

Ross Township Commissioners Meeting
1000 Ross Municipal Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15237
December 1, 2014
7:30 p.m.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Grant Montgomery, Paul Trilli, Jeremy Shaffer, Daniel L. DeMarco, Stephen Korbel, Grace Stanko, Lana Mazur and Junior Commissioner Jake Stanton

ABSENT: David J. Mikec and John Sponcer

SOLICITOR: Bonnie Brimmeier, Esq.

TOWNSHIP MANAGER: Douglas Sample

Pledge of Allegiance/Invocation

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS - None

PETITIONS AND COMPLAINTS - None

POLICE DEPARTMENT:

INTRODUCTION OF THE CANINES

Lieutenant Joseph Ley introduced K-9 Nos. 5 and 6 to the Ross Township Police Department, Neeko and Cezar. He gave a brief history regarding the dogs and their training. Officer Donald Sypolt is the handler of Neeko, and Officer Pete Chuberko is the handler of Cezar. He stated on the second night on the job Officer Sypolt and his partner assisted Shaler Township with a burglary in progress.

PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATE – Eagle Scout Thomas Zegar

Lieutenant Ley introduced Thomas Zegar, son of Officer Bob Zegar. His Eagle Scout project was developing, raising funds and helping in the construction of a K-9 agility course for the K-9s which the police use for training. The training course consists of several jumps, a platform climb, a trestle walk and a cardboard jump. The course was established to train not

only Ross Township Police K-9s, but also those of other departments within the North Hills/Allegheny County area.

PRESENTATION OF PLAQUE – Eagle Scout Brandon James Quinn

Commissioner DeMarco presented a plaque to Brandon James Quinn on his achievement of attaining the rank of Eagle Scout. Brandon’s project entailed organizing Scouts to collect the accounts of veterans on wartime experiences and catalog these experiences and send them to the Library of Congress to be archived for future generations to access.

RESOLUTIONS TO BE ADOPTED:

Resolution No. 2156 – Temporary Banner Placement across Siebert Road at McKnight Road which message reads: “Saint Sebastian Parish/School Program”

Motion to adopt made by Commissioner Mazur and seconded by Commissioner Korbel.

Motion passes – 7 to 0

Resolution No. 2157 – Establishing the Township of Ross Cafeteria Plan

Motion to adopt made by Commissioner Korbel and seconded by Commissioner Mazur.

Motion passes – 7 to 0

Resolution No. 2158 – Bloomberg Public Art Grant

Motion to adopt made by Commissioner Korbel and seconded by Commissioner Mazur.

Motion passes – 7 to 0

ORDINANCES TO BE INTRODUCED:

Ordinance No. 2348 – Sewer User Fee

Mr. Sample stated this is increasing the township user fee from 3.75 to 4.50.

Public hearing to be held on January 5, 2015

ORDINANCES TO BE ENACTED:

Ordinance No. 2346 – 2015 Appropriation Budget

Motion to enact made by Commissioner Korbel and seconded by Commissioner Mazur.

**Motion passes – 6 to 1
Commissioner Shaffer voting in the negative**

Ordinance No. 2347 – Fixing the Tax Rate for 2015

Motion to enact by Commissioner Mazur and seconded by Commissioner DeMarco.

Motion passes – 7 to 0

CONSENT AGENDA:

Approval of Minutes – Wednesday, November 5, 2014, and Monday, October 6, 2014 (Revised)

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

**Motion passes – 6 to 0 with 1 abstention
Commissioner Stanko abstaining due to absence**

Payment of Bills and Financial Reports

Motion to approve made by Commissioner Trilli and seconded by Commissioner Korbel.

Motion passes – 7 to 0

PLANNING COMMISSION - None

PLANNING/ZONING REDEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT:

Commissioner Korbel reported on Monday, November 24th, the final community outreach meeting was held for the comprehensive plan, which was well attended with a lot of great output. He also indicated he would be meeting with Mr. Hankins and Mr. Rickert to discuss the Zoning Ordinance. Commissioner Korbel also indicated he would like to have a meeting with Commissioners Mazur and Trilli to discuss their input. Since Mr. Rickert has been on board for approximately six months, Commissioner Korbel would like to get his thoughts. The survey is not closed, if anyone would still like to fill it out. He also stated there is a Zoning Hearing Board meeting on December 10th, if anyone would like to attend.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT - None

RECREATION COMMITTEE REPORT - None

ADMINISTRATION/LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT:

Request Board approval for Final Payment Application Request No. 2 from Gerard Heating and Plumbing in the amount of \$46,448.80 for the Municipal Building Rooftop Unit Replacement Project.

Upon inquiry by Commissioner Shaffer, Mr. Sample stated the system is functioning properly. Mr. Funk was in agreement.

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

Motion passes – 7 to 0

Request Board approval to appoint James Hughes of the Quail Fire Department as Ross Township's Deputy Fire Marshal pursuant to

Ross Township Fire Marshal John Reubi's and the Ross Township Fire Chiefs' recommendation.

Mr. Hughes was present and introduced himself to the Board and gave a brief history. He has been both a career and volunteer fireman for 32 years and will be retiring next year. He was a member of Quail for 20 years and was born and raised in Avalon. He was in the Air Force for six years and has worked for the Department of Air Force for almost 23 years.

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

Motion passes – 7 to 0

Adoption of the Ross/MTSA 2015 Lowries Run Operating Budget

Motion to adopt made by Commissioner Stanko and seconded by Commissioner Mazur.

Motion passes – 7 to 0

Request Board approval to place a sign on the corner of Perry Highway and Connie Drive. The purpose of the sign is to welcome commuters to Ross Township and identify the neighborhood known as "Ivory Towers."

Motion to approve made by Commissioner Stanko and seconded by Commissioner Trilli.

Motion passes – 7 to 0

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE REPORT:

Commissioner Korbelt had no report. Commissioner Shaffer questioned why there is no coordinated response between the township,

the county and PennDOT regarding the salting of roads. Chief Bellan responded that logistically they are not as responsive.

PUBLIC SAFETY/POLICE COMMITTEE REPORT:

Commissioner Trilli had no report. Commissioner Montgomery thanked the chief for the opportunity to meet the new K-9s.

PUBLIC SAFETY/FIRE/FIRE POLICE/EMS COMMITTEE REPORT - None

MANAGER'S REPORT:

Mr. Sample stated the DPW test is scheduled for Wednesday. He indicated they would be graded, and then they would meet with the committee to decide who to interview.

JUNIOR COUNCILPERSON REPORT:

Jake gave a report regarding activities at North Hills High School. Among his comments, Jake indicated North Hills High School students checked and packed Thanksgiving dinners for more 200 families to assure those in need in the North Hills area could enjoy a holiday meal. Also, the school district will be holding their first districtwide book fair to raise funds for Make-A-Wish of Greater Pennsylvania and West Virginia and also to support the district libraries and literacy programs at the Barnes and Noble in the Waterworks Mall from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on December 7th.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS:

Commissioner Shaffer recognized school board members Joe Muha and Mike Yeomans, who were in attendance. He stated he met with Ms. Peet; and they have tentatively scheduled a public meeting for Sunday, January 11th, from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. about Evergreen Park. He also commented on trash pickup issues regarding trash being picked up on one day and recycling being picked up on another day. Commissioner DeMarco suggested he write an E-mail to Mr. Mike Christ. Mr. Sample stated he would speak to Waste Management.

Commissioner Shaffer also commented on the budget. He stated the paving budget was increased by \$500,000. He also indicated the sewer rates will be going up 20 percent. He stated the “sewer bill is really going to be, has been and will continue to be escalating by probably double digit amounts for the foreseeable future.” Mr. Sample stated if you compare the township’s rates to the other 83 communities in ALCOSAN, Ross is right in the middle. Commissioner Shaffer stated this is as a result of the consent decree. He also reminded Commissioner Montgomery of the creation of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee.

Commissioner Trilli gave an update on the website. He also stated township resident Chris Jamison is a contestant on “The Voice,” and he wished him luck. Commissioner Trilli also said he would like to be put on a safety committee for employees.

Commissioner DeMarco commented that the budget has been approved, and taxes have not increased. He also stressed the importance of the township’s infrastructure.

Commissioner Mazur stated on Saturday, December 13, 2014, Santa Claus will be arriving around lunchtime at the Community Center. She also stated if anyone would like to help decorate the Community Center or be an elf to contact her. There will also be live reindeer at the event on the 13th.

Commissioner Korbelt echoed the comments of Commissioners Shaffer and DeMarco regarding infrastructure investments. He also indicated at the current paving rate of \$1 million a year that the quality of the township roads will continue to deteriorate. Even though next year paving will be at \$1.5 million, there will still be a decline. In regard to a request by some citizens for the Board to reach out to the school district in regard to Seville Elementary School, Commissioner Korbelt indicated there would be a meeting held this week including Commissioners Mikec and Sponcer with school board members Mike Yeomans, Edward Wielgus and Lou Nudi to discuss the matter. He also indicated Mr. Sample will be forwarding information on the business privilege and mercantile tax amnesty issue. He also welcomed Mr. Muha and Mr. Yeomans, who were in attendance this evening.

Commissioner Montgomery formed a Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee naming Commissioner Shaffer as the head. Commissioner

Montgomery also commented on Mr. Jim Atzert's efforts to obtain a vacant piece of property through the county. He inquired as to what the holdup was. Mr. Sample indicated the county wanted an additional letter sent to adjoining property owners.

Mr. Sample stated they are reviewing the township's proposed letter. Commissioner Montgomery questioned notifying residents within a mile when there are only two abutting property owners. Commissioner Mazur commented that the Board decided all the residents around the property would be notified and that they are waiting on a response from the county. The notice that is posted notifies residents that the property is under consideration for the vacant property program and that any interested parties should contact the county. Following further discussion, Mr. Sample stated it is a procedural issue with the county.

Commissioner Shaffer also commented that he requested a list of the properties in the township that qualified for the program, which a list of delinquent properties was provided. He requested if he could get the list as an Excel file. Ms. Lane indicated an Excel file could be created, but one could not be provided from Jordan. Commissioner Mazur inquired about looking at the information provided to see if there was some property that the township would be interested in for parks and trails. Commissioner Shaffer stated he started looking at the list and suggested that other commissioners also look at the list to see if there are any such properties in their ward. Commissioner Shaffer asked if the intern could prepare an Excel file.

Commissioner Montgomery also indicated he would like to create an Employee Safety Committee, which will be headed by Commissioner Trilli. The committee will involve employees and deal with safety issues and safety concerns at the township. Members of the departments will be added to the committee.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS:

Mr. John Shields, 126 Brunner Court, Pittsburgh, PA 15214, addressed the Board regarding the paving on Brunner Court.

Mr. Joe Zawoysky, 123 5th Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15229, addressed the Board regarding trash pickup, the salting of Cemetery Lane, his attendance at the redevelopment meeting, the survey, buses, sidewalks and speed bumps.

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner DeMarco and seconded by Commissioner Mazur.

Motion passes – 7 to 0

**MEETING ADJOURNED TO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 8:24 P.M.
NO ACTION TO BE TAKEN**

**Douglas Sample
Manager/Secretary**

**By: _____
David J. Mikec, Vice President
Ross Township Board of
Commissioners**

Minutes transcribed by *Noreen A. Re, Court Reporter*