

Rush Township Building
Hometown, PA 18252

Minutes of the Rush Township Board of Supervisors

A meeting was held at the Rush Township Municipal Building on September 26, 2024, at 7:00 PM. In attendance were Chairman Shawn Gilbert; Vice Chairman Robert Leibensperger; Supervisor George Gerhard; Jeaninne Motroni, Temporary Secretary; Chris Riedlinger, Solicitor; Bill McMullen, Engineer; Rick Weaver, Police Chief.

Chairman Shawn Gilbert called the meeting to order.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Police Report – A Motion was made by Chairman Gilbert to approve the Police Report for the month of September 2024. Vice-Chairman Leibensperger approved; Supervisor Gerhard seconded. Jeaninne Motroni polled the board. All members voted in favor of the motion; motion carried.

Fire Company Report – A Motion was made by Chairman Gilbert to approve the Fire Company Report for the month of September 2024. Vice-Chairman Leibensperger approved; Supervisor Gerhard seconded. Jeaninne Motroni polled the board. All members voted in favor of the motion; motion carried.

Minutes of Previous Meeting – A Motion was made by Chairman Gilbert to approve the previous meeting minutes of August 2024. Vice-Chairman Leibensperger approved; Supervisor Gerhard seconded. Jeaninne Motroni polled the board. All members voted in favor of the motion; motion carried.

Treasurer's Report – Not Treasurers report.

Approval of municipal reports (sewer, road, Arro, Prodesign)- A Motion was made by Chairman Gilbert to approve the municipal reports for August 2024. Vice-Chairman Leibensperger approved; Supervisor Gerhard seconded. Jeaninne Motroni polled the board. All members voted in favor of the motion; motion carried.

Correspondence – 141 Claremont Ave sink hole was discussed and the Solicitor stated that he researched the problem and found that the township never laid the pipe, therefore the township is not responsible. He then asked if the homeowner or the person who wrote the letter were present, but they were not. Chris Reidlinger then asked if anyone would like to speak to this issue, no one came forward.

Attorney's Business – Chris Reidlinger spoke about the tax-exempt hearing he attended earlier in the week and is expecting a favorable decision soon.

Old Business – None

New Business-

- 1. A motion was made by Chairman Gilbert for a discussion of Rush Township taking over SR 1015 from PennDOT and the Reading Railroad with the idea of possibly creating a turnaround amongst other uses.**

There was a very lengthy discussion which included all members of the board, Matt Johnson, the representative in attendance from the Reading Railroad and the residents from Golf Rd. on the township's involvement of the takeover of SR 1015 by the township.

There are several options on the table at this time about all the issues that need to be looked at before the board decides. That intersection on SR1015 is #8 of the most dangerous railroad crossings out of the 3,200 within the state. The no cost turnback program would pay the township \$4,000 a year starting 2025 while right now the township collects no liquid fuels money for this road even though they maintain it during snowstorms because it is not a priority for PennDOT. Rachele Evanousky questioned what Liquid fuels was; it was then explained by Bill McMullen as: "every time you fill your car with fuel, a small portion of the tax money goes to the township for road maintenance".

Resident Paul Kerestus questioned why the railroad removed the inner track instead of the other track, Matt explained that the railroad usually leaves the mainline in place. All the residents indicated that that intersection is used consistently by the residents. The railroad and PennDOT want the intersection gone while the townships concern is Golf road and its access for the residents who live along it. If the township does not want to take over the road, the state would look at the options keeping in mind there would need to be an 80' turnaround. The PUC is the decision maker along with the railroad and would ultimately decide the outcome.

Supervisor Gilbert questioned who is responsible for the improvement prior to the township taking it over. Matt Johnson stated he believes PennDOT would absorb the costs. If the township takes over SR1015 they would receive \$4,000 every year compared to the \$3,100 the township would receive for liquid fuels. Joe Evanousky questioned if any other options given, they are the taxpayers and PennDOT was spending \$*** in St. Clair. They don't want the road closed he said the Railroad looks like it was doing very well right now were any other options considered. Matt Johnson said they considered a back up ramp at the crossing but nothing further. Matt Johnson stated that the railroads responsibility ends at the tracks. Mr. Evanousky stated that he just had new tires and wheel alignment done on his car and that he called 3 times to have them looked at, but nothing was ever done. Matt Johnson said that he would have some cold patch put in to fix the holes.

Resident**** said that if the ambulance must go the long way around, it adds to the response time and that could result in loss of life. It was then decided that there needs to be further investigation done before a decision could be made, Vice-Chairman Robert Leibensperger made the motion; seconded by Supervisor Gerhard. Jeaninne Motroni polled the board. All members voted in favor of the motion; motion carried.

- 2. A motion was made for a discussion of Rush Township sponsor a DCED grant: LSA0 for the Tamaqua Ambulance Association.**

The head of the Tamaqua Ambulance stated that if the grant is not applied for the ambulance may not be in service much longer. He requested a letter like Tamaqua of support for the grant. Robert said the Rush Township will give a letter of support of the grant. This was not the way it was presented to him about the grant. Shawn asked who else is in the response area and what did they do. TJ said everyone keeps kicking the issue down the line and not commit the assistant. Robert said if they only want a letter, the Township will give the letter of support. There was a discussion about the data of response times and the scratched calls, Shawns, Robert and George discussed which unit would respond and George stated that he wanted Tamaqua to be the sole provides for the Township. George stated that if there is an incident at Tuscorara the ALS unit would come from Hazleton and not Tamaqua even though there is a unit sitting in Tamaqua. Ryan township was not able to be present at the meeting for this discussion because he is the president of the school board. Gilbert would like to sit down with all parties involved and have an in-depth discussion before any decisions are made. George questioned what support Senator Argall gave the township. Both Shawn and George stated they both have their own data that supports their argument.

Gilbert made a motion to reinstate Ryan Township as a provider for the township. Both Gilbert and Leibensperger trusted his call. Gilbert stated that if there are multiple incidents within the Tamaqua limits, Rush Township would be out in the cold for assistance. Robert stated that that he was willing to bring everyone together and discuss the issues.

Shawn made a motion to reinstate Ryan Township until the meeting to discuss the issue can be further discussed with all involved. George keeps repeating that the data shows Ryan

Jackie Varner – Are we done with the drama and gave an example of a situation when her father dropped over with a massive heart attack, and they could get no help. Ryan township was not able to help them and that is who was on the run card.

Barry Messerschmidt- Fire Chief Hometown said that years back both organizations were well established. Now volunteerism is down so keeping Ryan township manned is hard.

Robert stated that residents near the Ryan township questioned why, if their ambulance is up the street why they can't respond. He also pointed out the Gerhard took McAdoo off the run cards and now he wants them added back. Leibensperger asked if Gerhard could get a meeting set up, and he said he would try. Gerhard asked them if he was allowed to speak, and Gilbert told him he could talk at any time. A meeting will be tentatively set for Thursday October 3rd at 6:30pm at the township building. It is to be attended by all organizations involved and a decision will be made at that meeting.

Leibensperger made a motion to designate that both ambulances are to service the Rush township area through the 911 center until the meeting next Thursday when a permanent decision will be made.

As a result, the current motion on the agenda is tabled.

- 3. A motion was made by Chairman Gilbert to adopt Resolution 2024-16 regarding tub grinder fees.**
- 4. A motion was made by Chairman Gilbert to approve the mutual general release, settlement and agreement and execute same relating to ceasing of operation of the North Schuylkill Landfill Association.**

5. **A motion was made by Chairman Gilbert to adopt ordinance 217 establishing the requirements for use of the organic re-cycling facility.** Vice-Chairman Leibensperger approved; Supervisor Gerhard seconded. Jeaninne Motroni polled the board. All members voted in favor of the motion; motion carried.
6. **A motion was made by Chairman Gilbert to approve and authorize the signature of M-950AA forms for sidewalks and stormwater, Traffic Signal Maintenance Agreement and TE-160 related to traffic signal improvements at the intersection of Tide Road and SR 0309 being undertaken as part of and by the Wawa site developers.** Vice-Chairman Leibensperger approved; Supervisor Gerhard seconded. Jeaninne Motroni polled the board. All members voted in favor of the motion; motion carried.
7. **A motion was made to adopt Resolution 2024-15 as it relates to the traffic signal maintenance agreement.** Vice-Chairman Leibensperger approved; Supervisor Gerhard seconded. Jeaninne Motroni polled the board. All members voted in favor of the motion; motion carried.
8. **A motion was made to hire Jeaninne Motroni as temporary township secretary at a rate of \$20/hr.** Vice-Chairman Leibensperger approved; Supervisor Gilbert seconded, Jeaninne Motroni polled the board: Chairman Gilbert and Vice- Chairman Leibensperger voted in favor of the motion, with Supervisor Gerhard voting no; motion carried.
9. **A motion was made by Chairman Gilbert to accept the resignation of Kristen Woleslagle effective September 20,2024.** Vice-Chairman Leibensperger accepted the resignation but not the reasoning behind the resignation; Supervisor Gerhard seconded. Jeaninne Motroni polled the board. All members voted in favor of the motion; motion carried.
10. **A motion was made by Chairman Gilbert to accept the resignation of Sydney Woleslagle effective September 20,2024.** Vice-Chairman Leibensperger accepted the resignation but not the reasoning behind the resignation; Supervisor Gerhard seconded. Jeaninne Motroni polled the board. All members voted in favor of the motion; motion carried.

Public Comment-

Dave Ceci asked about the sewer project on Oak St and was informed it was moving forward and about the status of Wawa. He was told that he was involved in the planning, but it is moving forward. However, there probably would not be anything that the eye can see until next year this time because of the provisions in place from PennDOT.

SUPERVISORS COMMENT-

The Trunk or Treat has been cancelled this year because of lack of manpower. Trick or Treat will be held in the Township on Saturday October 26th from 5p-8p

ADJOURNMENT- HAVE A GREAT NIGHT!