

**Pocono Township Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting Minutes
April 21, 2025 | 6:00 p.m.**

The regular meeting of the Pocono Township Board of Commissioners was held on April 21, 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; Jerrod Belvin, Township Manager; Lindsay Scerbo, SFM Consulting; Erica Tomas, Administrative Assistant; Donna Kenderdine, Stenographer.

Public Comment

Wayne Majors (Resident) – Thanked everyone for their service to the community. He asked the board to consider forming a committee to assess the damage throughout the township regarding dead trees and their potential should a major weather event take place.

Charles Kepler (Resident) – Commented on the absence of the call in option on the agenda and if/when it will be available again. R. Wielebinski explained and stated that we are hoping to have it available once again by June.

Cheryl Parks (Resident) – Updated everyone that the Dog Warden was transferred to another district closer to her home. The new Warden did check on the situation. The Kennel now has 11 adult dogs registered & a litter of 9 puppies on January 1st. She is concerned about the unsanitary conditions and odor and believes they are operating as a business, not a hobby. She feels the township should revisit this situation.

Announcements

- An executive session was held prior to this meeting to discuss personnel.
- The public comment period is open for the 2025 5-year Hazard Mitigation Plan. Please use the provided link to view and comment:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MonroePublicComment2025>

Presentations

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap to appoint Dee Ackerman from the Zoning Hearing Board Alternate position to the full member of the Zoning Hearing Board. All in favor. Motion carried.

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to appoint Doug Olmstead to the position of Alternate with the Zoning Hearing Board. All in favor. Motion carried.

Hearings

Hearing #1

- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to open the hearing to consider for approval the request of NFERRARO, LLC, for an intermunicipal transfer of Restaurant Liquor License No. R-21177 to their proposed restaurant facility located at 2797 Route 611, Tannersville, PA. and consider for adoption a Resolution approving the transfer of Restaurant Liquor License No. R-21177 into Pocono Township, Monroe County from the Borough of Mt. Pocono, Monroe County. All in favor. Motion carried.

- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to close the hearing. All in favor. Motion carried.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to approve the request of NFERRARO, LLC, for an intermunicipal transfer of Restaurant Liquor License No. R-21177 to their proposed restaurant facility located at 2797 Route 611, Tannersville, PA. and consider adopting a Resolution approving the transfer of Restaurant Liquor License No. R-21177 into Pocono Township, Monroe County from the Borough of Mt. Pocono, Monroe County. All in favor. Motion carried.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to approve Resolution 2025-14 for the transfer of Pennsylvania Restaurant Liquor License No. R-21177 into Pocono Township from the Borough of Mount Pocono. All in favor. Motion carried.

Hearing #2

- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to open the hearing to consider for approval the request to consider a waiver request from the provisions set forth under 25 PA Code §72.33 Well isolation distance exception by Michael Persoleo, owner of and involving real property known as 1375 Waterview Dr. Scotrun, PA. All in favor. Motion carried.
- L. DeVito explained the process.
- 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 B. Winot, to approve the Well Isolation waiver for the real property known as 1375 Waterview Dr. Scotrun, PA. All in favor. Motion carried.

Hearing #3

- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to open the hearing to amend the Code of Ordinances of Pocono Township, Chapter 425, Vehicles & Traffic, Article I, Speed Limits, Section 425-1, establishing a maximum speed limit of Twenty-Five (25) miles per hour for motor vehicles on Post Hill Road and Section 425-11, restricting truck traffic on Post Hill Road. All in favor. Motion carried.
- Board Comments & Public Comments.
- 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 N. Leap, to approve Ordinance No. 2025-04 amending the Code of Ordinances of Pocono Township, Chapter 425, Vehicles & Traffic, Article I, Speed Limits, Section 425-1, establishing a maximum speed limit of Twenty-Five (25) miles per hour for motor vehicles on Post Hill Road and Section 425-11, restricting truck traffic on Post Hill Road. All in favor. Motion carried.

Hearing #4

- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to open the hearing to amend Ordinance, Chapter 90, Airport Zoning adding additional provisions for nuisances. All in favor. Motion carried.
- Board Comments & Public Comments.
- 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 B. Winot, to approve the amendment of Ordinance, Chapter 90, Airport Zoning adding additional provisions for nuisance to the Ordinance and repealing all ordinances inconsistent therewith. All in favor. Motion carried.

Hearing #5

- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to open the hearing to amend Ordinance, Chapter 129, Burning, Open; adding additional provisions for nuisances. All in favor. Motion carried.
- Board Comments & Public Comments.

- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to close the hearing. All in favor. Motion carried.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to approve the amendment of Ordinance, Chapter 129, Burning, Open; adding additional provisions for nuisance to the Ordinance and repealing all ordinances inconsistent therewith. All in favor. Motion carried.

Hearing #6

- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to open the hearing to amend Ordinance, Chapter 205 Floodplain Management adding additional provisions for nuisances. All in favor. Motion carried.
- Board Comments & Public Comments.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to close the hearing. All in favor. Motion carried.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to approve the amendment of Ordinance, Chapter 205 Floodplain Management adding additional provisions for nuisance to the Ordinance and repealing all ordinances inconsistent therewith. All in favor. Motion carried.

Hearing #7

- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to open the hearing to amend Ordinance, Chapter 212 Furnaces, Outdoor; adding additional provisions for nuisances. All in favor. Motion carried.
- Board Comments & Public Comments.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to close the hearing. All in favor. Motion carried.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to approve the amendment of Ordinance, Chapter 212 Furnaces, Outdoor adding additional provision for nuisance to the Ordinance and repealing all ordinances inconsistent therewith. All in favor. Motion carried.

Hearing #8

- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to open the hearing to amend Ordinance, Chapter 220 Grading, Erosion and Sedimentation Control; adding additional provisions for nuisances. All in favor. Motion carried.
- Board Comments & Public Comments.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to close the hearing. All in favor. Motion carried.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap to approve the amendment of Ordinance, Chapter 220 Grading, Erosion and Sedimentation Control adding additional provisions for nuisance to the Ordinance and repealing all ordinance inconsistent therewith. All in favor. Motion carried.

Hearing #9

- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to open the hearing to amend Ordinance, Chapter 230 Insurance Proceeds; Emergency Responses and Alarms; additional provisions for nuisances. All in favor. Motion carried.
- Board Comments & Public Comments.
- 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 N. Leap, to approve the amendment of Ordinance Chapter 230 Insurance Proceeds; Emergency Responses and Alarms adding additional provision for nuisance to the Ordinance and repealing all ordinances inconsistent therewith. All in favor. Motion carried.

Hearing #10

- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to open the hearing to amend Ordinance, Chapter 235 Junkyards and Junk Vehicles; adding additional provisions for nuisances. All in favor. Motion carried.
- Board Comments & Public Comments.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to close the hearing. All in favor. Motion carried.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to approve the amendment of Ordinance Chapter 235 Junkyards and Junk Vehicles adding additional provision for nuisance to the Ordinance and repealing all Ordinances inconsistent therewith. All in favor. Motion carried.

Hearing #11

- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to open the hearing to amend Ordinance, Chapter 250 Maintenance of Properties; adding additional provisions for nuisances. All in favor. Motion carried.
- Board Comments & Public Comments.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to close the hearing. All in favor. Motion carried.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to approve the amendment of Ordinance Chapter 250 Maintenance of Properties adding additional provision for nuisance to the Ordinance and repealing all Ordinances inconsistent therewith. All in favor. Motion carried.

Hearing #12

- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to open the hearing to amend Ordinance, Chapter 302 Transient Dwelling Use of Single-Family Dwellings; adding additional provisions for nuisances. All in favor. Motion carried.
- Board Comments & Public Comments.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to close the hearing. All in favor. Motion carried.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to approve the amendment of Ordinance, Chapter 302 Transient Dwelling Use of Single-Family Dwellings adding additional provisions for nuisance to the Ordinance and repealing all Ordinances inconsistent therewith. All in favor. Motion carried.

Hearing #13

- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to open the hearing to amend Ordinance, Chapter 333 Sewers, and Sewage Disposal; adding additional provisions for nuisances. All in favor. Motion carried.
- Board Comments & Public Comments.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to close the hearing. All in favor. Motion carried.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to approve the amendment of Ordinance, Chapter 333 Sewer, and Sewage Disposal; adding additional provisions for nuisance to the Ordinance and repealing all ordinances inconsistent therewith. All in favor. Motion carried.

Hearing #14

- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to open the hearing to amend Ordinance, Chapter 356 Solid Waste; adding additional provisions for nuisances. All in favor. Motion carried.
- Board Comments & Public Comments.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to close the hearing. All in favor. Motion carried.

- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to approve the amendment of Ordinance, Chapter 356 Solid Waste adding additional provisions for nuisance to the Ordinance and repealing all Ordinances inconsistent therewith. All in favor. Motion carried.

Hearing #15

- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to open the hearing to amend Ordinance, Chapter 365 Stormwater Management; adding additional provisions for nuisances. All in favor. Motion carried.
- Board Comments & Public Comments.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to close the hearing. All in favor. Motion carried.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to approve the amendment of Ordinance, Chapter 365 Stormwater Management adding additional provisions for nuisance to the Ordinance and repealing all Ordinances inconsistent therewith. All in favor. Motion carried.

Hearing #16

- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to open the hearing to amend Ordinance, Chapter 382 Structures, dangerous; adding additional provisions for nuisances. All in favor. Motion carried.
- Board Comments & Public Comments.
- 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 the amendment of Ordinance, Chapter 382 Structures, dangerous adding additional provisions for nuisance to the Ordinance and repealing all Ordinances inconsistent therewith. All in favor. Motion carried.

Hearing #17

- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to open the hearing to amend Ordinance, Chapter 404 Tires; adding additional provisions for nuisances. All in favor. Motion carried.
- Board Comments & Public Comments.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to close the hearing. All in favor. Motion carried.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to approve the amendment of Ordinance, Chapter 404 Tires adding additional provisions for nuisance to the Ordinance and repealing all Ordinances inconsistent therewith. All in favor. Motion carried.

Resolutions

- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by E. Gndt, to table Resolution 2025-07 Granting conditional approval of the 611 Land Development, LLC Dual Brand Hotel Lot 2 Land Development Plan. All in favor. Motion carried.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to approve Resolution 2025-12 Granting Conditional Approval of the Amended Swiftwater Solar LDP Phase B. Discussion was had by the board and engineer. Roll Call: R. Wielebinski, aye; M. Velardi, aye; N. Leap, aye; B. Winot, aye; E. Gndt, nay. Motion carried.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by B. Winot, to approve Resolution 2025-13 for preparation & Submission of Declarations of Taking & Related Documentation for the Condemnation of Land for Right of Way for Public Traffic Improvements. E. Gndt asked for clarification of location. L. DeVito and J. Belvin explained that it is only for the utility easements on each of the properties. Roll Call: R. Wielebinski, aye; B. Winot, aye; M. Velardi, aye; N. Leap, aye; E. Gndt, nay. Motion carried.

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 April 7, 2025 regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners. Financial transactions through April 21, 2025 as presented, including ratification of expenditures in the amount of \$679,837.48 for the following accounts: General Fund, Sewer Operations, Gross Payroll, Capital Reserve, Construction Fund, Transfers. All in favor. Motion carried.

Commissioner Comments

Richard Wielebinski – President

- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to award the 2025 Seal Coat Bid to Asphalt Maintenance Solutions. All in favor. Motion carried.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to accept & approve the following Pocono Township Police Department Policies: Use of Force, Training, Supervision Staffing Levels, Retiree Concealed Firearms, Organizational Structure & Responsibility, Handcuffing & Restraints, Electronic Mail, Departmental Directives, Administrative Communications (As approved by Labor Council & Pocono Township Civil Service Commission) All in favor. Motion carried.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by N. Leap, to have Township Solicitor send a trespass/ban from all Pocono Township parks to Kyle Whitmore. All in favor. Motion carried. A lengthy discussion was had between the board, solicitor, manager, and public works director on this matter prior to voting.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to award the Learn Road Roundabout project to Northeast Site Contractors with a winning bid of \$335,411.50. B. Winot abstained from the vote. All other board members approved. Motion carried.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to table until July having the sewer engineer, public works director, and SEO explore extending water and sewer service to Pocono Laurel Lakes Property Owners Association. All in favor. Motion carried. Tom Kramer, Vice President of the HOA stated that the association will meet in June to discuss this matter. N. Leap asked for the status of a prior open discussion for potential of some developer fees for the sewer being offset to help normal homeowners. Clarification, developer reservation fees not sewer fees. A lengthy discussion was had.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to open the meeting to add a Resolution 2025-15. All in favor. Motion carried. This would allow the township to provide a new emergency generator at the new NCC, Municipal Building.
- R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi to approve Resolution 2025-15 to authorize the submission of a Pennsylvania small water and sewer program grant application from the Commonwealth Financing authority and designated the township officials to take action in support of such application. All in favor. Motion carried.

Natasha Leap – Vice President

Ellen Gndt – Commissioner

- Update – SBA Cell Tower – No update – B. Winot questioned the special exception expiration date and the conditions. Further discussion was had with the board and engineer regarding the access road and the fact that none of the engineers' comments have been formally addressed by SBA in approximately 6 months.
Special exception for cell towers was discussed between the Board of Commissioners in length.
- Discussion and possible motion to exclude cell towers from essential services.

Brian Winot – Commissioner

- B. Winot updated the board on the progress made with enterprise for future police vehicles.
- Issue at Smugglers parking lot and Warner Rd. regarding the flooding from a clogged pipe near the personal pond on the property.

Mike Velardi – Commissioner

Reports

Zoning Report –Lindsay Scerbo went over her report with the board. The board had a long discussion with zoning on various properties within the township.

Quarterly Fire Report – Assistant Chief, Cory Sayer went over personnel and response statistics with the board. Average response time for the fire department is 7.99 minutes. He went over mutual aid, essential programming, upcoming events, and Knox Box programs. He emphasized the fire department's efficiency and commitment to training and community service. Volunteer hours are dramatically up from last year.

Police Report – Chief James Wagner

The new vehicle received today will be upfitted. March monthly statistics are as follows: 1,059 total calls for service, 365 traffic contacts, 24 summary non-traffic arrests, 47 criminal arrests, 25 traffic accidents investigated. Discussion was had regarding future vehicle purchases.

Manager Report – Jerrod Belvin

- Update Green Light Go – no update.
- NCC Update – on track for end of May, Countertop installed on the conference room table.
- UST Inspection & Update – Due for inspection in August. We added Patrolman Moser and Asst. Foreman, Mitch Bartholomew to cover the Class C while J. Belvin will continue to cover the Class A & B.
- We are still working out some updates on the Johnson Controls, for Lighting & HVAC at 205 Old Mill Road Administrative Building following L. DeVito's review.

Public Works – Patrick Briegel

- Sewer Business Update – DPW Crew cut all along the entire line. All meters have been calibrated.
- Current Public Works Projects – Clean out of drains, sweeping of roads, painting trim on Heritage Center. We are currently working on bids for the Capital Equipment that we have for the mower and blower. The Board will be updated with any progress.
- Discussion was had regarding the park rental program partnering with Rent4Fun.

Township Engineer Report

- Sewer Business Update – Survey for the NCC lateral has been completed. The easement should be finalized shortly.
- Learn Road safety enhancement project and roundabout survey work. Construction to start after school is completed.
- TASA Project should be submitted at the end of the week as revisions are being completed for PennDOT.
- TLC walking bridge will be next on the project list.
- Reports on the stop signs should be out this week.

Township Solicitor Report

- General legal update – Argument for Sunset Shooting Range, The Judges were tough. Waiting on decision. Received an appeal from the Pocono Places Zoning Hearing. Judge affirmed the township decision, and they appealed to the Commonwealth Court as of today.
- Learn Road Easement Process discussed prior.
- TASA Sidewalk Update – Working with the Township Engineer.
- B. Winot made a motion, seconded by M. Velardi, to advertise amendments to the Zoning Ordinance regarding the definition of nuisance being added to the Kennel provisions and the term "Essential Services" to Exclude Solar Arrays and Wind Turbines, adding them as uses in the Industrial District and to the tops of existing structures in the Commercial District. Roll Call: B. Winot, aye; M. Velardi, aye; R. Wielebinski, aye; N. Leap, aye; E. Gmandt, Nay. Motion carried.

▪ **Public Comment**

Cindy Gregor (Resident) – feels local governments have more authority in cell tower placement than previously believed, and the existing regulations are outdated.

Cheryl Parks (Resident) – Her comments highlighted frustration with the township's zoning and permit processes. Suggested something to track Tax sale properties for potential unpermitted renovations. She feels residents with long-standing contributions within the township are being disrespected.

Dawn Eilber (Resident) – Challenged the legitimacy of the cell tower project based on unverified road ownership documentation. Asked that submitted information be verified as true and accurate prior to any actions being taken.

Charles Keppler (Resident) – Remarked on the swiftness of the board to take action on his request for sewer service to Pocono Laurel Lakes and lack of urgency on the Ruby Lane situation along with the SkyView Drive cell tower issue. Mr. Keppler also commented on the township's ongoing issues with the dial-in and zoom attendance not being available. He voiced his feelings emphatically on the availability of zoom for the township meetings.

Leo DeVito, Township Solicitor cleared up the issue with the remote participation and the fact it is a privilege and NOT a right. Most municipalities are back to in person only.

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