

Penn Township Supervisor Meeting

January 15, 2025

Vice-Chairman Mark Strawser called the 1.15.2025 Supervisor Meeting to order at 6:00 pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present included: Supervisors: Mark Strawser, Ross Smoker, Solicitor Jim Bathgate and Township Manager Julie Hartley

Excused: Supervisor Isaac Ramer Jr.

Public Present: William Moyer, Bill Kline, Paul Long, Jon Payne, Chris Fetter, Brian Hipple, Chad Brandt, Shellie McCurdy, Rodney Ries, Tim Thomson, Marv Rudnitsky, Jeff Ries and Shannon Rudy

Public Hearing – Withdrawal from Penn Valley Airport Authority

Mark Strawser turned the public hearing over to Jim Bathgate. Jim stated that a letter was received by Slivinski Law Offices dated November 18, 2024 requesting the township to withdraw from the Penn Valley Regional Airport Authority because of a lack of representation and financial support. Jim asked if anyone representing the airport was present. Rodney Ries replied that he was present and has been Penn Township's representative for over twenty years. He listed the many planes and helicopters that use the airport including Geisinger's Life Flight. Jim asked Rodney if he knew how many Penn Township businesses used the airport and he answered that Bruce Witkop uses the airport. Brian Hipple from DH&L Ambulance noted that Life Flight transported six Penn Township residents in 2024. Jim asked if any residents use the Airport's Flight Simulator. Rodney said that the simulator was used at no cost by any SUN Tech students that wish to use it. Jim asked how much other townships are giving to support the airport. Rodney will need to gather this information. Rodney explained that the airport is required to replace its lighting to meet FAA standards and also needs to trim several trees to comply with the regulations. The lighting project is approximately a two-million-dollar project and the Authority needs to have one hundred thousand in matching funds. Rodney also noted that trees need removed and the runway needs new tar. Jim asked if projects have been submitted to the township to review and Rodney said they have not. Mark Strawser stated that he would like to see project plans given to the township for review. Jim Bathgate opened the meeting to public discussion. Bill Moyer said that the township gives to the Selinsgrove Community Pool and would like to see money given to the Airport. Darwin Swope believes the airport is an asset to the community and helps economic development. Jon Payne asked if supporting the airport was in the budget and it was answered that it is not. He continued by noting that the Airport Authority should be giving information to the member municipalities. He asked how often their Board meets and if their minutes are given to the municipalities. Jon asked if the bylaws of the airport authority were available and do they state that the member municipalities are required to give financial support and have a representative to remain in the authority. He also questioned if the authority's audits and financials were available to the municipalities to examine. Jon suggested that the Airport Authority be more open and transparent with the municipalities. Rodney Ries answered and stated that he will correct the Daily Item that he is Penn Township's representative and will get the township the authority's minutes and projects. Rodney will also get a list of contributions from the other municipalities. Chris Fetter asked about the tree removal financing and procedures. Darwin Swope suggested getting Susquehanna University students to do a study on the economic impact the regional airport has on the community. Shannon Rudy asked what the cost is to Penn Township residents to use the flight simulator. He answered that if they are SUN Tech students there is no cost and if permission is given it could be free to others. Bill Moyer asked about what value the Airport has to the member municipalities and Jim answered that if the airport would dissolve the assets would be divided among the members. Jon Payne suggested that more transparency is needed in the future. Mark Strawser explained that the Chairman could not make it to the meeting tonight because of an illness so the decision will be discussed further at the next meeting on February 5th at 6 pm.

On motion by Mark Strawser, seconded by Ross Smoker, and Board acclamation to table the discussion about staying or withdrawing from the Penn Valley Regional Airport Authority until February 5th.

Vice-Chairman Mark Strawser announced that an executive session was held from 5:35 pm to 5:55 pm this evening to discuss legal matters with no decisions made at that time.

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Minutes – On motion by Ross Smoker, seconded by Mark Strawser, and Board acclamation to approve the January 6, 2025 supervisor's meeting minutes.

Persons Present to be Heard:

Shannon Rudy, FFY 2024 CDBG Project Modification Approval & Certification and Approval of a Subrecipient Agreement for CDBG FFY 2023 – Shannon shared that she will need a modification approval for the 2024 funds because DCED did not approve using the funds for the elderly housing because when the Penn Township residents move in, they become Selinsgrove Borough residents. The new agreement will move the funds back to owner occupied housing rehabilitation. **On motion by Ross Smoker, seconded by Mark Strawser, and Board acclamation to sign the agreement that moves the funds to owner occupied housing rehabilitation.**

Rob Beierschmitt, Selinsgrove Little League – Not present.

Kelly Feiler, REC Center – Shellie McCurdy and Marv Rudnitsky came to represent the REC Center since Kelly Feiler was unavailable. Shellie explained that the REC grant to construct a new building at the 18th Street location requires a government body to sponsor it. DRIVE will administer the grant but a taxing body must be a sponsor to secure the grant. DRIVE is responsible to adhere to all the guidelines. Jim Bathgate noted that a Conditional Use Hearing was held and granted to construct the REC at the property along 18th Street. Jim's concern is that if Penn Township sponsors the project which calls for the Township to confirm that they support and agree with the project, that may be a conflict of interest since the Township will be approving the Land Development and Stormwater plans. Jim also expressed concerns about the exposure to the Township if the grant is not administered correctly. Jim asked if REC has the assets or a bond to guarantee the financial obligation if a mistake is made with the grant. Marv stated that DRIVE has experience with this type of grant. Jim asked why the Snyder County Commissioners or Selinsgrove Borough could not take the sponsorship of the grant. Darwin Swope added that he thinks Snyder County would be the best sponsor and not cause a conflict of interest with the project. Shellie continued by noting that they hope the move to 18th Street will help students from the Intermediate School be able to use the facilities more.

New Business:

Resolution 2025-10 Withdrawal from Penn Valley Airport Authority – Tabled

PMRS Cash Balance Agreement – Julie explained that the Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System would like a new agreement signed to update their records and that there are no changes from the prior agreement. **On motion by Ross Smoker, seconded by Mark Strawser, and Board acclamation to sign the PMRS Cash Balance Agreement.**

Pickup Spreader on Muncibid – Mark said that a new poly spreader was purchased for use on the township's pickup truck and that the old spreader is no longer needed. **On motion by Ross Smoker, seconded by Mark Strawser, and Board acclamation to place the old pickup spreader on Muncibid with a bid opening set for March 5th at 6 pm.**

90-Day Extension for Village at Penns Creek Land Dev. & Subdivision – **On motion by Ross Smoker, seconded by Mark Strawser, and Board acclamation to grant a 90-day extension to the Village at Penns Creek Land Development and Subdivision.**

Old Business:

Roadmaster Position – Tabled

Public Comment:

Brian Hipple – Brian shared that there were eighty-three calls with sixty-eight transports and one fire standby during the month of December. In 2024 there were a total of nine hundred and seventy-eight calls with a ninety-six percent

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response rate. He stated that all units are now are in service. He said that Selinsgrove Borough has implemented a new EMS tax at 0.5 mills since the maintenance bills for equipment are running at eighty-five thousand a year and new ambulances cost three hundred thousand dollars.

Shellie McCurdy – Shellie reported that there were six hundred and fifty-eight check ins during the month of December with an average of forty-seven students per day. The day before Christmas vacation there were sixty-eight students. The REC received a grant so that they can have staff in during the summer months to have the REC open.

FYI:

- 1.9.25 ACH Payroll Report
- PTMA Jan. 9 Agenda & Dec. 5th Minutes
- Check Register 1.6.25 to 1.15.25

Land/Subdivision:

- Village at Penns Creek Land Dev. & Subdivision, filed 11.15.24, due 5.13.25

Approval of Accounts Payable (State and General Funds)- **On Motion by Ross Smoker, seconded by Mark Strawser, and Board acclamation, to pay bills.**

Adjournment - **On motion by Ross Smoker, second by Mark Strawser, and Board acclamation the January 15, 2025 Supervisor's Meeting was adjourned at 7:16 PM.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Julie Hartley
Manager