

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

February 28, 2023

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The February 28, 2023 Regular Meeting of the South Strabane Township Board of Supervisors (“Board”) came to order at 7:03 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	Township Manager Brandon Stanick; Assistant to the Township Manager Jim Sutter; Police Chief Drew Hilk; Fire Chief Jordan Cramer; Finance Director Janna Luton; Township Solicitor Dennis Makel; and Township Engineer Rob Horvat.
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2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Burns lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

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.

Reverend Robert Grewe, Chaplain for the South Strabane Volunteer Fire Department (“VFD”), shared his perspectives on the improved relationship between the VFD and the career firefighters. Reverend Grewe provided background on the new logo patch and stated it has helped create unity. He added it was designed by a current member and paid for through a donation. Reverend Grewe stated expenses continue to increase and noted the continued fundraising efforts of the VFD. He expressed his belief Fire Chief Cramer is doing his best. He stated there is no restriction on public speaking; however the Fire Department follows proper procedure in having initial communications come from Chief Cramer. Reverend Grewe spoke positively of Chief Cramer’s community outreach initiatives. He stated there have been nine new members to the VFD in the 10 months since Chief Cramer came to the Township. Reverend Grewe stated Chief Cramer possesses strong communication skills and that he emphasizes openness and honesty. He stated the relationship with their mutual aid partners has never been better. Additionally, Reverend Grewe stated Chief Cramer sees the big picture and that there is unity where there was once division and healing instead of pain. He expressed his opinion the Board made the correct decision in hiring Chief Cramer.

Cory Gaiser, President of the South Strabane VFD, read aloud a statement from the VFD. He stated the Township has the best of both worlds in the current Combination Fire Department. Mr. Gaiser stated community outreach events have been a success, particularly the recent kids camp. Mr. Gaiser acknowledged the questions and concerns regarding the changes that are being made. He stated new purchases are necessary for providing the expected service level and the new apparatus is necessary given the changes experienced in the Township. He stated the new Fire Tax takes away some of the fundraising burden placed on the VFD; however, fundraising is still a foundational aspect of their organization. He stated Chief Cramer has made an immediate impact on the Fire Department and he appreciates this opportunity to provide feedback.

Chair Burns and Mr. Weber thanked the firefighters in attendance for their service. Mr. Gaiser introduced the firefighters in attendance. In response to a question from Mr. Luketich, Chief Cramer stated there are currently 22 active members of the VFD.

Nathan Perry, Resident on Arrowhead Drive, stated he and his wife Christine have been residents for the past two years. Mr. Perry expressed his appreciation for the efforts of the Fire Department when they had lost their eight-month old son several months ago. He stated the Fire Department showed up in less than 10 minutes. Mr. Perry stated he can vividly remember the kindness and compassion displayed by Chief Cramer and stated he and Reverend Grewe were very helpful in providing comfort to his family during a difficult time. He expressed appreciation for the Fire Department allowing use of the Fire Station for the celebration of life and their continued support in the ensuing months. Mr. Perry stated the Fire Department often encounters individuals on one of the worst days of their life and it should be comprised of people who can help them. He stated the South Strabane Fire Department is comprised of people who do just that.

Jeff Bull, Property Owner on South Main Street, noted the Township has always had a special Fire Department. Mr. Bull stated he is frightened by the financial situation of the Township. He stated, after having received audits via an Open Records request, the Township has had higher expenditures than revenues the past six years. He stated, while a Tax Anticipation Note (“TAN”) is proposed, it is not intended to spend on the prior year’s debt. Mr. Bull stated all monies received from the American Rescue Plan Act (“ARPA”) have now been spent. He stated pension funds have not been paid into. Mr. Bull stated the Township Manager has not informed the Board of the dire situation of the Township’s finances. He stated the Township is already starting the current year in debt and he is providing this information to the Board tonight to keep them informed. Mr. Bull expressed his opinion the Township Manager is catering to developers instead of residents.

Judy Panasik, Resident on Green Crescent Drive, questioned how the Township will balance the 2024 Budget with the ARPA funds all spent. Ms. Panasik inquired on why the Board does not allow residents to make Public Comment over Zoom. She recommended the Board receive legal advice regarding this matter. Ms. Panasik stated many meetings have not been properly advertised and that somebody should be reprimanded for this. Ms. Panasik expressed concern with proposed developments causing properties to become tax-exempt and noted Township residents are now being asked to pay more in taxes.

Township Solicitor Dennis Makel stated if the Township meetings are being broadcast over Zoom, then Public Comment should be allowed via this avenue. Chair Burns stated it is not a formal policy to not allow Public Comment over Zoom.

4. **CONSIDERATION OF MEETING MINUTES**

Mr. Weber moved to approve the Budget Meeting Minutes for November 17, 2022, the Special Meeting Minutes for November 28, 2022 and the Regular Meeting Minutes for January 24, 2023 as presented. Mr. Luketich seconded the motion.

The correct year was clarified for the Regular Meeting Minutes for January 24, 2023.

The motion passed 4-0-1, with Mr. Murphy abstaining.

5. **FINANCIAL BUSINESS**

The Board considered the following financial business:

- Payroll: \$ 137,469.23 (pay date of January 27, 2023)
- Payroll: \$ 139,219.98 (pay date of February 10, 2023)
- Payroll: \$ 151,943.91 (pay date of February 24, 2023)
- General Fund: \$ 156,899.87
- Liquid Fuels Fund: \$ 60,129.82
- Sewage Enterprise \$ 8,432.53
- Escrow: \$ 2,932.74
- Total Expenditure: \$ 657,028.08**
- Overtime costs for the period include:
 - Police: \$ 2,421.52
 - Fire: \$ 300.14
 - Public Works \$ 0.00
 - **Total OT: \$ 2,721.66** (pay date of January 27, 2023)
 - Police: \$ 1,597.76
 - Fire: \$ 866.22
 - Public Works \$ 0.00
 - **Total OT: \$ 2,463.98** (pay date of February 10, 2023)
 - Police: \$ 3,600.68
 - Fire: \$ 119.38
 - Public Works \$ 0.00
 - **Total OT: \$ 3,720.06** (pay date of February 24, 2023)

General Fund:

- Municipal Employees Insurance Trust \$ 58,100.49

Mr. Murphy moved to approve the payroll for the periods January 8 through January 21, 2023, January 22 through February 4, 2023 and February 5, 2023 through February 18, 2023 and Bills for the period January 21, 2023 through February 24, 2023. Mr. Luketich seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND RECOGNITION

Chair Burns announced the Board met in Executive Session on February 14 and February 28, 2023 to discuss personnel matters.

7. TOWNSHIP REPORTS

Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Report

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.

Ms. Panasik noted ARPA funds were previously proposed for stormwater projects, but these monies are now spent.

Mr. Bull expressed his hope the Township will not start charging a stormwater fee based on the square footage of impervious surface for individual property owners. He stated if the Township does do this, he recommends it be done in an easy and simplified manner.

Township Manager's Report

Mr. Stanick reported the Board of Auditors will meet March 9, 2023 at 5:00 p.m.

Mr. Stanick advised a joint workshop meeting with the Planning Commission to review a draft of the Township's Act 537 Plan Update is scheduled for March 7, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. at the Oak Spring Fire Station.

Mr. Stanick reported Cypher & Cypher has begun the annual audit.

Mr. Stanick noted the Secretary/Treasurer Report has been submitted for the Board's information.

Secretary/Treasurer's Report

The following was transmitted to the Board through the Secretary/Treasurer's Report:

Minutes and Agendas:

- a) Planning Commission Meeting Minutes – January 5, 2023;
- b) Green Team Meeting Minutes – January 19, 2023;
- c) Planning Commission Meeting Agenda – February 2, 2023;
- d) Green Team Meeting Agenda – February 9, 2023;

Reports and Publications:

- a) Finance Report - January 2023;
- b) Building Department/Code Enforcement Report – February 2023;
- c) Police Department Report – January 2023;
- d) Tax Collector's Report & Interim Collection Only – January 2023;
- e) Animal Control Officer's Report – January 2023;
- f) MS4 Report – December 2022;
- g) Township Engineer's Report – February 28, 2023;
- h) DODGE Data & Analytics – February 2023; and
- i) PSATS News Bulletin – January/February 2023.

Correspondence:

- a) Letter (w/ attachment) dated January 24, 2023 from Brandon Stanick to Chapman Properties regarding the Tanger Blvd. Resurfacing Project;
- b) Letter dated January 24, 2023 from Brandon Stanick to A. Folino Construction, Inc. regarding the Cameron Road Repaving Project;
- c) Press Release from Chief Cramer regarding January 29th Interstate 79 incident;
- d) Letter (*w/o attachments*) dated January 31, 2023 from Range Resources regarding a permit application/modification to drill the proposed Redd Earl Unit 12H in Amwell Township;
- e) Letter (*w/o attachments*) dated January 31, 2023 from Range Resources regarding a permit application to drill the proposed Prigg Morgan 11272 1H-6H in Canton Township;
- f) Letter dated February 1, 2023 from Jim Sutter regarding the Act 101 Recycling Information;
- g) Letter dated February 1, 2023 from PA Dept of Environmental Protection regarding Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4);
- h) Letters dated February 7, 2023 from Brandon Stanick regarding the appointments for 2023;
- i) Letter (w/attachment) dated February 13, 2023 from Brandon Stanick concerning the planned Panorama-Manifold Pipeline Removal;
- j) Letter dated February 20, 2023 from Christie Campbell, Co-President Citizens Library Board thanking the township of the 2023 donation; and
- k) Letter dated February 23, 2023 from PennDOT regarding the notice of payment for Liquid Fuels in the amount of \$353,572.07 on March 1, 2023.

Mr. Murphy questioned why the ARPA Fund is listed on the balance sheet, but not the Profit and Loss Report. Mr. Stanick stated they are continuing to work through issues with the QuickBooks software. Mr. Murphy noted the Profit and Loss Report states approximately \$4.3 million is budgeted for Accident Reports. Mr. Stanick stated this is an error in QuickBooks and will be addressed. Mr. Murphy questioned why the Gaming Fund is not listed on the Balance Sheet along with the other funds. Mr. Stanick stated this can be done for future reports.

Mr. Murphy stated the check for the Police Department's pension has been received in September in recent years and the Township has been assessed a fine for untimely deposits. Mr. Murphy stated that Mr. Stanick had previously told him the Township had until the end of the year to make this deposit. Mr. Murphy stated this money should never be deposited in the General Fund. Mr. Murphy stated any money transferred between funds should be approved by the Board.

Township Solicitor's Report

Solicitor Dennis Makel reported his office has been working on issues regarding agreements, personnel and planning.

Township Engineer's Report

Township Engineer Rob Horvat presented the following report:

Community Park 454-08

- KLH completed the as-builts of the forcemain for potential adoption by WEWJA.

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.

Act 537 Update 454-21

- KLH is making preparations for the upcoming March 7th workshop meeting with members of the staff, supervisors and planning commission to review and finalize the document.

2023 LSA Application 454-22

- Unfortunately, the Community Park Overflow Lot project was not selected by the LSA board for funding.

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

- A transition meeting with Township staff is scheduled to take place on March 1st.

Developer Reviews

- None to report

Township Engineer Rob Horvat drew attention to the items pertaining to the 2023 LSA Application, H2O PA Grant Application and MS4 permit support.

Mr. Murphy inquired on the Community Park forcemain item. Mr. Horvat stated this item has been included in the report since prior to his taking over as consulting engineer. He stated he would ask former consulting engineer Kevin Creagh for more background on this item.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

9. NEW BUSINESS

9A: 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

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

9B: Resolution Amending an Intermunicipal Agreement By and Between South Strabane Township, Canton Township, Nottingham Township and Peters Township Regarding the Sharing of Costs of a LeeBoy 8510D Paver, by Removing Peters Township

Mr. Murphy moved to approve the resolution amending an intermunicipal agreement by and between South Strabane Township, Canton Township, Nottingham Township and Peters Township regarding the sharing of costs of a LeeBoy 8510D Paver, by removing Peters Township. Mr. Grego seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

9C: Motion Releasing the Remaining Amount of the Road Bond for Munce Ridge Road

Mr. Stanick reported on April 30, 2020, the Township approved a request from Dallas Energy, LLC (“Company”) to enter into a road bond agreement for the use of 0.40 miles of Munce Ridge Road for the plugging of oil and gas wells that are no longer operating. According to Chapter 220 of the Township Code, an agreement is required with the Township when seeking to use vehicles, equipment and other machinery that exceed local weight limits for roadways or doing work within the right-of-way. This ensures adequate funds are available for maintenance and repair of the roadways being used.

For the Board’s information, the amount of the bond was determined using a formula established by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (\$12,500/mile), which resulted in an amount of \$5,000.

Public Works Director Russ Grego has inspected the road and finds the condition favorable. The remaining amount of the escrow established by the Company in the amount of \$3,000 will be released in addition to the bond.

Mr. Murphy moved to release the remaining amount of the road bond for Munce Ridge Road. Mr. Grego seconded the motion.

Upon a question from Mr. Murphy, Mr. Grego stated Munce Ridge Road is in good condition.

The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

9D: Motion Directing the Planning Commission to Review SALDO and Zoning Regulations Concerning Requirements for Sidewalks, Trees, Streetlights, Recreation Facilities and Mail Boxes, as well as Cul-de-sac Size, Cartway Widths and Bulk Regulations for Planned Residential Developments

Mr. Luketich moved to direct the Planning Commission to Review SALDO and Zoning Regulations Concerning Requirements for Sidewalks, Trees, Streetlights, Recreation Facilities and Mail Boxes, as well as Cul-de-sac Size, Cartway Widths and Bulk Regulations for Planned

Residential Developments. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Murphy stated he would like to include a review of parking stall widths to the items for the Planning Commission to examine. Mr. Luketich stated he would like to include a review of building heights given the height limitations in place for current and anticipated aerial apparatus. Mr. Stanick stated these items will be included in the analysis.

The motion was amended to include a review of parking stall widths and building heights by acclamation. The motion as amended passed on a unanimous voice vote.

9E: Motion Amending the Township Police Department Policies and Procedures Manual Regarding Uniforms

Mr. Luketich moved to table consideration of a motion amending the Township Police Department Policies and Procedures Manual regarding uniforms. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

9F: Motion Amending the Township's Ballfield Usage Policy

Mr. Murphy had previously expressed a desire for the current Ballfield Usage Policy to be amended in the following manner:

- Additional insurance requirements;
- Requirement for visiting teams to have a Certificate of Insurance;
- Require buses to be parked in the overflow lot;
- Authorize the Public Works Director to close the fields if conditions are unfavorable;
- Refund organizations for lost dates due to unplayable fields; and
- Codify the giving of priority to Township coaches and youth over those from non-residents.

An updated policy reflecting these changes has been provided for the Board's consideration.

Mr. Murphy moved to amend the Township's Ballfield Usage Policy. Mr. Luketich seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

9G: Resolution Amending the Township's Comprehensive Fee Schedule to establish a Fee for Use of the Cross Country Course in Community Park

Mr. Murphy moved to approve the resolution amending the Township's Comprehensive Fee Schedule to establish a fee for the use of the cross country course in Community Park. Mr. Grego seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

9H: Motion Authorizing a Pay Adjustment for the Finance Clerk

Mr. Stanick reported it is recommended the Board consider awarding Finance Clerk Lisa Carrier \$1,500 for her work during the transition to a Finance Director and adjust her hourly compensation from \$18.00 per hour to \$20.00 per hour.

Mr. Murphy moved to authorize a pay adjustment for Finance Clerk Lisa Carrier in the manner recommended by Mr. Stanick. Mr. Grego seconded the motion.

Mr. Stanick noted the value Ms. Carrier provides to the Township.

The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Motion Amending the Agenda

Mr. Murphy moved to amend the Agenda by adding Item 9I: Motion Accepting the Resignations of Finance Director Janna Luton and Assistant to the Township Manager Jim Sutter. Mr. Grego seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

9I: Motion Accepting the Resignations of Finance Director Janna Luton and Assistant to the Township Manager Jim Sutter

Mr. Murphy moved to accept the resignations of Finance Director Janna Luton and Assistant to the Township Manager Jim Sutter with regret. Mr. Grego seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Murphy expressed his pleasure in working with both Ms. Luton and Mr. Sutter.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Murphy moved to adjourn. Mr. Luketich seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brandon J. Stanick
Township Manager