

**Pocono Township Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting Minutes
May 13, 2025 | 6:00 p.m.**

The regular meeting of the Pocono Township Board of Commissioners was held on May 13, 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; Amber Salazar-SFM Consulting; Erica Tomas-Administrative Assistant; Jennifer Gambino-Asst. Public Works Manager.

Public Comment

Charles Keppler (Resident)–Made announcement that he would be livestreaming the meeting via Facebook. Expressed concerns on library moving out of Pocono Township. (Discussion with Rich Wielebinski on Townships stance on library).

Cheryl Parks (Resident) – Updated everyone on dog count. Is concerned with the runoff of canine feces and urine going into the wetlands and/or well water. Also felt that the kennel owners and burying a natural spring. (Discussion with Brian).

Announcements

- An executive session was held prior to this meeting to discuss personnel & litigation.
- The Township offices will be closed to the public May 20th and May 21st in order to begin facilitating the movement of files to the new building location. Services will resume on Thursday, May 22nd.
- 1124 Sky View Drive Mono-pine Tower (LDP# 1424) – Plans were administratively accepted at the 4/8/24 P.C. meeting with approval deadline of June 2, 2025. **The applicants have withdrawn this project.**

Presentations

- R. Wielebinski, 2nd N. Leap- made a motion to table 611 land development waivers. All in favor. Motion carried.
611 Land Development LLC – Waiver Requests and Plan Revisions

Resolutions

R. Wielebinski, 2nd N. Leap-Motion to TABLE Resolution 2025-07 611 Land Development-Discussion held with applicants engineer, board of commissioners, Manager- All in Favor. Motion Carried

R. Wielebinski, 2nd M. Velardi-Motion to approve Resolution 2025-16 Authorizing the submission of Greenways, Trails, and Recreation Program (GTRP) Grant Application to the Commonwealth Financing Authority-Presentation given by manager & Asst. PW Manager-All in Favor, Motion Carried

R. Wielebinski, 2nd N. Leap-Motion to approve Resolution 2025-17 Authorizing the submission of a PA small water and sewer program grant application from the Commonwealth Financing Authority and designating township officials to take action.-Questions/Discussion from BOC in regard to sewer line extension up Sullivan Trail. -All in Favor. Motion Carried

Consent Agenda

R. Wielebinski, 2nd M. Velardi- Made a motion to approve the consent agenda of the following items: Old business consisting of the minutes of the April 21, 2025 regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners. Financial transactions through May 13, 2025 as presented, including ratification of expenditures in the amount of \$301,605.60 for the following accounts: General Fund, Sewer Operations, Gross Payroll, Capital Reserve, Construction Fund, Transfers. Question from. E. Gndt, short discussion.-All in favor, Motion Carried.

Commissioner Comments

Richard Wielebinski – President

R. Wielebinski 2nd N. Leap -Made the motion to TABLE Lateral Transfer program for PTPD. Discussion, Solicitor stated it will be on the next meeting.-All in Favor, Motion Carried.

R. Wielebinski, 2nd N. Leap-Made the motion to accept Off-Duty Injury Policy for PTPD, as approved by Chief Wagner & Labor Council-All in Favor, Motion Carried.

R. Wielebinski, 2nd B. Winot, Made the motion to accept Act 120 Sponsorship program for PTPD, Discussion between BOC, Chief & Manager-All in Favor, Motion Carried.

R. Wielebinski, M. Velardi Made a motion to accept & approve the following Pocono Township Police Department policies: Control Devices, Conducted Energy Device, Officer Involved Shootings, Firearms, Foot Pursuits, Officer Response to Calls, Canines, Domestic Violence, Child Abuse, Adult Abuse, Discriminatory Harassment, Public Alerts, Victim & Witness Assistance, Hate Crimes, Standards, of Conduct, Information Technology, Department Use of Social Media, Report Preparation, Media Relations, Subpoenas & Court Appearances, Part-Time Officers, Outside Agency Assistance, Registered Offender Information. (As approved by Labor Council & Pocono Township Civil Service Commission) Question from E. Gndt, -All in Favor, Motion Carried.

Natasha Leap – Vice President

- Made the announcement of the Knox Box ordinance meeting May 19th at 12pm, invited all those who still had questions to come to the meeting.
- Questioned Township Manager on what the audio file retention policy was, polled board for public workshop to discuss public comment, once the move to the new 205 Old Mill Rd was complete. Manager will schedule after the move.

Ellen Gndt – Commissioner

- Update – Solar Field-Township Engineer had given update on recent complaint and issues with the rainstorm and retention basin failures. Lengthy discussion from BOC. The board directed Township Engineer / Zoning to issue a cease & desist order until the proper repairs are completed, and reinspection has been completed.
- Short Discussion on public comment to follow up with N. Leap prior discussion.
- Requested Solicitor to craft a legal opinion on Land development extension & final land development extensions. E. Gndt would like the motions added to 5-19 agenda.
- Lengthy discussion by BOC, Manager & Solicitor-on board vs manager directives, Facebook posting, and records requests and chain of command/custody for records. Manager will explore a sample policy to present to board.

Brian Winot – Commissioner

- B. Winot 2nd M. Velardi-Made a Motion to enter into an agreement with Enterprise Leasing for Fleet Lease/Purchasing/upfit. Discussion by BOC, Chief, PW Director, Solicitor & Manager-All in Favor. Motion Carried.

Mike Velardi – Commissioner

Reports

Zoning Report-Amber Salazar

BOC has requested a monthly Sewage report from the SEO. N. Leap & R. Wielebinski stated they did not need a report.

R. Wielebinski, 2nd M. Velardi made a motion to authorize the zoning office to conduct an inspection at 126 North Lane for a potentially dangerous structure.-,Lengthy discussion from BOC, Zoning, Manager, Solicitor-Nay: N. Leap, RW, BW, MV, EG-approve-Motion Carried

- R. Wielebinski, 2nd B. Winot, Made a motion to authorize zoning and legal to proceed with a settlement agreement with the owner of the property located at 145 Marcelle Terrace-All in Favor, Motion Carried

Police Report – Chief James Wagner

April monthly statistics are as follows:

1,234 total calls for service, up from 2024 (1202), 36 Arrests, 30 Accidents, 576 traffic contacts: 281 Citations, 295 Warning, 58 Major Crimes. Extensive annual training had occurred in the month of April. Community Policing event count for the year, higher than ever.

- R. Wielebinski, 2nd M. Velardi- Motion to purchase Total ID Solutions machine for Child Fingerprinting systems in the amount of \$5,995.00 to be taken from the Emergency Management Capital-All in Favor, Motion Carried

Manager Report – Jerrod Belvin

Manager Report

- **NCC Building Project:** Progress continues at the NCC building. Awaiting completion of exterior painting, paving, sealcoating, and line striping. Public Works is restoring the historic grader from the Learn Farm.
- **Sullivan's March Sign Restoration:** The Sullivan's March historical sign is going to be undergoing restoration this summer.
- **BOC & Planning Commission Workshops:** Joint workshops between the Board of Commissioners (BOC) and Planning Commission (PC) will commence on June 23 at 5:00 PM.
- **Jane Cilurso Memorial Sign:** The new Jane Cilurso Memorial Sign was successfully installed at Learn Road Park
- **Township Website Upgrade:** After reviewing current expense issues, we initiated discussions with alternative providers for township website.
- **Center City Beautification Grant:** We have been approved for a "Center City Beautification" grant sponsored by the Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau (PMVB).

Public Works – Patrick Briegel

- Sewer Business Update – Short Discussion
- MCTI & Sullivan Trail Expansions-No Update
- Current Public Works Projects – Working on NCC exterior & misc. drainage issues, Splash Pad set for opening on Memorial Day.
- R. Wielebinski, 2nd N. Leap-Made a motion to approve hiring T&M Services for Integration and Communications.-Short discussion from BOC, Engineer, DPW Director & Manager-All in Favor, Motion Carried
- R. Wielebinski, 2nd M. Velardi-Made a motion to approve the purchase of a new 2025 Peterbilt Chassis and upfit.-Discussion was held in regard to paint color, costars, upfitting, timeline, cost, brand.-N. Leap-NAY, RW, EG, BW, MV-All In favor-Motion Carried

- Motion to approve the purchase of a transportable flow meter from Hartco Environmental LLC in the amount of \$11,058.00.-Discussion was held by BOC, Manager, DPW Director-All in Favor, Motion Carried
- R. Wielebinski, 2nd M. Velardi-Motion to adopt "Sourcewell" as part of the official procurement process policy-Discussion held by BOC. -All in Favor, Motion Carried

Township Events Report-Jennifer Gambino

- R. Wielebinski, 2nd M. Velardi-Made a motion to waive Pavilion Fee's for the Hamilton Day Lodge for July 30th -All in Favor, Motion Carried
- R. Wielebinski, 2nd M. Velardi-Made a motion to waive Pavilion Fee's for the Pocono Mountain East Jr. High Emotional Support for May 23rd. -All in Favor, Motion Carried
- R. Wielebinski, 2nd B. Winot- Made a motion to waive Pavilion Fee's for the Pocono Mountain East High School Volleyball Team for May 30th. -All in Favor, Motion Carried

Township Engineer Report-Jon Tresslar

- Sewer Business Update-No Update
- Learn Road safety enhancement project and roundabout survey work.-Discussion on easements, detour, and timeline.
- TASA Project-Discussion on easements & timeline
- Discussion on Shine Hill Rd traffic study. PW will install intersections & signs; N. Leap was in opposition.
- Discussion on Woodlands/Cranberry traffic study. PW will install intersections & signs.

Township Solicitor Report-Leo V. DeVito

- Sewer Business Update-No Update
- General legal update
- R. Wielebinski, M. Velardi,-Made a motion to Authorize the County to re-issue separate tax code numbers for each of the five separate lots for the Grace United Church of Christ in order to be put back on the tax rolls. Short presentation by Grace Church solicitor Jeff Durney & Discussion by BOC - All in Favor, Motion Carried
- Update – Archer Lane-Quick update as Mr. Archer has passed the court filing for the name change to "Estate of James Archer" has been filed.
- Learn Road Easement Process-Quick update on easements.
- TASA Sidewalk Update – Easements- Process-Quick update on easements

Public Comment

Cheryl Parks (Resident) – Brought up questions/comments on code enforcement, 1983 zoning map & validity on 1983 meeting notes. Further comments on Kennel hearing.

Charles Keppler (Resident) –Additional Facebook concerns for dial in meeting & the importance of connectivity

Matthew Long (Resident) – Voiced concerns over Facebook posting in regard to the "dead of the night" post. Apologized for being incorrect. Voiced concerns on comments from commissioners online & via text. Stated commissioners would not meet with them. Lengthy discussion on attendance at fishing derby & each other's versions of transparency.

Betsy Casiano (Resident) – Thanked current board & previous board on helping on Core 5 Stadden Rd property land development to be stopped. Praised positivity to board & thanked them for their service.

Adjournment – R. Wielebinski 2nd M. Velardi made a motion to adjourn the meeting 9:11 p.m. All in favor. Motion carried.