

**TOWNSHIP OF SALISBURY
LEHIGH COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
MINUTES FROM THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
April 11, 2024
REGULAR MEETING – 7:00 PM**

The Public Meeting of the Salisbury Township Board of Commissioners was held on the above date in the Township Municipal Building located at 2900 South Pike Avenue, Allentown, Lehigh County, Pennsylvania.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Brinton asked everyone to rise and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Brinton called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Commissioner Brinton turned the proceedings over to Mr. Nicolo, Assistant Township Manager.

ROLL CALL

Board Members Present:

Debra Brinton, President
Rodney Conn, Vice-President
Heather Lipkin, President Pro-Tempore
Alok Patnaik
Alex Karol – ARRIVED at 7:17 p.m.

Staff Present:

Cathy Bonaskiewich, Township Manager
Sandy Nicolo, Assistant Township Manager/Community Development Director/MS4 Coordinator
Paul Ziegenfus, Finance Director
James Levernier, Director of Public Works
Donald Sabo, Chief of Police
Jack Gross, Esquire, representative of Gross McGinley, LLP, Township Solicitor
Stan Wojciechowski, representative of Barry Isett & Associates, Township Engineer

NOTIFICATION

Ms. Bonaskiewich informed the attendees that all sessions of the Salisbury Township Board of Commissioners regular meetings are recorded electronically for the purpose of taking the Minutes. All public comments on agenda items will be taken prior to the vote. All public comment related to non-agenda items will be taken after the agenda has been satisfied. Ms. Bonaskiewich reminded everyone of the three-minute rule and asked that anyone who wishes to speak, come to the podium, announce oneself, and sign-in with name and address so as to assist Township administration with follow-ups.

Commissioner Brinton announced that an Executive Session will take place after the regular meeting to discuss a personnel matter.

APPROVAL OF THE FINANCIAL REPORT AND LIST OF BILLS PAYABLE

Commissioner Patnaik inquired about the deficit noted in the Financial Report. Mr. Ziegenfus stated that it was due to when the Township received and recorded the actual loan for the purchase of the McAuliffe property. He explained that the Township closed on the loan in December of 2022, but the settlement for the property was in 2023, so those transactions made it look like the Township had a large surplus in 2022 and large deficit in 2023; however, they actually just offset each other.

Commission Patnaik inquired if that impacted any of the Township’s budgeted items. Mr. Ziegenfus replied that it did not impact any budget items.

Motion by Commissioner Lipkin, seconded by Commissioner Patnaik, to approve the unaudited Financial Report for the period ending December 31, 2023 and the List of Bills Payable for the period 3/23/24-4/5/24, broken down as follows:

\$109,640.55 = GENERAL
\$1,987.16 = FIRE
\$0 = LIBRARY
\$4,977.00 = WATER
\$35,945.50 = SEWER
\$457.02 = REFUSE & RECYCLING
\$167.75 = HIGHWAY AID
\$95,175.55 = CAPITAL GENERAL
\$248,350.53 = GRAND TOTAL ALL FUNDS

The Board voted: 4 Ayes; 0 Nays.

MINUTES

March 28, 2024

Commissioner Brinton declared the Minutes from March 28, 2024 accepted as presented.

NEW BUSINESS

ORDINANCES

None.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution Authorizing Removal of the Act 319 Designation on Nippert Property Recently Donated to Township.

Ms. Bonaskiewich commented that this action is a formality as Act 319 is preferential assessment, which helps reduce property taxes for landowners, but the Township is tax exempt. She noted that

the Resolution will “clean-up” the records to make them consistent with all other parcels owned by the Township.

Motion by Commissioner Patnaik, seconded by Commissioner Conn, to adopt Resolution No. 04-2024-1816, authorizing the removal of the Act 319 Designation on the Nippert property that was recently donated to the Township.

The Board voted: 4 Ayes; 0 Nays

MOTIONS

Motion Authorizing Reactivation of Township K-9 Program with Two K-9 Officers/Handlers.

Chief Sabo stated that throughout the program, there has been one K-9 unit that works with one platoon. He explained that the Department has a K-9 account that is funded by donations, and in recent months, they received a donation for the purchase and training of a dog, all while already having funds in the account to purchase a dog and its training. Chief Sabo is therefore requesting to have a K-9 on each platoon.

Chief Sabo stated that the cost to the Township is minimal as businesses have offered to support the food and maintenance for the K-9s. He commented that the K-9 class only comes around every two years, and a class is coming up in June. Chief Sabo noted that the officers can pick the dogs in two weeks, and they will have the dogs with them until training starts in June. He stated that the training is an eight-week program that is nationally certified for the dog and the handler.

Motion by Commissioner Lipkin, seconded by Commissioner Conn, authorizing the reactivation of the Township’s K-9 Program with two K-9 Officers/Handlers.

The Board voted: 4 Ayes; 0 Nays

OTHER BUSINESS

Discussion with Fountain Hill Community Coalition Representative.

Mr. Michael Zovko of 507 Greene Court, Fountain Hill, was present to address the Board. He explained that the Fountain Hill Community Coalition is a non-profit group that was originally formed to help save the Fountain Hill pool. Mr. Zovko stated that their membership has grown and Salisbury residents might have an interest as well, especially in the First Ward. He commented that a local church may possibly be donating their building and property to them in hopes of forming a community center, so he looking to open up the lines of communication with the Township.

Commissioner Lipkin stated that she will follow-up with Mr. Zovko.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

Commissioner Patnaik provided an update to the Board regarding the inter-municipality MOU with the City of Allentown. He noted that Mayor Turk currently has a draft of the MOU and will share the final version as soon as it is ready.

Commissioner Patnaik thanked Ms. Bonaskiewich for sending out objection letters to the State Representatives and Senators regarding the PTSI Bill, which will have massive financial impacts on first-class townships if it is passed.

Commissioner Patnaik stated that Senator Miller is championing the community park program, which provides match grant funding to municipalities who have projects related to parks, and he has urged the Township to reach out to him for support. Commissioner Patnaik noted that this news comes at a perfect time as the Township is considering the Master Site Plan for Laubach Park.

Commissioner Patnaik stated that there has been a massive push for the Radar Bill. He noted that the key reason people are objecting to the bill is because in Pennsylvania, there is a max cap on how much motorists can be fined in local communities, and it is extremely low compared to the rate that the Township would pay to try the case in court if someone challenges it. Commissioner Patnaik explained that unless there is a Bill to increase that fined amount, there is no reason to pass the current Bill because of the anticipated cost to the Township to run the operation. He stated that the current Bill does not have any provision to increase the fines, which means it has to be a separate Bill; however, it appears no one is working on that, so it was made clear the Bill will not be passed this year.

Commissioner Conn inquired about who is doing the utility work on Wenner Street and Country Club Road. Mr. Levernier replied that he can find out, but it is most likely Verizon.

Commissioner Lipkin reminded the Board that the tree planting event in honor of Earth Day will occur on April 13th and 14th at Lindberg, Devonshire and Franko Parks.

Mr. Levernier noted that the work at the police training facility is progressing and they will be starting the berm work.

Mr. Levernier stated that adolescents from Lehigh County Juvenile Probation picked up trash at Walking Purchase Park on Monday, April 1st. He noted that they typically have youths available for this type of work, so the Township should keep in mind for future cleanup work.

Chief Sabo announced that the Police Department is now certified by the Bureau of Justice for the new body and car cameras and can submit for reimbursement from the small, rural tribal grant as well as the State-shared casino grant.

Chief Sabo noted that more grants are in the works, including one that almost fully funds the renovations of the Emergency Operations Center, which is in the space that previously housed the District Magistrate's office.

Commissioner Brinton thanked the staff for their efforts with obtaining grant funding for the various projects.

Commissioner Conn thanked Sergeant Casey for coordinating his ride along opportunity with officers next Wednesday.

Chief Sabo announced that interviews are currently taking place for entry-level police officers.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Patnaik made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Lipkin seconded the motion. The time was 7:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Bonaskiewich
Township Secretary

These constitute the official Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners held on April 11, 2024.

Approved and certified on this date:

Cathy Bonaskiewich

Date: _____

SEAL