

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
MINUTES OF MONTHLY MEETING
AUGUST 27, 2019

The monthly meeting of the Longswamp Township Board of Supervisors was held at the Longswamp Township Municipal Building, 1112 State Street, Longswamp Township, Mertztown, Pennsylvania, 7:00 p.m., prevailing time as previously advertised and posted.

PLEDGE TO THE FLAG/ROLL CALL

Officials Present: Michael Sacks, Chairman; Joyce Marin, Supervisor; Jill Nagy, representing the Solicitor; Pete Eisenbrown and Bob Wuerth representing LTL Consultants were in attendance.

Vice Chairman, Randy Sicher; Steve Wyka, Operations Administrator; Jennifer Wassell-Bonser, Secretary/Administrator; David Fatzinger, Treasurer; and Jill Smith, representing the Engineer were absent from the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Mike Sacks called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and announced there is no Agenda since the meeting is to provide an update on the Act 537 Plan affecting property owners who received a notification that was previously mailed out. Chairman Sacks explained that DEP needs an improvement on the on-lot septic systems in the Township which meets DEP standards and the Township has approximately 3 ½ years to find a solution. Chairman Sacks stated that the plan as presented may not be the best plan at the moment and is subject to change but it is the best plan at this time to satisfy DEP. Joyce Marin also confirmed that if the Township does not meet DEP requirements within the set deadline, there will ultimately be a financial burden borne onto all of the Township taxpayers. Mike concluded by stating that the Board and representatives of LTL Consultants may not have all the answers at this time but will provide the best answers they can regarding any concerns and that DEP may over-look some issues unless it is a failing system or cesspool in order to minimize un-necessary hook-ups.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

None at this time.

APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT

None at this time.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None at this time.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None at this time.

ENGINEERING AND PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT

None at this time.

SEO REPORT

Pete Eisenbrown provided the audience with details of the history of the Act 537 Plan and outlined details of the current Plan, which is subject to change, as well as the guidelines of the Consent Order executed between the Township and DEP over the course of the past ten to fifteen years. Pete also reviewed the various solutions and plans that have been studied over that time. Pete explained details of most concern to DEP and the Township which have been designated as “High Needs Area”. Pete also reviewed the various types of on-lot systems and importance of ground water quality and the impact that sewage disposal has on the ground water. Pete reviewed details of the implementation phase of the Act 537 Plan and noted the five-year deadline is approaching in 2023 and the seriousness and significance of fines for failure to comply with the Agreement.

Pete explained details of the various areas in the Township including the High Needs Area (HNA), established by DEP, which are mainly smaller size lots. Pete reviewed the options available to the various lot sizes and the challenges for smaller size lots as well as cesspools. Pete explained that groundwater from cesspools is not treated and is a concern and not acceptable to DEP.

Pete reviewed details of the properties along Barclay, Locust, Hancock, and Mertztown area. Pete reviewed testing results taken from properties on Barclay which will be need to be connected to a Community On Lot Disposal System (COLDS) near Atlas and can accommodate 90 – 100 connections.

A member of the audience expressed his concerns regarding the extensiveness of the financial burden being placed onto the Township taxpayers, stating that it is his understanding that East Penn Manufacturing could have been a major contributor to help off-set costs if the opportunity for their previously-presented proposal would have been accepted by the Board of Supervisors. Chairman Sacks responded by stating that the East Penn Manufacturing proposal was hearsay and the Township had never received any documentation from Deka; however, Chairman Sacks went on to explain that Deka’s plans had several problems and they needed quick approval which wasn’t possible. Several members of the audience also presented questions to the Board of Supervisors and panel which included concerns regarding the timeline for finalizing the plan and the expense to the Township in addition to the possibility of hooking up to the Borough of Topton. Mike Sacks and Joyce Marin explained that the Borough of Topton does not have capacity to receive any sewage from the Township and that the Township would have to offset costs for any type of public sewer expansion. The Township Solicitor also stated that the Board may not have the ability to answer specific individual questions at this time due to potential changes to the plan in the future as deemed necessary by DEP but noted that anyone with a cesspool would not be acceptable to DEP.

The Township Solicitor reviewed various grant opportunities that are being pursued for each individual area, including USDA grants, CDBG grants. Jill Nagy reviewed the structure and process of USDA grants and urged property owners’ cooperation through the application process. Jill also stated that the Borough of Topton is in the process of finalizing upgrades to their sewer system which may be something the Township can approach later in the year.

ZONING AND CODES ENFORCEMENT

None at this time.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

None at this time.

RECREATION REPORT

None at this time.

ROADMASTER REPORT

None at this time.

OLD BUSINESS

None at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

None at this time.

APPROVAL OF BILLS

None at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

Joyce Marin made a **motion** to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:30 p.m.; Mike Sacks seconded the motion. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer A. Wassell-Bonser
Township Secretary