

EPHRATA TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS MEETING

December 3, 2024

The Ephrata Township Supervisors met this date at 7:00 p.m. at the Ephrata Township Office Building, 265 Akron Road, Ephrata, Pennsylvania.

Present were Supervisors:	Clark Stauffer
	Tony Haws
	Ty Zerbe
Twp. Manager:	Steve Sawyer
Bookkeeper:	Valerie Roark
Solicitor:	Anthony Schimanek
Engineer:	Jim Caldwell

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Clark Stauffer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

PUBLIC COMMENTS NON-AGENDA ITEMS

A motion to close the public comment period was made by Ty Zerbe. The motion was seconded by Tony Haws and carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Tony Haws to dispense with the reading of the November 19, 2024 Supervisors' Minutes and to approve them as presented. The motion was seconded by Ty Zerbe and carried unanimously.

2025 EPHRATA TOWNSHIP BUDGET

Manager Sawyer stated that staff prepared a draft of the 2025 Budget and a budget work session was held at the October 15, 2024 Board of Supervisors meeting. The Board approved the preliminary budget at this meeting and authorized Manager Sawyer to advertise that the preliminary budget was available for review by the public. The proposed budget includes a real estate tax increase of 0.1 mill. The new millage rate will be 1.37 mills. The primary reason for the increase is the additional cost of police services in 2025.

A motion was made by Ty Zerbe to approve a Resolution to authorize a 0.1 mill real estate tax increase for 2025. The 2025 millage rate will be 1.37. The motion was seconded by Tony Haws and carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Tony Haws to approve the 2025 Ephrata Township Final Budget as presented and recommended by staff. The motion was seconded by Ty Zerbe and carried unanimously.

STAFF REPORTS

Manager Steve Sawyer

- **446 North Reading Road – Financial Security Reduction.** Manager Sawyer provided the Board of Supervisors with a letter from Scott Cover, owner of 446 North Reading Road, dated November 21, 2024 requesting the release of his financial security for the Ephrata Diagnostic Building Parking Lot Expansion project. The project has not been closed out due to issues in the detention basin from water discharged into the basin from an Ephrata Area Joint Water Authority (EAJA) auto flusher. EAJA has approved an agreement with Scott Cover and EAJA will be making improvements to the basin in 2025. Rettew Associates performed a site inspection, and it was noted that there is still work to be completed that will not be part of the EAJA project. Manager Sawyer, Jim Caldwell, Scott Cover and his Engineer, Ed Ostrowski will be meeting tomorrow to discuss ways to resolve these issues. After discussion, Mr. Caldwell recommended that the Board approve a financial security reduction to \$14,980.00 subject to a schedule acceptable to the Township identifying when Mr. Cover will address the outstanding issues that will not be part of the EAJA project.

A motion was made by Ty Zerbe to authorize a reduction in the financial security to \$14,980 which is 10% of the original amount with the condition that the Applicant provides a plan, acceptable to staff, to address outstanding items in Rettew's May 28, 2021 letter, excluding any items that will be addressed when the EAJA project is completed. The motion was seconded by Tony Haws and carried unanimously.

- **Ephrata Township Burn Ban.** At the November 5, 2024 Board of Supervisors Meeting, the Board of Supervisors passed a Resolution approving a thirty day (30) burn ban which will expire December 4, 2024. The local area has had some rain over the last thirty (30) days, so Manager Sawyer recommended the board allow the burn ban to expire. After discussion, the Board decided not to take action and let the burn ban expire on December 4, 2024.
- **Indemnification Agreement – Richard Rehm.** At a previous meeting, the Board of Supervisors approved the Waiver for the well isolation distance to a new sewer system at 348 Middle Creek Road owned by Richard and Suzanne Rehm. A copy of the required Indemnification Agreement was provided to the Board of Supervisors for their information. No action is needed by the Board.
- **Concrete Walls Unlimited – Time Extension for Land Development Plan.** Manager Sawyer notified the Board of Supervisors that Ephrata Township received a letter from Burget & Associates on behalf of Concrete Walls Unlimited dated November 25, 2024 granting a time extension for the Township to act on the land development plan until March, 2025. The new deadline would be March 18, 2025. The additional time needed is to satisfactorily address the review comments.

A motion was made by Tony Haws accepting the time extension granted by Concrete Walls Unlimited for the Township to act on the Land Development Plan. This will extend the deadline to March 18, 2025. The motion was seconded by Ty Zerbe and carried unanimously.

- **Martin Energy – Time Extension for Land Development Plan.**

Manager Sawyer notified the Board of Supervisors that Ephrata Township received a letter from Diehm & Sons dated November 20, 2024 granting the Township an extension of time to act on the Martin Energy Land Development Plan. The new deadline to act on the plan will be April 18, 2025.

A motion was made by Ty Zerbe accepting the time extension granted by Martin Energy for the Township to act on the Land Development Plan. This will extend the deadline to April 18, 2025. The motion was seconded by Tony Haws and carried unanimously.

Solicitor – Tony Schimanek

Solicitor Schimanek reported that his office prepared the Rehm Indemnification Agreement that was discussed earlier in the meeting.

Township Engineer Jim Caldwell reported that the following plans/projects are in the review process:

- Tommy's Carwash – Financial Security Release
- 446 N. Reading Rd – Financial Security Reduction
- PPL Corporation – Waiver of Land Development for a Pole Building
- Blue Ridge Cable – Riverview Development HOP
- Concrete Walls Unlimited – Land Development Plan
- Akron Road Culvert Project Site Inspections

APPROVAL OF BILLS

A motion was made by Ty Zerbe to accept the list of checks written and to pay any bills pending. The motion was seconded by Tony Haws and carried unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE

Tony Haws stated that Ephrata Borough Police is currently filling a position for a detective who recently retired and they will be back to a full staff.

A motion was made by Tony Haws to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m. The motion was seconded by Ty Zerbe and carried unanimously.

Clark R. Stauffer

J. Tyler Zerbe

Anthony Haws