

**LOWER MOUNT BETHEL TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MINUTES – June 5, 2023 @ 7:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER– The June 5, 2023, regular meeting of the Lower Mount Bethel Township Board of Supervisors was held in person at 6984 S. Delaware Drive, Martins Creek, Pennsylvania, 18063 (formerly known as Centerfield School), Martins Creek, PA, 18063. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson DeBerardinis at 7:00 p.m. In attendance were M. DeBerardinis, S. Disidore, S. Newman, J. Mauser, S. Burns, J. Coyle, J. Zator, J. Smethers and M. Mastrogiovanni. There were 10 members of the audience present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – May 1, 2023. There were two revisions made – Pg. 3, 2nd paragraph 3rd sentence should be soil instead of sail; Road Dept. report – 2nd sentence should say what engineering will be, then will determine what drainage will cost. **MOTION** by S. Disidore, second by S. Burns to approved the minutes as revised. Vote: 5-0.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

1. **K. Brewer** – Karen indicated the LMBT Slate Belt Heritage book is complete, compiled on what Libby Bush had contributed, a donor paid for the printing and she paid for the graphics. They are for sale at \$25.00 per book. If someone wants a copy, they can contact Karen Brewer. Karen commented on the Road Department doing a wonderful job on the bridge and thanked M. DeBerardinis for fixing the road.
2. **J. Matthews** – Jeff asked about the Board of Supervisors considering a tax freeze for township taxes for residents over 65 years old. Jeff asked about the Township doing soil testing or water testing. S. Newman mentioned a private party did testing for PFAS and she did an article in the Spring Newsletter regarding this topic. J. Mauser suggested J. Smethers look into grants. J. Smethers mentioned last summer a rep. from DEP was doing some water testing for PFAS, she can follow up with them.
3. **H. Klein – BACAIDA.** He will comment during R. Grucela’s agenda item.
4. **R. Hunt** – Richard commented on the power plant property in UMBT now titled to the BACAIDA through an agreement between River Point Logistics East LLC and the Authority. Richard asked that the LMBT BOS and Mr. Grucella as the appointed Rep. put pressure on the BACAIDA to hire an independent environmental consultant to protect LMBT interests and minimize environmental liability from the power plant project in UMBT. The BACAIDA did not motion to hire an independent environmental consultant.
5. **Mark Metzlar** – Mark mentioned the Brownfield clean up project and site remediations. At the May 25th BACAIDA meeting, there was no environmental consultant hired, no record process, and Developer has no performance bond. Mark also talked about arsenic & palladium in the powerplant area and the RPL project taking up open space and open fields. The stormwater management they are proposing could flow into the river. UMBT is trying to move things along due to the election results and their board is going to change.

SUBDIVISIONS / ZONING – None.

OLD BUSINESS

- 1. Hunting permits for 2023/2024** – David Furmato and Billy Carr were present from the Game Commission to discuss how to handle deer hunting on township property and how to improve the habitat. J. Mauser indicated the Township issued 150 permits for the 2022-2023 season and only 16 deer were harvested. The state licenses will be fully online for sale on 6/26/23 and we would open ours up around that date. Anyone that did not report, will not be issued a permit from the Township this upcoming season. J. Mauser will talk to Talen to see if they would allow dual access to their property. M. DeBerardinis mentioned there are approximately 80-90 deer in that core area and access could be an issue and need a 3rd access point. John mentioned there was no bear hunting allowed, mirroring Talen’s decision on that but we can ask them again. We will move forward with the same plan as last year. Dave Furmato mentioned you could process the deer on site and take edible portions and leave the carcass.
- 2. IDA Update** – Rich Grucela reported at the last BACAIDA meeting held on 5/25/23, they went over some important information regarding environmental reviews and the DEP. Rich gave some background information regarding the BASD & the BACAIDA. They did not hire an Environmental Consultant or Attorney. Rich noted the three tiers – North, Center and South; that report is ready to go to DEP, once report is submitted, DEP has 90 days to say yes, no or nothing. The Northern tier is being developed and decided by UMBT. Even if LMBT withdraws from the BACAIDA, it will not stop the development there. There was discussion about the Northern section running into Portland. Public Comment by H. Klein – The BACAIDA. is one of the signatures on the agreement for the construction and operation of the Community Sewage & Water Authority; it’s even on the UMBT website. Howard suggested J. Zator review the agreement regarding liability pertaining to LMBT, and possibly have a hold harmless agreement drawn up with L. Pektor & UMBT. Howard referenced an article in the Morning Call on 5/22/23 that talks about traffic issues in LMBT, BACAIDA should not be making the traffic issues worse and a lot of things are not being brought up. R. Grucela indicated the IDA have not approved or discussed the agreement, many of these issues should be directed to UMBT & the BACAIDA.
- 3. Update to Open Space Checklist.** S. Newman thanked B. Humphries for the recommended changes. **MOTION** by S. Newman, second by J. Mauser to approve the LMBT Land Preservation Criteria / Evaluation checklist for use by the Open Space Committee. Vote: 5-0.
- 4. Approval to Advertise Tennis/Pickleball Courts Project** – J. Smethers indicated all the funds are secured for the courts. We received \$35,136.00 from Northampton County, \$10,000 from Lehigh Valley Greenways and \$100,000 from the State. Jen asked for approval to work with J. Coyle to get the project bid on PennBid. Justin indicated he is working on the final survey. **MOTION** by M. DeBerardinis, second by S. Newman to authorize J. Smethers and J. Coyle to bid out the Tennis / Pickleball Courts Project. Vote: 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS

- 1. MCAA Request for Support for 2023** – J. Smethers indicated they are requesting \$1,700, same as last year for grass cutting operation costs. **MOTION** by M. DeBerardinis, second by S. Newman to approve the request of \$1,700.00 to the MCAA for grass cutting operation costs. Vote: 5-0.

2. Engineering for Drainage Issue 3rd Avenue in village. J. Coyle reviewed the drainage Improvement Feasibility Study for 3rd Avenue with the BOS.

The recommended drainage improvement would include:

- Approximately 800 Linear Feet of Storm Sewer along Third Ave.
- Approximately 150 Linear Feet of Storm Sewer along Abbruzzi Ave.
- 8 Type 'C' inlets placed along Third Ave.
- 3 Twin type 'C' inlets placed along Third Ave.
- 2 Type 'M' inlets placed along Third Ave.
- Perforated pipe to promote infiltration & decrease stormwater volume
- Roadway reconstruction including full depth pavement, curbing, and restoration

Cost:

- Drainage subtotal - \$215,000.00
- Roadway reconstruction subtotal - \$308,025.00
- Construction subtotal - \$523,025.00
- Contingency (10%) - \$52,302.50
- Survey, Engineering, Construction Admin. Inspection - \$25,000
- Grand Total - \$600,327.50

Justin noted this is a good drainage improvement plan that would work, a sloped area with not a lot of pitch, and good soil infiltration with perforated pipe parallel to 3rd Ave. Construction would take 6 months.

3. Accept the Resignation of Rosalie DeBenedetto from EAC. MOTION by M. DeBerardinis, second by J. Mauser to accept the resignation of Rosalie DeBenedetto from the EAC. Vote: 5-0. The vacancy will be posted on the website.

4. Cameras for Gravel Hill Road. J. Smethers discussed the details of the options we received for the Video Camera's from Peter, Carroll Engineering. **Video camera detection option and Radar detection option:** Jen indicated the radar detection option is cheaper and more accurate. The mounting and location criteria are similar to the camera option. One potential limitation for this option is it cannot detect/analyze stopped vehicles, but it does work with slow moving vehicles, 5mph is the threshold. This option would need a standard power source and a data plan (\$100 per month) for the modem. There is also an annual cost associated with the software platform, the approximate estimate for that cost is \$500 per yr. The cost estimate for setting up the primary site (the mulch yard) is \$15,000-\$20,000. In addition, this vendor also has a camera product that could be setup near the main road. This camera would work like a vehicle detection camera, it would detect vehicles who take the incorrect route away from the site and capture an image for the township. It would not read the license plate, but would show an image of the truck. This secondary site would have a similar setup cost. The two sites would be connected via radio so only one modem at the primary site is needed. For \$30,000 - \$40,000 in setup costs and ~\$1700/annum in data and software costs, this option can classify vehicles as they enter or exit the facility and it can also observe the route vehicles take as they leave the site. Jen had also discussed with Peter the location of device on the pole entrance to facility, internet & power. We would need to ask GHE for their use, or possibly get solar. At the bottom entrance we could put up a cell cam and figure out location.

4. Assign General Fund 2022 Year End Balance – J. Smethers indicated the 2022 Year End Balance was \$293,390.85. Jen recommended leaving \$50,000 in the general fund account and allocate the following to the capital reserve accounts: \$43,390 to the cinder shed, \$75,000 to road equipment and \$125,000 to road projects. The cinder shed is going to cost approximately \$300,000; she will be applying for (2) two grants for that. She will make sure we have enough money for the match. **MOTION** by M. DeBerardinis, second by S. Burns to approve the allocation of the 2022 Year End Balance as recommended by J. Smethers, Township Manager. Vote: 5-0.

CORRESPONDENCE - All Correspondence is located in the Township office.

APPROVAL OF THE BILLS – J. Smethers explained the bill list is a little high because some bills are for 2 months. **MOTION** by S. Newman, second by S. Disidore to pay the bills in the amount of \$138,279.88. Vote: 5-0.

REPORTS

Township Engineer Report – Justin had nothing further to report.

Township Solicitor Report – J. Zator submitted his written report – nothing further to report.

Chairman’s Report – M. DeBerardinis had nothing to report.

Board Members Reports

J. Mauser – John reported a resident contacted him about purchasing a memory bench, we need to wait until tennis and pickle courts go in. John asked if F. Heitzman could check the culvert on Hillendale Road. The plaque came in for Jerry Brunetti, Agri Dynamics paid for the plaque.

S. Burns – Samantha mentioned Community Day is Sat. June 10th and asked Supervisors to attend.

S. Disidore – Susan updated the BOS on the Slate Belt Comp. Plan. They have added a lot of detail and the steering committee is moving forward to approve in July, Aug., or Sept. Portland has withdrawn, but they are trying to get them back in. Some of the Townships were dissatisfied with the lack of detail in the multi-municipal plan. They are looking into an intermunicipal agreement that municipalities can work together. The Board discussed the dual comp. plan and joint zoning with J. Zator. J. Zator mentioned MPC talks about Municipal Comp Plan, but there is no case law if you can have both. The Board will hold their regularly scheduled workshop meeting on June 19th to discuss this further. J. Zator will look at the text in the MPC relating to having both Comp. plans.

Township Manager Report – Written report submitted – nothing further to report.

Road Department Report – F. Heizman reported they worked on the headwall at the North end of Little Creek Road, spot paved various roads including Bangor Rd. Little Creek Rd. Miller Road. There were some trees down, they cut tree limbs and pulled trees out of the creek on Alpha Road.

PUBLIC COMMENT

R. Grucella - Rich asked about a constable being appointed by the Township for Election Day. J. Smethers indicated a constable needs to be appointed by the Court.

Ms. Wassell – She contacted Norfolk / Southern Train regarding unbelievable noise from the idling on Alpha Ave. of the train for 3 days now and is still idling.

S. Newman asked M. DeBerardinis about the Asphalt plant running 24-hrs a day. M. DeBerardinis will check if there is anything we can do, they are doing a state job on Rt. 33 and they pave at night.

J. Matthews – He asked about charging GHE a monthly fee. J. Smethers noted we will be getting tipping fees which are more beneficial. Jeff asked about the allocation of General Funds not used for streetlights. J. Smethers noted that is a separate account, and there’s not much left in that account that carries over.

ADJOURNMENT – The Board of Supervisors Public Meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted – Melissa Mastrogiovanni, Township Secretary / Planning Administrator
Lower Mount Bethel Township