

**TOWNSHIP OF SALISBURY
LEHIGH COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
MINUTES FROM THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
February 27, 2025
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 announced that an Executive Session will take place after the Workshop to a personnel matter.

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 Dev Director/MS4 Coordinator
Paul Ziegenfus, Finance Director
James Levernier, Director of Public Works
Donald Sabo, Chief of Police
Genny Baillie, Recreation Director
Jason Ulrich, 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.

APPROVAL OF THE FINANCIAL REPORT AND LIST OF BILLS PAYABLE

Motion by Commissioner Patnaik, seconded by Commissioner Conn, to approve the unaudited Financial Report for the period ending December 31, 2024 and the list of Bills Payable for the period 2/8/25-2/21/25, broken down as follows:

\$210,088.58 = GENERAL
\$4,232.65 = FIRE
\$0 = LIBRARY
\$120,178.73 = WATER
\$237,467.60 = SEWER
\$1,749.83 = REFUSE & RECYCLING
\$14,669.25 = HIGHWAY AID
\$14,509.15 = CAPITAL GENERAL
\$3,820.96 = PAYROLL
\$3,226.98 = SUBDIVISION & ESCROW
\$2,295.00 = CASH ALLOCATIONS
\$612,238.73 = GRAND TOTAL ALL FUNDS

The Board voted: 5 Ayes; 0 Nays.

MINUTES

February 13, 2025

Commissioner Brinton declared the Minutes from February 13, 2025 accepted as presented.

NEW BUSINESS

ORDINANCES

Ordinance Amending the Police Pension Plan to Include Act 49 Provision.

Chief Sabo commented that he believes this initiative will help the Police Department attract officers who are not vested in other departments, are dissatisfied, and are looking to join Salisbury.

Motion by Commissioner Karol, seconded by Commissioner Conn, to adopt Ordinance No. 02-2025-672, amending the Police Pension Plan to include the Act 49 provision.

The Board voted: 5 Ayes; 0 Nays.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution Appointing a Conflict Solicitor for Salisbury Township.

Commissioner Brinton commented that this Resolution appoints Attorney Christopher Muvdi as the Township's Conflict Solicitor. She explained that the need for a conflict solicitor would arise if there was a conflict of interest with Gross McGinley personnel.

Motion by Commissioner Lipkin, seconded by Commissioner Patnaik, to adopt Resolution No. 02-2025-1848, appointing a Conflict Solicitor for Salisbury Township.

The Board voted: 5 Ayes; 0 Nays.

MOTIONS

Discussion Regarding Procedural Notification for Planning Commissioner Matters.

Attorney Ulrich stated that a recommendation was made by the Planning Commission to discontinue the practice of sending individual advertisements and letters for each meeting. He noted that agendas are available online and that while Zoning Hearing Board items must still be advertised, the Planning Commission proposed this change to save time and money. Neither the SALDO nor the Municipal Planning Code requires such notifications.

Attorney Ulrich stated that as a solicitor, he would not recommend this because no other municipality does this. Attorney Ulrich further explained that eliminating mailed notices reduces potential liability for the Township, as it avoids creating the appearance of legal standing for individuals who may not have the right to challenge decisions.

Attorney Ulrich also noted that there is a cost associated with the printing, mailing and advertising of such notices. Mr. Nicolo stated that depending on how many properties are within the 300-foot distance of the site, it could be up to \$400-\$500, plus advertising costs.

Commissioner Karol asked whether letters had ever been sent to the entire Township for a project. Attorney Ulrich responded that they had not.

Commissioner Karol also stated that the Planning Commission letters for the project on E Emmaus Avenue have already gone out, so those letters are not being withheld.

Attorney Ulrich noted that this procedural change only impacts Planning, not Zoning. He reminded the Board that the Planning Commission does not ultimately make decisions.

Ms. Bonaskiewich clarified that all Township meetings are advertised at the beginning of each year. She explained that the Planning Commission also advertises their monthly agenda, something the Board of Commissioners does not do. She added that residents can also access the agendas on the Township website.

Ms. Jackie Straley of 3110 Dogwood Lane stated that she would like to know if something was going to impact her property. A discussion ensued regarding the difference between planning and zoning projects.

Mr. Arnaldo Bertola of 3145 Lehigh Parkway N requested clarification on the difference between zoning notifications versus planning notifications.

Ms. Patricia Yemm of 1502 E Emmaus Avenue noted that she finds it helpful seeing the advertisement in the Salisbury Press. Mr. Ziegenfus commented that it is around \$400-\$500 to advertise the meeting agenda.

Ms. Norma Cusick of 535 E Emmaus Avenue stated that she would like to be notified by mail of upcoming projects. A discussion ensued about future communication in reference to the proposed project on E Emmaus Avenue. Ms. Cusick suggested the Township do an email blast to residents about upcoming meetings with a link to the agendas.

It was the consensus of the Board to discuss notifications procedures in a future workshop.

Ms. Jamie Collins of 2665 W Rock Road commented that because the Township has been sending letters for planning items for so long, she believes it sets a precedence for the Township to continue to do so. She asked that there be a compromise by sending an email.

Ms. Straley inquired if the Township performs cost analyses with surrounding municipalities. Ms. Bonaskiewich stated that the Township is always looking at cost comparisons with other municipalities.

Ms. Straley suggested that the next Township Manager have extensive environmental experience.

Mr. Paul Willistein from the Salisbury Press stated that he could work with Township officials to write more advanced articles about upcoming projects. Attorney Ulrich noted that the agendas might not be completed that far in advance.

Motion by Commissioner Karol, seconded by Commissioner Patnaik, to table the procedural notifications of the Planning Commission matters until after a Workshop discussion.

The Board voted: 5 Ayes; 0 Nays.

Discussion Regarding Borough of Emmaus Proposed SALDO and Zoning Ordinance Updates.

Mr. Wojciechowski stated that the zoning usage for all of the areas that currently border Salisbury will remain the same. He commented that the SALDO is just procedures for how they do their Planning Commission.

Attorney Ulrich noted that the changes are strictly internal to Emmaus, involving zoning adjustments and updates to SALDO procedures.

Mr. Wojciechowski commented that the Planning Commission reviewed the updates at their meeting on February 26th and had no comment.

Attorney Ulrich noted that the Board only needs to take action on this matter if they object to it.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

Commissioner Patnaik brought forth a concern from resident about a deteriorating section of E Rock Road and asked the repair would be under warranty since it was recently paved. Mr. Levernier explained that there is no warranty since the road was scratched by the Department of Public Works. He clarified that the road was tarred and chipped as a maintenance procedure, not a part of a paving or reconstruction project. He added that he will inspect the location.

Mr. Levernier stated that he purchased 120 tons of salt last week from the PA Turnpike. He added that 120 tons were delivered today from the regular supplier, with another 120 tons scheduled for delivery tomorrow.

Commissioner Karol clarified that there was a nation-wide shortage of salt, which is why the Township had to briefly alter their salting operations.

Chief Sabo stated that the Police Department will be conducting aggressive driving enforcements this Spring using grant funds.

An audience member asked how many bus infractions the police have prosecuted this year. Chief Sabo responded that they have cited 200 drivers this school year. He commented that while the program is effective and includes a fine, it is not as severe as when an officer personally witnesses a violation. He explained that in such cases, the penalties include an automatic license suspension, a tripled fine, and four points on the driver's license.

Ms. Straley inquired about the possibility of a traffic light at E Emmaus Avenue and Gaskill Street. Chief Sabo responded that a study is being conducted with PennDOT to determine whether the intersection meets the criteria for a traffic light. He noted that he is working with the Township Engineer and recommends installing a light, but PennDOT bases its decision solely on specific crash data. Commissioner Karol added that the final decision is not up to the Township.

Ms. Baillie announced that the Recreation Advisory Committee will be holding an Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 5th at Franko Park with a rain date of April 12th. She also noted that they are currently working on a date for Salisbury Night at the Iron Pigs.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Karol made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Lipkin seconded the motion. The time was 8:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Bonaskiewich
Township Secretary

These constitute the official Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners held on February 27, 2025

Approved and certified on this date:

Cathy Bonaskiewich

Date: _____

SEAL