

Cherrytree Township Board of Supervisors
Regular Monthly Meeting
Monday, November 4, 2024, 6:00 p.m.

A regular monthly meeting of the Cherrytree Township Board of Supervisors was held on Monday, November 4, 2024, at 6:00 p.m., at the township building. In attendance were Jim Waugh, Rob Kellogg, and Shari Nelson, Supervisors, and Christine Kurelowech, Secretary-Treasurer.

Call to Order

Jim Waugh called the meeting to order.

Pledge

Moment of Prayer

Jim Waugh led those in attendance in a moment of prayer.

Public Comment

Ron Stewart noted that, many months ago, the Planning Commission and Tim McGrath, Zoning Officer, were holding public meetings on a regular basis to go through the zoning ordinance in an effort to discuss areas that are in need of change and/or clarification. The goal of the meetings was to develop an amended zoning ordinance that would be given to the Board of Supervisors for consideration. These meetings were prompted by a property owner who suggested the ordinance be made less restrictive. Ron Stewart told the Supervisors that the meetings abruptly ended and asked if the township could start holding the meetings again. The Supervisors were in favor of moving forward with the project and continuing public meetings to do so. Chrissie Kurelowech will contact Tim McGrath and the members of the Planning Commission in an effort to schedule meetings to continue the project.

Old Business

Titusville News-Journal – Advertising Information

Chrissie Kurelowech said that she recently contacted Titusville News-Journal to inquire about the cost of legal notices. She said that Titusville News-Journal is significantly less expensive than The Derrick. The legal notices cost \$2.25 per line plus a \$5.25 notary fee. An ad that the township recently put in The Derrick cost \$116.62, but would cost only \$45.75 in Titusville News-Journal. However, legal notices are not published on Titusville News-Journal's website and the paper is only published once a week. Titusville News-Journal must receive a legal notice by Tuesday for it to appear in Saturday's issue. This could be a problem if the township has to reschedule a meeting or has some other immediate need for a legal notice. Chrissie Kurelowech noted that an "emergency meeting" is exempt from "public notice" and, according to the PA Sunshine Act, is defined as "a meeting called for the purpose of dealing with a real or potential emergency involving a clear and present danger to life of property". So, in a true emergency, the Board of Supervisors could hold a meeting without publishing a legal notice first. The Supervisors were in agreement to move the township's advertising to Titusville News-Journal beginning in 2025. Chrissie Kurelowech said that she would adjust the 2025 reorganization resolutions accordingly.

Legalization of ATV, Side-by-Side, and Snowmobile Use on Township Roads

In an effort to collect public input, the Supervisors held a discussion regarding the possible legalization of ATV, side-by-side, and snowmobile use on township

roads. At the special meeting to prepare the 2025 budget, held on October 10, 2024, Ken Bryan, Venango County Commissioner, asked the Supervisors to consider passing an ordinance to legalize ATV, side-by-side, and snowmobile use on all or some township roads. As written in the minutes from the special meeting held on Thursday, October 10, 2024, *“The ordinance would require anyone wanting to operate an ATV, side-by-side, or snowmobile on township roads to purchase a permit through Venango County. The township would be part of the Oil Region ATV Association, which would handle permitting and some enforcement activities. A permit would cost \$50.00, with the county receiving a \$6.50 portion, the township receiving a \$20.00 portion, and the Oil Region ATV Association receiving \$23.50 to be used to purchase signs, trail cams, insurance, and private property. The Oil Region ATV Association plans to use the private property that it purchases to create off-road trails. The Oil Region ATV Association would be responsible for signage on township roads. In order to operate on a township road, an ATV, side-by-side, or snowmobile would need to display a sticker to show that it has been permitted to do so. Motorcycles and dirt bikes would be exempt. Each rider would need to be at least 16 years of age and each permitted ATV, side-by-side, and snowmobile must be properly registered and insured. Additionally, riders would be required to wear helmets and mufflers would need to keep exhaust below 99 decibels. Ken Bryan explained that the township could customize the ordinance by limiting speed, limiting the number of roads that could be used, and specifying which hours of the day people could use ATVs, side-by-sides, and snowmobiles on township roads. The Oil Region ATV Association and the state police would handle enforcement.”*. Jeff Langworthy expressed concern about who would pay for the road damage caused by the ATVs, side-by-sides, and snowmobiles, who would be responsible for enforcement of the ordinance, and how enforcement would be possible. He also said that he was concerned about the township’s liability if an accident were to occur. Jim Waugh said that the township would not be liable if the township did not legalize any roads for riding, and Jeff Langworthy noted that the township was involved in a case many years ago where 2 people were killed on Route 8, even though Route 8 is a state road. Jim Waugh was concerned about the expense of the signs possibly falling back on the township and how to enforce the ordinance. Jeff Langworthy noted that the state police have said in the past that they will not chase ATVs. Ron Stewart said that he would be in favor of passing the ordinance. Andrew Schwab expressed concern about the Oil Region ATV Association purchasing private property, noting that conflicts of interest could arise. He also said that he supports signage and, without an ordinance, there is nothing to enforce. Jeff Nelson asked the Supervisors who is in charge of the Oil Region ATV Association and Chrissie Kurelowech said that she had asked Ken Bryan the same question several weeks prior and he said they are “property and business owners, law enforcement officers, and other professionals”. Janey Rowe told those in attendance that the ATVs speed down the roads and damage them, noting that she lives near an S-curve where an accident could easily occur. Gail Patterson asked if people who live out of the area would be required to obtain permits and she was told that anyone wanting to ride an ATV, side-by-side, or snowmobile on the designated roads would be required to have a permit. Andrew Schwab asked how much money the township would receive from the permits. According to the Oil Region ATV Association’s website (www.oilregionatv.com), each permit would cost \$50.00, with \$6.50 going to the county and \$20.00 going into a pool to be paid to the townships. The Oil Region ATV Association would retain \$23.50. Chrissie Kurelowech thought that the money for the townships would be paid based on miles of roadway (similar to liquid fuels), but was not certain. It was suggested that Ken Bryan be invited to the next regular monthly meeting (Monday, December 2, 2024)

Committee Reports

VFD

Tom Huffman, VFD Fire Chief, reported that there were 15 calls since the last meeting, 2 of which were in Crawford County and 13 of which were in Venango County. Of the calls in Crawford County, 1 was a building fire and 1 was dispatched and canceled. Of the calls in Venango County, 1 was a building fire, 1 was EMS, 1 was a medical assist, 2 were MVAs with no injuries, 1 was a gas leak, 6 were public service, and 1 was dispatched and canceled.

Tom Huffman told those in attendance that there is currently a countywide burning ban in effect.

The fall shoots continue to be held every Tuesday night. The doors open at 5:30 p.m. and the shooting begins at 6:00 p.m. There will be no shoot on Tuesday, November 5, 2024, due to the election, so a shoot will be held on Thursday, November 7, 2024 instead.

EMA Office

There was no report.

Road

Lew Staub, Roadmaster, reported that the road crew spent 6 days pushing trees off of roads, 10 days grading bad spots, 2 days putting salt in the shed, and 12 days blowing leaves. They replaced 2 culvert pipes, spent 1 day ditching a spot on Breedtown Road, mowed the yard, spent 1 day opening pipes, and cold patched 3 intersections.

As for equipment, the spreader lights were replaced on the 2002 International and on the 2009 International. A new battery was put in the 2019 JCB backhoe.

New Business

UPMC Health Insurance 2025 Renewal

Chrissie Kurelowech reported that she recently received the renewal information for employee health insurance (2025) from Frank Riley, of Loesel-Schaaf Insurance Agency. If the township renews the current plan (UPMC Inside Advantage PPO \$1,250/\$2,500 \$20/\$40 \$15/\$30/\$50 Rx), the premiums will increase by 3.5%, which will increase the township's health insurance cost by \$1,897.34 per year. Currently, the township pays 90% of the premiums and each employee pays 10% through payroll deductions. Chrissie Kurelowech said that Frank Riley will provide quotes from other companies, but he does not foresee a better option since the township is "grandmothered" into UPMC. Usually quotes from other companies are significantly higher. The Supervisors will vote on the 2025 employee health insurance at the regular monthly meeting scheduled for Monday, December 2, 2024.

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

The bills were reviewed by the Board of Supervisors.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine C. Kurelowech, Secretary-Treasurer