

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

MINUTES OF THE MONTHLY MEETING OF NOVEMBER 12, 2024

Chairman Paul Amigh called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and led the assembly in the salute to the flag.

Township elected officials and personnel included Chairman Paul Amigh, Supervisor, Brad Germaux; Supervisor, Lou Lusk; Secretary/Treasurer Kami Bilek; Police Chief Roger Peacock; Road Foreman John Reed; representing Stiffler McGraw, Eric Banks; Solicitor Patrick Fanelli, Esq.; and Auditor, Jacob Wible.

Visitors present were CDBG Grant Coordinator, Dodie Amigh, Mike Lockard, representing Metz Builders; Jeffrey Cipriani, Patrick Schurr, and Mark Ickes representing Explore Altoona, Jane Sheffield, regarding the 9/11 Memorial Trail, and John P. Harker and Terri Harker, regarding possible subdivision on Harker Farm Lane.

Public comment is welcome and invited in accordance with the Township policy and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Right to Know provisions and Sunshine Act.

Supervisor Germaux made a motion to **approve the minutes of the Monthly Business Meeting of October 08, 2024** with no additions or corrections. Supervisor Lusk seconded the motion. The motion to approve passed with a unanimous vote.

Disbursements for the month of October: Payroll \$38,892.18; General Fund disbursements and payroll liabilities \$207,721.32; Liquid Fuels \$233.94; and Local Services Tax Account, \$1,756.91.

Supervisor Germaux made a motion to **approve the total October disbursements in the amount of \$243,604.35**. Supervisor Lusk seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Supervisor Germaux made a motion to **approve the Treasury Balance for October 2024 of \$1,850,957.43**. Supervisor Lusk seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Supervisor Germaux made a motion to approve the **“Specific Service Investment Account Funds” Treasury Balance for October 2024 of \$170,576.96**. Supervisor Lusk seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Supervisor Germaux made a motion to approve the **FNB Credit Card Statement** for the month of October in the amount of \$309.39. Supervisor Lusk seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Supervisor Germaux made a motion to approve the **Wex Bank/Sunoco Fuel Cards** in the amount of \$1,944.13. Supervisor Lusk seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Amigh invited public comment. At this time Jane Sheffield, Executive Director of the Allegheny Ridge Corporation took the floor to discuss her recommendation that the Township allows the placement of signage along the September 11th National Memorial trail that spans six municipalities including Blair Township. Ms. Sheffield showed examples of the signs to the Board of Supervisors and stated that they would be placed along the roads and indicating where to turn to follow the route. She stated that the signs and placement are approved and certified through PennDOT. Road Foreman John Reed and the road crew will place the signs where indicated on the provided map. The signs are expected to be placed prior to December 2024. Chairman Amigh asked for any questions, and there were none. No formal action was necessary.

John P. Harker questioned the Board of Supervisors about a proposed subdivision on Harker Farm Lane. Engineer Eric Banks reported that no plans have been formally submitted for the proposed subdivision to date. Both Mr. John P. Harker and Ms. Terri Harker voiced their desire to discuss the proposed project. Mr. Harker questioned the size requirements for the road leading to the properties, and Eric reported that since it's a private lane, there are no requirements. Mr. Harker questioned if he has a right-of-way to his property, which is located in the back, and wanted to make sure that a potential subdivision would not change that. Eric explained that there is an access easement to his property that will remain and is shown on the preliminary sketch plan that was shown to the Supervisors. Mr. Harker questioned how many parcels are allowed off of the existing private road, and Chairman Amigh reiterated what was said at the October monthly Supervisors meeting, which is that the ordinance requirements for private roads were put in place for new developers to be accountable for providing appropriate roads rather than attempting to circumvent the road requirements by putting additional homes on a shared private drive. Chairman Amigh stated that the developer would need to request a waiver of the shared drive ordinance in order to allow the subdivision. He stated that in the prior meeting, the Supervisors took no issue with that proposal if it is submitted as discussed. Ms. Harker asked the Supervisors why they don't feel the road needs to be a certain width, as a private drive, and shared concerns that she believes the property to be built will operate as a business, and the road will be used to supply that business. Chairman Amigh reiterated that the Township has not received any plans to date. He stated that the Township has no zoning laws; Therefore, it would be within the right of the homeowner to put a business on the property. Eric Banks stated that if the homeowner applies for a commercial building permit, at that time it would trigger a land development review by the Township that would address the roadway, access for a commercial facility, and other things. Eric again stated that nothing has been submitted to the Township for review to date. Ms. Harker then questioned who would review and approve the subdivision plans. Eric stated that as the Township Engineer he would review the plans, and it would be up to the board for approval. Ms. Harker asked Eric if he would stand down and stated that she believes he worked with John Harker before. Eric stated that he had personally never worked with John Harker, and an independent surveyor is preparing the plans so there would be no conflict. Chairman Amigh then stated that the agenda can be accessed online, so that if the subdivision plans are submitted to the Township, Mr. and Mrs. Harker will know when it is on for review and discussion. He also stated that they could call into the office with any questions, and Mrs. Harker stated that they did previously come into the office to discuss their concerns. Mr. Harker then asked if the Township had an ordinance regarding Solar Panels. Solicitor Fanelli gave a brief overview of the recently implemented Solar Ordinance. Mr. Harker stated that he was approached about a solar farm on his property. Secretary Kami Bilek offered to provide a copy of the Ordinance if they request it.

Mark Ickes, Executive Director of Explore Altoona took the floor to discuss the intention of the Blair County Commissioners to decertify Explore Altoona as the tourism promotion agency for Blair County. Mr. Ickes introduced Mr. Jeff Sipriani and Mr. Patrick Shore and turned the podium to Mr. Sipriani at this time. Mr. Sipriani addressed the Board of Supervisors, stating that he has been the General Manager of the Hampton Inn for the past twenty-six years. He states that because the area is so small, area hotel managers rely upon a Destination Marketing Organization to is focused like a laser on bringing business to the area. He stated that Explore Altoona has always done a great job with marketing outside of the area to places as far away as Washington DC and Harrisburg. He feels strongly that his staff would be negatively impacted by a less resourceful Direct Marketing Organization, or no Marketing Organization at all, because guest stays would decrease. He also states that local businesses would be impacted negatively, as well. Mr. Ickes shared the positive impact that Explore Altoona has had on the local hotels and businesses, and again asked for the Supervisor's support in voting against the Resolution, decertifying Explore Altoona. Mr. Patrick Shore took to the podium and provided two letters from small business owners and board members of Explore Altoona. He discussed the letters of support from additional hoteliers and from outside agencies such as the Mishler Theater, Altoona Symphony Theater, the Blair County Historical Society, and the Altoona Community Theater. These letters were sent to the Blair County Commissioners and were ignored. Mr. Shore explained that the people that they represent do not want the Commissioners to decertify Explore Altoona. Mr. Shore stated that the Commissioners would move toward the improvement and building of outdoor trails and recreational facilities, which would go against Act 18 Hotel Tax purposes, which is solely for the promotion and marketing of existing businesses and facilities. Mr. Shore provided information on the money that is spent on marketing specific trails and outdoor recreation. He also asked that the Board of Supervisors vote against the resolution for decertification of Explore Altoona. Supervisor Lusk asked how the Agency came to fruition. It was explained that the County had created this organization in 1963. The County had named them as the official tourism and marketing agency for Blair County. Supervisor Lusk asked if they are affiliated with the Blair County Convention Center, and Mr. Sipriani stated that they partner with the Convention Center to promote activities within the center. There were no further questions.

At this time, Ms. Harker requested that a notarized copy of the approved minutes to be provided to her and requested specifically the response of Engineer Eric Banks, stating that he had not worked with John Harker in the past.

Chairman Amigh asked for any additional public comment, and there was none.

The **Greendown Acres Site Expansion** plan as prepared by Clearwell Engineering was discussed. The proposed plan is located at 210 Allen Ln. Duncansville. The plan has been submitted to Blair Planning for review. Stiffler McGraw submitted their review letter on October 16, 2024. Eric banks reported that no new information has been received. He requests the Supervisors table the plan.

Supervisor Germaux made a motion to **table the Greendown Acres Site Expansion Plan**. Supervisor Lusk seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote. The municipal review period ends on January 11, 2025.

The Eads Group has submitted the **Craig & Melissa Plants** stormwater plan for Metz Builders. The proposed new home is located at 726 Pete's Way, in the Pleasantview Phase 6 development, Lot 4. The total proposed earth disturbance is 35,000 square feet, requiring a stormwater plan to be submitted for approval by the Board of Supervisors. The plan has been submitted to Blair Planning

for review. Eric Banks reported that he has been working closely with the Eads Group to address all outstanding comments from the Stiffler McGraw review letter dated 7, 2024. He stated that the builder is requesting infiltration testing to be done during construction. Eric stated that he spoke with Solicitor Fanelli and it was decided that if they do the infiltration testing during construction, the cost estimate should reflect that in the financial security, and a Developer's Agreement should be completed if that is the case. Mike Lockard from Metz Builders discussed the outstanding items, and stated that with the upcoming winter weather, they would like to break ground as soon as possible. He stated that they have all been working with the Engineers to make sure all the items are being addressed as quickly as possible. Eric Banks recommends conditional approval upon satisfying all items in the review letter, a Developer's Agreement being submitted, and receipt of financial security. Solicitor Fanelli voiced his satisfaction with a conditional approval, as well.

Supervisor Germaux made a motion to **conditionally approve the Craig & Melissa Plants stormwater plan** with the stipulation that all outstanding items from the Stiffler McGraw review letter are met. Supervisor Lusk seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Secretary, Kami Bilek reported that the incorrect amounts were used in the calculation of **Pension Minimum Municipal Obligation** amount due for 2024. The estimated 2025 numbers were used, rather than the 2024 numbers. The total due is \$107,579.00. The corrected cost to the Township was reported as \$ \$25,624.57, but the correct amount is \$622.57.

Supervisor Germaux made a motion to **approve the corrected amount due to PMRS**. Supervisor Lusk seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Secretary Kami Bilek reported that she met with a representative from Knepper insurance on November 5, who presented the 2025 Employee Health Insurance and Hospitalization rates. She spoke with the Union Representative of the Blair Township Police Department to discuss the changes, and there were no concerns regarding the 2025 Health Insurance. The plans that were presented are in line with the plans that were offered in previous years. There is a 10.3% increase in the plan that is currently in place. Alternate Plan 1 has a 4.9% decrease, but has a much smaller service area of physicians, Alternate Plan 2 has an increase of 4.1% over the current rates and is an HMO rather than a EPO. Kami recommended staying with the current plan.

Kami reported that the vision and dental plans have not changed for 2024, and the cost to the Township remains the same.

Supervisor Germaux made a motion to **approve staying with the current health insurance plan for 2025**. Supervisor Lusk seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Supervisor Germaux made a motion to **approve staying with the current vision and dental plan**. Supervisor Lusk seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Brian Smith of Keller Engineers submitted a letter to the Blair Township Board of Supervisors regarding a property identified by Tax Parcel 09.00-04.-032.04-000 and Project No. 17-0001.230, asking for the Board of Supervisors to sign and complete two sections of the Community Acknowledgement Form. The request is to remove a parcel from the floodway, as the elevation is higher than the current floodway line. Eric Banks recommends tabling the request pending additional

information. Chairman Amigh asked who is required to check the fill to make sure that it's clean fill. Eric stated that he had requested that the Engineer show evidence of clean fill and stabilization.

Supervisor Germaux made a motion to **table the request to sign the Community Acknowledgement form**. Supervisor Lusk second the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Secretary Kami Bilek reported that per the Credit Card Policy that was adopted at the October 8, 2024 meeting, the Board of Supervisors are asked to approve any employee that will have access to credit cards. Kami reported that John Reed, Roger Peacock, and Kami Bilek currently hold cards for First National Bank (FNB). The cards for Kami and John are kept locked at the Township Office and Chief Peacock's is held at the BT Police Department until needed. Kami reported that she holds a Sam's Club Credit card and listed the Wex Bank Fleet gas cards that are held by the Police Department, and the Highway Department, and the Township Codes Vehicle.

Supervisor Germaux made a motion to **approve John Reed, Roger Peacock, and Kami Bilek to hold FNB credit cards**. Supervisor Lusk seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Supervisor Germaux made a motion to **approve Kami Bilek to hold a Sam's Club credit card**. Supervisor Lusk seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Supervisor Germaux made a motion to **approve Chief Roger Peacock, Sergeant Jim Brantner, and Patrol Officers Nate Hale, Eric Calhoun, and Bryce Martellacci to hold Wex Bank Fleet gas cards**. Supervisor Lusk seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Supervisor Germaux made a motion to **approve Road Foreman John Reed, Lou Legory, Dave Smith, and Todd Lynn to hold Wex Bank Fleet gas cards**. Supervisor Lusk seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Supervisor Germaux made a motion to approve a **Wex Bank Fleet gas card to be held in the Codes Vehicle under John Reed's name**. Supervisor Lusk seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

A revised variance agreement was submitted to the Township for the placement of a shed on the property owned by Tom and Dianne Churbock located at 1801 N. Juniata Street. The Board of Supervisors had previously approved a Variance Request on September 10, 2024. Since then, Tom and Dianne had found that the size of the proposed shed exceeded the requirements for a fifteen (15) foot side lot setback, rather than the eight (8) feet previously shown. A revised variance request was submitted for approval and reviewed by Solicitor Fanelli.

Supervisor Germaux made a motion to **approve the Revised Churbock Variance Agreement**. Supervisor Lusk seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Secretary/Treasurer Kami Bilek presented the proposed budget, asking for approval to advertise the proposed budget as presented for public inspection. Kami reported the breakdown as follows: 2025 General Fund projected revenue is \$1,810,862; projected carryover from 2024 is \$275,000; projected expenditures are \$1,625,067 with an ending balance of \$460,795. 2025 Liquid Fuels projected revenue is \$158,199 based on the notice of estimated allocation from the State; projected carryover from 2024 is \$224,182; projected expenditures are \$188,985 with a projected ending balance of \$193,396. 2025 Capital Reserve projected income is \$70,186; projected carryover from 2024 is \$703,705; projected expenditures are \$138,250 with a projected ending balance of \$635,641. 2025 Local Service Tax projected income is

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\$116,500; projected carryover from 2024 is \$235,571; projected expenditures are \$117,524 with a projected ending balance of \$234,547. 2025 Stormwater Management projected income is \$289,686, which includes an expected ARPA transfer from the ARPA account; projected carryover from 2024 is \$36,612; projected expenditures is \$30,232 with a projected ending balance of \$296,066. 2025 Act 32 2012 proposed income is \$73,825; projected carryover from 2024 is \$79,040; projected expenditures are \$73,000 with a projected ending balance of \$79,865. Chairman Amigh asked for any questions or comments, and there were none.

Supervisor Germaux made a motion to **approve advertising the proposed 2025 budget for public inspection**. Supervisor Lusk seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Under informational items, it was reported that the Township received the reimbursement for the Boom Mower in the amount of \$138,775 on November 8, 2024. This amount comes from the CDBG Grant that was awarded in 2023, but the Boom Mower was unavailable at that time. The Mower with Boom attachment was delivered to the Township in July 2024, and paid for with Township funds, at which time a reimbursement request was submitted to the State.

Chairman Amigh called for other business at this time. Chief Peacock requested permission as required by the Credit Card Policy to use his FNB Credit Card to make a purchase over \$500. He would like to purchase ammunition for the Blair Township Police Department in the amount of \$639.00. This was not listed as an item on the agenda because Chief Peacock had gotten the pricing for the ammunition less than twenty-four hours before the Supervisors meeting.

Supervisor Germaux made a motion to **approve the purchase of ammunition on the FNB Credit Card**. Supervisor Lusk seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

At this time, Chairman Amigh made a motion to **amend the November 10, 2024 Monthly Meeting Agenda to include Resolution No. 2024-09**, regarding the Statewide Local Share Account Statewide Program grant from the Commonwealth Financing Authority to be used for the Mountain Home Community Park. The item was not included on the Agenda, because the request was made less than twenty-four hours prior to the Supervisors meeting, and after the agenda had been posted for public review. Supervisor Germaux seconded the motion. The motion to amend the agenda passed with a unanimous vote.

Visitor Dodie Amigh reported that she met with Chris Foster from Stiffler McGraw this morning and reported that the Township was not accepted for the previously submitted grant in 2024, but she was informed that there is a Statewide Local Share Account Program Grant available. Dodie reported that the grant application must be submitted before November 30, 2024. Stiffler McGraw submitted a proposed Resolution, Resolution No. 2024-09 to the Township, as well as a request for a letter stating that the Township will match \$25,000 of grant money received, to be used for the Mountain Home Community Park Project. Dodie also stated that the cost of the project had decreased from \$550,000 to \$375,000 by restructuring the project and removing unnecessary items in order to make the grant application more competitive. Letters of support from State legislature and other organizations have been requested, and Dodie reported that she will be resubmitting the cover letter to, as she stated, "Add more heart to it" and explain how much it will mean to the community.

Chairman Amigh made a motion to **Approve Resolution No. 2024-09 and to sign the letter indicating the Township will submit a partial match to the grant in the amount of \$25,000**. Supervisor Germaux seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

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Chairman Amigh called for other business, and there being none, Supervisor Germaux made a motion to **adjourn the meeting of November 12, 2024**. Supervisor Lusk seconded the motion. The motion to adjourn passed with a unanimous vote. The meeting was adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by

Kami Bilek

Secretary