

Cherrytree Township Board of Supervisors
Regular Monthly Meeting
October 5, 2020
6:30 p.m.

A regular monthly meeting of the Cherrytree Township Board of Supervisors was held on Monday, October 5, 2020, at 6:30 p.m., at the township building. In attendance were Jim Waugh, Dave Zdarko, and Rob Kellogg, 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

There was no public comment.

Minutes/Treasurer's Report

The minutes, from the regular monthly meeting held on Tuesday, September 8, 2020, were read, accepted, and approved, on a motion made by Dave Zdarko, seconded by Rob Kellogg, and carried unanimously.

The treasurer's report, for September 2020, was read, accepted, and approved, on a motion made by Jim Waugh, seconded by Dave Zdarko, and carried unanimously.

Correspondence

Venango County Assessment Office – Parcels Scheduled for Appeal
Appeals have been scheduled for two properties in the township.

Venango County Tax Claim Bureau – Bid – 123 Fleming Alley
A bid has been received for 123 Fleming Alley, so the property will soon be moving back on the tax rolls.

Zoning

Permits

Z-2020-09 Tim and Karen McGrath 1066 Cherrytree Road addition to existing barn – new storage shed

Zoning Report

There was no report.

Administrative Action

Fuel Bids – Approximately 8,000 Gallons – Vote to Advertise

On a motion made by Jim Waugh, seconded by Rob Kellogg, and carried unanimously, the Supervisors voted to put approximately 8,000 gallons of diesel fuel out for bid. Bids will be accepted until 6:30 p.m. on Monday, November 2, 2020, at which time they will be opened and reviewed.

Committee Reports

VFD

Tim McGrath, VFD Fire Chief, reported that there were 8 calls since the last meeting. Of the 8 calls, 1 was a building fire, 1 was EMS, 1 was an MVA with injuries, 1 was a search for a person on land, 1 was public service, 2 were dispatched and cancelled, and 1 was a smoke detector activation.

The fall shoots have started and will continue to be held every Tuesday through November 24, 2020, with the exception of November 3, 2020 (Election Day). Sign-ups begin at 5:30 p.m. and the cost is \$2.50 per shot. The VFD will hold a gun show on Saturday, October 10, 2020 (9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.) and Sunday, October 11, 2020 (9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.). There will be a \$5.00 general admission fee.

EMA Office

All in-person EMA meetings have been cancelled through the end of the year due to COVID-19. Tim McGrath is working on a yearly report for Venango County EMA that is due by October 10, 2020, so it can be turned over to PEMA (Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency). The purpose is to report EMA information specific to Cherrytree Township.

Road

Chrissie Kurelowech read a report submitted by Lew Staub, Roadmaster. The road crew ditched spots on 4 roads, mowed the yard 3 times, and checked the roads once. They cleaned up the back lot, stacked salt in the building, graded bad spots on 11 roads, and spent 5 days stacking antiskid.

As for equipment, a new spreader light was put on the 2009 International. The 2002 International was picked up from Hunters Truck Sales where issues with the thermostat, rear main seal, oil pan gasket, and injectors were addressed. The rear-end was rebuilt (differential lock). The 2014 Dodge was picked up from Shults of Warren where issues with the emergency brake, “check engine” light, and water in the fuel light sensor were addressed. It was returned to Shults of Warren for an emergency brake cable and a new knock sensor on the engine. The 2009 International and the 2002 International each received 4 new rear tires and the 2014 Dodge received 6 new tires.

Old Business

Solar Development

Tim McGrath thanked the Supervisors for giving residents the opportunity to voice their concerns regarding solar development during the meeting held on Tuesday, September 8, 2020 and for tabling the vote on Ordinance 02-2020, a proposed curative amendment to the township’s zoning ordinance that includes regulations pertaining to solar development. He said that a meeting of concerned citizens was recently held with approximately 75 people in attendance who provided a lot of input on the matter. Tim McGrath and several concerned citizens went door-to-door with a petition asking the Supervisors to pass a moratorium on solar development in the township to allow more thought and careful consideration to be taken in developing solar regulations for the township. He said that approximately 200 Cherrytree Township residents signed the petition and noted that, when Jim Waugh was elected, 179 residents voted for him and when Rob Kellogg was elected, 190 residents voted for him. Tim McGrath told the Supervisors that he puts the petition at the same level as voting and it shows how important their decision on solar development is to the residents of the township. He read the petition aloud, asked the Supervisors to enact a moratorium immediately, and presented them with the signed petition which follows.

The signatures below represent residents of Cherrytree Township who are asking the Board of Supervisors to proclaim, to vote on, and to enact a COMPLETE MORATORIUM on all permits, planning reviews, determinations, both verbal and written, and all decisions pertaining to the past, present and future solar-related systems, whether private, commercial, community or industrial scale projects.

We are requesting this moratorium for a period of 10 months, beginning October 5, 2020 until July 5, 2021. This time frame will allow the Community and Planning Board to gather input for a comprehensive township solar ordinance.

We are also asking that a committee of citizens be selected by the Board to meet at the least monthly with the Planning Board to diligently investigate and propose acceptable restrictions and safeguards for the benefit and well-being of the Cherrytree Township Community. These proposed safeguards would then be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors and Solicitor for review and policy-writing by mid-April 2021. Public review and comments would follow in May and June, permitting the adoption of an ordinance at the July 2021 public township meeting.

Due to the current global pandemic, AKA COVID-19, various restrictions were imposed which resulted in lock-downs, canceled meetings and curtailment of public gatherings. We do not believe that the residents of Cherrytree Township have had neither the ability to meet, discuss, and sufficiently research the potential impacts of solar collection on our community nor vet the current proposed Solar Ordinance.

Therefore, we humbly ask the Cherrytree Township Board of Supervisors to call for and enact this moratorium regarding all solar projects, in its entirety, as detailed above.

Tim McGrath asked the Supervisors to consider passing a moratorium in an effort to safeguard the community and Jim Waugh responded by saying he understands the need for the moratorium.

Helen Beach told those in attendance that she has called her senator and sent a letter to President Donald J. Trump asking for help with keeping large companies from leasing the farmland in Cherrytree Township and building solar farms, which will ruin the community. She read the letter she sent to President Donald J. Trump aloud and urged those in attendance to vote for him, noting that if there is anyone who can help the community, it is him. She said that the solar farms are invading our community and that the next election will “save us or break us”. She also said that federal and state grants are being used for solar development. Jim Waugh thanked Helen Beach for her input and said the Supervisors appreciated it.

Roger Coup, a biologist from the Pennsylvania Game Commission, said that he was in attendance to gather information regarding community concerns with the construction of solar farms. He urged the Supervisors and the residents to get as much information as possible before developing and passing regulations pertaining to solar development. He said that he would try to gather more information (environmental issues, wildlife issues) and share it at the next regular monthly meeting.

Steve Anderson asked Roger Coup and Jason Amory, both of the Pennsylvania Game Commission, what the effect would be on wildlife if a solar company were to put fence around a 400-acre solar farm. Jason Amory said it obviously would not be good for the wildlife, but that he would gather more information and share it with the township.

New Business

Planning Commission - Vacancies

Chrissie Kurelowech said that the Cherrytree Township Planning Commission currently only has one member because there are two vacancies. She asked those in attendance to consider serving and, if interested, to let her know. Jim Waugh noted that the township needs people to help and serving is “what makes the township work”.

Resolution #20-47 – Moratorium on Solar Development

Tim McGrath asked the Supervisors to pass a moratorium on solar development. On a motion made by Jim Waugh, seconded by Rob Kellogg, and carried unanimously, the Supervisors adopted Resolution #20-47, which imposes a 300-day moratorium on solar development in Cherrytree Township.

Adjournments

The meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

The bills were reviewed by the Board of Supervisors.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine C. Kurelowech, Secretary-Treasurer