

ROSS TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS MEETING

November 4, 2024

The Ross Township Supervisors Meeting was called to order on November 4, 2024 at 6:00pm. The meeting was held at the Township Municipal Building.

In attendance were Chairman James Zahoroiko and Vice Chairman David Shay and Supervisor Randy Detrick. Solicitor Rich Campbell was also in attendance.

OPEN TO PUBLIC:

Martha from The Ross Township Historical Society let it be known that the Museum will be open Saturday 11/9 from 10:00am-3:00pm and all are welcome to come out.

Judge of the Elections gave reminder that November 5th will be the next General Election with voting opening at 7:00am and closing at 8:00pm. Any residents who are in line at 8:00pm will not be turned away and allowed to vote.

MINUTES REVIEW:

A motion to approve the minutes of the October 7, 2024 meeting as written was by Supervisor Randy Detrick, seconded by Vice Chairman David Shay. The motion carried 3-0.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Vice Chairman David Shay made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Randy Detrick and carried 3-0.

PLANS:

Catherine Andrews/Dan Saunders Land Development Request for Modification

Attorney Joe Wiesmeth and Daniel Saunders were present to discuss with the Board of Supervisors their request for modification. Attorney Wiesmeth explained they have been working within the SALDO, but are at a differing of opinion between them and the Township's Planning Commission and Solicitor Attorney Gaul over the whether their plan would be considered adding an additional principal use under section 1004.A.3 of the SALDO. Attorney Wiesmeth states that there is no additional use being added as the current, and future uses, would be "residential" where the Planning Commission is stating the addition of another home would be adding another principal use to the road.

Attorney Wiesmeth continued stating that by allowing the plan to move forward, this would allow for some improvements to be made to the road with Mr. Saunders agreeing to maintain the section of road they are allowed to work within. The property currently only is granted 20ft of the right of way where the SALDO now requires 50ft. They have stated that others that live off of the road have approved of Mr. Saunder's use of the road and have agreed that there is personal responsibility in terms of the road's maintenance.

Supervisor Randy Detrick asked to confirm if the only current issue keeping the plan from moving forward was in regards to the road and then asked if it would be possible to instead add a second driveway. It was explained that they had previously submitted a plan that did show the use of a new alternative driveway.

Supervisor Randy Detrick then called upon Planning Commission Chairman Roger Christman, who was in attendance, to confirm the Planning Commission's view. PC Chairman Roger Christman stated that their view was not that there was multiple principal uses in the ways of "residential" versus "commercial", but in that there would be multiple single family dwellings accessing the same roadway which led to their motion to not recommend approval of the modification under the SALDO to the Board of Supervisors.

Attorney Campbell stated that he had reviewed the plans on his own and came to the same conclusion as Attorney Gaul and the Planning Commission that an additional principal use would be being added. Vice Chairman David Shay then brought up that there is concern for the future that others in a similar situation may look to use this case as an argument point in the future against sections of the SALDO.

Attorney Wiesmeth stated that the Board of Supervisors are not bound by prior decisions with regard to zoning applications as there are differences within each case. He then brought up his opinion that, under the zoning ordinance, Ms. Andrews could farm the majority of her land with an accessory use and add in a farmstand for sales without any further land development approvals under the SALDO which would further increase traffic along the road.

Vice Chairman David Shay stated that his stance was that past wrongs in regards to the land do not lead to them being corrected by decisions made today and that, with the SALDO in place, the Planning Commission had not recommended approval from the Board of Supervisors under the current scenario.

At 6:17pm, Chairman James Zahoroiko called for an Executive Session to discuss potential litigation and to review legal issues with the Solicitor and returned at 6:24pm.

Supervisor Randy Detrick asked if it would be possible for them to instead add a driveway from Ross Road and reviewed possible locations on the property map with Attorney Wiesmeth. PC Chairman Roger Christman stated that there is another property plan in progress that has access from Ross Road. Mr. Saunders said that the property has access to Ross Road, where Ms. Andrews' does not.

After further discussion about what could or could not be done under the SALDO, it was reiterated that items are in place to allow for safe access of emergency vehicles should a need arise and that approval of the current modification request may only lead to issues in the future from other properties in a similar situation.

Supervisor Randy Detrick asked what conditions could be set that would allow for approval of the plan to move forward from PC Chairman Roger Christman who stated that conditions include obtaining the 50ft right of way access, a maintenance agreement for the road and if a Highway Occupancy Permit would be required from PennDOT.

Attorney Wiesmeth asked if instead of a decision to approve or deny be made that evening to instead table the discussion to allow time for him and his client to explore alternative options before returning to the Planning Commission.

Supervisor Randy Detrick made a motion to table the discussion of the Land Development Modification. The motion was seconded by Chairman James Zahoroiko and carried 2-1.

OLD BUSINESS:

Outsourcing Some Accounting Work – Payroll Outsource

Supervisor Randy Detrick stated they have been looking into outsourcing payroll responsibilities so that they are no longer dependent on anyone at the Township. This would allow Melissa more time and offer peace of mind for the Township that all taxes and reporting were being handled in a timely manner.

Supervisor Randy Detrick shared there had been an issue with a recent update to the Quickbooks system that they were having to work back through and having the outside company, Gusto, would help in passing reporting liability and responsibility to the company instead.

A motion was made by Supervisor Randy Detrick to hire Gusto to handle Township payroll at a cost of less than \$100 a month. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman David Shay and carried 3-0.

Melissa will reach out to start the process as certain items, including W-2s and W-9s, will need to be transferred to start in 2024 being that payroll had already been run for the year.

NEW BUSINESS:

2025 Budget

Vice Chairman David Shay reported that they have put together a 2025 Budget for a total of \$907,446.16 that will be advertised for the December Meeting. This does not include any Real Estate Tax to residents and the Township will also be looking to purchase an additional truck.

Vice Chairman David Shay made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Randy Detrick, to advertise for adoption of the new budget. The motion carried 3-0.

EVENTS:

Election Day – Tuesday, November 5 – Township Office will be closed for Township business, open for voting 7:00am-8:00pm.

Veteran’s Day – Monday, November 11 – Township Office will be closed

Thanksgiving Day – Thursday, November 28 & Friday, November 29 – Township Office will be closed.

ROAD FOREMAN REPORT:

Sale of Tractor – No Bids

Road Foreman Ethan Brewer reported there were no new bids for the sale of the tractor. Vice Chairman David Shay stated they will now hold over until Spring.

Snowplow CDL Drivers

Road Foreman Ethan Brewer would like to hire two more snowplow drivers as one previous driver had passed recently and another’s schedule no longer lined up. He has spoken with two individuals already.

Chairman Jim Zahoroiko made a motion to give Road Foreman Ethan Brewer the authority to hire two new drivers at the current rate. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Randy Detrick and passed 3-0.

CORRESPONDENCE:

The Board of Supervisors had reviewed the list of Correspondence items and there were no further questions.

RECEIPTS & EXPENDITURES:

After a review of the bills to be paid, a motion to approve the processing and payment of all current bills was made by Vice Chairman David Shay and seconded by Supervisor Randy Detrick. The motion carried 3-0.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:48pm. The motion to adjourn was made by Supervisor Randy Detrick, seconded by Vice Chairman David Shay and carried 3-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lizzy Stortz
Temporary Recording Secretary