

**Pocono Township Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting Minutes
February 03, 2025 | 6:00 p.m.**

The regular meeting of the Pocono Township Board of Commissioners was held on February 03, 2025 and was opened by Chair Richard Wielebinski at 6:00 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

Lonnie Lippert (Resident) – Voiced his concerns and frustration with the ongoing firearms use within his neighborhood. A long discussion was held by the board and solicitor on the options the township has to assist in this matter.

Cheryl Parks (Resident) – Continued issues with Kennel, stated that she has a hearing with the Magistrate this week. Ms. Parks expressed her issue with the township meeting minutes on verbatim, also an issue with Zoning and the lack of enforcement.

Announcements – None

Presentations

Pocono Mountain East Little League – Darren Leonard presented information on player participation regarding the new filed use policy. Spring and Fall seasons participation has fifteen teams and 276 participants. They are requesting the use of the fields more than just what the policy that is in place allows. Mr. Leonard will work with the Asst. PW Mgr. to work through the schedule.

UCC Interviews of Kyle VanFleet and R. Douglas Olmstead, P.E. took place.

- E. Gndt made a motion, seconded by R. Wielebinski, to appoint Kyle Van Fleet to the UCC Board. All in favor. Motion carried.
- E. Gndt made a motion, seconded by R. Wielebinski, to appoint and R. Douglas Olmstead, P.E., to the UCC Board. B. Winot abstained from the vote. R. Wielebinski, aye; M. Velardi, aye; E. Gndt, aye; N. Leap, aye. Motion carried.

Resolutions

Consent Agenda

- Old business consisting of the minutes of January 21, 2025 regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners.
- Financial transactions through January 28, 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 \$235,261.24.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to approve the consent agenda with changes to the minutes to include the comments missed on January 21 2025 by K. VanFleet of his disappointment that the Planning Commission wasn't consulted on the zoning changes along with E. Gndt's directive on financial numbers to date on the NCC improvements (Twp Manager provided). 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 purchase countertops/cabinets/sink for employee cafeteria from Lowes in the amount of \$13,867.06. All in favor. Motion carried.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by E. Gndt, to approve the reduction of Trapasso Hotel Land Development construction escrow by the amount remaining in their Land Development Escrow account. B. Winot abstained from the vote. R. Wielebinski, aye; E. Gndt, aye; N. Leap, aye; M. Velardi, aye. Motion carried.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to authorize Township Manager blanket authorization in the amount of \$160,000 for purposes of NCC: Furniture, Access Control, Appliances, Audio/Visual, etc. as marked in cost comparison for Administrative Wing, utilizing Costars vendors or PA procurement standards. Discussion: E. Gndt questioned some items and asked for clarification & cost analysis, solicitor provided opinion. The board held a lengthy discussion on pricing and bids. All in favor. Motion carried.
- Discussion & selection of Main Signage for NCC & Administration Sign.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to choose the 8'x10'x2" design and purchase from Bartush signs a costars vendor in the amount of: \$16,027.90.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap to waive Pavillion Park Rental Fees for the Lions Club at Mountain View Park for August 12. All in favor. Motion carried.

Natasha Leap – Vice President

- Laurel Lake Discussion – Rosemary Browns office is trying to work with DEP regarding the classification as per J. Tresslar.
- N. Leap made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to contract with Build-All (Costars Vendor) to build the Administrative & "Wedge" entrances to match the police entrance in the amount of \$94,070.00. Discussion was held by the board. All in favor. Motion carried.

Ellen Gndt – Commissioner

- SBA Cell Tower – Zoom meeting with entire SBA team going over questions from comment letter.
- Solar Field – continuing to inspect and review is moving forward with amended submission.
- Kennel – Hearing is at 11 am Tuesday morning with Judge Kresge's office.
- E. Gndt asked for details regarding the detour of Route 715 during the construction. B. Winot stated that the closest detour will be Route 314.
- Warehouse – DEP agreed that sewer line will go up Stadden Rd. They have their MPDS and are working on their 102 for the sewer extension.
- Nuisance Ordinance Timeline discussion was held. L. DeVito will submit drafts to the board prior to the next BOC meeting.

Mike Velardi – Commissioner

Discussion to have a sign put up by Public Works to put a directional sign up for the new location.

Brian Winot – Commissioner

- Discussion on "Big Brown" Billboard. – possible idea would be to rebuild a replica and put it on the side of the Glenwood Hall Barn.
- B. Winot made a motion, seconded by R. Wielebinski, to collaborate with PennDOT on the realignment detour by providing assistance and construction signage for local businesses affected by the detour and assume financial responsibility for signage if PennDOT does not fund these measures. All in favor. Motion carried.

Reports

Zoning Report –Lindsay Scerbo went over her report with the board. E. Gndt asked about the hearing on February 25th for non-compliance.

Police Report –

Drone update- we will be receiving the drones next week from Sanofi. Training will commence in March.

Manager Report

- County Hazard Mitigation Update – none
- Update Green Light Go – programing for Cherry Lane have been fixed this morning. Now online with PennDOT in Datta Collection. Hopefully fully adaptive by Summer.
- LERTA Update – no update from the school board. Action may take place at the second meeting in February.
- NCC Update – Flooring going down in hallways. Everything is moving forward. Move in date at end of May which will coincide with the TASA project (Sidewalk Grant). We will be saving approximately \$3K/month during the length of the sidewalk construction by allowing the contractor to utilize the current township building for their office space. N. Leap asked about obtaining a price to move our office.
- B. Winot mentioned the LERTA. N. Leap asked for an open discussion with the public to assist with answering the public's questions. J. Belvin recommended the Planning Commission on the comprehensive review they have been working on for the past 18 months.
- Pocono Township was called out three times for all the positive things we are doing in and for our community. Commissioner Parker also called out the township on the positive effects that LERTA can have on our community going forward.
- E. Gndt asked J. Belvin what our plans are for the library. The building will still be here, and the library will stay where they are until the police department is finished and then hopefully we can focus on Glenwood Hall to move them there.

Public Works

- Sewer Business Update – met with contractor to mark up plans regarding laterals, well locations etc. collaborating with engineers on the proposals for media replacement at pump station 5 and on the force main inspection and cleaning project.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to authorize sewer reservation of 45 EDUs to 3481 Route 611, Bartonsville, PA 18321, 611 Land Development LLC. B. Winot questioned the EDUs. E. Gndt questioned how Pocono Township got the sewer and where do the taxes go. All in favor. Motion carried.
- Discussion and clarification on sewer reservation fees. Quarterly reports on the reservations could be given to the board. P Briegel also recommended a re-evaluation of the reservation fees.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to allow the manager and public works director to administer the sewer reservation in accordance with Resolution 2013-27. All in favor. Motion carried.
- Current Public Works Projects
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to authorize the purchase of one New 2024 Caterpillar Broom, Pickup, BP25, 24V in the amount of \$20,600.00. All in favor. Motion carried.
- Parks Update
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to hire Brian Espenshade as the full-time parks lead at a rate of \$24.62/hr. as marked in the 2025 budget. E. Gndt asked when they would start. All in favor. Motion carried.
- P. Briegel stated they are putting together the Parks Team and thanked the DPW crew for all they do and the work they have done at NCC to date.

Events Report - \$17,000 has been raised through sponsorships this year for events.

E. Gndt stated that the TV in the Heritage Center does not work.

Township Engineer Report

- Sewer Business Update –
- Learn Road safety enhancement project and roundabout survey work. Moving forward on the little items.
- TASA Project. – working out the minute details
- TLC walking bridge –
- Post Hill Rd. speed limit report sent out this morning. Recommending Posting the speed limit of 25 mph.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap to open the agenda. All in favor. Motion carried.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap to authorize the solicitor to prepare an ordinance to establish the speed limit on Post Hill Rd. at 25 Miles per hour. All in favor. Motion carried.

Township Solicitor Report

- Sewer Business Update – draft response ready to go to Tobyhanna Township based on their proposal to address the current situation.
- Motion to advertise Nuisance Ordinance. Discussed earlier.
- Food Truck Ordinance Discussion & Advertisement – R. Wielebinski asked what the reasoning is behind not allowing a food truck. L. Scerbo listed detailed items that would be regulated.
- General legal update – Oral argument took place for Pocono places LLC.
- Update – Archer Lane – No changes. Conference call with council for the estate.
- Learn Road Easement Process – Bank closing scheduled. March should be the end date.
- TASA Sidewalk Update – Easements – working with engineering to determine easements needed.

Public Comment

Charles Keppler (Resident) – Stated he is troubled by the townships hesitancy to do anything to restrict firearms usage on private property.

Randy Peechatka (Resident) – Stated excessive repetition of shooting should be regulated.

Cheryl Parks (Resident) – Spoke in depth about not being able to use her property because of her neighbors that live next door. She stated that she still does not understand how her residential deed restrictions no longer apply due to the change in zoning to commercial. She feels that the quality of life has gone down since the neighbors moved in with their dogs. L. Scerbo commented on the interpretation of the Ordinance by the zoning officer. Ms. Parks stated the days that the temperatures dipped below freezing the dogs were out on the deck for six hours at a time. When questioned how she knew the length of time she stated because she was watching them.

Adjournment – R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 p.m. All in favor. Motion carried.