

MINUTES

LEGISLATIVE MEETING: JANUARY 15, 2025

The January 15, 2025, Legislative Meeting of the Lower Swatara Township Board of Commissioners was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by President Jon G. Wilt. President Wilt called for the pledge of allegiance followed by a moment of silence.

Roll call was taken with the following officials in attendance:

- Jon G. Wilt, President
- Todd F. Truntz, Vice President
- Ronald J. Paul, Assistant Secretary
- Michael J. Davies, Commissioner
- Christopher DeHart, Commissioner
- Zachary Border, Manager
- Tracey Bechtel, Township Secretary
- Michael McAuliffe Miller, Eckert Seamans, Solicitor
- Shawn Fabian, HRG
- Thomas Bell Jr., Police Chief

Residents and visitors in attendance: (see attached sign-in sheet)

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

PRESENTATION:

Joel McNaughton from McNaughton Properties L.P. noted that they were before the Board last summer to present thoughts on rezoning of the Williams tract to include a mix of R-S and R-U Zoning. That request is still pending on the Township's agendas. Mr. McNaughton indicated it is their intention to withdrawal that pending application in full. They will follow up with an alternative proposal which would seek a zoning of the entire property as R-S, under standard by right proposal the property could be developed into 20,000 sq. ft. single family detached lots, which is similar to the surrounding area to the east. He indicated that they would not intend to develop it in that manner, their intention would be to develop it as an age restricted community with an impact from population, traffic, school district on a very small multiple as compared to what could be done as a by right subdivision.

Mr. McNaughton is requesting the Board permitting them to the extent necessary to talk to staff and professionals to see if we can come up with something together to review and make a decision so that everyone involved has an understanding whether or not we can move forward.

Vice President Truntz asked if the R-S would have duplexes. Mr. McNaughton replied that the R-S by right is 20,000 sq. ft. single family only. Their thought is to present an age restricted community then

you could have some duplex units, but no townhomes. President Wilt added that he would hope it would be a limited number of duplexes. Commissioner DeHart asked if that would require a text amendment. Mr. McNaughton replied that they don't have that figured out yet, hence the reason for being here this evening is to let you know we want to work up something and talk to the different professionals to see if it is something we can make happen.

Commissioner Paul commented that if they are going to amend the ordinance for retirement housing, are they stating just because it is zoned R-S the amendment and language is going to allow by special exception this high-density housing. Mr. McNaughton stated not by special exception, perhaps a conditional use, perhaps by right, if you meet certain criteria. He added it will certainly be served with public water and sewer, perhaps properties of certain size you could add criteria such as on-site recreation facility, the possibilities are endless. Commissioner Paul added that his concern is if it is zoned R-S but then you put amendments to that district, like reduced lot size, spacing between the houses, will it really be the district we say it is, saying it is R-S and then coming in with the high density it really isn't R-S, he added that density is always an issue. Mr. McNaughton stated that he understands density is an issue, the issue with density is people and vehicles. The reason why they are looking into age restricted is because they can put a similar number of units as proposed before, but at an impact of substantially less. Less vehicles and people, and millions of dollars in revenue for the school district by not having a kid in school. He also pointed out that the comprehensive plan says this is a unique property and should find a way to use it in a way that's beneficial to the Township and that's what they are looking to do. Commissioner DeHart noted that it might seem better for the school district, but it will put another strain on emergency services. Mr. McNaughton agreed.

Mr. McNaughton confirmed with Solicitor Miller that he will send a letter to withdrawal the pending application in full and then we can spend some time with the Township to see if we can come up with a path forward, if not we will all go our own ways.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion was made by Commissioner Davies, seconded by Commissioner DeHart to approve the Minutes of December 18, 2024, Legislative Meeting. The motion was unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Commissioner DeHart, seconded by Commissioner Davies to approve the Minutes of December 23, 2024, Special Meeting. The motion was approved 4-0 with Vice President Truntz abstaining due to being absent.

PAYMENT OF BILLS:

A motion was made by Vice President Truntz, seconded by Commissioner Paul, to approve the Payment of Bills – Warrant No. 2024-12. The motion was unanimously approved.

TREASURER REPORT:

A motion was made by Commissioner Davies, seconded by Commissioner Paul, to approve the Treasurer’s Report for December 2024. The motion was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC SAFETY REPORTS:

Police Department

Chief Bell presented the summary of the monthly statistics for December. There were 1225 total calls, 20 total cases, 5 arrests, 19 total vehicle accidents, 94 citations, 82 traffic warnings, 5908 patrol miles driven, 150-foot patrol minutes, 690 total overtime hours and 11 training hours. Co-responder stats included 7 new contacts, 4 repeat contacts, 1 follow-up contact, and 3 mental health commitments.

Commissioner DeHart asked if all the vehicles were in. Chief Bell reported 1305 was picked up today, the 09 should be done shortly.

Fire Department

Chief Taylor presented the Fire Department’s monthly statistics for December. There were 80 calls in total. 29 number of responders, 4 average personnel per response, 38:56:03 time in service. 8 fire incidents, 4 Over pressure rupture, explosion-no fire; 15 rescue & EMS incidents, 2 hazardous conditions incident, 3 service calls, 32 good intent calls; 3 false alarms. Mutual aid was provided to Derry Township (3), Highspire Borough (1), Hummelstown Borough (1), Londonderry Twp (3), Middletown Borough (7), Monroe Township (1), PA Turnpike (2), Royalton Borough (1), Steelton Borough (10), Susquehanna Township (1) and Swatara Twp (20).

Chief Taylor presented the Fire Department’s yearly totals for 2024 with 755 total calls, the most in a decade and the second most in the last 15 years just behind 2011 caused by the hurricane/tropical storm. 31 number of responders, 5 average personnel per response, 366:46:15 time in service. 88 fire incidents, 14 over pressure rupture, explosion, overheat-no fire, 130 rescue & EMS incidents, 37 hazardous conditions incidents, 24 service calls, 310 good intent calls, 109 false alarms and 1 severe weather and natural disaster. Mutual aid was provided to Conewago Township (2), Conoy Township (3), Dillsburg Borough (1), Derry Township (10), East Donegal Township (4), East Hanover Township (2), Harrisburg City (7), Harrisburg International Airport (2), Highspire Borough (27), Hummelstown Borough (6), Lewisberry Borough (1), Londonderry Township (16), Lower Allen Township (1), Lower Paxton Township (5), Middletown Borough (35), Middle Paxton Township (1), Monroe Township (4),

Penbrook Borough (2), PA Turnpike (14), Royalton Borough (5), Silver Spring Township (1), South Hanover Township (3), Steelton Borough (85), Susquehanna Township (1), and Swatara Township (219).

Commissioner DeHart asked for an update on the tax rebate and EIT discount resolution. Mr. Border indicated he got information from Chief Taylor and has been in contact with Solicitor Flower on the Resolution, which should be on the agenda next month.

Chief Taylor reported on the water leak that happened early Christmas morning. The dry pipe system in the attic of the station mysteriously let go and three of the sprinkler heads flooded the front half of the station. Working with Mr. Washinger and Mr. Border on the restoration.

Vice President Truntz commented that he went down to the fire department at 7:30 Christmas morning after getting a call from Mr. Leonard. He noted there were a lot of folks there away from their families with wet/dry vacs, mops and buckets working to get it cleaned up, so he wanted to express his thanks, as a member of this Board and the community, this is just another example of dedication of our fire service folks.

ENGINEER'S REPORT:

Rosedale Ave Bridge Repair Project Discussion

Mr. Fabian informed the Board that he wanted to put the JPA Supplement on the agenda for discussion purposes before Board approval. He indicated this is for the Chapter 105 Permit that PADEP rejected. He was hopeful that the last time this was discussed we would be able to do a small project JPA and not the full Joint Permit Application. Mr. Fabian asked the Board if they had any questions regarding the Supplement. Solicitor Miller asked what the status of the Dauphin County Bridge Repair Program currently is, he understood it was undergoing some changes. Mr. Fabian responded that he is not directly involved with that program, but he will reach out to Dan Long and get an update to Solicitor Miller.

Mr. Fabian updated the Board on the following in addition to his monthly report: **Fiddler's Elbow Box Culvert Replacement:** There has been much coordination over the last couple of weeks for utility relocation to make sure that all of the pole movements that need to occur for the project to begin are completed before our hopeful start date of March 2025. Mr. Washinger is assisting with this process as well. HRG has been asking for updates, but they have not received any yet. Mr. Fabian noted there was a large utility coordination meeting today, where an HRG representative attended, and it was brought up that it is hard to plan and give assurances when HRG is not getting updates from some of the utility owners. They continue to push on the situation the best they can. Commissioner DeHart asked once the road is shut down, how many months will it be closed. Mr. Fabian indicated around four to six months. **Hazard Mitigation Grant Program:** HRG has been coordinating with the reports that PEMA requires coordinating materials

testing for finalization of the full bid package. Commissioner DeHart inquired if they are in communication with Mr. Furlong, Mr. Border replied that they are.

MANAGER'S REPORT:

Paving List

Mr. Border noted that in the Board's packet was a copy of a list of possible Road Repairs that we are looking to do in 2025. Mr. Border noted that these are outside of the areas that are going to be paved as part of a project. Any feedback from the Board is welcomed. Commissioner DeHart recommended that we start a 3- or 4-year plan schedule for budgeting purposes. Vice President Truntz added as a reminder when the Township does these road repairs that we need to notify the residents well in advance.

Pickle Ball

Mr. Border reported that he included a quote from Acoustiblok for the covering which will go around the fence to act as a noise curtain. Mr. Border noted that he could not find any other companies that do this and was questioning the bidding process. Solicitor Miller commented that it would be a sole source, but we have to confirm that there is no other option.

Commissioner DeHart asked if this is for two fences or all of them. Mr. Boder responded that it would be for three fences, the company does not recommend all four. Commissioner Davies asked if this obscures the view through the fences. Mr. Border indicated it would. Commissioner Paul asked if this is normal to screen the courts. Mr. Border noted that most times the courts are out and away from residential housing.

Greenwood Hills Update

Mr. Border explained that this is the property that the Township purchased. There were no plan notes or requirements officially noted on the land development plan when these lots were created requiring sidewalks. However, there was a letter of credit of \$15,000 posted in 2005 for the sidewalks on these lots. Mr. Border indicated that in February the Board will see a deferral agreement for sidewalks for Greenwood Hills development.

Parking

Mr. Border stated that a few Public Works employees have come to him with concerns on how tight some of the areas are especially in Shope's with parking on both sides of the road, especially during snow events. He asked the Board if this had ever been talked about in the past, if alternate side parking was ever discussed aside from declaring a "snow emergency" when everyone is required to move their vehicles from the street. Commissioner Paul commented that it has been discussed in the past, which is why there are three major streets in Shope Gardens that have restricted parking on one side. He asked if the question is to put restrictions on the whole development. President Wilt inquired how many snow events do we get a year and

do we have to go that far. After a brief discussion, Mr. Border indicated he will research the current ordinance.

Salt Shed

Mr. Border noted that the grant for the salt shed needs to be used by June of 2026. He is looking for direction from the Board, even though it is not in this year's budget, he still would like to start planning for next year. Commissioner DeHart commented that everywhere we seem to want to put it, it doesn't work out. Vice President Truntz indicated his concern was, this project was turning into a taj mahal and he feels we don't need over a million-dollar salt shed. Commissioner Paul stated that where we would like to put it, we apparently can't as the engineer pointed out that the ground where the current salt shed is isn't stable enough to put the new one. Mr. Fabain indicated HRG has the full Geotech report showing the recommendations. They looked at potential stoning, piling, all sorts of things, our geo tech subcontractor recommendation for cost effectiveness was removal and replacement. Commissioner DeHart noted that he remembers some talk about putting it in where our dumpsters are behind the Township building. Mr. Border indicated there were two locations, one was behind the second public works building. Originally, we talked about where the dumpsters are located now. Commissioner Paul asked if we ever saw costs for both sites, he remembers the cost for behind the public works building but he doesn't remember the cost for dumpster location. Mr. Border added that we are also looking at getting a new quote from a different company for building the salt shed. Vice President Truntz asked if we could use the Greenwood Hills property that we just bought. Mr. Border indicated there is a deed restriction so we cannot put it there. Commissioner Paul commented he would prefer it to be at the property where the old one currently is. Mr. Border noted that if we put it there, we would not get a sign off from the engineer. Vice President Truntz also agreed that the location at the old fire house would be the most ideal location.

Mr. Border referenced the email from a resident that the Board received regarding the stop sign at Donald and Speyer to have an additional sign below the stop sign stating oncoming traffic on Donald Ave does not have a stop sign. Mr. Border indicated it is a two-way stop sign there, would it be easier to just remove the stop sign on Donald, since that's a throughway street and just keep the one on Speyer. Commissioner Paul inquired about three-way stop signs; he thought it was brought up before that there are regulation regarding 3-way stop signs. Chief Bell stated that PennDOT regulations say, unless there is a sight distance issue, all through streets should not have stop signs. The intersecting cross streets should have stop signs. PennDOT is very clear that they do not want stop signs to reduce the speed of traffic, that is not the design of a stop sign and technically it is against PennDOT regulations to have a stop sign on a through street that has sufficient sight distance. Mr. Boder and staff will look into this further.

Vice President Truntz wanted to mention for the record the trash situation. He feels a lot of residents are frustrated that there was half an inch of snow and Republic Services shut down operations. Mr. Border noted that Commissioner Davies also called him on Monday morning, not happy about the trash situation. Mr. Border reported that he did reach out to Republic Services and their explanation was that there was more snow in York County than in Middletown and the incinerator's hours on Saturday are only till 12:30 pm , so if they ran on a delay then still would not have been able to have complete the whole route, which is why they decided to cancel Saturday pickup and have a double pickup on the regular Friday pickup. He added that Republic is aware of the extra trash that will be out, and they are responsible to take it.

Vice President Truntz noted for the record when the trash contract came out to bid, the Township only got one response. Republic Service was the only trash company that bid, so it wasn't like the Township had a pick from multiple vendors. He added that he talked with Commissioner Davies, the Board should keep in mind that we may need to craft the RFP better the next time. Mr. Border added that there are only about three major players still left in the business. Solicitor Miller commented that he feels we can try to do the RFP a little differently, but the reality is, as in other municipalities that we solicit for, there was only one responder in those municipalities as well. There are limited players, and not only do they have one responder they are changing the method of service, going to the mechanical arm, the bigger size bins etc. It's very frustrating for the residents because it requires them to change things on how they put out their trash, when they put out their trash, how big the trash bin will be and the constant issue of the people who are part-time residents who don't want to pay for full-time service, but they have to for the benefit for the whole. Solicitor Miller added that it is very frustrating if you are an elected official because it is difficult to get competition and better service. Vice President Truntz added that his concern is, what happens if nobody bids. Commissioner Davies pointed out that there are large Townships in Lancaster County who have no municipal collection. With that said, there is also a healthy number of private trash collectors in that area. Commissioner DeHart and President Wilt indicated at one time it was like that here in Lower Swatara, but the problem now is Dauphin County requires all trash be taken to the incinerator.

FUTURE MEETINGS/EVENTS:

February 5, 2025	7 PM	Board of Commissioners Workshop Meeting
February 19, 2025	7 PM	Board of Commissioners Legislative Meeting
February 24, 2025	7 PM	Municipal Authority Meeting
February 26, 2025	7 PM	Zoning Hearing Board
February 27, 2025	7 PM	Planning Commission Meeting

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Public Safety Committee: Commissioner Paul – No Report.

Budget and Finance: Commissioner Davies – No Report.

Public Works Committee: Vice President Truntz reported that public works has been keeping up with these nuisance snow events by salting, unfortunately that requires washing all the vehicles and equipment afterwards because the salt is very corrosive. Another 200 tons of salt has been delivered.

Community Development: Commissioner DeHart – No Report.

Personnel Committee: President Wilt – No Report.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Ordinance No. 617 amending the Zoning Map

Solicitor Miller recommended this item remains tabled till we receive the withdrawal letter.

Vice President Truntz moved to table Ordinance No. 617 amending the Township of Lower Swatara Zoning Ordinance, specifically the Zoning Map. There was no opposition to table.

NEW BUSINESS:

Appointment of William Leonard to be Township's representative to the Susquehanna Area Regional Airport Authority

A motion was made by Vice President Truntz, seconded by Commissioner DeHart to approve the appointment of William Leonard to be Township's representative to the Susquehanna area Regional Airport Authority with a term expiring January 5, 2030. The motion was unanimously approved.

Application for Payment No.7 to Horst Excavating

A motion was made by Vice President Truntz, seconded by Commissioner Davies to approve Application for Payment No. 7 in the amount of \$16,699.41 to Horst Excavating for the Richard L. Shireman Park. The motion was unanimously approved.

Application for Payment No. 8 to Horst Excavating

A motion was made by Vice President Truntz, seconded by Commissioner Davies to approve Application for Payment No. 8 in the amount of \$277,599.76 to Horst Excavating for the Richard L. Shireman Park. The motion was unanimously approved.

Resolution No. 2025-R-1, Setting the Fees of the Township and Establishing a New Fee for Inspection of Residential Electrical Improvements.

Commissioner Davies inquired if the Code Department is in favor of these fees. Mr. Border indicated that they are the ones who are setting these fees. Commissioner Davies just wanted to make sure we are covering our costs, because he has seen fees in other Township's in other Counties and they were

more and added that our fees seem very affordable.

A motion was made by Commissioner Davies, seconded by Commissioner DeHart to approve Resolution No. 2025-R-1, Setting the Fees for the Township and Establishing a New Fee for the Inspection of Residential Electrical Improvements. The motion was unanimously approved.

GOOD AND WELFARE:

Commissioner DeHart recalled a while back he inquired about doing an audit on the parking fees from our entities that pay and asked Mr. Border if he had any updates. Mr. Border indicated that he did reach out to Mr Franklin from the School District, who did explain how they do things, but no further action has been taken. Commissioner DeHart is just concerned with what is reflected in the budget for what we receive seems very minimal verses the number of parking spaces. He would just like to have it verified. He thanked everyone for coming out this evening.

Commissioner Davies thanked the residents that spoke up concerning the trash collection. He is unhappy as well. His hope is that the Board takes a careful look at the way we do the RFP next time. He added that he can't help but wonder if perhaps our expectations or the way that we did things dissuaded other bidders from looking to bid on our contract. He is not pleased with the services that we are getting from Republic, and he would like to see an alternative if it can be managed.

Commissioner Paul asked if we were going to have an executive session, President Wilt indicated he was going to call for one. Commissioner Paul noted the plans on the back table he is assuming that is for the upcoming Planning Commission meeting for the project on Stoner Drive. Mr. Border confirmed that is correct.

Vice President Truntz commented on the trash situation, he indicated this is not an easy thing to tackle, he understands as well that Republic Services is facing astronomical fuel costs, labor costs are very high, labor quality is down, all those factors are part of this situation. In the past, there was a substantial delinquency in the Township and for some reason he doesn't remember why, the trash company was still required to pick up trash from people that were not paying their bills. So, any company who bids on the Township is going to look into and see what percentage of the population is collectable, the lower that percentage is the higher the bid is going to be and if there is only one bidder, that's what we are going to be paying. He also notices that there is often trash piled up outside of the trash carts, and then the truck has to stop, the driver has to get out and physically load the trash into the truck and that costs them money, it's increases time to do that route which increases costs. All these factors are things we as a Board need to think about and he agrees with Commissioner Davies that we need to improve on some things. Mr. Border added that he has been hearing from other managers that Haulers are now wanting the municipality to do the billing, which will help to keep the haulers' costs lower. Commissioner Davies noted if that would get us more

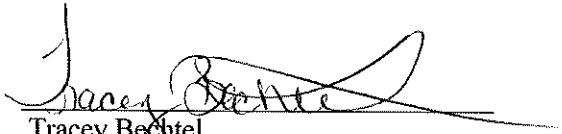
bidders, he would be willing to explore what the cost factors would be to do that. Commissioner DeHart added that if the trash sits out then we create another problem, unfortunately there is no easy solution.

President Wilt added that he agrees, we need to look into this situation. President Wilt asked for an executive session for personnel reasons.

ADJOURN AND CONVENE INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Hearing no other comments, a motion was made by Commissioner Davies, seconded by Commissioner DeHart to adjourn the meeting and convene into executive session. The meeting was adjourned at 8:04 P.M.

ATTEST:


Tracey Bechtel
Township Secretary

PLEASE **PRINT** NAME CLEARLY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS JANUARY 15, 2025
LEGISLATIVE MEETING (7:00 PM)

Name/Organization	Address/Contact Information
Dale Messick DAVE FEIST	Resident 763 Zurich Dr 17036
Sean Taylor	FDLS
PHIL DEIBERT	RES,
BILL LEONARD	1401 HERSTAGE SQ.

