

**Pocono Township Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting Minutes
October 6, 2025 | 5:30 p.m.**

The regular meeting of the Pocono Township Board of Commissioners was held on October 6, 2025 and was opened by Chair Richard Wielebinski at 5:30 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Ellen Gndt, present; Natasha Leap, absent; Mike Velardi, present; Brian Winot, present; Rich Wielebinski, present.

In Attendance: Leo DeVito-Township Solicitor; Jon Tresslar- Engineer; Patrick Briegel-Public Works Director; Jerrod Belvin-Township Manager; James Wagner, Chief of Police; Erica Tomas-Administrative Assistant, Paul Morgan, SFM Consulting, Jennifer Gambino, Public Works Asst. Mgr.

Announcements

Public Comment – Non-Agenda Items:

Limited to 3 minutes per person, please state your name and if you are a Pocono Township Resident.

Atty. Chris Brown- Council for 611 Land Development – Updated the board of Hamilton Township's stance regarding the hotel project that encompasses both Pocono and Hamilton and their demand for the tax revenue. They want an agreement in writing, or it goes to court.

Michelle Bisbing – Pocono Mountains Economic Development – introduced herself and the organization along with their offerings of service.

Cheryl Parks – Resident – updated everyone regarding the Kennel near her including dogs being boarded and noise complaints. She expressed her frustration with her neighbor and believes he is trying to intimidate her. E. Gndt wants zoning to look further into the laws regarding the kennel.

Rebecca Gallagher – Executive Director of the Pocono's Association of Vacation Rental Owners. – introduced herself and looks forward to working together in the community.

Jim Pellegrini – Resident – Spoke regarding social media. Asked that all commissioners rise above when addressing or commenting in response to social media.

Josie Keppler – Resident – expressed her concerns regarding intimidation and abuse of power by a commissioner who has served her family with legal action for speaking out.

Dawn Eilber – Resident – Reminded the board not to forget residents on Zoom that would like to speak and were inadvertently missed at the last meeting.

Presentations

Frank Cefali, Treasurer Pocono Township – Treasurer Report – walked the board through the report and how it was set up. General Fund collected 72.23% of the annual budget. Expenses are at 46% of total annual expenses. E. Gndt asked what the time line will be going forward.

Eckert Seamans & Pocono Mountains Economic Development Corp – Camelback TIF Bonds Refunding – E. Gndt asked what the restrictions are and what is being terminated. In-depth discussion took place between the presenter and the board. Leo DeVito gave clarification to the subject matter.

- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to approve the Termination of Declaration of Restrictive Covenants MCIDA Camelback TIF ***All in favor. Motion carried.***

PFM & Eckert Seamans– Financing for Police Wing

PFM is proposing to finance the police wing project with a \$9.5 million bond, including \$3.5 million for project completion, \$5.25 million to pay off interim financing, and \$150,000 for reimbursement. The 30-

year bond will have an estimated interest rate of 4.75% and annual payments around \$620,000. Discussion took place between the board and PFM.

- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to proceed with authorization for financing and to have PFM/ Township Solicitor to draft debt ordinance amendment & advertise for BOC meeting 10-20-2025. Discussion took place with the public. All in favor. Motion carried.

PFM & Eckert Seamans & Mike Gable T&M Engineering – Penn Vest Sewer Loan

The township plans to extend sewer services to three areas: Bartonsville Ave., Stadden Road, and Sullivan Trail, addressing failing septic systems and improving water quality. The total project cost is estimated at \$11.2 million, with potential funding from tapping fees, grants, and a Penn Vest loan, with no anticipated increase in user rates. Discussion took place. PFM suggests using the sewer funds \$7.9 million cash reserves strategically, potentially borrowing from Penn Vest at low interest rates or creating a rate stabilization fund. The goal is to maintain low user rates while preserving financial flexibility for future needs. Discussion took place.

- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to execute the letter of engagement for the Penn Vest Sewer Loan. Discussion took place. All in favor. Motion carried.

Hearings – Knox Box Amendment:

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to open the hearing. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to Close the hearing. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to approve Ordinance 2025- 21 amending the Pocono Township Code of Ordinances, Part II General Legislation; Chapter 170 Emergency Access to Buildings; § 170-1 Definitions, § 170-4 requirements for existing Commercial and/or Industrial Buildings. Discussion took place. Roll Call Vote: E. Gmandt, nay; M. Velardi, aye; B. Winot, aye; R. Wielebinski, aye. (Passed 3-1) Motion carried.

Resolutions

- Motion to approve Resolution 2025-34 denying preliminary plan approval of the Swiftwater Pond LLC preliminary land development plan. ***The plan was withdrawn and therefore no resolution was needed.***

Consent Agenda

- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to approve a consent agenda of the following items:
 - Old business consisting of the minutes of the September 15, 2025 regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners. ***E. Gmandt requested the in leu of fees for Tannersville Point be added to the minutes. This has been updated as of 10/7/25.***
 - Financial transactions through October 6, 2025 as presented, including ratification of expenditures in the amount of \$998,467.91 for the following accounts: General Fund, Sewer Operations, Gross Payroll, Capital Reserve, Construction Fund, Transfers. All in favor. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Personnel

Commissioner Comments

Richard Wielebinski – President

- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to task the Chief of Police & Civil Service Commission to create the eligibility list to present to the Board of Commissioners for hiring purposes. Discussion took place. All in favor. Motion carried.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to approve Trick or Treating hours within Pocono Township Friday, October 31st 2025 from 5:00pm-8:00pm. Discussion took place. All in favor. Motion carried.
- E. Gndt made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to approve Support on RCAP and LSA Grant Application for Crescent Lake. B. Winot updated the board on his observations and research regarding the situation. All in favor. Motion carried.
- E. Gndt abstained from this matter due to a conflict of interest. B. Winot made a motion, seconded by R. Wielebinski, regarding discussion for a Request for Support on LSA Grant Application for Brookdale's Nordic Spa. Discussion took place between the board. The public commented to not support this matter. Roll Call: E. Gndt, abstain; B. Winot, nay; R. Wielebinski, nay; M. Velardi, nay; Motion failed.
- E. Gndt abstained from this matter due to a conflict of interest. B. Winot made a motion, seconded by R. Wielebinski, regarding discussion for a request for support on an RCAP Grant Application for Brookdale's Nordic Spa. Discussion took place. Roll Call: E. Gndt, abstain; B. Winot, aye; R. Wielebinski, nay; M. Velardi, nay; Motion failed.

Natasha Leap – Vice President

Ellen Gndt – Commissioner

- Update – Solar Field- Seed mixture was confirmed.
- E. Gndt commented that she missed the Budget meeting and didn't receive a curtesy call. Discussion took place.

Brian Winot – Commissioner

- Historic Overlay Discussion – L. DeVito circulated a preliminary draft for review by the board prior to the next meeting. The attorney that represents the undeveloped portion of PMI reached out for clarification that it would cover the entire original Platted subdivision. Waiting on a better map. All the original plotted lots were part of the National Park Service Designation.

Mike Velardi – Commissioner

- Tent City Update – Citations were filed, and the owner has been slowly complying.
- Oktoberfest mugs for sale at \$10/ea.
- Mail in Ballots – Remember to VOTE
- Community Clean Up results – it was a lackluster turnout.

Reports

Zoning Report-SFM Consulting – violations are being cleared up.

Police – James Wagner, Chief

Manager Report – Jerrod Belvin

- Website is now active – this is a much cleaner look with a lot more access of forms along with information.
- Parks update – Issues still taking place at Mountain View Basketball Courts. Looking to have shorter hours next year to assist in rectifying the issues. Discussion was had by the Board. Public Works refurbished the old Glenwood Hall Fountain that is approximately 130 years old. Historic Walk is moving forward. Two new fountains have been installed in the ponds at TLC.
- Fuel Bid – PMCOG Fuel Bid was accepted
- MS4 Application has been accepted from DEP with the education session with Public Works set for October 16th.

- Act 101 Ordinance Discussion – to line up the requirements with DEP to stay in compliance and open us up to act 101 grant funds. The Waste Authority has approved it. J. Belvin asked the board to review and comment prior to placing on the next agenda for advertising.
- R. Wielebinski mentioned a bunch of trash dumped at Latural Lake and Cranberry to be looked into.

Public Works – Patrick Briegel

- Sewer Business Update – working on finalizing the easement for sewer service with the Strand property owners and CPI. They have been very cooperative. Valve Station One valves have been changed out and the system is coming back on line now.
- SEO Report
- PennDOT / Intersection brush update
- MCTI & Sullivan Trail Expansions
- Current Public Works Projects – Massive cleanup of the exterior at Glennwood Hall in addition to the fountain. Walkways have been expanded along with parking making for a safer environment.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to approve the purchase of a new Track Skid Steer in the amount of \$84,119.51. Discussion took place. All in favor. Motion carried.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to direct the solicitor to draft a FOG Ordinance for Pocono Township Sanitary Collection System. Discussion took place. All in favor. Motion carried.

Township Events Report – Jennifer Gambino

The township building hosted a movie night in the meeting room that was a success. The second annual Food Truck festival was bigger and better than last year! The First Car Show ended up a huge success with over a 110 registered cars and a great band for entertainment. The tug of war trophy for 2025 was presented to the Pocono Township Fire Company. Popup Tattoo event sponsored by Northbound Rehab Center to be held Saturday, October 11th.

October Events:

- Oktoberfest October 10th
- Spooky Walk October 17th and 18th
- Trunk or Treat October 26th

Township Engineer Report- Jon Tresslar

- Learn Road safety enhancement project and roundabout survey work. Working with PPL to relocate a couple poles.
- B. Winot made a motion, seconded by R. Wielebinski, to approve an engineering study regarding the Truck Restriction Ordinance. Discussion took place. All in favor. Motion carried.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to install regulatory signs for Pocono Circle & Sky-High Drive Traffic. All in favor. Motion carried.
- TASA Project – Resubmitted hopefully the final submission to PennDOT.
- TLC walking bridge. J. Tresslar presented photos of a total timber bridge example to the board and public along with a conceptual drawing for consideration.

Township Solicitor Report-Leo V. DeVito

- Sewer Business Update – Comments have been received from the Tobyhanna Solicitor. Revised rules and regulations will be circulated to everyone for consideration at an upcoming meeting.
- General legal update – Zoning is keeping busy with actions.
- Discussion on Chicken Ordinance Draft – working on final touches. Discussion was had by the board and residents.
- Discussion on Food Truck Ordinance Draft – Discussion took place.

Adjournment – R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to adjourn the meeting 9:19 p.m. All in favor. Motion carried.