

Milford Township Board of Supervisors
MINUTES
March 23, 2020, 4:00 p.m.

A special meeting of Milford Township Supervisors was called to order at 4 P.M. by Chairwoman Penney Luhrs through a teleconference, the call in number for which had been advertised in advance in the Pocono Record. Also present in this teleconference meeting were Vice-Chairman Gary M. Williams, Supervisor Rachel Hendricks, Solicitor Anthony Magnotta, Emergency Operations Coordinator Bob DiLorenzo and Secretary/Treasurer Shahana Shamim.

Ms. Luhrs said that the Resolution# 2020-5 was of a very standard type, declaring an emergency for the COVID 19 pandemic. Rachel commented that the resolution was for 14 days, which would extend to the next Board meeting. She made a motion to adopt the resolution, Penney seconded, and it was passed unanimously.

Rachel said that she had spoken to Chief Christensen of Milford Fire Department (MFD), and she had learned that manpower was still their chief concern. She continued that the Fire Department might need financial assistance from the Municipality. She and Mr. DiLorenzo had looked into whether PEMA would reimburse the Township to cover this EMS expense. The response from Tim Knapp was that the Municipality could spend the money, and then hope to get the reimbursement. She said that the Chief was concerned, as they were getting some 911 calls, and those callers mislead dispatchers about their COVID 19 status, risking the safety of the ambulance crews.

Mr. Kevin Stroyan commented that the availability of day-time volunteers was a practical question. Rachel replied that the Chief had informed her that MFD had been getting three times more volunteers out in the recent days. She added that the MFD had received a call the day before, and they had gotten 13 volunteers to cover the call. Penney and the Solicitor expressed their concerns about whether residents were doing a good job of staying home. Rachel commented that Milford Borough had posted caution tape to block the use of their parks. She continued that the Mayor, Sean Strub, had urged residents to remain in their homes. She expressed concern that being too strict about remaining in homes may result in more lack of cooperation as the situation worsen. If people stop working, and don't receive paychecks, then crime may become an issue.

Mr. DiLorenzo reported that there was a 60% reduction in ~~the~~ highway traffic. He also reported that Home Depot was having a lot of customers, as people wanted to remodel their homes while they were stuck at home. The Solicitor inquired if Mr. DiLorenzo had seen any reduction in traffic along the three-lane. Mr. DiLorenzo replied that traffic in this area looked about the same. Penney added that the homes, which were shut down for the winter, were filled. The Solicitor informed that borders were open and traveling was not restricted. He added that Supervisors of another Township had informed him that they had gotten some people living in their township on campsites without any water and sewer. Mr. DiLorenzo and Ms. Luhrs added that going out for a car ride and not getting out of the car can be a good option for residents.

Rachel informed that one of the residents of the Borough was worried about the employee bussing of the cookie factory. She added that she had informed that resident that food businesses were essential businesses, and bussing of employees was essential too. Dingman Township had decided not to perform any building inspections for new projects, which were not related to repairs. The Solicitor added that that Township had also stopped having visitors, who did not have any appointments. He suggested putting applications on the website. He pointed out

that if employees become unable to go to the office and cannot work on these applications, then these applications could be deemed approved, and hence a waiver to cancel the time limit needed to be signed by applicants. He said that he would create the language for the waiver, send it to the Township office, and this waiver would have to be added under each application of the Township. He asked Shahana to post these updated applications into the Township website. He added that this waiver should be good enough for the current emergency situation. Mr. DiLorenzo suggested if sewage applications could be sent to Shahana by emails for emergencies, she could send it to him, and he could work on those emergency situations. He added that the paperwork could be done at a later time.

Penney asked the Solicitor if the meeting of April 6, 2020 needed to be held through the teleconference again. The Solicitor replied that PSATS had required only Supervisors to be present at meetings. Rachel commented that Supervisors did not need to be present, as meetings could be conducted electronically. She added that she had responded to PSATS, and they liked the way the Township was conducting the meeting, as the Township had published the dialing number and access code to participate in the meeting in the newspaper. Rachel added that this way of conducting the meeting was safer for the public. She suggested publishing the teleconference contact numbers for Township meetings until further notice in the Dispatch. The Solicitor approved this suggestion, but he added that things could change anytime. He informed that there would not be any non-emergency actions in the court till April 14th, only criminal cases were being handled, and boundary disputes were not being handled. Scranton and Harrisburg District Court Houses were closed.

Supervisors asked Shahana to notify employees to stay home if they were sick or had possible exposure to coronavirus. Shahana was also asked to advertise in the Dispatch about continuing teleconference meetings with conference contact numbers. Rachel asked Shahana to post the sewage application on the website along with the waiver form of time limits. Kevin Stroyan inquired if there was a time limit for the emergency declaration. Rachel replied that reaffirming the time limit would be in the agenda of the April 6, 2020 meeting.

Mr. Stroyan asked to formally cancel the April 1, 2020 Comprehensive plan meeting. He also asked to cancel their participation with the Sewage Project meeting. The Solicitor informed that the County Commissioners had opted out of this project by declaring a disaster. They had cancelled their advisory meetings (the Sewage group is an advisory group). Rachel and Kevin said that this opting out was only for seven days, and Commissioners would have to resume or extend their declaration. The Solicitor added that some county courts had stopped accepting e-recording filings. Rachel added that those courts were still accepting filings through Gmail addresses. Rachel reminded that revenues this year would likely not meet the expectation, which was shown in the budget, and this matter would need to be discussed in the near future.

Mr. DiLorenzo informed that a cost of \$1.6 million for four ambulances had been discussed in the Westfall Township meeting. He continued that breaking this cost down by municipalities yielded \$153/year for each property. A full time EMT complement could be hired with this amount of money. Municipalities could join together for paramedics and EMTs probably with a lower cost. Mr. Stroyan suggested engaging Lackawaxen Township also, as this Township is already doing it by paying their EMTs. Mr. DiLorenzo and Mr. Stroyan added that some State funding, such as, PEMA money might be available this way. Rachel commented that Tim Knapp had given some hope about reimbursing the Municipality, and some concepts about such reimbursements could be acquired by consulting with Senator Lisa Baker. Mr. Stroyan said that he would call Senators to consult about PEMA reimbursement.

Rachel inquired if the Township had ever adopted a NIMS resolution, which was the first item in the checklist of PEMA reimbursement. Penney asked Shahana to look around the time of 2001, when 9/11 had happened. Mr. DiLorenzo added to look around the time of 2008/2009, when all public officials had to get the NIMS (National Incident Management System) certification. Rachel suggested putting the NIMS template resolution on the next meeting's agenda.

There was no other businesses to discuss, so a motion was made by Penney Luhrs to adjourn. Rachel Hendricks seconded to it, and it was passed unanimously. Adjournment was at 4:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Shahana Shamim

Secretary/Treasurer