
- c) Press Release from Chief Cramer on April 29, 2023 regarding Ladder Truck struck by motorist;

Copies of those items in italics are not attached, but available upon request.

Township Solicitor’s Report

Solicitor Megan Patrick had nothing to report.

Township Engineer’s Report

Township Engineer Scott Groom presented the following report:

Burkett Manor 454-03-120

- KLH has an inspector on-site ensuring that the storm, roads, and sanitary are being built to the Township’s standards and the approved plans. Time spent on sanitary work is being billed separately to WEWJA.

H2O PA Grant Application 454-23

- A grant application was submitted to the Commonwealth Financing Authority in December for upgrades to the Quarry Pump Station. The total project estimate is \$2,732,437. The application will be for 50% grant funding with 50% Township match. The most recent correspondence with DCED suggests that funding offers may not be announced until September (originally anticipated for July).

MS4 Support 454-24

- Updates will need to be made to the Township’s existing stormwater ordinance to satisfy more recent PADEP guidance.

Tanger Blvd. Streetlights

- A proposal has been provided to design and preparation of bidding documents associated with replacement of 20 streetlights along Tanger Blvd.

Developer Reviews

- None.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

8A: Public Hearing for the Consideration of an Application from Washington County Transit Authority (d/b/a/ Freedom Transit) to create definitions for Transit Facility, CNG, CNG Fueling Station and Electric Vehicle Charging Station and to establish Transit Facility as a Primary Conditional Use and CNG Fueling Station and Electric Vehicle Charging Station as Accessory Conditional Uses in the I-1 Light Industrial Zoning District, in anticipation of constructing a Transit Facility at 375 Berry Road in the I-1 Zoning District (Tabled)

As this item was on the table, there was no motion from the Board to remove the item from the table.

8B: Motion Approving a Memorandum of Understanding with the Public Works Union, Local 207M Regarding Paid Leave (Tabled)

Mr. Luketich moved to remove this item from the table. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Luketich moved to approve a Memorandum of Understanding with the Public Works Union, Local 207M regarding paid leave. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

8C: Motion Approving a Final Collective Bargaining Agreement between South Strabane Township and the South Strabane Police Department Wage and Policy Unit beginning January 1, 2023 and ending December 31, 2027 (Tabled)

Hearing no opposition, Chair Burns announced this item will remain on the table.

8D: Motion Approving an Employment Agreement with Public Works Director Russell Grego (Tabled)

Receiving no opposition from the Board, Chair Burns announced this item will remain on the table.

8E: Motion Concerning the Recommendation of the Planning Commission Regarding the Closure of Berry Road (Tabled)

Mr. Murphy moved to remove this item from the table. Mr. Luketich seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Following a discussion, Mr. Murphy moved to direct: i) Staff to draft an ordinance establishing three-way stop intersections at Kohl's entrance to Strabane Square and at Old Mill Blvd.; ii) direct Staff to engage PennDOT regarding a three-way stop intersection at Manifold Rd. and Berry Rd.; and iii) the Township Engineer to draft a Project Scope for the redesign of Berry Rd. Mr. Luketich seconded the motion.

Ms. Laynee Zipko, resident on Berry Rd., stated it is not the road itself, but the driving on Berry Rd.

Ms. Judy Panasik, resident on Green Crescent Dr., suggested the Township install stop signs near the narrower portions of Berry Rd.

The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

9. NEW BUSINESS

9A: Resolution Designating a Flag for South Strabane Township

Chair Burns introduced Mr. Weber to present the resolution. Mr. Weber stated the idea for a Township flag came from having attended the 2022 PSATS conference. PSATS and encouraged all Townships of the Commonwealth to develop and display its flag. Mr. Weber stated, with the Board's consent he worked with Trinity Grade 6 to help us with the design of the flag and to provide the symbols for our Township. He then read an excerpt from the Township Comprehensive Plan regarding Township and School District relations. The project was a great way to teach the students about township government as students nowadays do not have a great deal of understanding about civics.

Mr. Murphy and Mr. Grego held the flag to display it to the audience. At the request of Mr. Weber, Mr. Stanick read aloud the following resolution before the Board:

SOUTH STRABANE TOWNSHIP WASHINGTON COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

RESOLUTION 11-23

RESOLUTION DESIGNATING A FLAG FOR SOUTH STRABANE TOWNSHIP

WHEREAS, South Strabane Township and Trinity Middle School Grade 6 collaborated to create and design a "First Ever Flag" for South Strabane Township; and

WHEREAS, Strabane Township was founded in 1781 by Irish Settlers and split into North Strabane and South Strabane Townships in 1831; and

WHEREAS, a flag is an instrument of symbolism, embodying the culture and ideals brought forth by our ancestors and all those who came before us; and

WHEREAS, the Sixth Grade Middle School Student Body, comprised of 246 students, created symbols depicting the farming and mining occupations of the Township's early nineteenth century settlers; and

WHEREAS, it is an objective of the Township, through its Comprehensive Plan, to establish a stronger identity for the Township, to build a stronger sense of place, and to promote meaningful student and citizen participation in all aspects of local government; and

WHEREAS, this objective was fulfilled by the collaboration with Trinity Middle School Grade 6, led by teachers Ron Tarquinio and Darlene Biernesser with support from Principal Paul Kostelnik and coordination by Dr. Bob Weber, South Strabane Township Supervisor, to energize the community's youth in becoming and staying involved in municipal activities; and

WHEREAS, through his generous contribution, Dennis M. Makel, Esquire served as benefactor for the project; and

WHEREAS, all Grade 6 students were awarded Certificates of Recognition for their contributions to the Flag Project, and the participating teachers received flags, which will be displayed in their classrooms.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the South Strabane Township Board of Supervisors hereby designates a flag symbolizing its past history and extant partnership with the Trinity Area School District for the benefit of South Strabane Township.

Mr. Weber moved to approve the resolution designating the flag as the flag for South Strabane Township. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

9B: Motion Directing the Zoning Hearing Board to Review Township Sign Regulations

Chair Burns introduced the item and Mr. Stanick reported that at its meeting on May 8, 2023, the Zoning Hearing Board ("ZHB") expressed its desire to review the commercial and industrial district sign regulations, which are part of the Zoning Code. As the Board of Supervisors is aware, one of the duties of the ZHB is to consider applications for variance that seek relief from the rigid standards of the Zoning Code when compliance becomes a hardship. The ZHB has received and adjudicated 19 applications for signs from 2017 through May 2023 and finds the current standards outdated and not useful for the large commercial districts in South Strabane.

Mr. Stanick stated should the Board authorize this request, it is anticipated the ZHB would evaluate the Sign Code and make a recommendation to the Board. It would then be the Board's choice to forward the ZHB's recommendation to the Planning Commission to commence the Public Hearing process for text amendments.

ZHB Chair Art Sullivan stated the most variances that come before the ZHB are those related to commercial signage. It is the intent of the ZHB to review the Sign Code to ensure that it is response to the needs of both the Township's business community and residents. In response to a question from Mr. Luketich, Mr. Sullivan stated this would be the only update to the codes the ZHB would like to review at this time.

Mr. Murphy moved to authorize the ZHB to review the Township's sign regulations. Mr. Luketich seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

9C: Resolution Amending Resolution #10-23 Concerning Mandatory Attendance by Applicants

Hearing no opposition, Chair Burns announced this item will remain on the table.

9D: Motion Authorizing Advertisement of Bids for Tanger Blvd. Streetlights

Mr. Murphy moved to table this item. Mr. Luketich seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

9E: Motion Authorizing a Lien on Property Located at 1530 Hillcrest Avenue (Patten School)

Mr. Murphy moved to authorize a lien on the property located at 1530 Hillcrest Avenue (former Patten School) for violations of the Property Maintenance Code. Mr. Luketich seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Murphy moved to amend the agenda to add 9F: A Motion Authorizing the Board of Supervisors to Contract with a Consultant for Manager Search Services and to Approve such Contract at the Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting. Mr. Luketich seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

9F: A Motion Authorizing the Board of Supervisors to Contract with a Consultant for Manager Search Services and to Approve such Contract at the Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting

Mr. Weber moved to authorize the Board to contract a consultant for Manager Search Services and to approve such contract at the next regularly scheduled meeting. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

10. ADJOURNMENT

As no further business came before the Board, Mr. Weber moved to adjourn. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brandon J. Stanick
Township Manager