
REGULAR SEMI-MONTHLY MEETING

August 25, 2020

The regular semi-monthly meeting of the Board of Supervisors, Hanover Township, Northampton County, was called to order by Chairman John Diacogiannis at the Hanover Township Municipal Building, 3630 Jacksonville Road, Bethlehem, PA, 18017 at 7:03 P.M.

Present via virtual Zoom meeting were Supervisors Nagle, Warren, Prendeville, Diacogiannis, Engineer Brien Kocher, and Solicitor Jim Broughal. Supervisors Lawless was absent.

The Pledge of Allegiance was performed.

Upon motion of Mr. Nagle, seconded by Mr. Warren the Board approved the Agenda.

Mr. Nagle aye, Mr. Warren aye, Mr. Prendeville aye, Mr. Diacogiannis aye

Upon motion of Mr. Nagle seconded by Mr. Warren, the Board approved the minutes from the meeting of the Board of Supervisors dated July 28, 2020.

Mr. Nagle aye, Mr. Warren aye, Mr. Prendeville aye, Mr. Diacogiannis aye

Upon motion of Mr. Nagle seconded by Mr. Prendeville, the Board approved the list of bills and transfers dated August 25, 2020.

Mr. Nagle aye, Mr. Warren aye, Mr. Prendeville aye, Mr. Diacogiannis aye

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

Mrs. Joan Steinberg, 4417 Tracey Lane, spoke on the closure of Hanover Township Community Center. Mrs. Steinberg questioned the board as to why Hanover Township Community Center was hampered with so many restrictions, unlike other similar facilities? What has to happen in the COVID world for HTCC to reopen, as we are already in the Green-Phase?

Mr. Warren expressed he understands the frustration felt by residents on the closure of the Community Center. Mr. Warren stated he also felt the frustration, as he has young daughters that utilize the Community Center. Mr. Warren explained his main concern during the discussions was how the Preschool Program would affect families. Mr. Warren said the Board discussed and tried to find the best way to make the Community Center work for everyone. There was no feasible way to configure the building to meet all the requirements to keep all age groups safe. Mr. Warren stated from his seat on the board his main goal is to protect the children and families of the Township.

Mrs. Steinberg asked what state does the Township have to be in for the Community Center to reopen. Mr. Warren responded that he cannot answer that, as he has not lived through a pandemic before.

Mr. Diacogiannis advised that once a potential decision is to be made it will be placed on the agenda. Mr. Diacogiannis stated this has been an extremely trying year, with a lot of unpleasant decisions being made. The Board made the decisions based on each member's individual opinions and votes. Each member had their own reasons and opinions for why they voted the way they did. There are changes constantly happening. Mr. Diacogiannis stated do not question the motives in which the decisions were made.

Mr. Nagle added the greatest population at risk are the seniors, who constitutes a significant portion of the Community Center users, which played a part in the decision to close the community center.

Mr. Prendeville stated in terms of documentation there is enough available in the media to understand risk and reward. Mr. Prendeville advised that he followed all the protocols and did everything he was supposed to do but he still contracted COVID 19. Mr. Prendeville stated this was his reasoning and how he formulated his vote to close the community center.

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN

Mr. Diacogiannis stated that Friday there was a DUI checkpoint, administered by the DUI task force. Chief Seiple advised the checkpoint ran from 10 pm – 3 am. There were 21 contacts, which resulted in 4 DUI of marijuana, 4 warnings, and 7 citations issued.

Mr. Diacogiannis advised that the Colonial Regional and PSP continue to investigate the speeding and potentially dangerous driving on Schoenersville Rd.

REPORT OF THE VICE CHAIR

Mr. Prendeville spoke about misinformation being posted on social media about the Township and how it is run. Mr. Prendeville thanked the staff and advised that they are doing a great job and reminded that this a pandemic and there is no roadmap. The Board is a governing body elected to make decisions to the best of their ability. Mr. Prendeville advised that he hopes there is a change in approach for a more open dialogue, pick up the phone and have a conversation. Mr. Prendeville advised the Board strives for transparency. Moving forward Mr. Prendeville advised he hopes for civilized dialogue in the appropriate formats.

SUPERVISOR'S COMMENTS

Mr. Nagle – Road District #1, - Mr. Nagle spoke on the use of the social media. Mr. Nagle stated the following: I found the manner in which social media was used appalling, with the accusations of calling the members of the Board corrupt, supplying baseless rumors, and totally false information. Thankfully, it was basically only 3 individuals stirring up the pot for their own selfish motives. Unfortunately, many others chose to believe those 3 individuals. ~~Frankly, those~~ ~~Frankly, those~~ 3 should be ashamed of themselves by which they attacked the members of this Board and employees of the Township. I laud the administrator of the Hanover Forum for recognizing that these accusatory and personal attack posts were deleted. I also appreciate those citizens who gave this matter serious thought and the situation and thought it through logically and understood what we were trying to accomplish. This Board and many township employees live in the township and are your Neighbors, with the same concerns, lifestyles, joys, and hopes as everyone else in the Township. We are not some far-off governing body, but again we are your neighbors, and we ask that you act like you are our neighbors. This Board and Township Employees work very hard to make and keep Hanover a great place to live, work, and play.

Mr. Diacogiannis– Road District #2, had nothing to report.

Mr. Warren – Road District #3, Mr. Warren commended our Fire Department, EMS and public works department with their handling of the ~~se~~ recent storms.

Ms. Lawless – Road District #4, was absent.

Mr. Prendeville – Road District #5, had nothing to report.

APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS – BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES

PLANNING & ZONING

Zoning Hearing Board – 4387 Loraine Lane

The applicant is requesting a variance from the maximum land cover to install a swimming pool for the property located at 4387 Loraine Lane.

Mr. Prendeville asked the Board if they want to send representation to the Zoning Hearing Board meeting. The Board will not send representation to the hearing.

Zoning Hearing Board – 4200 & 4220 Airport Road

The applicant is seeking a change of use to convert a single-family residence for religion use for place of Worship/Church & Sunday School.

Mr. Prendeville asked the Board if they want to send representation to the Zoning Hearing Board meeting. The Board will send representation to the hearing.

ADMINISTRATION

Hough Associates – Recycling Grant Agreement 2020 – 2022

Mr. Warren moved the Board authorize the Chairman to sign the Recycling Grant Agreement with Hough Associates for 2020 – 2022.

Mr. Nagle seconded the motion.

Mr. Nagle aye, Mr. Warren aye, Mr. Prendeville aye, Mr. Diacogiannis aye

Leonardo – Warranty Extension

Mr. Warren moved the Board authorize the Township Manager to sign the Quote from Leonardo Company for a warranty extension for period 9.6.2020 through 9.5.2021 on the license plate recognition equipment at Route 512 and Crawford in the amount of \$7,330.00.

Mr. Nagle seconded the motion.

Mr. Nagle aye, Mr. Warren aye, Mr. Prendeville aye, Mr. Diacogiannis aye

DEVELOPMENTS

Advanced Health Care – Subdivision Plan

Mr. Nagle moved the Board of Supervisors approves the Preliminary/Record Subdivision Plan, dated as last revised August 18, 2020, upon the following conditions:

CONDITIONS

1. The Developer/Owner shall address all outstanding comments in the Hanover Engineering Associates, Inc. review letter dated August 24, 2020 to the satisfaction of the Township Engineer prior to Plan recording.
2. Notes shall be added to the Plan identifying all waivers and deferrals granted by the Township, any conditions, and the meeting date of the Board of Supervisors action.
3. If necessary, the Developer/Owner shall enter into an Improvements Agreement with the Township and provide appropriate security. (SALDO Section 159-30.D.(5))
4. The Developer/Owner shall pay all current fees, including any outstanding plans and appeals account charges. (SALDO Section 159-36J)
5. The Developer/Owner shall provide two (2) Mylars for recording the plans and ten (10) sets of plans which are signed and notarized by the Owner and sealed by the Surveyor/Engineer. (SALDO Section 159-34.B)
6. The Developer/Owner shall meet all conditions of the Preliminary/Record Plan approval, and the Preliminary/Record Plan shall be recorded within twelve (12) months of Conditional Plan approval,

and agrees that if such conditions are not met, the conditional Preliminary/Record Plan approval shall be considered void, and the application for Preliminary/Record Plan approval shall be considered void and withdrawn.

Mr. Nagle further moved, that the granting of conditional Preliminary/Record Plan approval of this plan recognizes that the Township is agreeing to the following on the Subdivision Plan:

- A. That the Board of Supervisors waives the requirement to provide sidewalks along High Point Boulevard, Stoke Park Road and Old Stoke Park Road. (SALDO Section 159-13.B)
- B. That the Board of Supervisors waives the requirement to base the survey elevations on the USGS seal level datum and allow the survey to be based on NAD 88 datum standards. (SALDO Section 159-29.C.(2))
- C. That the Board of Supervisors waives the requirement to identify the size and species of all trees four (4) inches or more in trunk diameter at a height of four and one-half (4 ½) feet above grade. (SALDO Sections 159-29.C.(3) and 159-29.C.(6)(a))
- D. That the Board of Supervisors waives the requirement to provide separate Preliminary and Record Plan submissions and allow a combined Preliminary/Record Plan submission. (SALDO Section 159-34)

Mr. Nagle further moved, that the Township Secretary be authorized to notify the Developer of the Board's action.

Mr. Warren seconded the motion.

Mr. Nagle aye, Mr. Warren aye, Mr. Prendeville aye, Mr. Diacogiannis aye

Farmhouse Village – MPC Deadline Extension

It is noted for the record the Developer of Farmhouse Village granted the Township an extension to November 30, 2020 regarding the MPC deadline, per their letter dated August 19, 2020.

Valley Wellness – Improvements Deadline

Mr. Nagle moved the Board grant the developer of Valley Wellness an extension to March 4, 2021 to complete the improvements per the developer request August 19, 2020.

Mr. Warren seconded the motion.

Mr. Nagle aye, Mr. Warren aye, Mr. Prendeville aye, Mr. Diacogiannis aye

Freshpet Pre-Treatment Sewage Plant – Improvements Extension

Mr. Nagle moved the Board grant the developer of Freshpet Pre-Treatment Sewage Plant an extension to December 5, 2020 to complete the improvements, per their letter dated August 19, 2020.

Mr. Warren seconded the motion.

Mr. Nagle aye, Mr. Warren aye, Mr. Prendeville aye, Mr. Diacogiannis aye

Freshpet Manufacturing – Improvements Extension

Mr. Nagle moved the Board grant the developer of Freshpet Manufacturing addition an extension to December 5, 2020, to complete the improvements per their letter dated August 19, 2020.

Mr. Warren seconded the motion.

Mr. Nagle aye, Mr. Warren aye, Mr. Prendeville aye, Mr. Diacogiannis aye

Hanover Flex Center – 5000 Township Line Road – Improvements Extension

Mr. Nagle moved the Board grant the developer of 5000 Township Line Road an extension to October 31, 2020 to complete the improvements, per their letter dated August 19, 2020.

Mr. Warren seconded the motion.

Mr. Nagle aye, Mr. Warren aye, Mr. Prendeville aye, Mr. Diacogiannis aye

6904 Steuben Road – MPC Deadline

It is noted for the record the developer of 6904 Steuben Road has granted the Township an extension to November 27, 2020 regarding the MPC deadline, per their letter dated August 20, 2020.

PUBLIC WORKS

Grace Industries – Payment 1 Request

Mr. Prendeville moved the Board approve Payment #1 Request in the amount of \$74,161.11 for their work on Hanoverville Road.

Mr. Nagle seconded the motion.

Mr. Nagle aye, Mr. Warren aye, Mr. Prendeville aye, Mr. Diacogiannis aye

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

Mrs. Joan Steinberg asked when the 2019 Township audit will be posted, and if the Township has a 5- or 10-year plan that is available to the residents?

Mr. Finnigan advised it was an error of omission, the 2019 Township audit was presented to the Board at the May 26, 2020 meeting and is usually placed on the website the following day. The audit will be available by tomorrow.

Mr. Broughal advised there is a comprehensive plan for the Township.

Mr. Finnigan advised that Hanover Township along with 8 other municipalities, are working on an updated regional plan. Once that plan has been completed, presented, advertised, and approved it will be made available to the residents.

Mrs. Joan Steinberg asked the Board if the pool evaluation is going to be on the 2021 budget.

Mr. Prendeville advised there are several factors that go into that. Mr. Prendeville advised that the Township is currently in a capital expense lock down. There is a lot of economic uncertainty, and a judgement call can not be made, the budget is currently being discussed. The Township was preparing to enter into an agreement with Terracon before the pandemic happened. Mr. Prendeville stated there was over \$200,000.00 set aside in the 2020 budget for pool issues. Until there is a better understanding of the financial impact for 2021, which will be discussed during the budget meetings in October, the pool advisory board has been put on pause.

Mr. Warren added that many of the Supervisors went out to the site of the pool along with Terracon, and this process was going to happen, but there was no effective way to do the testing during the winter months.

Mr. Diacogiannis stated the Supervisors all agree that this issue must be looked at, but the question is when.

Mr. John Todaro spoke and stated he thinks Mr. Prendeville did a great job of this is where we are, and there is a lot of good information that has been uncovered and done behind the scenes, but said that he is not sure

the Township knows all the work that has been done and what the status is. Mr. Todaro questioned what the communication plan is to make sure everyone knows the work being done and the status.

Mr. Prendeville advised the Board has made an effort to put the information in the newsletter, Township residents are invited to attend the Board meetings and ask questions. He noted that a frequently asked questions was recently added to the home page of the website to address some of the questions.

STAFF REPORTS

Mr. Kocher – Engineer – nothing to report.

Mr. Broughal – Solicitor – nothing to report.

Mr. Milite – Public Works Director – nothing to report.

Mr. Finnigan – Township Manager – Mr. Finnigan advised that there was a bid opening for the Waste and Recycling contract. The past three years the Township has been operating on an extension of the previous 5-year contract. There will be a significant increase in fees due to the expense of recyclables. The bids are currently being analyzed.

Mr. Finnigan stated the Township met with PSP, CRPD, City of Bethlehem police department, businesses, and property owners along the Schoenersville Rd. corridor to discuss the gatherings that happen. These gatherings are not happening in Hanover Township, but are affecting the quality of life within Hanover Township.

Mr. Finnigan advised the Township recently had vandalism in the Township. The individuals have been identified.

Mr. Finnigan stated, “It is unfortunate that some individuals decided to impugn the integrity of the Board of Supervisors and Township staff via social media. Let’s be clear, all parties disparaged need no defense. However, the disparaging remarks have undeservingly had a negative and unnecessary effect on the Township staff. Unfortunately, we live at a time when individuals can rant and rave on social media and not back it up with facts. They believe if they say it enough times, not only will they believe it, but others will as well.

Starting in March of this year, the BOS and Staff have had to make some challenging and controversial decisions. The decisions made were always with the best interests of the residents, business community and Township staff in mind. Any discussions regarding staff & staffing was held in executive session, as allowed by law, and to maintain the confidentiality of personal and personnel information.

The decisions were based on the information that has inundated us whether it’s been from the President’s Corona Virus Task Force, the CDC, the Center for Infectious Disease, the Governor of Pennsylvania and PA Department of Health or any of the other departments and agencies charged with dealing with the COVID-19.

Beginning in March, all municipalities have been receiving daily Situation Reports from Northampton County Emergency Management. Just recently it was downgraded to Monday – Wednesday – Friday. In addition, we have been flooded with information via print and electronic media.

What has become very evident is there is erroneous information being placed on social media to fuel a fire which is unnecessary and in some cases slanderous and perhaps even rises to the level of being libelous. Throughout this entire ordeal - Corona Virus - the Township staff, including public works employees, have worked diligently to maintain the public assets of the Township. We are one of ONLY a few municipalities where staff has worked either virtually or in person EVERY day without missing a beat.

PSATS, the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors, in their releases and virtual meetings have indicated the revenue shortfall in 2020 would be 20 - 25% and in 2021 upwards of 30%. Yet, uniformed individuals, again to fuel a fire that shouldn’t exist, continue to propagate erroneous information on social media.

I am proud of the manner in which Township staff has handled the crisis and most recently the personal attacks. Many staff members have reached out to you individually, the members of the Board of Supervisors, and expressed their disdain for the comments being placed on social media. It has caused a significant morale issue which the Board has needed to deal with.

Anyone impugning the integrity or commitment of the Board of Supervisors and Township staff lacks knowledge, facts and credibility.

The staff and I appreciate the support and confidence the Board has expressed to each of us during the past few weeks and tonight.”

Upon motion of Mr. Prendeville the Board adjourned at 8:15 PM.

Elizabeth D. Ritter
Township Secretary