

**Elizabeth Township
Board of Commissioners
Monday, November 7, 2016
Commissioners' Meeting
Agenda**

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance & Moment of Silence

Roll Call

Commissioner Similo – Present
Commissioner Saxon – Present
Commissioner Kuzma – Present
Commissioner Beckowitz – Present
Commissioner Blake – Present
Commissioner Evans – Present
President Rhoderick – Present

Executive Session Acknowledgement: Solicitor Racunas acknowledges that there was an executive session held to discuss personnel and litigation items.

Bid Opening: Opening of bids received for Chapel Drive.

Bryan Churilla conducts bid openings:

Raffle Construction – \$167,700.00

Golon Inc. – \$77,535.00

Swede Construction Corp. – \$139,000.00

Liokareas Construction – \$132,000.00

CBF Contracting, Inc. – \$192,707.00

Freedom Enterprises – \$113,000.00

Presentation: Bennett Family to present awards to Sergeant, Gerald Cimba and Officer, Ronald Makosey. Linda & Bob Bennett recount the story of Bob Bennett's heart attack and how thankful they both were that Sergeant Cimba, Officer Makosey, Elizabeth Township Area EMS, & McKeesport Hospital were there to save his life.

Department Reports:

Code Enforcement – John Snelson states that all demos were completed and all structures have been torn down. There were several issues with the contractor that are being addressed and taken care of. President Rhoderick has directed John Snelson to look into an ordinance requiring the registration & inspection of commercial business within the Township on a yearly basis. John Snelson asks that the rental fee be waived for Stephanie Squibb for a wreath making event that is free to the public.

- **Motion to waive the rental fee for the Community Center for Stephanie Squibb to host a free wreath making event.**

1st Motion President Rhoderick

Second Commissioner Saxon

All in Favor: **Motion Carries**

President Rhoderick states that every house as of right now that is not demolished by a private resident must have an asbestos survey completed and remediation.

Engineer – Bryan Churilla states that his talking points are all listed on the agenda.

Police – Chief Kerestes states that there were 518 events logged by Allegheny County 911 for the Department for the month of October with 10 adult arrests, 2 juvenile arrests. Officers conducted 78 traffic stops and issued 16 traffic citations. Officers investigated 9 motor vehicle crashes, 5 reportable, 4 non-reportable, and 2 injuries.

A resolution designating the Capital Reserve Fund of Elizabeth Township for capital purchases, capital improvements and emergency needs.

1st Motion Commissioner Beckowitz **Second** Commissioner Blake
All in Favor: **Motion Carries**

A resolution to consolidate the Recreation Fund into the General Fund and keep funds designated for recreation purposes.

1st Motion Commissioner Beckowitz **Second** Commissioner Kuzma
All in Favor: **Motion Carries**

Items for Consideration:

1. Motion to approve the Commissioner Meeting Minutes from October 17, 2016.

1st Motion Commissioner Beckowitz **Second** Commissioner Evans
All in Favor: **Motion Carries**

2. Motion to approve the November 7, 2016 Bill Warrant in the amount of \$117,631.33 which includes \$1,449.13 for Sanitary Department payroll that will be reimbursed from Sanitary Funds.

1st Motion Commissioner Beckowitz **Second** Commissioner Blake
All in Favor: **Motion Carries**

3. Motion to approve the Sanitary Fund November 7, 2016 Bill Warrant in the amount of \$177,245.51.

1st Motion Commissioner Beckowitz **Second** Commissioner Blake
All in Favor: **Motion Carries**

4. Motion to advertise the sale of the Elizabeth Township Authority Building located at 2420 Greenock Buena Vista Road with minimum bid being \$125,000.00.

1st Motion Commissioner Beckowitz **Second** Commissioner Saxon

Motion to table motion to advertise the sale of the Elizabeth Township Authority Building located at 2420 Greenock Buena Vista Road with a minimum bid being \$125,000.00.

1st Motion Commissioner Evans **Second** Commissioner Saxon
All in Favor: **Motion Carries**

5. Motion to award the Penneman Drive Bridge Repairs to Thornbury, Inc. in the amount of \$15,000.00.

1st Motion Commissioner Saxon **Second** Commissioner Evans
All in Favor: **Motion Carries**

6. Motion to award the Arrow Drive Storm Sewer Outlet Repairs to Lawson Excavating, Inc. in the amount of \$4,750.00.

1st Motion Commissioner Kuzma **Second** Commissioner Blake
All in Favor: **Motion Carries**

7. Motion to execute the LogiTek, Inc. contract for the Property Tax Collection Software changing the billing from monthly to annually (Terms and conditions of contract remain the same).

1st Motion Commissioner Beckowitz **Second** Commissioner Kuzma

Commissioner Similo – Yes
Commissioner Saxon – Abstain, related to Tax Collector
Commissioner Kuzma – Yes
Commissioner Beckowitz – Yes
Commissioner Blake – Yes
Commissioner Evans – Yes
President Rhoderick – Yes

6:0, 1 Abstain, **Motion Carries**

8. Motion to pay Alpha Space Control \$1,536.78 for the emergency line painting of Weigles Hill Road.

1st Motion Commissioner Evans
All in Favor: **Motion Carries**

Second Commissioner Blake

9. Motion to purchase gift cards for all full-time employees for Thanksgiving as done in years past.

1st Motion Commissioner Beckowitz
All in Favor: **Motion Carries**
**Note- \$50.00 Gift cards*

Second Commissioner Blake

10. Motion to re-advertise for the open Assistant Public Works Employee with Inspection License in the Tribune Review and Pittsburgh Post-Gazette.

1st Motion Commissioner Beckowitz
All in Favor: **Motion Carries**

Second Commissioner Blake

11. Motion to advertise the 2016 Elizabeth Township Financial Audit for RFP.

1st Motion Commissioner Beckowitz
All in Favor: **Motion Carries**

Second Commissioner Kuzma

12. Motion to advertise the final 2017 Budget Workshop Meeting for November 14, 2016 at 6pm.

1st Motion Commissioner Beckowitz
All in Favor: **Motion Carries**

Second Commissioner Blake

13. Motion to advertise an ordinance vacating Lake Alley, a paper street near Clark Street and Washington Alley in Industry.

1st Motion Commissioner Kuzma
All in Favor: **Motion Carries**

Second Commissioner Beckowitz

14. Motion to authorize the Public Works Department to scrap the generator, no longer being used.

1st Motion Commissioner Beckowitz
All in Favor: **Motion Carries**

Second Commissioner Saxon

15. Motion to authorize payment of K9 related expenses for veterinary services and medication and membership to North American Police Work Dog Association out of the K9 Donation Fund totaling \$773.71.

1st Motion Commissioner Beckowitz
All in Favor: **Motion Carries**

Second Commissioner Blake

16. Motion to provide millings at the discretion of the Public Works Supervisor and if additional millings are requested the resident shall be charged \$100.00 per truck load delivered, not spread.

1st Motion Commissioner Kuzma
All in Favor: **Motion Carries**

Second Commissioner Blake

17. Motion to pay \$8,000.00 to get the CAD drawings necessary to complete the design phase for Act 537 Plan from Senate Engineering contingent upon Elizabeth Township not obtaining them through investigation in the next 7 days.

1st Motion Commissioner Saxon
Commissioner Similo – No
Commissioner Saxon – Yes
Commissioner Kuzma – Yes
Commissioner Beckowitz – Yes
Commissioner Blake – Yes
Commissioner Evans – Yes
President Rhoderick – Yes
6:1, **Motion Carries**

Second Commissioner Kuzma

President Rhoderick states that there has been chatter on social media in regards to transparency at the Township. He states that Commissioner Saxon has requested the line items of how much has been spent on the front office since January and asks if he received that information. Commissioner Saxon states that he has received some of it. President Rhoderick states that this year to this point the Township has spent about \$80,000.00. Comparing to this time last year, the Township had spent \$160,000.00 on the Administrative Staff salaries. \$6.8 million was spent last year and this year the Township is at about \$5 million. Vacation was paid to the former Township Manager one month before his one year anniversary date. President Rhoderick asks Commissioner Saxon if there was a reason why this decision was never brought in front of the Board of Commissioners when he was Chairman of the Personnel Committee. Commissioner Saxon asks why he didn't ask the President of the Board at the time and President Rhoderick responds because you were Chairman of the Personnel Committee. A part-time employee was also paid a week's vacation July 6th-10th that was not board approved. Several holidays were paid to a part-time employee that were also not board approved. Commissioner Saxon states that he found this information out the same time that President Rhoderick did.

18. Motion to turn over to the Allegheny County District Attorney and the PA State Attorney General for investigation in to all correspondence and information related to vacation and holiday pay that was paid to employees in 2015 and not board approved.

1st Motion President Rhoderick **Second** Commissioner Saxon

All in Favor: **Motion Carries**

Citizens to address items:

Theresa Szczerba – Theresa Szczerba speaks in regards to Highland Avenue, Ordinance 926. Highland Avenue is crucial to access her family's property. Theresa Szczerba wants to know why after 65 years of her family posting and maintaining Highland Avenue why it is just now being quietly vacated by the Township. Solicitor Racunas states that a Township cannot give a paper street to someone whether it's been vacated or not. The Township can either lay it out and make it a public roadway or vacate it and the joining property owners would each get half of that paper street. The Township vacating Highland Avenue would not take away any of the legal rights that Theresa Szczerba has obtained over time. There may be legal rights as far as adverse possession goes. If there is an issue accessing the property there may be a prescriptive easement that's not recorded, but you can't have a landlocked piece of property. Commissioner Similo asks about the location of Highland Avenue and informs Theresa Szczerba that he knows who owns the other half of the vacated street and that person would be happy to give her their half. Theresa Szczerba stresses that she needs the entire road or her driveway would have to be 1,000 feet long.

Paula Szczerba – Paula Szczerba states that she is interested in building a home on or developing 10 acres of land that connections to Highland Avenue. Highland Avenue was left by Paul Paula and Theresa Szczerba's parents who were the original owners so that there would be an access to the property. The Szczerba family has subdivided their land, sold land to the Elizabeth Township Sportsmen's Association, and allowed Nichols Hill Road expansion. Solicitor Racunas states that the issues may be already worked out and that the street is not the Township's to give. Legal rights to Highland Avenue may have already been obtained over years of maintaining and posting.

Jim Jones – Jim Jones speaks in regards to the Ordinance regarding controlling stray cats and that's there is still a big stray cat problem in the Howell Plan. Jim Jones asks what is being done about Skyvue Drive. President Rhoderick states that the project is out for bid currently and the bid opening will take place at the next Commissioner's meeting on November 21st.

Fred Bickerton – Asks that the Commissioners amend the E-code.

Patty Hoffman – Patty Hoffman states that she is looking for the most recent Comprehensive COG Plan and can only find one from December 2003. President Rhoderick states that there should be a plan done every ten years so there should be a newer one available. John Snelson states that he has a 2013 Comprehensive Plan for 2013. Patty Hoffman goes on to comment on the Halloween Parade held on

Saturday, October 29th. She states that she received feedback that day from parents and families that they really enjoyed the parade being on a Saturday and Halloween could be just Halloween on Monday the 31st. She states that the only downside was some traffic control issues and people not paying attention to cars getting through.

Commissioner Beckowitz thanks the Administrative Staff, the Public Works Department, the Police, the Fire Departments and EMS for putting together the Halloween Parade and Trunk or Treat Event on behalf of the Board.

Monique Saxon – Monique Saxon states that she is handing out paperwork corresponding to her unfulfilled RTK's to each member of the Board. She states that she thinks it is apparent tonight what the Township has been doing as opposed to fulfilling our Right-to-Knows.

Frank Sabolcik – States that he hasn't been to a Commissioner's meeting in years, Commissioner Similo and Commissioner Beckowitz have been his two Commissioners throughout his life living in the Township. He states that he's known Commissioner Saxon for a very long time. Frank Sabolcik states that he is embarrassed as a Township Resident and a taxpayer. The Board of Commissioners, Senate Engineers, the secretaries all work for him and everyone in the audience. We elect you. Frank Sabolcik directs to Lauren Zang, we pay you to be at this meeting. Lauren Zang states that she is a taxpayer too. Frank Sabolcik states but you work for this Township and therefore you are not entitled to your opinion, not as an employee. I expect you, Donald (Commissioner Similo), Joanne (Commissioner Beckowitz), & Paul (Commissioner Saxon) to look into this bullshit. Lauren Zang agrees there needs to be an investigation and that she would like the Commissioners to look into investigating the harassment that is taking place by a Commissioner and his spouse. I have all of the proof if needed and it is beyond RTK's. Commissioner Saxon states that he will gladly respond to this and first of all, a personnel issue or when things are requested that are personnel issues, I will not, my credibility is everything, I will not put my credibility on the line because if I do give her or them any information whether it's public information or not that deals with the personnel here, I would be getting lambasted. I don't give any information and when someone comes to me and asks me I tell them to fill out a right-to-know. You're a taxpayer and you have every right to know and there's laws that govern that right. Lauren Zang states that the Board of Commissioners also have an obligation to their employees. Solicitor Racunas states that the conversation is getting into personnel issues and is not appropriate for a public meeting. Monique Saxon talks from the audience again in regards to her unfulfilled RTK's. Lauren Zang states that there we 52 items in the RTK specifically on her employment and she is a cyber bully. Monique Saxon states I believe there is discrimination here. Lauren Zang agrees that there is discrimination.

Theresa Szczerba asks if she has the right to walk Highland Avenue to post no hunting signs on her property. Solicitor Racunas states there is nothing prohibiting her from posting signs on her own property.

President Rhoderick asks if Solicitor Racunas could assist with the County or other neutral firm look into the harassment claims at the Township. Solicitor Racunas states that he will look in to making some recommendations.

Motion to Adjourn:

1st Motion Commissioner Saxon

Second Commissioner Evans