

ROSS TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS MEETING

December 2, 2024

The Ross Township Supervisors Meeting was called to order on December 2, 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 Attorney 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 12/14 from 11:00am-3:00pm and all are welcome to come out for light refreshments while they are decorating with donated items. She also stated that they are looking to do a reenactment in the park in 2025 with the reenactment regiment setting up a camp at the park to answer any questions. They are planning for a Saturday in late September from 10:00am-4:00pm. If this goes well, they can look into a full reenactment.

Representative from the Pohopoco Watershed presented the educational Watershed map to be displayed at the Township meeting. The map came in under the initial cost amount quoted at \$50. He also stated that there is information posted about an upcoming Watershed Steward Class that will be training again in the Spring. There is an informational Zoom meeting taking place on 12/19 any interested are able to sign up for.

**MINUTES REVIEW:**

A motion to approve the minutes of the November 4, 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:**

Robert E Andrew Estate

Allison Rode was present for the meeting. Ms. Rode stated that she had the signed Plan and copies were presented the Board of Supervisors. She was still waiting on a response from DEP on the Planning Module which was the only other outstanding item from the Planning Commission. Attorney Campbell recommended the addition of having compliance with the comments listed in the Township Engineer Review dated November 15, 2024, including the DEP approval of the Sewage Planning Module and payment of any applicable fees under the SALDO Section 1007, as determined by the Township Solicitor, and fees detailed under Section 108 for any invoice issued by the Township prior to making a motion.

Vice Chairman David Shay made the motion to approve the Plan based on the acceptance of the required conditions that had been previously stated. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Randy Detrick and carried 3-0.

Catherine Andrews/Dan Saunders Land Development Request for Modification

Representatives Chris McDermott and Daniel Saunders were present for the meeting. Mr. McDermott apologized for missing the last meeting as believed it to be at a later time. He then stated they were there on the Modification Request to permit a secondary principal use of the current driveway access and the differing of how the principal use was defined between the applicants and the Township with the issue being the shared access within other plans. Mr. McDermott shared that access to the current Andrew's Property was established in 1950 allowing for a 20-foot access easement and driveway allowing for the drive to be well established. Other properties that were further subdivided in 1978 have utilized the same road, but were mapped with a 50-foot right of way. The subsequent deeds documented the 50-foot easement for the benefit of the later properties. Catherine Andrew only has right to the 20-foot easement and the desire is to build an additional residential house on the 21-acre property that is not highly developed outside of a paved driveway to the existing home.

Previous discussions with the Planning Commission have centered around if there could be a secondary principal use and how the principal use was defined. Instead of creating a second drive, the applicants are asking for use of the existing drive without intense increase of the road along with minor maintenance of the road.

Supervisor Detrick presented a list of proposed conditions that he prepared with the intent of discussing the conditions with Applicant. Mr. Saunders stated that counsel could not be present for the meeting and that it was the first they were seeing the conditions.

The third condition was discussed as coming from the perceived recommendation of the Planning Commission to create a second driveway, instead of a shared driveway, to limit future issues if the homes on the property were owned by separate families over use and maintenance. Mr. McDermott questioned the purpose of creating a secondary drive from the environmental disturbance aspect with creating additional impervious surfaces when use of the current drive could suffice.

Planning Commission Board Member Lauri Lapping was in attendance and was called upon by Supervisor Randy Detrick to discuss the Planning Commission's views of the driveway. Ms. Lapping stated that it was not the second driveway, but that there were already too many homes that accessed the current drive. The Planning Commission had given no recommendation on the creation of the second driveway. Supervisor Randy Detrick stated he had spoken with Nate from the Monroe County Planning Commission who had stated approval of a second driveway could be given. The main goal of the Township is to avoid the future issues the shared use could cause.

Mr. McDermott continued through the conditions including adding tar and chip to a portion of the road to Kunkletown Road which they could look the cost and getting a bond for as would be beneficial to all. Next, was the restrictive covenant to restrict further subdivision of the property. He questioned, if the property was restricted to only one owner, what the need for the creation of the second driveway would be. Further items were stated would be passed along for lawyer review. Mr. McDermott again asked for consideration of shared use of the current paved road under one property owner. Mr. Saunders stated he would like to take back for his council to review and discuss.

Supervisor Randy Detrick made a motion to table further discussion until next month. The motion was seconded by Chairman James Zahoroiko and carried 2-1.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

2025 Budget

Vice Chairman stated that it has been advertised and there is no further action currently until adopted.

### 1123 Pine Cone Court Property Public Hearing – Dangerous Structure

Before beginning, Supervisor Randy Detrick was informed that others watching were unable to hear well and swapped out microphones for better sound quality.

Attorney Rich Campbell called to convene a Public Hearing under the Township Danger Structures Ordinance for property located at 1123 Pine Cone Court with Parcel ID 15.3C.1.16. A record of the Hearing would be created to include exhibits introduced along with reflection in the Meeting Minutes. Attorney Campbell then swore in those intending to give testimony including the Board of Supervisors and Zoning Officer Jeff Snyder.

Attorney Campbell stated that he had compiled exhibits related to the Hearing including the Public Notice, proof of publication, notices sent to interested parties including the mortgage companies, Title Search, Zoning Officers Report with photos of the property. A diligent search was made to affect service on the property owner via Certified Mail and no response was received. A Skip Trace and Lexis Trace were completed for the individual along with a USPS Litigation Search, internet search, and PA Inmate and Parolee search which only returned the Pine Cone Court address.

The Hearing was advertised in the Times News on November 8, 2024 and notices were sent. Certified Mail notices sent to the mortgage companies, Capital One and E-Loan, were received, but did not return any response.

Zoning Officer Jeff Snyder was called upon to answer questions from Attorney Campbell in regards to the property. When asked if the property was reported to him if the structure located at 1123 Pine Cone Court was in a dangerous condition as defined by the Ordinance, he answered yes. When asked if the Board requested him to investigate the condition, he answered yes. When asked if he produced and submitted a report to the Board, he answered yes. Attorney Campbell then asked Mr. Snyder to review his findings of the property and the conclusion of his report.

Mr. Snyder stated that he had been to the property several times over the last few years in which time no changes had been made and the building continued to deteriorate. With submitted up to date photos, he stated that the residence is unsafe to enter and will most likely fall in. The property has many junk vehicles around and it is his recommendation to the Board is for the property to be condemned and removed. Attorney Campbell asked for the cause of damage to the property which Mr. Snyder stated was from a fire five or six years ago.

When Attorney Campbell asked if it was Mr. Snyder's opinion that the structure meets the definition of a dangerous structure under the Ordinance and should be demolished, he answered yes for the safety and integrity of the surrounding community as the structure is beyond repair and affecting the value of surrounding properties. Attorney Campbell asked that after the Hearing was announced that the property and Municipal Building had been posted with notice to which Mr. Snyder confirmed.

Attorney Campbell stated under the ordinance two Supervisors are required to view and assess the structure. He then asked for impressions and testimony from the Supervisors. Supervisor Randy Detrick stated he and Chairman James Zahoroiko went to the property together and that the structure is unsavable. Chairman James Zahoroiko agreed stating that it is beyond repair and, being that the owners are unable to be reached, it is up to the Township to make a decision to resolve the situation. Vice Chairman David Shay shared his impression of visiting the property to be an unsafe structure that is not repairable.

Attorney Campbell stated the floor at this time would be opened to the property owner or anyone with direct interest to the property to which no one presented. The floor was then opened to members of

the public wishing to offer comment. Kevin Overfield, neighbor to the property at 1115 Pine Cone Court, stated the house has been there about seven years burned down with no activity at the property in at least a year or more and that they see the house deteriorating more and more with the fear that someone will eventually get hurt at the property and the Township will be liable. When asked the last time anyone was seen at the property, Mr. Overfield stated it had been at least ten months to a year when Diane Strohl's brother had come to remove items from the shed on the property.

At this time, Attorney Campbell closed the floor to the public comment and stated that with the Hearing being duly convened by Public Notice was now closed. The Board would timely issue its findings under the Ordinance and issue any required any orders under the Ordinance.

#### Letter from Blue Ridge Fire about Arsha Vidya

Vice Chairman David Shay stated the letter received was in regards to the Arsha Vidya addition being built and that the Fire Department would have no issue. He also stated he had sent an email to the Blue Ridge Fire Department about setting a time to meet and they had not heard back yet.

#### LVEMS – Designate Ambulance Service

Vice Chairman David Shay stated they should maintain how the designation is set up for the lower end of the Township who are members of the Suburban Department being that they are paid members of one and may possibly be dispatched from another location that they may receive a bill from. There was no further action to be taken at this meeting. Attorney Campbell stated he would review any other correspondence that may come in.

#### Approve Part-Time Secretary Hire – Carolyn Hoos

Carolyn Hoos had been approved through the interview process for the hire of a Part-Time Secretary for the Township.

Vice Chairman David Shay made a motion to hire Carolyn Hoos as a Part-Time Secretary at a starting rate of \$16/hr followed by an increase to \$18/hr after 90 days up to 20 hours a week.

When asked for a second, Supervisor Randy Detrick voiced that he wanted to keep things as they currently are without bringing in another employee. Vice Chairman David Shay and Chairman James Zahoroiko stated their concerns of having office coverage in the case of vacation or sickness without having to close the Township Office to the public for an extended time.

Chairman James Zahoroiko seconded Vice Chairman David Shay's motion to hire Carolyn Hoos as the Part-Time Secretary with the rates set forth. The motion carried 2-1.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

##### Reorganizational Meeting and Supervisors Meeting – Monday, January 6, 2025 at 6:00pm

The Reorganizational Meeting for the Township will be held on Monday, January 6, 2025 at 6:00pm and will be immediately followed by the Board of Supervisors Meeting. It was confirmed with PSATS that the timing of the Reorganizational Meeting was acceptable.

#### **EVENTS:**

Christmas Day – Wednesday, December 25, 2024 – Township Office will be closed

New Years Day – Wednesday, January 1, 2025 – Township Office will be closed

#### **ROAD FOREMAN REPORT:**

### Snowplow CDL Drivers – 2 New Hires

Two new drivers have been hired to help with plowing for the Township.

### Purchase of New Plow Truck

Road Foreman Ethan Brewer stated that, as previously discussed with the Board of Supervisors, that he had two quotes for International trucks that were with \$500 of each other from two dealerships He also had quotes for the body of the truck, but is waiting for the other quote to come back that he was asked to get for next meeting. Both trucks are around \$111,000 and are comparable trucks and is almost identical to the last truck that was purchased. With being comparable in price at both dealerships, the preference was made to purchase from a more local dealer.

Vice Chairman David Shay made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Randy Detrick, to purchase the 2026 International chassis for \$111,208. The motion carried 3-0.

### Purchase of Used Plow Truck

Road Foreman Ethan Brewer had met to look over the used truck that is currently up for auction from Plainfield Township. He was unable to drive the truck, but was not aware of any major issues and recommended that the high end of the purchase price should be within the \$5,000 - \$6,000 range. Vice Chairman David Shay stated that he had also spoken with them and would report back tomorrow following the decision made at the meeting.

Vice Chairman David Shay made a motion approving the purchase of the used truck from Plainfield Township at a cost of up to \$6,000. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Randy Detrick and carried 3-0.

The truck would be added into the current fleet has the same plow and spreader setup, but is a different model of truck from others that the Township owns, but would allow for coverage until the new truck arrived.

### Purchase of New Plow for Utility Truck

Road Foreman Ethan Brewer received a quote to purchase a plow to be added to the utility truck as a backup for plowing in case there would be any issues with getting necessary parts for repairs for the main trucks in the winter.

Vice Chairman David Shay brought up that if the new truck and used truck are purchased and are able to be used in the fleet, that the extra plow may not be needed for the utility truck to limit extra wear and tear from plowing. He also asked to allow for a couple of weeks to see if the need to purchase the backup plow would still be necessary. Road Foreman Brewer stated that he is currently four months out on waiting for parts for a current truck and is just wanting to guarantee coverage should it be needed.

A motion was made to approve the purchase, if needed, of a nine-foot plow for the utility truck for \$6750. Supervisor Randy Detrick seconded the motion and it carried 3-0.

### **CORRESPONDENCE:**

Vice Chairman David Shay stated that the Gioino Plan received by the Board of Supervisors had items needing to be addressed, but nothing had to be decided upon that evening at the meeting. Attorney Campbell had spoke with representatives and explained the Plan has to meet the review of the Engineer and for Attorney Huffman to approve and sign off on the plan as Attorney Campbell had been conflicted out to be able to sign the plan before moving forward.

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 Supervisor Randy Detrick and seconded by Vice Chairman David Shay. The motion carried 3-0.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:50pm. 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