

**FORKS TOWNSHIP, NORTHAMPTON COUNTY**  
**Board of Supervisors**

**7-15-2021**

**Regular Meeting Minutes**

The regular meeting of the Forks Township Board of Supervisors was held on Thursday, July 15, 2021 at the Forks Township Municipal Building, Easton, PA, and was also held virtually through ZOOM. Chairman O'Neil opened the meeting at 7:06 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Board Members:**

John O'Neil, Chairman  
Dan Martyak, Vice Chairman  
Tim Hughes, Secretary/Treasurer  
Kelly Keegan, Member  
Ty Corallo, Absent

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Lisa Pereira, Twp. Solicitor  
Donna M. Asure, Township Manager  
Chief Greg Dorney - virtual  
Steve Kramer, Public Works Director – virtual  
Rachel Sulzbach, Parks & Recreation Director – virtual  
William Donovan, Finance Manager - virtual  
Dean Turner, Chairman, Planning Commission

**Supervisors Comments:**

Chairman O'Neil –

- J. O'Neil addressed the concern by a township resident on the Twin Tubing agreement with the county at the Frost Hollow County Park. Unfortunately, this is a county issue and the board asked that the township manager respond to the resident recommending contacting the county executive's office as well as the Conservation District and the PA. Fish and Boat commission.
- The concert in park held Wednesday, July 14<sup>th</sup> was a great success and J. O'Neil commended the recreation department for a job well done.

D. Martyak - none

T. Hughes – none

T. Corallo –

- T. Corallo spoke about the federal ARPA funds that will be available to the township. He stated that we must be diligent on how we spend these funds. He would like a punch list of items for the July 1<sup>st</sup> work session.

K. Keegan – none

**Announcements:** An executive session was held this evening prior to the board meeting, at 6PM to discuss personnel and possible litigation issues.

**Public Comment:** none

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**Hearings:**

SALDO Ordinance 374-

The hearing was opened at 7:10pm by Chairman O'Neil. L. Pereira stated that the ordinance is to amend several sections of the township's SALDO concerning plan submission time frames. Copies had been provided to both the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission as well as our township planning commission with favorable comments received by both. There was no public comment. Chairman O'Neil closed the hearing at 7:12pm.

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by K. Keegan to adopt Ordinance 374, an ordinance of the Township of Forks, Northampton County, Pennsylvania, amending Chapter 175, Subdivision and Land Development, of the Code of the Township of Forks, and repealing all ordinances inconsistent herewith. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, absent; D. Martyak, yes; J. O'Neil, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes. Motion carried.

Warehouse Ordinance – 375

The hearing was opened at 7:12 pm by Chairman O'Neil. L. Pereira stated that the ordinance is a zoning text amendment. It is governing additional regulations to warehouse uses. The planning commission recommended adoption. A letter was received from the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission commending Forks Township for taking the initiative to address a growing issue in our area. There was no public comment. Chairman O'Neil closed the hearing at 7:14pm.

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by K. Keegan to adopt Ordinance 375, an ordinance of the Township of Forks, Northampton County, Pennsylvania, amending Chapter 200, Zoning, Article V, Use regulations, 200-28, Additional regulations, of the Code of the Township of Forks, and repealing all ordinances inconsistent herewith. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, absent; D. Martyak, yes; J. O'Neil, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes. Motion carried.

**Presentations:**

SFM Consulting, LLC

SFM Consulting, represented by Shawn McGlynn spoke to the board concerning the services their company could provide for Forks Township in the area of Building Codes and zoning. He introduced his partner, Jennifer McGlynn and Richard Furs, a township resident who will be assigned to work in Forks Township if they are approved to move forward. They use their website, [sfmconsultingllc.org](http://sfmconsultingllc.org) as a clearing house for Forks Township information. Residents and developers will be able to apply on-line as well as schedule inspections and request information. Mr. McGlynn believes 10 – 12 hours per week to start would give them a good jumping off point to see what needs to be done within the department. SFM believes in empowering the current employees to do more and work as a team. D. Turner asked about attendance at the planning commission meetings. Mr. McGlynn stated that normally SFM would only attend if requested for a special circumstance. Prior to the meeting he would prepare memos and documentation as needed by the planning commission to enable them to conduct their meetings. The board asked about enforcement. Mr. McGlynn stated that everything must be interpreted consistently and fairly. Mr. McGlynn responded that he normally responds to complaint driven issues. T. Hughes asked how the due diligence would go to see what we need and do not need. D. Martyak stated that he is not sure that 10 – 12 hours per week will be enough to complete an assessment of the department. Mr. McGlynn stated that he will look at how many permits have been issued to access needs to adapt to what are the needs in the township, he believes that much of the work is best handled by those in the office and much of the day to day should be able to be handled with the office staff. The number of hours will be evaluated and will most probably evolve over time. He commented that the one tool we currently have, Permit Manager, he already has seen, is not being used to its fullest extent. The board asked that SFM conduct an assessment of the department and report back to the board in three months.

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K. Keegan made a motion, seconded by T. Hughes to approve the proposal of SFM Consulting, LLC to provide zoning and building code services to Forks Township at \$65.00 per hour and to appoint Shawn McGlynn as the Forks Township Building Codes Official and Zoning Officer. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, absent; D. Martyak, yes; J. O'Neil, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes. Motion carried.

Dietzler request for zoning text amendment -

Julie Wagner Burkhart, Esq presented the request to the board. Mr. Dietzler is asking that the property which was formerly the driving range and is zoned EC-1, would like the definition of residential housing for this zone be expanded. His sketch plan shows 20 twins, 23 apartment and 16 condos for a total of 59 units. Apartments are not permitted but would be permissible under a performance subdivision mix. J. O'Neil stated that we are going through the review and update of the comprehensive plan and perhaps it would not be a good idea to make changes during this planning process. T. Hughes stated that he agreed and believes we should look at everything as currently is before we grant any changes. D. Martyak stated that several years ago the township spent many, many months discussing where apartments should be located, and this was not one of the properties. If this text amendment were to be granted and the ordinance changed to allow this, then this would open the use up to all other properties in the EC-1 zone. Ms. Burkhart stated that yes it would but there is a limited number of properties that would meet the criteria. Perhaps there would be a total of nine properties that would fall under this with the two largest parcels consisting of 16.15 acres and the other 9.94 acres. D. Turner, Chairman of the planning commission stated that redevelopment of properties must also be considered. The supervisors asked that this be taken to the planning commission for their consideration and review. D. Turner stated that this could be placed on the August 12<sup>th</sup> planning commission agenda.

**Invited Guest Reports:**

Planning Commission – D. Turner, Chairman of the Planning Commission asked that the board being to think of topics for discussion at the upcoming joint meeting between the two boards on August 24th. He reported that the planning commission will be reviewing the report created after the visioning meeting in June as well as having Lafayette Hills appear again for continued discussion on their waiver request.

Recreation Board – R. Sulzbach stated the board has not met.

FBA –

T. Hughes reported there was no meeting this month.

**Treasurer's Report –**

Secretary/Treasurer T. Hughes reported that the township's outstanding debt is \$4,921,000.00

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by K. Keegan to approve vouchers payable received through July 14, 2021, in the amounts of General Fund \$ 229,097.58; Real Estate Fund - \$ 138,022.46; Utility Capital - \$ 80.00; Utility Fund - \$ 74,409.09; State Liquid Fuel Fund - \$2,942.48; Escrow Fund - \$ 13,105.79. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, absent; D. Martyak, yes; J. O'Neil, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes. Motion carried.

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by K. Kegan to ratify the gross payroll for pay period ending July 4, 2021, in the amount of \$ 161,302.13. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, absent; D. Martyak, yes; J. O'Neil, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes. Motion carried.

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**OLD BUSINESS**

Approval of Minutes

D. Martyak made a motion, seconded by K. Keegan to approve the minutes of the July 1, 2021, work session of the Board of Supervisors. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, absent; D. Martyak, yes; J. O'Neil, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes. Motion carried.

Draft Ordinances -

T. Hughes made a motion, seconded by K. Keegan to table discussion on the dangerous structure and nuisance junk vehicle ordinances until the next work session. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, absent; D. Martyak, yes; J. O'Neil, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes. Motion carried.

Detention Basins –

L. Pereira reported that we have been working to gather all the information necessary to determine ownership and maintenance on open space properties and retention basins in the township.

- Steeplechase. L. Pereira reviewed the land development files. The plan is silent on the retention basin but the minutes show action of approval for this to be turned over to the township. She will be working with the developer to transfer the property to the township through a deed and legal description for us to continue to maintain.

- J. O'Neil asked about the property next to the railroad tracks. L. Pereira reported that this basin is the Steeplechase basin. Minutes were found which reported that a fence should be kept as a barrier to the railroad. R. Sulzbach stated that the fence needs to be totally replaced. They will now continue to maintain, and she will start gathering quotes for different types of fencing, trees, bushes, etc. Mr. Gomez, resident who spoke at the last meeting, asked if the residents can have a vote on the type of fencing that is put in place. The residents will be informed as the process moves forward. Tara Armstrong, resident, thanked the board for revisiting this issue and she wanted the board to know that the residents prefer a fence over trees and bushes.

- Sullivan's March – L. Pereira reported that the information formerly provided to investigate this matter was incorrect. The information is not in the land development files. Research through Landex seem to indicate that we maintain but what the township is currently maintaining is not a basin at all. We will continue to research this issue and report back to the board.

**NEW BUSINESS -**

Quality of Life Ordinance -

The board discussed the ordinance being considered for adoption by South Whitehall Township. It allows for tickets to be issued before formal enforcement steps are taken. L. Pereira provided a definition of tickets, Notice of Violations and Non-Traffic Citations. The board discussed the benefits of adding an additional tool for compliance with our ordinances. This is not for repeat offenders. The tickets are like a warning of further action if compliance is not achieved. The board instructed L. Pereira and D. Asure to move forward with a draft ordinance for consideration. The ordinance requires an appeal board. After discussion, the supervisors stated the appeals board should be the entire board of supervisors.

ESRI Agreement -

S. Kramer explained that this is a mapping system we use for our sewer system, streetlights, stop signs, stormwater issues and other public works items.

D. Martyak made a motion, seconded by T. Hughes to approve the quote from ESRI to provide GIS information to the township in the amount of \$1368.00 per year for 2 licenses as requested by Steve Kramer, Director of Public Works. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, absent; D. Martyak, yes; J. O'Neil, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes. Motion carried.

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WeatherWorks Agreements –

S. Kramer informed the board that this agreement will replace our current weather tracking system used by the township. It was demo' d last winter and works very well.

D. Martyak made a motion, seconded by K. Keegan to a approve the quote from WeatherWorks for winter storm alert and weather forecast services in the amount of \$1650.00 per year as requested by Steve Kramer, Director of Public Works. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, absent; D. Martyak, yes; J. O'Neil, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes. Motion carried.

Resolution 2021-07-15

K. Keegan made a motion, seconded by T. Hughes to adopt Resolution 2021-07-15 a resolution a resolution to approve the destruction of certain township records. Roll Call Vote: T. Corallo, absent; D. Martyak, yes; J. O'Neil, yes; T. Hughes, yes; K. Keegan, yes. Motion carried

Sewer Authority Appointment –

D. Asure reported that this will have to be placed on a future agenda as we are waiting to hear back from the sewer authority on this issue.

J. O'Neil asked if any department head had something to bring to the attention of the board.

S. Kramer reported that the annual paving project of township roads will begin at the end of July or the beginning of August.

**Public Comment**- none

K. Keegan made a motion, seconded by T. Hughes to adjourn the meeting at 9:04 pm. Motion carried.