

Ross Township Commissioners Meeting  
1000 Ross Municipal Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15237  
August 4, 2014  
7:30 p.m.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Grant Montgomery, David J. Mikec, Paul Trilli, Jeremy Shaffer, John Sponcer, Stephen Korbel, Grace Stanko and Lana Mazur

**ABSENT:** Daniel L. DeMarco and Junior Commissioner Jake Stanton

**SOLICITOR:** Bonnie Brimmeier, Esq.

**TOWNSHIP MANAGER:** Douglas Sample (via telephone)

**FINANCE DIRECTOR:** Dawn Lane

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*Pledge of Allegiance/Invocation*

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**PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS - None**

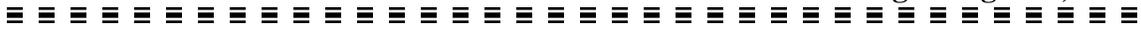
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**PETITIONS AND COMPLAINTS:**

**Phil Gavasto, 408 Forest Avenue – Re: Properties on Balsam Street**

Mr. Phil Gavasto, 408 Forest Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15202, addressed the Board regarding problems with residents at 1 Balsam Avenue. He indicated several of his neighbors also have concerns with activity at that property. Some of their concerns involve profanity, fighting, animal torture, pit bulls getting loose and the general condition of the property.

Mr. Hankins indicated violation notices have been sent to separate buildings in the area. Mr. Hankins also stated a real estate agent is actively trying to sell Nos. 1 through 8 on Balsam, which are multiple rental duplexes. Mr. Gavasto also stated there were issues with garbage, foul language and issues of suspected drug use.



Discussion ensued. Chief Bellan indicated the properties have been a source of problems over the years. He also advised Mr. Gavasto and his neighbors to call the police when there are issues.

Upon inquiry by Commissioner Mikec if there was such a thing as a “nuisance residence,” Ms. Brimmeier responded as follows:

MS. BRIMMEIER: "I don't know off the top of my head, but I doubt it. I've not seen that. But we can certainly look at that. I made a note to look to see if we can do something like that as like the nuisance bar, if you have X-amount of police calls within a certain period, so let me look at that with our police chief."

Commissioner Shaffer commented that one piece of adjacent property is owned by the township and another qualifies for the vacant lot program. By the township purchasing the one property and demolishing the house, the possibility exists for a corner park area. Commissioner Montgomery suggested Mr. Hankins talk to the real estate agent and advise him of those two properties, also. Commissioner Mikec stated the corner property was not that large. Ms. Brimmeier commented further as follows:

MS. BRIMMEIER: "For our property you have to put it up for public bid. But chances are no one else is going to bid on it."

Commissioner Shaffer commented the city has the URA which goes after blighted or vacant properties and offers incentives for redevelopment. He also stated possibly some redevelopment incentives might be a good suggestion to get someone to purchase the property.



**RESOLUTIONS TO BE ADOPTED:**

**Resolution No. 2145 – Live Well Allegheny Campaign**

**Motion to adopt made by Commissioner Korbelt and seconded by Commissioner Mazur.**

**Motion passes – 8 to 0**



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**ORDINANCES TO BE INTRODUCED:**

**Ordinance No. 2344 – Flood Plain Ordinance**

**Public hearing to be held on August 18, 2014**

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**ORDINANCES TO BE ENACTED - None**

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**CONSENT AGENDA:**

**Approval of Minutes – July 7, 2014  
Payment of Bills and Financial Reports**

**Motion to approve the minutes of July 7, 2014, and the Payment of Bills and Financial Reports, made by Commissioner Mikec and seconded by Commissioner Mazur.**

**Motion passes – 8 to 0**

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**PLANNING COMMISSION:**

**S-14-2 – Richard V. Henke requesting Subdivision approval for a lot line revision on property located at 135 Byron Road in an R-1 Zoning District of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ward.**

MR. HANKINS: "Commissioners, this here is a Subdivision approval for a lot line revision on property located at 135 Byron Road in an R-1 Zoning District of the 2nd Ward. The Planning Commission, having reviewed this application, is of the opinion that it meets the terms as set forth in the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance, and/or the Zoning Ordinance, and hereby recommends approval of the request by a vote of seven to zero."

Richard and Claire Henke, owners of 135 Byron Road, were present and explained their request in detail. They own both properties and simply want to move the lot line 10-15 feet.

**Motion to approve made by Commissioner Korbel and seconded by Commissioner Sponcer.**



**Motion passes – 8 to 0**

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**PLANNING/ZONING DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT:**

Commissioner Korbelt stated on August 11th the township is holding a public meeting on the Comprehensive Plan, and the public is invited to participate. It will be held at 7:00 p.m. at Evergreen Park Community Center. He thanked Mr. Cook for putting it on Across Ross and also requested the Post-Gazette and Tribune Review to put it in their papers.

Commissioner Korbelt stated he had lunch with Ms. Natalie Thiess and Ms. Maura Dowdy from Town Center Associates, who is in charge of a County program called Allegheny Together. They discussed what Allegheny Together could do for Ross Township. There is a website called downtownfirst.net that puts together a list of all vacant, for sale or for lease properties of a commercial nature in the township.

They have identified Perrysville in Commissioner Stanko's ward as an area to be included in this website. They also will be preparing what they're calling a business composition analysis for Perrysville. When that comes in, they will meet with Ms. Dowdy again. Commissioner Stanko will be participating with that to look at the business composition in Perrysville so the township can look at what they might want to do in Perrysville moving forward, which should dovetail nicely with the Comprehensive Plan.

Regarding vacant properties in the township, Commissioner Korbelt indicated they would be talking with Nick Rickert, the new Planning and Zoning Administrator.

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**Request Board motion to cover Ross Business and Economic Development's (RED) 2014 membership renewal fee for 2014 in the amount of \$175.00 in the Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group (PCRG).**

**Motion to approve made by Commissioner Korbelt and seconded by Commissioner Sponcer.**



**Motion passes – 8 to 0**

Regarding the Comprehensive Plan, Ms. Lane indicated on the township’s website there are two surveys that residents are requested to take under the “Feedback Needed” tab.

**SOLICITOR’S REPORT:**

Ms. Brimmeier had no report but indicated she would like a brief executive session.

**RECREATION COMMITTEE REPORT - None**

**ADMINISTRATION/LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT:**

**Request Board motion to ratify Brit/State National Insurance Company as the general liability, auto and umbrella insurance broker for our 2014-15 policy year.**

**Motion to approve made by Commissioner Stanko and seconded by Commissioner Mazur.**

**Motion passes – 8 to 0**

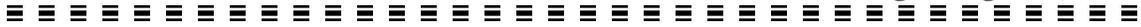
**Request Board approval for Pay Application No. 2 from Insight Pipe Contracting, L.P., in the amount of \$44,637.04, for repair work completed between June 1, 2014, and June 30, 2014, for the CCTV inspections as required by the Consent Order.**

**Motion to approve made by Commissioner Stanko and seconded by Commissioner Mazur.**

**Motion passes – 7 to 0 with 1 abstention  
Commissioner Mikec abstaining**

**PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE REPORT:**

Commissioner Mikec indicated the township is in Year 3 of the five-year winter program with PennDOT. The five roads that Ross Township will be salting or plowing are: Union Avenue, the steep part



going across 279; Gass Road, from Home Depot around all the way up to Valley Hi; Siebert Road between Babcock and Thompson Run; Sutter Road between Thompson Run Road and the Shaler line; and Reis Run between Louise and Rochester Road.

Commissioner Mikec also stated Allegheny County is going to start the oral rabies vaccination program. They drop the packets from low-flying planes and helicopters. It is harmless to pets. Chief Bellan stated they bait by vehicle, also.

Commissioner Mikec also indicated Duquesne Light Company is running a pilot program to replace streetlights with LED lights, which is an expensive endeavor. They have chosen roads in the 6<sup>th</sup> Ward all the way up Forest Avenue.

**Motion that the application for the grant be sent in made by Commissioner Mikec and seconded by Commissioner Korbel.**

**Motion passes – 8 to 0**

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**PUBLIC SAFETY/POLICE COMMITTEE REPORT:**

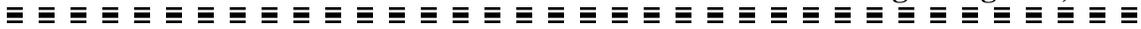
**Request Board permission for Lieutenant Joseph Ley to attend the Simon National Law Enforcement Summit in Indianapolis, IN, 8/17-19/14. Registration, travel and lodging will be covered by the host. Any uncovered costs, not to exceed \$200.00, will be covered by the department budget.**

**Motion to approve made by Commissioner Trilli and seconded by Commissioner Mazur.**

**Motion passes – 8 to 0**

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**Request Board permission for Patrolman Robert Zegar and Patrolman Mark Sullivan to attend the Annual SunGard User Conference in Greensboro, NC, 8/18-21/14. Estimated cost not to exceed \$1,400.00. Cost for this training has been included in the department’s budget.**



**Motion to approve made by Commissioner Trilli and seconded by Commissioner Mazur.**

**Motion passes – 8 to 0**

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**PUBLIC SAFETY/FIRE/FIRE POLICE/EMS COMMITTEE REPORT:**

Commissioner Sponcer stated there has been progress.

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**MANAGER’S REPORT:**

Ms. Lane indicated the HVAC system was being installed the weekend of the 22<sup>nd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>. The building will be vacant, and the driveway will be closed off. There was a pre-construction meeting, and information is posted on the website. There was a meeting last Thursday, and alerts will be updated every Friday. She also indicated Duquesne Light would be working on Thompson Run Road and that there would be closures, which was also on the website. Upon inquiry by Commissioner Montgomery, Ms. Lane indicated the road closures would be during regular daylight hours. The work was to be completed by August 25<sup>th</sup>, but the schedule may change.

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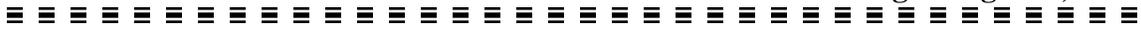
**JUNIOR COUNCILPERSON REPORT - None**

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**COMMISSIONERS’ COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Shaffer stated there was a vacancy on the Girty’s Run Joint Sewer Authority and that there were no applicants. He requested the closing date be extended for two weeks. He indicated he would write a little blurb about the importance of the Sewer Authority to be put on Across Ross to see if anyone would apply. He also suggested the opening be posted on the township’s website.

Commissioner Shaffer also requested that the E-mail addresses for the commissioners be placed on the website. He also commented that Ms. Shannon Looper, 5907 Babcock Boulevard, Pittsburgh, PA 15237, contacted the County regarding the placement of guiderails on a county road and also inquired if the township could assist. He suggested having one lane in each direction with a



flexible turn lane that might be safer and have bike lanes on the side as a possible solution. Chief Bellan stated the police have been working with the County on that issue and will be providing crash data for their use.

Commissioner Trilli stated the Traffic Advisory Board is looking for members.

Commissioner Stanko inquired as to where the junior councilperson has been and that she has missed him. Ms. Lane stated she would follow up with him. Commissioner Stanko also stated she applied for a grant with Allegheny Together and that she did not win the grant. She also applied for the LED grant with Duquesne Light, but they did not have the funds to fund the grant. Commissioner Stanko also offered her condolences to the family of Tony Pelligreno, long-time member of the West View-Ross Athletic Association and past president, who was dedicated to the youth and the organization, who recently passed away.

Commissioner Mikec reminded everyone about the educational seminar to be held at the end of September. He stated there were a lot of good topics and that it would be a great learning experience for everyone. He also expressed his condolences to the Pelligreno family on their loss.

Commissioner Mazur commented that a former member of the Girty’s Run Sewer Authority was in attendance, Mr. Bill Grady. She stated other members did not want him to leave and that he did a fantastic job.

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**CITIZENS’ COMMENTS:**

Mr. Joe Zawoysky, 123 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15229, addressed the Board regarding the property at 115 Fifth Avenue and the overgrown grass situation. He also discussed the trash can ordinance and the use of stop signs to delay traffic and the situation on Balsam Street.

Mr. Bill Grady addressed the Board regarding the refinancing of the township’s bonds with bank loans. Upon inquiry by Mr. Hankins if

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he would be interested in filling the vacancy on the Sewer Authority, Mr. Grady stated if they can't find anyone else that he would.

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**Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Korbel and seconded by Commissioner Mazur.**

**Motion passes – 8 to 0**

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**MEETING ADJOURNED TO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 8:17 P.M.  
NO ACTION TO BE TAKEN**

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**Douglas Sample  
Manager/Secretary**

By: 

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**Grant Montgomery, President  
Ross Township Board of  
Commissioners**

**Minutes prepared by** Noreen A. Re, Certified  
Realtime Reporter