

**Minutes**  
**December 18, 2023**  
**6:30 P.M.**

**Hybrid Workshop of the Board of Supervisors (Zoom meeting ID was advertised in advance in the Pike County Dispatch) 560 Route 6 & 209**

Mr. DiLorenzo spoke to a representative from the Fire Company in Westfall but he has not heard back from the Chief yet. Bob told him they got more calls than we did from our Department and want to better understand why. He said he would check with the Chief. Rachel said she filed a right to know request with no response yet. She indicated the possibility that when we are off at night they are running calls for us but she would like to see the numbers. She also asked what their plan was that they filed with the County for matching EMS funds and what checks they got. It's possible that they didn't file for anything. And it's possible that there's just so many calls in Westfall that they are out and that's why we are getting so many calls there. With all the accidents and all the traffic and senior facilities, they are possibly just very busy.

The Supervisors recessed the workshop, stating they were entering into executive session to discuss a personnel matter. They returned shortly and reconvened the workshop.

Rachel said that while the folks from PCLP were here (Ed Verbarak & Katrina Mancini) she wanted to bring up something out of the scope of their reason for coming this evening. As part of our Comprehensive Plan Process, something we are discussing is alternative energy. In an effort to preserve property from potential sprawl for alternative energy generation, we want to prioritize for example, solar panels on existing impervious surface areas over clearing of land areas for the same, for example, on rooftops, and parking lots, and are exploring how to integrate that into our regulations, if that is appropriate. The Township wants to engage the power company in that process so that we are writing things that make sense from your perspective. Not just what we think or our planners think but something would work, practically. Mr. Verbarak agreed wholeheartedly. Rachel requested to engage them in the conversation and have it continue. It's an idea that has been discussed for most of the year through the Comprehensive Plan because we do think that would be the better alternative than a field full of solar panels. It would make more sense to us to put in regulations for rooftop and parking lot preferences and doing that in a way that works for the power company is important to us. Mr. Verbarak replied that he was surprised there wasn't more solar around here. He doesn't know why it hasn't taken off in this area. Rachel explained we don't have any solar regulations here yet. Mr. Verbarak said there are two things to consider. The first part is they are not involved directly in the solar because even though they take the energy, it is mostly independent contractors & companies who come out and talk to the homeowners. He said the thing to keep in mind is that when a homeowner wants to put solar and depending on how much they put on their house, it may require an infrastructure improvement on the power company's end, and their tariffs say that the homeowner pays for that. So if a homeowner puts solar up and then they find out that PCLP needs to install a new transformer, the homeowner pays for that. The contractor goes out and sells the solar without letting the customer know about potential charges from the utility company. He feels it is important as we move forward that we engage them ahead of time. Rachel indicated that the Township is not looking at homeowners necessarily but the bigger picture. Mr. DiLorenzo said it could be good to put in the ordinance that any utility upgrades

will be the homeowner responsibility. He asked if there is a cap and Ed was not sure either. He said it is a fast moving industry. He also said regarding ordinances, California put in their ordinance that any new construction is required to have solar in it. Rachel said the Township did not intend to go that far, our discussion is how can we incentivize this through the Municipal Ordinance structure in a way that we are prioritizing impervious surface coverage rather than acres and acres of trees cut and fields are filled with solar panels. There are environmental regulations that we would need to adopt as well. The Planning Board is looking at several examples for regulations. When they come into the Planning Commission, projects are considerably preliminary to actually constructing anything & they can get feedback. It benefits us to connect them to the power company sooner rather than later. Ed V. said they would welcome that. Rachel said it would be good for them to tell us the things that need to be considered before starting a solar project so that we could include them when writing the ordinance structure for this purpose. We should have the items they should be cognizant of as well as us. Ed said to put someone in touch with him and we will take it offline.

**Minutes**  
**December 18, 2023**  
**7:00 P.M.**

**Hybrid Meeting of the Board of Supervisors (Zoom meeting ID was advertised in advance  
in the Pike County Dispatch) 560 Route 6 & 209**

A scheduled meeting of Milford Township Supervisors was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Chairperson Rachel Hendricks. Also present were Supervisors Gary M. Williams (Vice Chairman) and Robert Di Lorenzo, Solicitor Anthony Magnotta, Secretary/Treasurer Shahana Shamim and Assistant Secretary/Treasurer Barbara Schiavone.

Bob made a motion to adopt the minutes from the previous meeting with several revisions he delineated. Rachel seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

**Treasurer Report:**

**Receipts 12-4-2023:**

\$1,040.65 from Eastburn & Gray Advertise Hearing NLD  
\$ 1 Tim Downing RTK Request  
\$711.50 Magisterial District Court  
\$7,325.50 Realty Tax

**PCLP Update for the coming year – Ed Verbarak:** Ed said Pike County Light & Power is slowly swapping street lights to LED. They are doing it slowly because it is time consuming and costly. The other issue is supply chain problems. The nice thing about LED is it will save some money. Rachel said the Township spends about a half a mil on lights. He was surprised it was that much. He would like to accelerate the LED transition but not sure how much he can do with the supply chain issues. He also discussed a capital project they are working on for 2024; putting a sub-station up on Rt. 6 past I 84. He explained the power company has one sub-station in Matamoras that feeds that side of the area but everything coming over to Milford-feeds off of that. The power company's long term plan is to put a substation up on Rt. 6 by the gravel quarry. That's where the MetEd transmission line is. PCL&P has an agreement from Met Ed to tap off of that and they know no one wants a substation in their backyard, but that's where PCL&P felt the community would be most open to the project. Rachel asked if it would be on the same side as the quarry or across the street. He prefers the same side. Rachel said that is Dingman Township's side. Ed said that this project is slated for 2026-2027 possibly. He mentioned that due to supply chain issues, it will take 3 & ½ years. He is mentioning it because he wants to upgrade the line coming up 6 from Old Owego to 84. PennDot wants him to push the poles 50 feet off the road, like they did on 209. He would need to clear cut a huge swath to put a pole. He doesn't think anyone would be happy with that. That adds cost to his job which is then passed on to the ratepayer. Bob said there are areas where you can't push them 50 feet off the road. At the end of the day PCL&P is doing

the project either way but would love to not have that additional cost. They will start that next year. They will set the line from Old Owego to the 84/6 area in 2024 and finish it in 2025. He said having the substation here would mean he would not hear from us regarding outages with this frequency. Rachel explained that folks are concerned about price increases. She asked what is PCLP doing to help keep costs down. Rachel said the delivery cost went up when the other side went down. Total cost is up however, he said he and Katrina would look into that. The other piece of helping keep prices down besides the substation is that they are currently buying energy from NY. It's one of the most costly areas to buy energy in the country. They are paying Con Ed rates. We can buy energy from PA for significantly cheaper if we have a connection. Rachel suggested they go to the Road Task Force Meeting because PennDot will be there. It is on Dec. 21 at 2:00 pm in the Pike County Commissioner's office. The County Hazard Mitigation Plan has a specific task for developing a tree removal program to prevent power outages and to prioritize and we also adopted that Hazard Mitigation Goal on a local community level. We are waiting to see how the County will pay for that and how they implement it. We all want to make sure the power stays on. Rachel suggested Ed call the County planning office and tell them you want to come to the Road Task Force meeting and what you want to discuss so it can be put on the agenda. Katrina said she will handle that.

## **Roadmaster**

Gary said the Kodiak was up for bid and received not offers. He believes we can now just sell it outright. The Road Crew went out the other day and filled all the holes with cold patch. The Roadmaster said he sent a man out last Tuesday night just in case we had some snow on the upper elevation roads. The 5,500's oil pan is rusted and must be replaced in the near future. It's a 2017 Dodge & they are known for the oil pans rusting out. The cost will run around \$2,000. Bob said it's a good price. Gary will contact the bidders and see if any are still interested. Rachel suggested rearranging the agenda since the guests from PCLP were in attendance.

**Public Participation** – Kevin Stroyan mentioned that he went to a Water Authority meeting this month to hear their concerns about development on the Watershed Property and what impact it would have. Their Chair reached out to Kevin and said they would like to have a Workshop with the three organizations, Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors and their Board. Rachel stated she would prefer to have any joint meeting here. A meeting where we advertise and they all could come in and so can members of the public and hear what's being said and discussed was her preference. Kevin said there was a two sentence rule or regulation adopted at the last Water Authority meeting that solidified them being able to charge the Township for the hydrants. Rachel said the Water Authority attorney can meet with our attorney who is not present tonight. Rachel said the communication we got in writing made it sound as if the hydrant fees were being requested of the Township in order to reimburse the Water Authority for their costs regarding the Warehouse application, which was not the discussion she had with Mr. Sheldon and it's completely and totally inappropriate. It's less of an issue now that the application has been withdrawn. Kevin asked if she would be inclined to have the Secretary write a letter to the Water Authority and ask them for some dates and invite them. Rachel said sure and made a motion to

send a letter to the Water Authority and invite them to a Joint Meeting with the Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission at our office and provide them with several dates in January. Bob seconded it, all said aye. Rachel said Shahana should invite them to the second meeting of the Supervisors or Planning Board in January.

Dave Helms asked about the truck for sale and why not keep it through the winter. Gary said he is not putting money into it for inspection. Rachel said put the sale for the Kodiak on the next meeting agenda. Bob made a motion to sell the Kodiak for a price not less than \$7,500. Gary seconded it, passed unanimously. If there are no offers for that price, Gary was directed to bring all offers to the next meeting for further discussion.

**Secretary's Report:** Shahana presented correspondences, including from MHE Engineering, UGI, Pennsylvania Municipal League, Brian Snyder, Pennsylvania Dept. of Environmental Protection, Pike County Conservation District, Joseph Dooley confirming a meeting for Jan. 9, Rep. Joe Adams indicating he will be there for the meeting on the 9th, Springview Laser Services Team, Pike County Human Services & Pocono Rehab, Shannon DeVoyt from the County Commissioner's office, Pike County Humane Society.

### **Old Business**

- a. **Review of the Zoning Map:** A motion was made by Bob and seconded by Rachel to table this item to the next meeting.

b. **Auditor Appointment** – Rachel explained that the auditor we have been using came in with a price for 2023's audit that is \$500 over the amount anticipated in our budget. There are very few auditors who do municipal audits. We can keep our eyes open to see if any other municipalities use other firms. Most of the Townships in PA are using the same one, Kirk, Summa and Co. Rachel made a motion to appoint them again for next year, Gary seconded and passed unanimously.

c. **2024 Budget Adoption and adoption of resolution setting millage for 2024 to 12 mills general fund plus 2 mills ambulance tax** – Rachel made a motion to adopt the budget and authorize the resolution enacting the tax increase, Gary seconded it. Rachel asked before voting if there were any public comments on this. Kevin stated he understands the need for this increase although he typically dislikes them. Rachel said to be aware that it has been 10 years since the last general fund tax increase. A lot of inflation has happened in the last 10 years. Tony Magnotta called in at this time. Wayne Witkowski asked what lead to this increase. Rachel explained when the Township adopted our budget last year, we adopted a deficit budget. We clearly stated then, the fact that we knew we had to raise taxes this year. The Supervisors approved using money the Township had on hand to close the gap in 2023 so we could postpone the tax increase another year. We tried to hold off as long as we could responsibly do so. We've been very lucky that we had some supplemental grant dollars that aided us in keeping the tax increases at a minimum. The motion passed unanimously.

d. **National Land Developers Conditional Use Application – Update** Rachel said National Land Developers has withdrawn their application for conditional use. NLD terminated their contract for the property. This information was already widely known as all the parties were provided the information at the same time and it has been posted on the Township's website. The Supervisors have nothing further to share at this time.

e. **Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance – Update** - Rachel indicated we had a great joint meeting with the Planning Commission last week and ironed out the last few things we needed on the SALDO. She made a motion to forward the revised SALDO back to the County for the County's comments one more time. As soon as we have that 30 day window set when we know we'll have their comments back then that next agenda will include scheduling the hearing for the SALDO. Gary seconded that. The motion passed unanimously.

### **New Business**

a. **Cancellation of December 26 Planning Board Meeting** – Rachel made a motion to cancel the Planning Board meeting for Dec. 26th and gave instructions to post an ad and post on our website. Bob seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

b. **Certificates of Thanks for 2023 Volunteers** – Rachel thanked all the volunteers serving on the various Township Boards. They do a lot of important work and we are most appreciative of it, as are the citizens of Milford Township. Kevin stated that Mr. Pitman quietly does a lot for the Township, researching issues and providing his opinions in a good and reasonable manner. Bill thanked all.

c. **DEP response to Eastern Pike Act 537 Plan and meeting with DEP** – Bob stated that he went to a meeting with the DEP in Wilkes-Barre on December 5, 2023, and Mr. Stroyan attended that meeting as well. They are allowing the engineering company, HRG, to use some of their material to be used for data but basically want the process to start all over again. They require a new resolution, new public hearing, etc. They do have another meeting set up for possibly Jan. 9<sup>th</sup>. Kevin said Jan. 9 is a meeting at the Commissioner's office, that's with the legislators. DEP needs to have the second meeting to give them the final documents which they have not done yet. Bob said they were only provided with the highlights so far. Bob explained to Mr. Magnotta on the phone that the DEP said start over and the only reason for the second meeting is because they did not have all the necessary documents. They only covered about 25 items and the DEP said there was more to come. They also confirmed that they would be at the Pike County Commissioner's office on Jan. 9<sup>th</sup>. Rachel asked if there has been a discussion about how this all gets paid for. Bob said in the meeting HRG was bringing this all back to DEP & not charging for it, but if it needs to start all over again, there will be charges. Kevin said the discussion about money has been avoided but there is going to be costs certainly for various solicitors & whoever else is involved. Kevin said as long as he & Bob keep going to the meetings, there are no associated costs being incurred. Rachel agreed but said as long as no one else comes along and incurs expenses and divides by four and bills us, as they did the last 2 times. Kevin said we need an agreement & we don't have that now. Rachel said what we do have

are letters telling them they are not permitted to spend any funds and will not be reimbursed if they do spend without our advanced written permission. Tony Magnotta said DEP is likely going to make them do a new plan and he thinks the plan will have them going to Westfall and do that first, then incorporate the rest. Bob said they wanted everything, even adoption from the start, all agreements, everything has to be redone. He said one of the problems was that they didn't have an end, a demarcation, for where the system ended. They had future stuff, which you can't have on the plan. He said that was one of the major things. The biggest one was that you can't fit residential into a commercial system. The whole thing was designed for commercial. If you go residential, you can get some commercial into it due to the gallonage. That was one of the bigger issues. The state officials are coming into this meeting so we will see where everyone stands. Kevin said the reason the elected officials are coming is to get a commitment of dollars. Bob said the other reason is they said they want to help push this along.

**d. Road Task Force Appointment – Gary Williams** – Rachel made a motion to reappoint Gary Williams to the Road Task Force (even though this will be affirmed again at the reorganization meeting). The County requested this due to an internal deadline on their part. Bob seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**e. Consideration of Bonus for Harvey McKean** – Rachel explained when we adopted our budget last year as a deficit budget, there were no pay increases for employees. At that time, Supervisors promised to look at the financial situation at the end of the year to see if they could give any bonuses. They were able to raise the Secretary earlier in the year. The only full time employee is Harvey McKean who worked all of 2023 with no pay increase. Gary made a motion to give Harvey McKean a \$2,000 bonus for the year 2023. Bob seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

**Other public participation** – Kevin wished all Happy Holidays. Wayne Witkowski, reporter for Pike County Dispatch was in attendance and wanted to clarify the bonus was approximately 4% of Mr. McKean's annual salary.

**8:11pm** - Rachel made a motion to pay bills and adjourn. Gary seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

## **11. Pay Bills and Adjourn**