

Cherrytree Township Board of Supervisors
Regular Monthly Meeting
December 2, 2019

A regular monthly meeting of the Cherrytree Township Board of Supervisors was held on Monday, December 2, 2019, at 6:30 p.m., at the township building. In attendance were Emery Fiely, Jim Waugh, and Dave Zdanko, Supervisors, and Christine Kurelowech, Secretary-Treasurer.

Call to Order

Emery Fiely called the meeting to order.

Pledge

Moment of Prayer

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

Public Comment

Jamey Miller thanked Emery Fiely for his years of service and noted that Emery was always understanding and took time to listen to the residents. Several people in attendance echoed Jamey Miller's sentiments.

Minutes/Treasurer's Report

The minutes, from the regular monthly meeting held on Monday, November 4, 2019, were read, accepted, and approved, on a motion made by Jim Waugh, seconded by Emery Fiely, and carried unanimously.

The treasurer's report, for November 2019, was read, accepted, and approved, on a motion made by Emery Fiely, seconded by Jim Waugh, and carried unanimously.

Correspondence

Venango County Regional Planning Commission–Miller Farm Road–County Aid Denial
The county denied the township's application for \$29,249.42 to be spent on gravel for Miller Farm Road (approximately 2.81 miles), noting that the project may have been eligible for funding through the Dirt, Gravel, and Low-Volume Roads program. The total cost of the project was estimated to be \$32,569.42.

Venango Conserv. District–Pastorius Road– Dirt, Gravel & Low Volume Roads Approval
The Venango Conservation District awarded \$35,490.00 to the township to be used to fund drainage improvements on Pastorius Road during 2020.

Zoning

Permits

None

Zoning Report

Ben Breniman, Zoning Officer, reported that he recently attended a meeting with people from the Venango County Regional Planning Commission and representatives of

Cypress Creek Renewables regarding a proposed solar farm along Route 8. Maps were distributed showing 300 acres of property (multiple parcels, multiple property owners) that will be used for the solar farm. The project will consist of two phases, the first being on the west side of Route 8 (this spring) and the second being on the east side of Route 8 (sometime after the completion of the first phase). Ben Breniman noted that the project is considered a “passive” stormwater project and, consequently, will not require a retention pond. He said that, according to the maps, the maximum percentage of coverage (specified in the Zoning Ordinance) will be exceeded, so the project may require a special exception from the Zoning Hearing Board. He has brought this to the attention of Cypress Creek Renewables and has not received a response yet. Someone asked if the solar farm would increase township revenue and Ben Breniman said that, most likely, the properties involved would see increases in assessed values, which would generate higher tax revenue for the township, county, and school district. Jamey Miller noted that Cypress Creek Renewables must be held to the same standards that all of the township residents are held to regarding allowable coverage, stormwater, etc. The Supervisors agreed with Jamey Miller, but Jim Waugh said, in reality, if the county, state, or federal government gives Cypress Creek Renewables a “free pass”, the township will be unable to do anything about it. Jamey Miller stressed the importance of the Supervisors monitoring the project as it unfolds as opposed to waiting until the project is complete and being dissatisfied with the result (proactive vs. reactive). Ben Breniman asked the Supervisors if they would like a representative from Cypress Creek Renewables to attend a township meeting to answer questions and they said they would appreciate it, so he will contact the company and make arrangements. He will also keep the township updated on the project as it progresses.

Administrative Action

Resolution #19-45 – 2020 Budget – Vote to Adopt

On a motion made by Jim Waugh, seconded by Dave Zdarko, and carried unanimously, the Supervisors voted to adopt Resolution #19-45 (2020 Budget). Anticipated income for 2020 is \$704,041.50 and anticipated expenditures total \$586,316.00.

Resolution #19-46 – Cherrytree Township Personnel Policy – Vote to Adopt

On a motion made by Emery Fiely, seconded by Dave Zdarko, and carried unanimously, the Supervisors voted to adopt Resolution #19-46 (Cherrytree Township Personnel Policy). Chrissie Kurelowech said that the changes made to the personnel policy are the result of recent discussions regarding the changes that are currently taking place to the township’s pension plan through Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System (PMRS). The changes to the personnel policy are as follows: a new employee will not be eligible to participate in the township’s pension plan until he or she has been employed by the township for 90 days, accrued sick time and personal time will be paid in full upon separation, and a new employee will not be eligible for health insurance until he or she has been employed by the township for 60 days.

PMRS Changes–Approve Adoption Agreements–Vote to Advertise Ordinance #01-2020

Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System (PMRS) is making changes to all of its plans, including the plan for Cherrytree Township, in order to meet IRS regulations.

Chrissie Kurelowech explained that there are two adoption agreements (defined benefit plan and cash balance plan) that the township must approve. Once those are approved, the township must pass an ordinance that includes the adoption agreements. The defined benefit plan pertains to mandatory contributions (3%) made by employees and the cash balance plan pertains to voluntary contributions (0 to 17%) made by employees. Each adoption agreement contains 22 pages of specifications/options, many of which are determined by the township. After discussing options and changes during the meeting held on November 4, 2019, the adoption agreements were in need of a change that would allow township employees to retire, begin receiving a pension, but continue to be employed by the township or be rehired at some point in the future. Chrissie Kurelowech told the Supervisors that PMRS changed both agreements to allow an employee to retire, begin receiving a pension, and continue employment, or be rehired by the township, in any capacity (full-time, part-time, or as-needed). The employment capacity would be at the discretion of the Supervisors, so if they did not want an employee who retired to continue working full-time for the township or be rehired as a full-time employee, they could choose to only employ the person part-time or on an as-needed basis. On a motion made by Jim Waugh, seconded by Emery Fiely, and carried unanimously, the Supervisors voted to approve the adoption agreement for the PMRS defined benefit plan. On a motion made by Emery Fiely, seconded by Dave Zdarko, and carried unanimously, the Supervisors voted to approve the adoption agreement for the PMRS cash balance plan. Emery Fiely signed both documents. The final step in the process to change the pension plan is to pass Ordinance #01-2020, which will put the changes made to both the defined benefit plan and the cash balance plan into effect. On a motion made by Emery Fiely, seconded by Dave Zdarko, and carried unanimously, the Supervisors voted to advertise Ordinance #01-2020 (Amend Non-Uniform Pension Plan Administered by PMRS) with the intention of voting to pass the ordinance at the meeting scheduled for Monday, January 6, 2020.

Committee Reports

VFD

Jim Waugh, VFD President, reported that there were 19 calls since the last meeting. Of the 19 calls, 2 were building fires, 1 was a trash or rubbish fire, 7 were EMS, 1 was an MVA with injuries, 1 was a search for a person on land, 3 were public service, and 4 were dispatched and cancelled. So far, there have been 207 calls for the year.

On December 18, 2019, at 7:00 p.m., there will be a meeting of the Venango County Firefighters and Fire Chiefs Association held at the township building. The VFD will have a work session night on December 16, 2019 and would like to have the carpet cleaned in the township building before December 18, 2019. The December EMA meeting has been cancelled.

EMA Office

There was no report.

Road

Lew Staub, Roadmaster, reported that the road crew graded the bad spots on 8 roads, blew leaves for 2 days, plowed and anti-skidded 6 times, spent 1 day opening pipes, made

parking spots in front of the township building, and checked the roads once. They also cleaned the garage.

As for equipment, a plow pin was made and the plow blades were changed on the 2014 Dodge. Batteries were put in the 2014 Dodge. Chains were put on the grader and heater motors were installed. The oil and filters were changed on the Massey Ferguson tractor. Work was performed on the mirrors on the JCB backhoe. The plow blades were changed on the 2002 International. A light was put on the 2009 International and the cab mount bushings were changed as well.

Old Business

There was no “Old Business”.

New Business

There was no “New Business”.

Adjournments

Several people thanked Emery Fiely for his years of service as a Supervisor and he said it has been a pleasure. The meeting adjourned at 6:59 p.m.

The bills were reviewed by the Board of Supervisors.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine C. Kurelowech, Secretary-Treasurer