

**Pocono Township Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting Minutes
February 18, 2025 | 6:00 p.m.**

The regular meeting of the Pocono Township Board of Commissioners was held on February 18, 2025 and was opened by Chair Richard Wielebinski at 6:08 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

In Attendance: Leo DeVito, Township Solicitor; Jon Tressler, Engineer; James Wagner, Chief of Police; Patrick Briegel, Public Works Director; Jennifer Gambino, Events Coordinator; Jerrod Belvin, Township Manager, Lindsay Scerbo, SFM Consulting.

Public Comment

Robert Quick (Resident) – expressed concerns regarding loud music from new neighbors late at night and asked if the township had a noise ordinance.

Charles Kepler (Resident) – raised concerns about the growing number of solar farms being developed on residential properties. He suggested the township should instead incentivize solar development on commercial properties through tax relief in order to protect residential areas.

Cheryl Parks (Resident) –. Discussed runoff from a neighboring property that flooded her driveway. Ms. Parks read a letter criticizing the township for numerous waivers for the Core5 warehouse project. She expressed frustration with the townships' failure to enforce zoning ordinances and criticized the township for not publicly posting information about DEP ruling related to the Core5 project, which limited the time to appeal.

Commissioner Winot disagreed with the claim that runoff from the new development would inundate neighboring properties and stated that the township's ordinances are designed to ensure that post-construction runoff must be less than pre-construction, so it is impossible for the neighboring properties to be flooded.

Announcements – None

Presentations

Brookstead Apartments LDP # 1423 waiver requests

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to approve a partial waiver for 390-57.C and 365-10.1(6)(b) [1]. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to approve the waiver for 390-29. K. E. Gndt questioned if a traffic study was done. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to approve the waiver for 390-43.A(6)(e)[2][a]. E. Gndt questioned what the man-made slope is meant to do. All in favor. Motion carried. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to approve the waiver 365-8. L. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to approve the waiver 365-13. B. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to approve the waiver 390-59. B. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to approve waiver 390-55. G. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to approve waiver 390-55. D.(1)(a). All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to approve waiver 390-55. D.(3)(a). All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to approve waiver 390-55. F.(3)(a)[2]. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to approve waiver 390-55. F.(4)(a)[1]. All in favor. Motion carried.

E. Gndt, questioned the open space amount on the resolution resulting in a lengthy discussion between the board, solicitor, and developer.

Resolutions

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to approve Resolution 2025-03 granting conditional preliminary/final land development plan approval of Brookstead Apartments LDP# 1423. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to approve Resolution 2025-04 granting conditional approval of the Donald Simpson Minor Subdivision Plan LDP# 1426. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to approve Resolution 2025-05 granting approval of Phase "C" of the Swiftwater Solar Amended Plan LDP# 1375A. All in favor. Motion carried.

Consent Agenda

- Old business consisting of the minutes of February 3, 2025 regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners.
- Financial transactions through February 12, 2025 as presented, including ratification of general fund expenditures, sewer operating expenditures and gross payroll, vouchers payable, sewer operating expenditures, construction fund expenditures, capital reserve expenditures and transfers in the amount of \$550,524.84.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to approve the consent agenda. E. Gndt questioned if the corrections were made as per her request from the last meeting. N. Leap pointed out that the minutes reflect the correction. All in favor. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS –

Personnel – None

Travel/Training Authorizations - None

Commissioner Comments

Richard Wielebinski – President

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to hire Erica Thomas to the open Administrative Assistant position to start March 3, 2025. All in favor. Motion carried.

Natasha Leap – Vice President

N. Leap made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to authorize the township solicitor to advertise for the public hearing regarding an Ordinance changing the speed limit on Post Hill Road to 25 MPH. All in favor. Motion carried.

- N. Leap asked if we could coordinate with PennDOT to repair the potholes on Cherry Lane Rd.

Ellen Gnandt – Commissioner

- SBA Cell Tower – Waiting for revised plans to be submitted.
- Solar Field – Everything is moving forward.
- Kennel – the owners were fined.
- E. Gnandt questioned that status of a bus that had to back out of Ruby Lane looking for a church. The residents questioned the action.
- Have we made any headway with the detour regarding 715 to Shine Hill? A discussion was had by the commissioners regarding detours and signs.

Brian Winot – Commissioner

B. Winot made a motion, seconded by R. Wielebinski, to purchase MioVision system from Signal Service (Costars Vendor) to replace dated loop detection system at Route 314 & 611 to be used from the ARPA funds in the amount of \$ 17,558.00. A lengthy discussion took place regarding updating the rest of the stop lights along Route 611 with an Ordinance and PennDOT. All in favor. Motion carried.

Mike Velardi – Commissioner

- The Tall Cedars, part of the Masons, will be holding a Pork and Sauerkraut dinner on March 1st to raise money for research of neuromuscular diseases, veterans' charities, valor house and vet stock. The Masonic center is located on Rim Rock Road and the dinner is from 4:30 to 7p.m. at a cost of \$12/person. They will also be holding a golf outing on May 3, 2025.

E. Gnandt made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to open the agenda. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap to gather the Civil Service Commission, to update the requirements of hiring new police officers to laterally transfer from other police departments. All in favor. Motion carried.

Reports

Zoning Report –Lindsay Scerbo went over her report with the board.

Police Report – January Status were sent out to the board. Summary: 1140 calls for service, 29 criminal arrests, 13 summaries non traffic arrests, majority being disorderly conducts. 37 traffic accidents investigated and 356 traffic contacts for the month of January.

Manager Report

- County Hazard Mitigation Update – Draft should be out for public view by mid-June.
- Civil Service Commission 2024 Annual Report
- Update Green Light Go – no major updates. They are continuing to collect data.
- N. Leap asked about Public Works employees attending PSATS this year.
- Public Works attended the first of three defensive driving classes presented by EHD, our insurance provider and risk assessment group.
- LERTA Update – no new updates. It will be back in front of the school board tomorrow night. Further discussion was had amongst the board members.
- NCC Update – work continues to move forward.

- Grants Update – we were approved for a small dog park grant, along with a second Myo vision system.

Public Works

- Sewer Business Update –. NCC, T&M is working on the easements for water and sewer.
- MCTI & Sullivan Trail Expansion – delayed by ice and weather.
- Current Public Works Projects – Restocking salt and cinder piles. Salt issues are being rectified. Door has been repaired at the heritage center. The TV is being replaced.
- Met with engineer and grant writers for a generator to serve the new building. Trucks are being repaired to get back on the road. Safety training will be on March 5th through LTAP.

Events Report -. \$25,000 raised for events.

R. Wielebinski made a motion seconded by M. Velardi to approve a waiver of fees for a pavilion rental by the Boy Scouts. All in favor. Motion carried.

Township Engineer Report

- Sewer Business Update – Covered under Public works.
- Learn Road safety enhancement project and roundabout survey work. We are looking to advertise early March. Plans and specifications are ready.
- TASA Project. – We continue to have monthly meetings and moving forward.

Township Solicitor Report

- Sewer Business Update – Engineering letter is ready to go out to the engineers for Kalahari to resolve the issues.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to advertise the updated Nuisance comments throughout the non-zoning ordinances. A lengthy discussion was had regarding the wording of the potential updates by all board members. Roll Call vote: R. Wielebinski, aye; N. Leap, aye; B. Winot, aye; M. Velardi, aye; E. Gndt, nay. Motion carried.

Public Comment

Charles Keppler (Resident) – Stressed his point that we are incentivizing the right kind of development in Pocono Township. B. Winot stated that it is local businesses that are doing the work most of the time on the new construction coming into Pocono Township.

Cheryl Parks (Resident) – The kennel is advertising 9 dogs now on their website. She also commented on the concerns about the warehouse.

Adjournment – R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to adjourn the meeting into executive session at 8:41 p.m. All in favor. Motion carried.