

**HILLTOWN TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, January 27, 2025**

The regular meeting of the Hilltown Township Board of Supervisors was called to order by Chairman Caleb Torrice at 7:02 PM and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. Also in attendance were Vice Chairman James Groff, Supervisor Joseph Metzinger, Township Manager Deanna Ferry, Township Solicitor Jack Wuerstle, Township Engineer Timothy Fulmer, and Chief of Police Christopher Engelhart.

1. ANNOUNCEMENTS: Chairman Torrice announced there was an Executive Session on January 6, 2025 to discuss personnel, and another prior to this meeting to discuss legal matters with regard to Linke, Delaney Construction and Rouse, as well as an internal investigation.
2. CONSENT AGENDA:
 - a. Minutes of January 6, 2025, Board of Supervisors Meeting
 - b. Bills List: January 28, 2025
 - c. 2025 Fire Protection Agreement: Silverdale Fire Co.

Chairman Torrice asked for a Motion to approve items A through C on the Consent Agenda. Supervisor Metzinger requested that item C be separated out pending further review with Solicitor Wuerstle. Chairman Torrice asked for a Motion to approve items A through B on the Consent Agenda, a motion was made by Supervisor Metzinger, seconded by Vice Chairman Groff, and carried unanimously to approve items A through B on the Consent Agenda. Chairman Torrice asked for a motion to Table item C, a motion was made by Vice Chairman Groff, seconded by Supervisor Metzinger, and carried unanimously to table item C on the Consent Agenda. There was no public comment.

3. CONFIRMED APPOINTMENT:
 - a. Promotion of Officer Towhey to Detective: Chief Engelhart spoke regarding the need for another Detective within the Department, as well as noting the great work Officer Towhey has completed since joining the Department. Chairman Torrice asked for a motion to promote Detective Towhey to his new role, a motion was made by Supervisor Metzinger, seconded by Vice Chairman Groff, and carried unanimously. District Judge Regina Armitage then administered the oath and swore in Detective Towhey.
 - b. Appointment Corrections: Chairman Torrice advised that some term dates were incorrect on last month's approval for appointments which is why they are re-appearing this month. Chairman Torrice asked for a motion to approve item b, i through iv, which was made by Vice Chairman Groff, seconded by Supervisor Metzinger, and carried unanimously.
 - c. New Appointments: Chairman Torrice requested a motion to appoint Steve Kendra to the Parks and Recreation Board with a term ending 12/31/2029, which was made by Supervisor Metzinger, seconded by Vice Chairman Groff, and carried unanimously.
4. LEGAL: Solicitor's Report:
 - a. None.
5. PLANNING:

- a. Telford Borough Authority Well House #6 Land Development Waiver: Mr. Fulmer advised the Board that the Planning Commission recommended the proposal to waive the Land Development process, with conditions, for the construction of a filter building on the existing property owned by Telford Borough to comply with pending Environmental Protection Agency mandates for water quality. The Authority's Engineer, Pat DiGangi from CKS Engineers, provided further explanation of the project. Chairman Torrice requested a motion to waive the land development plan conditioned upon completion of items contained within the engineering review dated January 9, 2025, and we'll add receiving confirmation from PPL that proposed improvements may be located within that utility easement. A motion was made by Vice Chairman Groff, seconded by Supervisor Metzinger, and carried unanimously.
- b. Suburban Equities, III LLC Land Development: Mr. Fulmer explained that this project was before the Planning Commission in December and this month for consideration of the proposal to construct a warehouse building on the property along Bethlehem Pike which is located within the HI Zoning District. He reminded the Board that this project previously received conditional use approval and some variance approval from the Zoning Hearing Board, which was granted by the Board of Supervisors as well. Mr. Fulmer stated that the Planning Commission's recommendation this month was to grant preliminary approval subject to compliance with the items in the November 18, 2024 review letter and made recommendations on waivers. He then introduced the applicant's attorney, John VanLuvanee, who spoke on behalf of the applicant regarding the project's history and three items within the review letter. Discussion then ensued for items 5, waivers f and g under line item 7, and lastly, regarding preliminary final approval that was requested and not approved by the Planning Commission. Following an extensive discussion regarding these items, Mr. Fulmer further explained how any fees in lieu would be handled through the Development Agreement should an alternative use of the funds be requested by the Board, to which Mr. VanLuvanee affirmed. Chairman Torrice then asked about the buffer yard, and Mr. Fulmer responded that the buffer is essentially double buffer for the parking lot, as well as the neighboring use, between type 1 and type 5 depending on the location on the property. Representatives for the applicant added additional information regarding the buffering, the recent traffic study, conditional uses, and alternative energy sources. Chairman Torrice requested a motion for preliminary land development approval upon the completion of items contained within engineering review correspondence dated November 18, 2024, with additional capital contribution determination for sidewalks and trees at a later date, Vice Chairman Groff made a motion amending the Chair's motion from preliminary land development approval to preliminary final land development approval, seconded by Supervisor Metzinger. Chairman Torrice then asked for public comment, which there was none of. The amended motion was passed unanimously.
- c. Front Porch Cohousing: Mr. Fulmer advised that the members of Front Porch Cohousing met with staff about a month ago to talk about a proposal that they would like to discuss with the Board, and introduced co-founder Jim Richardson for his presentation. Mr. Richardson shared that he was seeking a very preliminary approval from the Board for a project they would like to start at a parcel located off Route 113. Mr. Richardson and his team presented on the need for a neuro-inclusive community, shared his personal story, and provided a concept plan for the potential development. The Board provided comments and positive feedback on the proposal.

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6. ENGINEERING:

- a. None.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- a. None.

8. NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Motion to Approve 5-year Contract for new Permitting Services to Spatial Data Logic: Dr. Ferry advised that Spatial Data Logic was selected out of the three options that presented to the public at a prior meeting. Chairman Torrice asked for a motion to approve the 5-year Contract for new Permitting Services to Spatial Data Logic. A motion was made by Supervisor Metzinger, seconded by Vice Chairman Groff, and carried unanimously.
- b. Motion to Approve 3-year Auditing Services Contract: Dr. Ferry advised that this motion is to approve auditing services to cover audits in 2025, 2026 and 2027, noting there was a substantial difference in the cost with no real variance in services between the two responses that were received. Chairman Torrice asked for a motion to approve auditing services for years 2025, 2026 and 2027, at which time Supervisor Metzinger requested that this motion be tabled until February. Chairman Torrice then asked for a motion to table this item until February. A motion was made by Supervisor Metzinger, seconded by Vice Chairman Groff, and carried unanimously.
- c. Ordinance Advertisements:
- i) 1987-002, Well Certification for Private Water Supplies
 - ii) 2016-004, Vehicles and Traffic

Dr. Ferry advised the first item, Ordinance 1987-002, Well Certification for Private Water Supplies, is no longer consistent with the County's recently modified requirements and noted she would like to evaluate and amend the Township Ordinance to be more consistent. Dr. Ferry advised the second item, 2016-004, Vehicles and Traffic, is used when making snow emergency declarations and general emergency declarations. The sections that are proposed for updates are Schedule 1 and Schedule 7, to increase safety and make the Township roadways more clearly defined for the Township residents. Chairman Torrice asked for a motion to draft and advertise Ordinance 1987-002 and Ordinance 2016-004. A motion was made by Vice Chairman Groff, seconded by Supervisor Metzinger, and carried unanimously.

- d. Discussion for future quarterly treasurer reports: Vice Chairman Groff: Vice Chairman Groff advised that he wants to have Dr. Ferry's present quarterly treasurer's report with respect to budgets, spending, etc. Chairman Torrice asked for a motion for to provide quarterly treasurer reports in the future. A motion was made by Vice Chairman Groff, seconded by Supervisor Metzinger, and carried unanimously.

- e. Discussion for Agenda addition timetables: Vice Chairman Groff: Vice Chairman Groff advised the need for a deadline for when material must be added to the Agenda so that everyone has to time to review material. Discussion ensued and a deadline of Thursday at noon was decided. Further discussion on when to post the materials to the website prior to the meeting was initiated by Supervisor Metzinger.
- f. Supervisor Liaison Program: Supervisor Metzinger: Supervisor Metzinger advised that one of the roles he took on when a liaison program was established last year was as the fire liaison. He noted that based on his involvement over the last year, there seems to be overlap between fire and EMS, he asked if the other Board Members would be open to more of an emergency services liaison, excluding police. Discussion ensued regarding the Manager's role and if a liaison program is necessary now that there is a Manager. The Board agreed to table it at this time.
- g. Hilltown Fire Evaluation: Supervisor Metzinger: Supervisor Metzinger felt it would be a good time to take another look at the fire evaluation report that was completed in 2007, and asked Dr. Ferry to explore avenues to get another one done. Dr. Ferry advised that she would look into it.

9. MANAGER UPDATE:

- a. Resignation of Elected Auditor, James O'Brien: Dr. Ferry announced Mr. O'Brien's resignation and advised the County of Bucks has been notified.
- b. ARPA Recap Report: Dr. Ferry provided a report on the fully obligated ARPA grant money, providing a comparison to the previously reported projected uses for the funding which were presented in fall of 2024.

10. SUPERVISOR'S COMMENTS:

Chairman Torrice thanked the Public Works Road Crew for their hard work and great job on the recent snow event.

Supervisor Metzinger thanked Dr. Ferry and Chief Engelhart regarding their response to a safety concern on Rte. 113 and Keystone on Friday night.

11. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Tyler Coleman, Township resident, asked about access and changed to the Telford Borough Authority Well House #6. Mr. Fulmer responded to his questions after which, Tyler's brother Brian Coleman, also a Township resident, approached the podium and asked about the bridge. Mr. Fulmer advised Brian to ask Telford Borough as it is their access point.

12. PRESS CONFERENCE: None.

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13. ADJOURNMENT: Upon a motion made by Vice Chairman Groff, seconded by Supervisor Metzinger, and carried unanimously, the January 27, 2025, Hilltown Township Board of Supervisors meeting was adjourned at 8:38 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Deanna Ferry".

Deanna Ferry, DPA
Township Manager

(*NOTE: These minutes were transcribed from notes and recordings and should not be considered official until approved by the Board of Supervisors at a public meeting).