

**LOWER MOUNT BETHEL TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MINUTES
FEBRUARY 7, 2022 @ 7:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER - The February 7, 2022, regular meeting of the Lower Mount Bethel Township Board of Supervisors was held 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, S. Burns, M. Posner via zoom, P. North, J. Coyle, J. Smethers and M. Mastrogiovanni. J. Mauser joined the Zoom at 7:15 p.m. There were four members of the audience present and one on Zoom. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 3, 2022 – Re-organization & Regular monthly meeting.
MOTION by S. Newman, second by S. Disidore to approve both meeting minutes as presented. Vote: 4-0

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

1. Martha Posner – Rec. Board Chair. Updates and request to clean out the Rec. Room. M. Posner explained the items in the Rec. room consisting mostly of old sports equipment that does not meet current regulations. Options would be to either throw them out, or donate. She mentioned residents Donna Maloney and Ann Roth own costume shops, they are interested in taking some of the items. The clothing that says “LMBT” can be used as prizes to give out at Community Day. M. DeBerardinis suggested sending out an email to old players to see if they’re interested in any of the items. Martha mentioned previous discussion about moving Community Day to the village to make it more like a block party. She asked Joe Pilyar if they can use the field. Joe responded they are ok with them using it, just as long as they don’t allow anyone use of the ball field and use just the grassy area. Joe also suggested they ask St. Rocco’s if they can use their facilities. Martha indicated she is not interested in doing that, she wants to keep it in the village and not have people walk across Front Street. Martha indicated she and Jen have been working with Carrie Martin from Miller Flooring regarding the Tennis Courts / Pickle Ball replacement. They will look at the courts and decide if they can be rehabbed or need a total replacement. J. Smethers said they came out last week and she is waiting for an estimate. M. DeBerardinis indicated he and Road Crew can assist with the demolition. Martha said once we have received the estimate, she will get a donation letter to bring to our larger local businesses.

Martha indicated in light of covid, game night is put on hold considering it’s indoors and is not comfortable with the Rec. board team organizing the events, but would be interested in having a lending library available at Centerfield. She also mentioned we ordered and received the Free Little Library which is being assembled and painted by Jenny Leggett. It will be placed in the Village in front of the Municipal office. Martha asked about the status of the Code of Conduct and would like to see it addressed again sooner than later. Martha mentioned the bridge in Martins Creek and issues on Penn DOT roads. R. Marinelli mentioned the bridge collapsing in Pittsburgh and the bridge on the other side of the traffic lights is a major link to our township. She doesn’t understand why we were denied access to the bridge inspection reports. M. DeBerardinis indicated Bob Killbanks from Scavello’s office is looking into it. S. Burns mentioned the meeting regarding 303 Demi Rd. She will reach out to Susan Wild and see if she will get involved.

2. Garden Club –Request to put up (2) signs at the CF playground. J. Pilyar and E. Woodruff were present. They presented 2 signs to be put up at the Centerfield playground. One is a dedication sign thanking the people who donated \$100.00 or more to the fence and arbor project. The other is a playground rules sign. They are planning to install the fence and arbor at the end of February – beginning of March. They need the three metal slides taken down and the metal monkey bars. The sliding boards are going to come down the end of March depending on the weather. The Board agreed with the requests.

SUBDIVISIONS / ZONING

1.Baggitt Minor Subdivision 10087 Richmond Rd. – F11-8-2C – Declaration of Covenants.

This was prepared by P. North and recorded at NC Recorder of Deeds along with the Final Subdivision plans on 1/24/22. Paul indicated the Deed of Dedication is being prepared by Attorney Ceraul which will address the easement provisions and maintenance. **MOTION** by M. DeBerardinis, second by S. Newman to approve the Baggitt Subdivision Declaration of Covenants. Vote: 5-0.

OLD BUSINESS

2.Woolverton ASA. Verbal referral to LMBT PC, LVPC, EAC & ASA Committee is needed.

The referral is to include any comments received by the close of business after the 15 days period for Public Comment has expired from date of publication. The public notice of the proposal was published in the Express Times on 1/13/22 and posting of the public notice was completed on 1/21/22. **MOTION** by S. Disidore, second by S. Newman to refer the Woolverton ASA to the LMBT Planning Commission, Lehigh Valley Planning Commission, EAC and ASA for a recommendation. Vote: 5-0.

3.Brewer Farmland Preservation Ranking. R. Marinelli was present on behalf of the Open Space Committee. She submitted the evaluation letter and checklist from the Open Space Committee visit in December. S. Newman asked about Pg. 2 (7c – infrastructure) on the checklist. Regina indicated the infrastructure is power lines. S. Disidore recommended putting the address and parcel # on the Open Space recommendation & checklist. The Open Space Committee will be working on another checklist for properties not going through Farmland Preservation that the township might be interested in preserving. The Official Map needs to be completed so the Open Space Committee can move forward. J. Smethers mentioned we received a grant for the Official Map and the money needs to be spent by November. 30th. We need to solicit members to update our comp. plan. They mentioned getting J. Snook involved and if we can use the grant money for the comp. plan. S. Newman & S. Disidore mentioned they don't know if the Plan Slatebelt Comp. plan is going to pan out. S. Newman will contact J. Snook.

NEW BUSINESS

1.Terpstra ASA – 9501 Richmond Rd. F11-8-15-0117. We received an ASA application from Matthew Terpstra to include 108.3 acres to the Lower Mount Bethel Township Agricultural Security Area. **MOTION** by S. Newman, second by J. Mauser to acknowledge the application, authorize advertising and posting and allow Zator law to move forward with the process. Vote: 5-0.

2.UMBT Softball Annual Request. UMBT softball is requesting to use the CF gym Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5-6 p.m. in February and March for UMBT softball clinics and asked the fees be waived as this includes LMBT children as well. **MOTION** by M. DeBerardinis, second by S. Burns to approve the request and waive the fees. Vote: 5-0.

3.Slater Baseball Annual Request. Slater Baseball is requesting to use the Keifer field from April 1st to July 15th and asked the fees be waived as this includes LMBT children as well. **MOTION** by M. DeBerardinis, second by S. Burns to approve the request and waive the fees. Vote: 5-0.

4.Process for Future Tax Assessment Appeals. P. North explained the County now requires a written response from townships if they want to intervene. If the Township wants to be involved, Zator law will need to file a written response on behalf of the Township. The County Solicitor's office will continue to take the lead. Jen asked the Board if they want our Solicitor to do this on a global basis automatically; not do it all; or raise each specific tax assessment appeal with her and the BOS for consideration. Paul explained they won't get involved in all appeals; just big ones such as MCOPO or Ardent Mills. There are time restraints as the entry needs to be submitted within 30 days and sometimes the BOS does not meet in time. The Board agreed to have it all circulate through J. Smethers.

5. Local Share Account Statewide Grant. J. Smethers asked for Board approval to apply for two grants; one for the failed bank on Main Street and one for the tennis courts/pickleball courts. There is a \$100.00 fee for each grant and they're due in mid-March. The County will also be opening up other Park & Rec. grants such as for the playground, etc. She indicated we will be doing the renovations of the office, which we received a grant for and can use some American Relief money. Jen asked the Board about other projects such as upgrades to the Centerfield Building ceiling, floor and lighting inside and outside. The Board discussed some options for upgrades to the Centerfield Building. J. Smethers indicated we might be able to use some American Relief money as well. The BOS approved J. Smethers moving forward with the grants. Jen will have the Resolution prepared for the March 7th BOS meeting.

6. Approval of the Service Level Agreement for Tax Services. J. Smethers explained this is the agreement for BCIU to print and mail the real estate bills. Regina indicated she has been using this service since she started and good with the agreement. **MOTION** by M. DeBerardinis, second by S. Newman to approve the Service Level Agreement for Tax Services. Vote: 5-0.

7. Proposal for the Purchase of Computer Hardware, Software and Professional Services. J. Smethers explained this is the proposal to switch our email service around so we don't have the problems we have been experiencing. Jen said the emails would sync together. M. DeBerardinis asked Jen to find out about increasing the 50GB mailbox for emails. The BOS would consider the option of a 1-year agreement.

8. Gravel Hill Monitoring Inspection system. S. Burns indicated she received an estimate from All Traffic Solutions. It's a small unit that can be mounted on a pole, we would not need all the services they provide. Sandra indicated she talked to the Rep. from Fox Security, there's a lot of hardware involved and the point-to-point beam won't register the pick-up trucks. Cost would be \$150-\$175 per month for video monitoring. There was discussion about the possibility of a trial cam. S. Newman mentioned dumping of sludge and if they do inspections. M. DeBerardinis suggested looking into the trail cam, put it in a good spot that's safe and only videos traffic going up the driveway. J. Mauser suggested putting a pole in the Township right-of-way and a sign that says all tri-axle must turn left. P. North suggested a solar panel for the trail cam.

APPROVAL OF THE BILLS. J. Smethers indicated there was an additional bill in the amount of \$10,386.00 for the Bobcat. **MOTION** by M. DeBerardinis, second by S. Newman to pay the bills in the amount of \$167,008.51. Vote: 5-0.

CORRESPONDENCE. All Correspondence is located in the Township office.

REPORTS

Township Engineer Report. J. Coyle reported H & K has submitted their grading plan for the plant re-construction, they had the requirement of Land Development waived. There was no Planning Commission meeting in January. He will be working with M. DeBerardinis and F. Heitzman on the Gravel Hill Road culvert in March.

Township Solicitor Report. P. North reviewed his written report with the BOS. Paul indicated he hasn't received a response from Mark Jackson regarding the Agreement of sale for the Acquisition of the Tekening Trails Pavilion and Parking area from Talen. P. North mentioned the Gacki Writ of Revival. The Judgement was entered against the Gackis in 2017 and remains outstanding. It needs to be revived 5 years from when the judgement was originally entered. It was revived in Northampton County in December and also needs to be revived in Carbon County in March.

Zoning Officer Report. S. Newman inquired about the Home Occupation permit to make cookies and cakes. She mentioned about 10 years ago, someone in Gravel Hill had applied for a similar permit and was denied. S. Burns indicated rules have changed, you can sell non-perishable items. P. North agreed and mentioned the MPC changed the requirements about 10 years ago. We will double check with the Zoning Officer about this permit tomorrow.

Chairman's Report - M. DeBerardinis will report under Road Department.

Board Members Reports

S. Burns. Samantha reported she and Jen met with Randy from Alloy 5 and Paul Weiss regarding the Centerfield Kitchen floor that needs repair / replacement under the warranty. Samantha would like to replace the damaged tiles and will start to do so. Samantha thought once those tiles are pulled up, it will create the other tiles to come undone and most likely the entire floor will need replacement. We will have to hold off on renting the kitchen until the floor is completed.

S. Newman - Sandra reported attending the Energy, Environment and Land Use Committee meeting prior to the Northampton County Council meeting on 1/20/22. Presenting were Tara Mezzanotte of the I-80 Delaware Water Gap Coalition, Adele Starr, Mayor of Knowlton, Lori Ciesla, Warren County NJ Commissioner, J. Bermingham, UMBT Supervisor, and S. Newman. All advocated for County Council to pass a resolution in support of fixing the S-Curve on I-80. Sandra attended the January COG meeting and they are asking each Municipality to consider a joint date for Halloween.

Road Department Report - M. DeBerardinis reported the Road Crew did a great job managing materials during the snow storm with minimal damage. The rear tire on the backhoe had to be replaced; the new tire was \$700.00. Mike mentioned trees being trimmed in the Township, either a professional arborist will trim or they will be cut. J. Larrison is asking for approval of their annual car show at Riverton for 10/23/22 (rain date 10/29/22).

Township Manager Report - J. Smethers discussed the letter we received from Maria Bentzoni regarding the Burkholder ASA being processed by NC Farmland Preservation. The land survey determined the total land is 48.9333 acres located in LMBT and 1.2245 are located in Washington Township. The Resolution we adopted was for 45 acres and needs to be amended. Maria is asking if LMBT would amend the Resolution to include the 1.2245 acres located in Washington Township be enrolled with LMBT portion. Washington Township is amendable to this request. P. North indicated LMBT should only include the land located in LMBT. The 1.2245 acres in Washington Township should be handled through Washington Township. The Board agreed. Jen indicated the Auditors are doing the 2021 audit this week. She is meeting with Justin Thursday to go over the specs for the office renovations. Jen discussed the last meeting she had for the NC Tax Collection Committee. The contract is up with Keystone and they are discussing whether or not to stay with Keystone at a higher rate; or go with Berkheimer. Berkheimer would be cheaper, but there would be a big impact switching. Keystone is sending out our Sanitation bills on 2/14/22. Jen talked with the Board about prior discussions of implementation of an annual Distinguished Service Award for one Committee / Board member for dedicated years of service. Joe Keifer would be the first one this year. We can get a plaque and pass a Resolution. The Board agreed. Then annually we can ask for nominations based upon years of service and certain criteria.

PUBLIC COMMENT - None.

ADJOURNMENT - The Board of Supervisors regular meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted, Melissa Mastrogiovanni, Township Secretary / Planning Administrator
Lower Mt. Bethel Township