

**TOWNSHIP OF SALISBURY  
LEHIGH COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA  
MINUTES FROM THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
December 12, 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 pm.

Commissioner Brinton turned the proceedings over to Ms. Bonaskiewich, Township Manager.

**ROLL CALL**

**Board Members Present:**

Debra Brinton, President  
Rodney Conn, Vice-President  
Heather Lipkin, President Pro-Tempore  
Alok Patnaik  
Alex Karol

**Staff Present:**

Cathy Bonaskiewich, Township Manager  
Sandy Nicolo, Assistant Twp Manager/Comm Devel Director/MS4 Coordinator  
Paul Ziegenfus, Finance Director  
James Levernier, Director of Public Works  
Donald Sabo, Chief of Police  
Jason Ulrich, Esquire, representative of Gross McGinley, LLP, Township Solicitor  
Charlie Myers, 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.

**APPROVAL OF THE FINANCIAL REPORT & LIST OF BILLS PAYABLE**

**Motion by Commissioner Lipkin, seconded by Commissioner Conn, to approve the unaudited Financial Report for the period ending October 31, 2024 and the List of Bills Payable for the period of 11/23/24-12/6/24, broken down as follows:**

\$98,048.81 = GENERAL  
\$5,933.31 = FIRE  
\$0 = LIBRARY  
\$489,285.54 = WATER  
\$211,929.12 = SEWER  
\$1,402.48 = REFUSE & RECYCLING  
\$217.17 = HIGHWAY AID  
\$332,468.05 = CAPITAL GENERAL  
\$0 = REFUSE & RECYCLING  
\$2,772.98 = PAYROLL  
\$11,170.80 = CASH ALLOCATIONS  
**\$1,153,228.26 = GRAND TOTAL ALL FUNDS**

**The Board voted:** 5 Ayes; 0 Nays.

**MINUTES**

**November 26, 2024**

Commissioner Brinton declared the Minutes from November 26, 2024 accepted as presented.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**A Public Hearing Regarding Vacation of Nottingham Road Between Yorkshire Road and the Cul-de-Sac.**

Commissioner Brinton turned over the proceedings to Attorney Ulrich.

Attorney Ulrich noted that Attorney Rich Somach and Joseph Rentko from Black Forest Engineering were present on behalf of the applicant, Mr. Robert Bennett.

Attorney Somach provided a brief background on the property. He noted that the applicant wishes to vacate the road and give it the official designation of a private road.

Attorney Ulrich noted that this was reviewed by both the Planning Commission and the Township Engineer, and they had no additional recommendations with respect to the vacation. He commented that the only outstanding issue is that the Bennett subdivision has been approved, but the plans have not yet been recorded. Attorney Ulrich further explained that, to his understanding, the applicant is proceeding with this matter due to the ill health of the owner of an adjacent property, Mr. Dodo. He noted that the Dodo's are willing to execute a quitclaim deed, which would establish a unity of title along the road for the Bennett parcel.

Mr. Rentko stated that he addressed comments from the Township Engineer, which included the notation of a blanket easement on the section of the road for two public utilities. He commented that the Township Engineer also wanted it recorded that the Dodo's would rescind their rights. Mr. Rentko noted that he received a letter from the Township Engineer that stated he had no objection to the vacation of this section of the street. He also stated that the Dodo's have no interest in the property.

Commissioner Brinton inquired if this vacation would impact any other entity. Mr. Rentko commented that the Township does not plow the road, the trash company does not use it, and the school buses do not utilize it. Attorney Somach stated that it is paved, but it looks like a driveway.

Commissioner Patnaik asked what would happen if Mr. Bennett decides to sell the property. Attorney Ulrich stated that the deed restriction would require the establishment of a permanent access easement to the parcel, which would remain attached to the land. This ensures that, regardless of who purchases the dominant parcel, the servient parcel will retain access to the driveway for use. Attorney Ulrich further noted that the parties are required to file a maintenance agreement between the two parcels, ensuring that the Township is not burdened and that any issues are resolved between the property owners.

After hearing no additional comments, Attorney Ulrich closed the hearing.

**Motion by Commissioner Brinton, seconded by Commissioner Patnaik, to approve the vacation of Nottingham Road between Yorkshire Road and the cul-de-sac.**

**The Board voted: 5 Ayes; 0 Nays.**

### **ORDINANCES**

#### **Public Comment regarding 2025 Budget Approval and Ordinance Setting/Reaffirming Tax Rates for Year 2025 and Approving 2025 Budget Appropriations.**

Mr. Ziegenfus stated the tax rate proposed for 2025 is 3.77 mils, which is an increase of .20 mils that shall be earmarked for General Fund Capital purposes.

Mr. Michael Adelizza of 1765 33rd Street SW alleged that Salisbury Township has the second-highest total millage rate in Lehigh County for 2024 when combining the rates for the School District, Township, and County. He noted that the Township typically raises taxes only once every

two years and expressed his expectation for no increase this year, as his taxes had already risen by 22% last year.

Commissioner Brinton gave a brief description of why the taxes must be raised and noted that it was the consensus of the Board to raise them gradually over time instead of one large increase every other year.

Mr. Ziegenfus stated that the surrounding municipalities in Lehigh County have industry and growth in their Townships, while Salisbury does not.

Commissioner Patnaik explained that only five Townships in Lehigh County are classified as First-Class Townships and noted that the state code for Second-Class Townships is significantly different, particularly in terms of taxation rates. He commented that among the First-Class Townships, three are experiencing the fastest growth in real estate within the entire county; however, Salisbury is among the slowest-growing in terms of real estate development. Commissioner Patnaik stated that being landlocked limits the Township's ability to expand, and no substantial developments have occurred in the past 11 years. As a result, the Township's primary revenue source remains the per capita tax.

**Motion by Commissioner Lipkin, seconded by Commissioner Conn, to adopt Ordinance No. 12-2024-670, setting/reaffirming tax rates for Year 2025 and approving 2025 Budget Appropriations.**

The Board voted: 5 Ayes; 0 Nays.

**Ordinance Amending Non-Uniformed Defined Benefit (PMRS) Pension Plan to Set Employee Contribution Rate for Year 2025.**

Mr. Ziegenfus noted that this is the rate the employees who are in the defined pension plan have to contribute to their pension plan. This year is 3%, next year is 3.5% and was built in to the CBA.

**Motion by Commissioner Karol, seconded by Commissioner Patnaik, to adopt Ordinance No. 12-2024-671, amending the Non-Uniformed Defined Benefit (PMRS) Pension Plan to set the employee contribution rate for year 2025.**

The Board voted: 5 Ayes; 0 Nays.

**RESOLUTIONS**

**Resolution Increasing Water and Sewer Rates effective 01/01/2025.**

Commissioner Brinton commented that the rates are imposed on the Township from Lehigh County Authority.

**Motion by Commissioner Patnaik, seconded by Commissioner Karol, to adopt Resolution No. 12-2024-1838, increasing water and sewer rates effective 01/01/2025.**

**The Board voted: 5 Ayes; 0 Nays.**

**Resolution Setting the Police Pension Plan Employee Contribution Rate for Year 2025.**

Mr. Ziegenfus stated that the rate is per the police contract, and the amount withheld is now 3.25%.

**Motion by Commissioner Patnaik, seconded by Commissioner Conn, to adopt Resolution No. 12-2024-1839, setting the Police Pension Plan Employee Contribution Rate for Year 2025.**

**The Board voted: 5 Ayes; 0 Nays.**

**MOTIONS**

**Motion Approving Non-Uniformed Defined Contribution (DC) Pension Plan Funding for Year 2024.**

Mr. Ziegenfus commented that the final amount will be available after the last payroll of the year. He explained that the Township must credit plan members' accounts with an amount equal to eight percent of their annual W-2 compensation by December 31<sup>st</sup> of the current plan year. Mr. Ziegenfus stated that the Board must authorize the payment into the DC Plan by the year-end deadline. The Board will then need to ratify the account amount credited at the meeting on January 9. He noted that the amount is estimated at \$102,920.

**Motion by Commissioner Conn, seconded by Commissioner Karol, approving Non-Uniformed Defined Contribution (DC) Pension Plan Funding for Year 2024.**

**The Board voted: 5 Ayes; 0 Nays.**

**Motion Approving Payment #1 to Wexcon, Inc. for the 2024 Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation Project in the Amount of \$66,870.**

Mr. Myers commented that this payment represents about 15% of the project.

**Motion by Commissioner Lipkin, seconded by Commissioner Conn, to approve Payment #1 to Wexcon, Inc. for the 2024 Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation Project in the amount of \$66,870.**

**The Board voted: 5 Ayes; 0 Nays.**

**Motion Approving Payment #2 in the amount of \$205,080.84 and Change Order #1 for \$53,019.30 Increase for Wexcon, Inc. for the Louise Lane Waterline Project.**

Mr. Myers stated that the change order was needed to address inconsistencies found in the pavement when they did the resurfacing work. He noted that the change order represents a significant amount of more work needed in order to rebuild the top of the road.

**Motion by Commissioner Karol, seconded by Commissioner Lipkin, to approve Payment #2 in the amount of \$205,080.84 and change order #1 for a \$53,019.30 increase for Wexcon, Inc. for the Louise Lane Waterline Project.**

**The Board voted: 5 Ayes; 0 Nays.**

**Motion Approving Payment from Fire Fund Capital Reserves for Repair of WSFD Apparatus in the amount of \$15,044.19.**

Mr. Ziegenfus explained that while the Township provides the Fire Departments with a stipend, if an extraordinary repair is needed, it comes out of the Fire Capital Fund.

Commissioner Patnaik suggested the use of a water softener on the trucks in order to prevent the hard water damage that keeps occurring and therefore offset the cost of repairs.

**Motion by Commissioner Patnaik, seconded by Commissioner Lipkin, to approve payment from the Fire Fund Capital Reserves for the Repair of WSFD Apparatus in the amount of \$15,044.19.**

**The Board voted: 5 Ayes; 0 Nays.**

**Motion Appointing 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward Representative to Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC).**

**Motion by Commissioner Lipkin, seconded by Commissioner Patnaik, to appoint Mr. Joseph El Chaar to the Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) as the Third Ward representative.**

**The Board voted: 5 Ayes; 0 Nays. Assistance**

**Motion Appointing Civil Service Commission (CSC) Alternate.**

**Motion by Commissioner Conn, seconded by Commissioner Karol, to appoint Mr. Gabriel Candia to the Civil Service Commission (CSC) as an alternate member.**

**The Board voted: 5 Ayes; 0 Nays.**

### **COURTESY OF THE FLOOR**

Commissioner Conn announced that he will not run for an additional term as the Fourth Ward Commissioner.

Chief Sabo noted that the two recruits in the academy will graduate on December 13, 2024. They will start with the Field Training Program after the New Year with the hope of being out on their own by May 2025.

Chief Sabo announced that the Township has received a \$14,000 grant to reimburse the cost of the cadets' academy training and uniforms. He also commented that the Township has been notified it will be reimbursed \$17,000, covering approximately 45% of the cadets' salaries during their time in the academy.

Chief Sabo reported that renovations in the former Magistrate's area are nearly complete. He invited the Board to visit the new Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and the expanded Police Department. He expressed gratitude to Mr. Paul Bringenberg, the Township's Building Maintenance Mechanic, for completing the renovations in-house, which helped save the Township money.

Mr. Joseph El Chaar of 450 Mountain Park Road expressed concerns about the water run-off on Mountain Park Road in the area of utility lines at the end of mountain. Mr. Levernier stated that he will look into the issue.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Lipkin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Patnaik seconded the motion. The time was 8:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Bonaskiewich  
Township Secretary

These constitute the official Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners held on December 12, 2024.

Approved and certified on this date:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cathy Bonaskiewich

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

SEAL