

ELK TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
MEETING MINUTES
November 4th, 2024

The Board of Supervisors' November 4th, 2024 meeting convened at 7:01 PM at the Township Building. The following Supervisors were present: Vice Chairman Estace Walters, and Member Milton Rudy. Chairman Albert Jezyk, Jr. could not attend.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

No public comment.

Adopt Ordinance #2024-01 Open Space Tax Reduction

Milt Rudy made a motion to adopt the updated Open Space Tax Ordinance. Estace Walters seconded. The Open Space Tax will be reduced from .5% to .1% effective January 1, 2025.

Union Fire and EMS 2025 Contracts

Estace Walters read the new contracts to the audience. Both Fire and EMS contract fees were reduced compared to the prior year. Milt Rudy made a motion to approve both contracts. Estace Walters seconded.

Budget Work Meeting

Michael Corcoran proposed having a Budget Work Meeting on November 21st at 6 pm. Estace Walters and Milt Rudy did not have schedule conflicts. Michael stated he would info Al Jezyk of the meeting.

Auditor Appointment By BOS (Dennis Jacobs to replace Marcia Jacobs)

Estace Walters explained that Marcia Jacobs would be resigning as a Township Auditor and that her husband, Dennis Jacobs, would be taking her place. Marcia & Dennis Jacobs were in attendance. Milt Rudy made a motion to appoint Dennis Jacobs as Township Auditor. Estace Walters seconded.

Big Elk Creek Oversight Meeting Report

Melanie Ryan was not present. In her place Franklin Township appointee, Anteia Consorto, provided an extensive meeting report. At the October meeting, DCNR and SMP Architects unveiled 2 conceptual plans for the park. The maps include connectivity plans for regional trails including connecting to Springlawn Trail. Anteia expressed concern for the additional traffic on trails and roads and the additional upkeep costs the township would incur. Anteia discouraged the connectivity to township trails and suggested Elk request their trails be left off of DCNR maps. Some of the DCNR loop trails will be ADA-compliant and more than likely cinder trails.

Anteia's primary concern was that if you look closely at the trails, some of them seem to follow the outline around what was the original proposed site for the campground. Representative John Lawrence asked for an update on presenting Secretary Dunn with his Preserve redesignation plan and we were informed by John Hallas that Sec. Dunn and Dep. Sec. Norbeck were considering it but not making a decision, for now. Ultimately, the decision rests with Dunn, Norbeck and Hallas.

Anteia also stated that the Task Force was informed by DCNR that, despite our participation in good faith in a process to develop low-impact plans for BEC, they would continue to assess the need for camping. It came to light in the meeting because Director Hallas was asked in a recent press interview and he admitted that camping was still a possibility. Several members expressed extreme dismay. Hallas maintained that he had never taken camping off the table.

Some members of the task force felt let down, expressing a feeling of betrayal of trust. Elk's own appointee, Judy Jordan, walked out of the meeting. Senator Kane encouraged members to continue moving forward with DCNR on the master plan. He recognized the need for future conversations to resolve issues surrounding overnight accommodations and preserve status but felt it was more important to not throw away months of effort.

Elk Creeks Watershed Association president, Kevin Warren, stated that his organization is developing a land use plan recommendation for the BEC master plan. He said they're finalizing the plan and will pass it to DCNR and possibly the task force members for discussion in the next task force meeting. This is happening within the organization without consulting the townships affected.

The task force has requested that the decision makers (Dunn & Norbeck) attend the next task force meeting. Due to this request, the meeting is postponed from the Nov. 19 date until schedules allow. We were told this could be as far out as January.

Estate Walters and Milt Rudy thanked Anteia for all of her hard work.

Elk Township Letter to DCNR

Milt Rudy read the letter drafted for Elk Township to send to Cindy Dunn and Josh Shapiro regarding the Board of Supervisors' stance on development plans at Big Elk Creek State Park and with a request to redesignate the property as a Preserve. Estate Walters made a motion to adopt the letter and send copies to the Governor and DCNR. Milt Rudy seconded.

ORPC Meeting Summary

This topic was postponed due to Al Jezyk's absence.

December BOS Meeting

Estate Walters stated that the next BOS meeting would be held on December 2nd.

STAFF REPORTS Secretary's Report

On a motion made by Estate Walters, seconded by Milt Rudy, the October 7th, 2024, Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes were approved minutes.

Treasurer's Report

Michael Corcoran reported the totals of the bills to be paid for the month of October. On a motion made by Estate Walters seconded by Milt Rudy, the bills to be paid, except Roadmaster, were approved. The Roadmaster bill was postponed until the December meeting due to the absence of Albert Jezyk.

Tax Collector

October 2024: \$373.92 Collected.

Planning Commission

No Report.

Historic Commission

No Report.

Open Space Committee

No Report

Trails Coordinator

No Report

Zoning Hearing Board

No Report.

Roadmaster

Estate Walters read his monthly report to the audience, he removed a large tree that fell on Springlawn Trail. Estate also discussed the cul-de-sac issues in Breckinridge on Ridgewood Lane. Estate was down there and noticed the road was falling apart and decided it would be best to fix it before winter so there are no issues plowing.

Emergency Management Coordinator

Milt Rudy reported on his attendance of the October 10th AGREM meeting. The new radio tower will be here in early November. The Fall Fest will be in Penn Twp on with be on December 4th. The information on free vaccine clinics is now on the county website. Road closure announcements on the radio station AM 1670 is progressing. The next meeting will be on November 14th.

Milt Rudy also provided an update on the Camp Bonsul Bridge Replacement: A pre-construction field meeting was held on October 8th. A PennDOT Cultural Resources Professional will review requirements before and during construction. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties will be applied. The existing stone on the abutments and wing walls will be re-used as much as possible; any new stone must match the existing as closely as possible. CRP will review and approve all stone selection, mortar, and pointing styles and the mason selected to do the work. Two weeks' notice is required for CRP Monica Harrower to be present for stone removal. The CRP will review and approve rip-rap samples, and the shade of tan/brown for the steel pain color, the timber paint color and timber deck coating, and the new bridge sign shop drawing.

Oxford Area Recreation Authority (OARA)

Estate Walters summarized the most recent monthly report provided. Their Halloween activities were a success though there were issues with kids being dropped off and left unattended.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Donna Ellingson requested Elk Township share their letter to DCNR with all the surrounding Townships. Michael Corcoran replied that we would be doing that, and requesting letters of support from the other townships.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Michael Corcoran