

BLAIR TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
375 CEDARCREST DRIVE
DUNCANSVILLE, PA 16635

MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF NOVEMBER 09, 2021

Chairman Edward Silvetti called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the assembly in the salute to the flag.

Township elected officials and personnel present included Chairman Silvetti; Supervisor Paul Amigh II; Supervisor Robin Cadwallader; Secretary/Treasurer, Betty Robertson; Chief of Police, Roger White; Building Code and Ordinance Enforcement Officer, Donald Ott; Highway Foreman, John Reed; Township Engineer, representing Stiffler McGraw, Eric Banks; and Township Solicitor, Patrick Fanelli.

Visitors to the meeting included Jessica Sorge, HALAS, and Teddie Kreitz, representing Perry Properties, LLC.

It was announced that public comment is welcomed and invited in accordance with the Township of Blair policy and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Right-To-Know provisions and the Sunshine Act. All cell phones are to be silenced.

Supervisor Cadwallader made a motion to approve the minutes of the Monthly Business Meeting of October 19, 2021. Supervisor Amigh seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes of the October 19, 2021, Business Meeting passed with a unanimous vote.

Disbursements for the month of October were reviewed. Secretary/Treasurer Betty Robertson presented the report as follows: Payroll totaled \$47,954.22; General Fund disbursements and payroll liabilities for the month of October totaled \$174,295.19; Liquid Fuels, \$7,804.95 Local Services Tax, \$2,870.00 and Stormwater Management Fund \$22,499.74.

Supervisor Amigh made a motion to approve total October disbursements in the amount of \$255,424.10. Supervisor Cadwallader seconded the motion. The motion to approve the total September disbursements in the amount of \$255,424.10 passed with a unanimous vote.

Supervisor Cadwallader made a motion to approve the Treasury Balance for October 2021 of \$1,458,497.78. Supervisor Amigh seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Supervisor Cadwallader made a motion to approve the "Specific Services Investment Account Funds" Treasury Balance for October 2021 of \$114,564.02. Supervisor Amigh seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Chairman Silvetti called for public comment. Those in attendance, but not intending to address a listed agenda item, were asked to address the Supervisors.

Jessica Sorge reported on the **Hollidaysburg American Legion Ambulance Service**. She stated that to date this year the HALAS has responded to 173 calls in Blair Township. She reminded the assembly that there are numerous classes available to anyone wishing to attend. Flu shot clinics are available to those wishing to get flu shots. The annual membership drive will begin after Black Friday. The cost for a “household” membership is \$75.00 annually. The Supervisors thanked Jessica for the service that the HALAS provides to the community.

Eric Banks addressed the Smith/Dull Lot Line Relocation Plan as submitted by Andy Ebersole of Keller Engineers. Both County and Township Planning Commission reviews are outstanding. Supervisor Amigh made a motion to table the plan pending receipt of the reviews. Supervisor Cadwallader seconded the motion. The motion to **table the Smith/Dull Lot Line Relocation Plan** passed with a unanimous vote. The municipal review period will end on 02/12/22.

Teddie Kreitz, Certified Floodplain Manager, of Keller Engineers, representing property purchased by Perry Properties and located next to Leighty’s Boot Warehouse in Blair Township (Tax Parcel # 04.00-06.-025.01-000), offered comments. The owner is requesting approval from FEMA for a Letter of Map Amendment (**LOMA-F**). The Township is responsible to complete and sign Section A of the FEMA submission, assuring that fill previously placed on the property is in compliance with the Township’s Floodplain Ordinance. Eric Banks reviewed the initial submission and prepared review comments on July 7, 2021. He commented that the resubmitted documents appear to have addressed the comments in the July 7 letter. He noted that results of fill testing showed that the material is generally consistent with the floodplain requirement. Teddie indicated that the elevation was certified on 2.3 acres, with half being elevated above the flood zone. If approved by FEMA, the LOMA-F will relieve the need for flood insurance and bring the property into compliance with the Floodplain Ordinance, while still meeting building code requirements. Supervisor Amigh made a motion to **approve** completing and signing **Section A of the Community Acknowledgement Form** to be included in the FEMA application. Supervisor Cadwallader seconded the motion. The motion to approve completing and signing the submission passed with a unanimous vote.

The **2021 Auditor General’s Fireman’s Relief Funds** distribution was discussed. The Township received the funds on 09/17/21 and has 60-days to distribute. The amount of distribution is **\$25,288.51** and is routinely divided between the four local Volunteer Fire Companies: Duncansville, Freedom, Geeseytown, and Phoenix. Due to recent charges, arrests, and prosecutions of certain Officers of the Phoenix VFC, and representation at the October meeting from the Hollidaysburg Watch Dog Group, distribution was undecided at the October meeting. Following a discussion, the Supervisors agreed to distribute the funds evenly between the four VFCs. Chairman Silveti will draft a letter to be included with the distribution check indicating that regular financial reports and statements will be due to the Township. If fiscal accountability is not forthcoming, future distributions will be reconsidered in 2022. It is the Township’s understanding that the Borough of Hollidaysburg is also requiring regular financial statements from the PVFC. Supervisor Amigh indicated that he has concerns but agrees with the distribution as long as the letter is included with the distribution and that it is complied with. He also questioned the PVFC’s 501 (c) (3) status, noting it expired in 2019. Supervisor Amigh made a motion to **approve the equal distribution of the 2021 Fireman’s Relief Funds between Duncansville, Freedom, Geeseytown, and Phoenix Volunteer Fire Companies**, distribution to

include a fiscal compliance letter. Supervisor Cadwallader seconded the motion. The motion to distribute the 2021 Fireman's Relief Funds evenly among the four local VFC's passed with a unanimous vote.

Supervisor Amigh made a motion to approve advertising to appoint a CPA firm in place of the elected auditors for the 2021-year end DCED Audit. Supervisor Cadwallader seconded the motion. The motion to **advertise to appoint a CPA firm** for the **2021 DCED Audit** passed with a unanimous vote.

Chairman Silvetti stated that he has received one (very recent) **garbage collection complaint** in the eight years he has held office. After doing some research, he found that Section 331-9 (G) of the Code of Ordinances requires that pickup should be between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday. Discussion suggested that, due to the number of haulers contracted in the Township, it would be impossible to enforce this Ordinance.

Chairman Silvetti revisited the **proposal** from **Eric Banks** of Stiffler McGraw to estimate the engineering fees associated with the study of two specific **stormwater** locations: 1003 Gordon Lane and 733 Cedarcrest Drive. He commented that a legal opinion has already determined that the Township has no legal obligation to fix stormwater issues on private property. Supervisor Amigh commented that should the Township begin to address individual stormwater issues the Township could be overwhelmed by additional private stormwater issues and requests.

Solicitor Fanelli commented that the procedural part of the amendment to Blair Township **Ordinance 2010-02** relating to the burial of deceased persons on private family burial grounds is complete, asking for clarification as to whether the Board wishes to prohibit burial or to allow exceptions. The Supervisors agreed that the recommendation is to prohibit. With that decision being made, the Ordinance will be advertised for adoption at the December 14th meeting.

A discussion regarding a vacant lot located on **Brooks Boulevard**, known as the Walter lot (formerly, Benton), was tabled at the October meeting, pending review of Blair Township Planning Commission minutes. The minutes referenced a different parcel of ground on Brooks Boulevard, not the parcel being discussed. It was decided that the Walters could go through the legal process of having the lot lines removed, creating one lot. The combined lot size will be 66' x 130'. The Walters are requesting a permit to place a 13' x 6' x 66' mobile home on the lot. Once the lot merger is done, placement of the mobile home would need to be approved; a rear variance may be needed to do so. No formal action was taken.

Chief White addressed the Supervisors commenting that effective December 2, **Patrol Officer Matthew Fleck** is eligible, as per the Collective Bargaining Agreement, to be promoted from Patrol Officer 1 to Patrol Officer 2. This is a wage increase from \$22.56 to \$27.36. Officer Fleck has an exemplary record and is to receive a Top Gun Award from the County of Blair for DUI arrests. Supervisor Amigh made a motion to promote Officer Fleck from Patrol Officer 1 to Patrol Officer 2 effective December 2, 2021. Supervisor Cadwallader seconded the motion. The motion to **promote Officer Fleck to Patrol Officer 2, effective December 02, 2021**, passed with a unanimous vote.

Computer Maintenance and Support Agreements were prepared by A. J. Delorme for the Blair Township Municipal Office and the Police Department. The agreement and the costs remain the same as the current Agreement(s). The Agreement(s) will commence on January 01, 2022, and run through December 31, 2022. The Municipal Office monthly fee is \$135.00. The Police Department monthly fee is \$135.00 plus \$25.00 for Metro Alert backup. Supervisor Amigh made a motion to **approve the Computer Maintenance and Support Agreements for 2022**. Supervisor Cadwallader seconded the motion. It was noted that the Township is very pleased with the service that A. J. provides. The motion to approve the Agreements passed with a unanimous vote.

Betty reviewed **draft budget** summaries she had prepared for fiscal year **2022**. No real estate millage increase is factored into the draft budgets. Narratives were reviewed in some detail for each of the seven budgets presented. As in the past, Police Department and Highway Department major expenditures are budgeted through Local Service Tax revenue and major highway expenditures through the Liquid Fuels Fund. The General Fund covers all day-to-day expenditures and overhead and is always presented in a worst-case scenario. Wage increases are factored at 2.5%. Payroll deductions include 5% of each employee's healthcare insurance premium. Healthcare insurance premiums are not available to date, but they were budgeted with a projected increase from 2021. Chairman Silveti expressed his concerns with never having completed the establishment and filling of the position of township manager. To do so in 2022 would require a significant real estate tax increase. The complexity of managing Blair Township municipal government operations, in his opinion, dictates strengthening management capacity. He concluded that the budget, as presented, is as good as it can be, but that it has shortcomings because of revenue constraints, noting that, while a decision of last resort, supervisors have the responsibility to ensure an adequate revenue stream to meet Township needs. Chairman Silveti made a motion to advertise the 2022 draft budgets for public inspection. Supervisor Amigh seconded the motion. The motion to **approve advertising the 2022 draft budgets** passed with a unanimous vote.

Chairman Silveti made a motion to approve the appointment of Robin Cadwallader to a five-year term on the Blair Township Water and Sewer Authority Board, effective January 01, 2022. Supervisor Amigh seconded the motion. Supervisor Cadwallader abstained due to a conflict of interest. The motion to **appoint Robin Cadwallader to a five-year term on the Blair Township Water and Sewer Authority Board** passed with two-yes votes.

Other Business:

Chairman Silveti stated that the **Blair Township Water and Sewer Authority** is considering **bond debt refinancing**. The refinancing is projected to save approximately \$85,000 over the life of the debt. Further information will be available in the future, pending a decision from the BTWSA.

Chairman Silveti called for other business and public discussion.

Minutes of Monthly Meeting of November 09, 2021
Blair Township Supervisors

There being no further business, Supervisor Amigh made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Supervisor Cadwallader seconded the motion. The motion to adjourn passed with a unanimous vote. The meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by

Betty Robertson
Secretary