

As advertised in the Journal Herald newspaper, the Packer Township Supervisors held their regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, October 3, 2023 at the township building. Bob Selert called the meeting to order and roll call was taken. All were present.

The meeting was opened to the floor. There were no comments.

Susie Gerhard made a motion to approve the minutes. Terry Davis seconded the motion and Bob Selert agreed. Vote 3-0.

Ordinances and Resolutions – Resolution 2023-04. Bob Selert made a motion to approve A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF PACKER IN THE COUNTY OF CARBON, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, REQUESTING A MONROE COUNTY LOCAL SHARE ACCOUNT (LSA) GRANT. Susie Gerhard seconded the motion and Terry Davis agreed. Vote 3-0

Reports of Officials and Committees –

Barry Isett & Associates – Permit/Zoning & Code Enforcement Officer- Absent. ZONING: 9/19/2023: Site visit Spring Mountain Road regarding burning. Excavation near cemetery at 3250 Quakake Road. Bob notes that the resident is cleaning up top soil. Follow up on 1297 Quakake Road. Some improvement. Noticed an unsafe property at 795 Quakake Road.

Bill Brior – Sewage Enforcement Officer – Absent. Report not received.

Old Business – A letter was sent to the Weatherly Area School Board requesting their participation in the appeal of the Hazleton City Authority's tax exempt status. It is Bob's understanding that the School Board's solicitor is reviewing and their meeting is coming up. Atty. Yurchak mentions an article on the Hazleton City Authority and the projects they are funding. Bob responds that it is not all from the sale of timber but it is part of it.

Regarding the status of the authorization to use property for the Ochre Mill bridge replacement, Bob said the engineer was up to give a quote for the storm drainage work on Grist Mill and he told us that they are in the final stages of getting the agreements ready for Maday. Carbon Engineering has billed the Township for the surveying. When we have the agreement we will execute it as soon as we can. Diane Maday acknowledges.

The Weatherly Borough has reached out to the Supervisors for a meeting regarding the fire protection agreement. Susie has prepared a response to the Borough's proposal. The Supervisors will meet with the Borough sometime after the 23rd.

A \$100,000 LSA grant was applied for by Susie. A \$100 filing fee was paid.

On the storm damage at the park, Susie has three quotes for cutting and removing trees and stumps and repairs to the fence. The fence quote is for \$2900. Feaster Excavating (quote \$2000) and Buck Mountain Landscape Supply (quote \$1525) will work together to remove the trees, level the ground and plant grass. Stephanie had contacted the insurance company. Quotes before the work is done are preferred but not required. This is so if the quote is too high for the fence, it can be checked into. The trees are limited to \$1000/each. Bob said to move forward with it.

The purchase of a zero-turn mower is considered. Zero-turn Stihl mowers are made in the U.S. with all American parts. The 0% interest offer is only for personal loans so the purchase would have to be paid for in full. An additional quote was obtained from Martins Small Engine for \$12,650. Bob Selert made a motion to purchase a Stihl RZ 751 I zero-turn, 52" deck, fuel injected mower from JC Small Engine for \$11,700. Susie Gerhard seconded the motion and Terry Davis agreed. Vote 3-0

New Business – Robert Selert made a motion to approve the request for the library to hold its basket raffle at the township building. Terry Davis seconded the motion. Vote 2-0 Susie Gerhard abstained.

The insurance renewal from DGK was reviewed. The annual premium increased by \$369. Bob Selert made a motion to authorize payment once the invoices are received. Terry Davis seconded the motion and Susie Gerhard agreed. Vote 3-0 The Zero-Turn mower will be added to the policy.

Paul Bray asked if a letter from the Commissioners was received regarding a 911 fee that you pay on your phone bills. It expires at the end of the year. The Commissioners supposedly sent a letter out to all the legislators that cover us. They were going to ask each municipality to do the same. If the fee goes away the county would have to come up with \$1.7 million. Stephanie did not receive anything on this. She will call the Commissioners office tomorrow.

Paul Bray asked if his information could be listed on the Township website as the Emergency Management Coordinator for the record in case a grant opportunity would arise. Bob told Stephanie to add this to the website.

Terry Davis was at the County Commissioners meeting regarding Bridge #4. An email was received and Stephanie read it as follows:

Supervisor Davis had requested the County provide information regarding the current condition and funding for the replacement of Bridge #4 in Packer Township. Attached is a copy of the latest inspection report from March of 2023. Most importantly, in April of 2023, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) changed regulations and delineators are no longer approved for use. Subsequently, this change in regulation prompted the County to have temporary water filled barriers installed and lower the maximum weight limit. Included is a copy of the County Engineer's analysis for the temporary water filled barriers.

The holes have been repaired, the temporary barriers have been set in place and new signage has been installed as of Friday, September 29, 2023.

Carbon County has encumbered \$720,000 in Liquid Fuels Funds for the replacement of Bridge #4 in Packer Township. The estimated cost to replace this structure is approximately \$3 million dollars. In order to do this project, it must be placed on the Department of Transportation's Twelve Year Plan, the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The organization that handles these matters for Carbon, Monroe, Pike and Schuylkill counties is the Northeastern Pennsylvania Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). By securing approval of the project from the MPO it would provide the necessary funds needed to replace this structure but it would not be immediate. Any Liquid Fuels Funds and funds secured through the TIP for the replacement of the bridge must conform to the PA Department of Transportation regulations.

Please know the County will work diligently to secure funding for this project and bring this bridge up to current national bridge inspection standards.

The email was sent by Eloise Ahner, Chief Clerk/County Administrator, Carbon County Commissioners. Terry added that this means we can't take our plow trucks across the bridge. If we get a snow storm that needs to be plowed, the road will be closed. There was some additional discussion concerning the County's decision to leave the road open at all. Cars can still travel the bridge but busses, garbage trucks and emergency vehicles in addition to trucks cannot travel this bridge. Stephanie notified the garbage company. The County notified the school district and emergency responders. Delivery drivers and others must adhere to road signage in any case. Bob asked Atty. Yurchak if the township can put up signs advising of no winter road maintenance. Atty. Yurchak feels we may have to because there would be no way of informing everyone who may travel this road unless the County will. It would have to be closed at Wallace Way and the last driveway on the other side. There was discussion about the cost and funds for infrastructure which are not getting filtered down to the township level. Bob comments that this is a county bridge and they are going to replace it. Susie said that they should check

with the county to see if they will pay for signs. She asked what would happen if an overweight vehicle is driven over the bridge. Bob responds that it would be at your own risk and Paul added that if there is damage the state police would become involved. Terry will call Rocky or Eloise to ask if the County will provide signage. More discussion occurred about whether signs have been changed from 10 tons to 3 tons.

Bob Selert made a motion to approve the treasurer's report. Susie Gerhard seconded the motion and Terry Davis agreed. Vote 3-0

Bob Selert made a motion to sign and approve the checks drafted. Susie Gerhard seconded the motion and Terry Davis agreed. Vote 3-0

Bob Selert made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Susie Gerhard seconded the motion Terry Davis agreed. Vote 3-0

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m. A total of 4 residents attended the meeting.

Respectfully submitted
Stephanie Stolpe
Packer Township Secretary/Treasurer