

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

January 2, 2024

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The January 2, 2024, Reorganization Meeting of the South Strabane Township Board of Supervisors (“Board”) came to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Meeting Room of the Municipal Building (550 Washington Road, Washington, PA 15301).

The following were present:

Board of Supervisors	Bob Weber, Chair; Mark Murphy, Vice-Chair; Jeff Bull; Russell Grego; and George Rowand.
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Absent	None
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Also Present	Township Manager Jeff Ziegler; Fire Chief Jordan Cramer; Township Solicitor Dennis Makel and Township Engineer Scott Groom.
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2. SWEARING IN OF NEWLY ELECTED OFFICIALS

Magisterial District Judge Michael Manfredi was on hand to swear in Mr. Jeffrey Bull and Mr. George Rowand as Township Supervisor and Ms. Janine Skariot and Mr. John Stewart as Elected Auditors for South Strabane Township.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice-Chair Murphy led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

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

Mr. Dale Flowers of Shawnee Drive read from prepared comments including the Strabane Manor Homeowners Association (HOA) had not fulfilled its fiduciary responsibility and he went on to call for an investigation of the current Township Supervisor that was a past President of the HOA. He stated that the development was not built to the terms of the Developer’s Agreement related to sidewalks, trails and detention basins.

Mr. Mike Mahurin, Flint Drive continued reading from prepared remarks including that statement that the township released a security bond before all of the improvements were made and he stated that the township is currently doing everything that it can to settle the lawsuit. He also stated that the current HOA board is working to try and dissolve the HOA. He concluded his comments by

demanding an investigation into what he referred to as a coverup of wrongdoing at the taxpayer's expense.

Mr. Joe Sebastian, Shawnee Drive introduced himself as a member of the current HOA board. He stated that everything that the previous two individuals did was slanderous and untrue. He stated that he doesn't want to see a lawsuit and would like to re-establish a positive relationship with the township.

Ms. Cindy Derazno, Tomahawk Drive stated that Mr. Sebastian wasn't around when everything was happening, and he was wrong in what he just said. She stated that there is a need for an investigation.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND RECOGNITIONS

Mr. Murphy announced the Board held Executive Session on December 28, 2023, to seek advice of legal counsel on matters related to litigation.

6. BOARD OF SUPERVISORS REORGANIZATION FOR 2024

A. Appointment of Chair: Mr. Grego moved to open nominations for Chair of the Township Board of Supervisors for 2024. Mr. Bull seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Grego nominated Bob Weber for Chair. Mr. Weber accepted the nomination.

Mr. Rowand nominated Jeff Bull for Chair. Mr. Bull accepted the nomination.

With there being no further nominations, Mr. Grego moved to close nominations. Mr. Rowand seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

At the Solicitor's suggestion, the Township Manager polled the board members individually regarding their vote for Chair for 2024. Mr. Weber, Mr. Grego and Mr. Murphy indicated their vote was for Mr. Weber. Mr. Bull and Mr. Rowand indicated their vote was for Mr. Bull. On a 3-2 majority vote, Mr. Weber was elected Chair for 2024.

Mr. Murphy passed the gavel to Mr. Weber.

B. Appointment of Vice-Chair: Mr. Grego moved to open nominations for Vice-Chair of the Township Board of Supervisors for 2024. Mr. Bull seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Grego nominated Mark Murphy as Vice Chair. Mr. Murphy accepted the nomination.

With there being no further nominations, Mr. Grego moved to close nominations. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Grego moved to appoint Mark Murphy as Vice Chair for 2024. Mr. Weber seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

- C. Appointment of Township Solicitor, Labor Counsel and Zoning Hearing Board Solicitor: Mr. Murphy moved to appoint Makel & Associates to serve as Township Solicitor, Campbell, Durrant, Beatty, Polumbo and Miller to serve as Labor Counsel and Sweat Law Offices to serve as Zoning Hearing Board Solicitor for 2024 at the rates presented. Mr. Grego seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.
- D. Establish the Time and Place of Monthly Meetings: Mr. Grego moved to set Board of Supervisors meetings for every fourth Tuesday at 6:00 p.m. except for the months of November and December, which will be the third Tuesday at 6:00 p.m. at the South Strabane Township Municipal Building, 550 Washington Road. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.
- E. Robert's Rules of Order: Mr. Grego moved to use Roberts Rules of Order as a guideline for parliamentary procedure during meetings for 2024. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.
- F. Appointment of Township Manager, Secretary/Treasurer and Pension Fund Administrator: Mr. Murphy moved to appoint Jeffrey Ziegler as Township Manager, Secretary-Treasurer and Pension Fund Administrator for 2024. Mr. Grego seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.
- G. Appointment of Township Zoning Officer: Mr. Grego moved to appoint Scott Heckman as Township Zoning Officer for 2024. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion.

Mr. Bull asked the Chair if the Township Manager has always been the Zoning Officer. The Chair responded in the affirmative. Mr. Bull asked if the two employees being put forward for Zoning Officer and Assistant Zoning Officer are qualified for the positions. The Township Manager responded that they are qualified for the positions, and both have been serving in the positions since the previous Township Manager left this past July. Mr. Bull stated that it is his understanding that the two employees do not have all of the qualifications they are required to have to do their job and asked that items G and H be tabled because the Township has been spending over a quarter million dollars on code enforcement and he stated other options should be considered. Chair Weber stated there was a motion on the table that needed to be acted upon.

Chair Weber called for a roll call vote:

Ayes: Mr. Weber, Mr. Grego and Mr. Murphy

Nays: Mr. Bull and Mr. Rowand

The motion passed by a 3-2 roll call vote.

- H. Appointment of Assistant Zoning Officer: Mr. Grego moved to appoint Troy Lucas as Assistant Zoning Officer for 2024. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion. Chair Weber called for a roll call vote:

Ayes: Mr. Weber, Mr. Grego and Mr. Murphy

Nays: Mr. Bull and Mr. Rowand

The motion passed by a 3-2 roll call vote.

- I. Establish Depository Institution: Mr. Bull moved to designate Washington Financial Bank as the Township's depository institution. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.
- J. Designation of Official Newspaper: Mr. Bull moved to designate The Washington Observer as the Township's depository institution. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.
- K. Appointment of Tax Collectors: Mr. Murphy moved to appoint Keystone Collections as Local Services/Delinquent Tax Collector for 2024 and Laura Keisling as Real Estate/Delinquent Tax, Mercantile/Delinquent Tax, Per Capita/Delinquent Tax and Fire/Delinquent Tax Collector for 2024. Mr. Grego seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.
- L. Emergency Management Coordinator: Mr. Grego moved to appoint Jordan Cramer as Emergency Management Coordinator for the 2024 year. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.
- M. Township Engineer and Alternate Consulting Engineer: Mr. Grego moved to appoint K LH Engineers as the Township and MS4 Engineer and Harshman CE Group, LLC as Alternate Engineer for 2024. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.
- N. Zoning Hearing Board: Chair Weber asked Township Manager Ziegler to indicate the names of the candidates and if they submitted a letter. The Manager reported that Mr. James Stewart and Ms. Michele Mansfield Tysiak were each seeking reappointment for a 3-year term, and both had submitted a letter seeking reappointment.

Mr. Grego moved to appoint James Stewart and Michele Mansfield Tysiak to each serve on the Zoning Hearing Board for 3-year terms expiring on December 31, 2026. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.
- O. Planning Commission: Chair Weber asked Township Manager Ziegler to indicate the name of the candidate and if the candidate submitted a letter. The Manager reported that Ms. Paula Phillis is seeking reappointment to a 4-year term and that she did submit a letter seeking reappointment.

Mr. Murphy moved to appoint Paula Philis to serve on the Planning Commission for a 4-year term expiring on December 31, 2027. Mr. Grego seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.
- P. Building Code Board of Appeals: Chair Weber asked Township Manager Ziegler to indicate the name of the candidate and if the candidate submitted a letter. The Manager reported that Mr. Carolla had submitted a letter seeking reappointment to a 3-year term and that he did submit a letter seeking reappointment.

Mr. Bull moved to appoint Ron Carolla to serve on the Building Code Board of Appeals for a 3-year term expiring on December 31, 2026. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

- Q. Township Vacancy Board Chair: Chair Weber asked Township Manager Ziegler to indicate the name of the candidate and if the candidate submitted a letter. The Manager reported that Mr. Jones was seeking reappointment to a 1-year term and had submitted a letter seeking reappointment.

Mr. Murphy moved to appoint Bob Jones to serve as the Township Vacancy Board Chair for a 1-year term expiring December 31, 2024. Mr. Grego seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

- R. Washington County Tax Collection District Representative: Mr. Murphy moved to appoint Jeffrey Ziegler as the Township's Representative on the Washington County Tax Collection District Board of Delegates for the year 2024. Mr. Grego seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

- S. Washington County Sewage Council Representative: Mr. Murphy moved to appoint Jeffrey Ziegler to serve as the Township's Representative on the Washington County Sewage Council for the year 2024. Mr. Grego seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

- T. PSATS Convention Voting Delegate: Mr. Bull moved to appoint George Rowand as the voting delegate to the 2024 PSATS Convention. Mr. Grego seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

7. NEW BUSINESS

7A: Motion to approve the hire of one (1) full-time Police Officer with the South Strabane Township Police Department per the recommendation of the Township Manager and Police Chief.

Mr. Grego moved to approve the hire of one (1) full-time Police Officer with the South Strabane Township Police Department. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion.

Chair Weber asked for an explanation on the motion. Chief Hilk explained that one of the officers that was approved for hire at the December Board of Supervisors meeting declined the offer of employment and that the motion on the agenda this evening is a replacement for that officer and not in addition to the two that were approved last month.

The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Weber thanked everyone for their attendance.

Ms. Deeb asked why the meeting time was being changed from 7:00pm to 6:00pm for 2024. The Township Manager responded that by starting the meetings earlier we would be able to get everyone home earlier and particularly this time of year when it gets dark earlier, and the roads could be

bad. Changing the time by one hour earlier will also be a benefit to the staff that attend the meeting who have been working all day.

As no further business came before the Board, Mr. Murphy moved to adjourn. Mr. Grego seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey L. Ziegler
Township Manager