

Benezette Township Meeting Meeting Minutes – January 3, 2023

The Benezette Township Board of Supervisors held their organizational meeting with the regular monthly meeting immediately following on Tuesday January 3rd, 2023 at the Benezette School House located at 105 Schoolhouse Road, Benezette, PA. A workshop began at 5:00 PM with the organizational meeting starting at 6:00 PM. Present were Chairman Doug Ruffo, Supervisor/Roadmaster Mitchell Hanes, Supervisor Pamela Mong and Secretary/Treasurer Krista Meyer. Please see the attached sign in sheet for residents and guests present at the meeting. Supervisor Ruffo called the organizational meeting to order with the pledge of allegiance and thanked everyone for attending.

REVIEW MEETING PROTOCOL & MEETING FLOW: Meetings are recorded each month and transcribed to create meeting minutes. We ask that comments and questions are held off until the "Public Forum" portion of the meeting unless the Chairman specifically asks for feedback on a specific topic.

MOTION TO ACCEPT DECEMBER 2022 TOWNSHIP MEETING MINUTES:

FIRST: Supervisor Hanes COMMENTS: None SECOND: Supervisor Ruffo YES: 3 NO: 0

MOTION TO ACCEPT DECEMBER 2022 TOWNSHIP TREASURER'S REPORT:

FIRST: Supervisor Hanes COMMENTS: None SECOND: Supervisor Mong YES: 3 NO: 0

MOTION TO ACCEPT SPECIAL MEETING 12-28-2022 MEETING MINUTES TO APPROVE 2023 BUDGET & MILLAGE INCREASE:

FIRST: Supervisor Hanes SECOND: Supervisor Mong YES: 3 NO: 0

COMMENTS: correction Mitchell Hanes was in attendance

BV SCHOOL POST CARDS: Folks in Byrnedale and Weedville put together a lost effort to try to save the school in Bennett's Valley. The postcards are addressed and stamped. They will be sent to Harrisburg.

CANOPY UPDATE: The weather has caused some delays. They have one more day left of Devil's Elbow. Then they will move on to by the Visitor's Center and move towards the Game Commission parking lot. Brian and Dee Chaney commented that it looks very nice. Supervisor Hanes is going to have them give a price to do Gray Hill Road maybe next year.

SCHOOL HOUSE BUILDING UPDATE: Supervisor Mong will be working on getting advertisement out for getting the roof replaced. We had a couple bat biologists come by from the PA Game Commission. She took samples of bats with her. They want to come back in the spring. She wants to know when the roof will be fixed so that they can make sure the bats stay safe. There are small and large brown bats up there. They were surprised at home many bats were up there. Dave Weber questioned how big of a house they would need to house all those bats.

HAZARD MITIGATION REQUIREMENTS: Supervisor Ruffo attended a meeting that went over forest fires, flooding, lighting strikes, snow events, tornadoes; anything that we may need to apply for assistance from the federal government. Supervisor Ruffo and Krista Meyer will be attending meeting with Tracy Gerber at the Planning Dept. to get help filling out the form that needs to be submitted by January 11th.

SECURITY CAMERAS: They are in place. We ended up with 6 cameras that monitors several areas at the township. So far we are very pleased with them. Supervisor Ruffo contacted the Game Commission as they have a pole up on their parking lot. The thought is to put another camera up there for the township to monitor the road conditions. The camera guy will be able to install it, but it needs to be approved by the PA Game Commission.

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK: We are planning on coming up with 2 policies to add to the employee handbook each month. We are hoping to have about 20 policies in effect by the end of the year. Supervisor Mong will be working on the first two which will be the holidays and adding an MVR to our drug policy.

TAX COLLECTOR REQUEST: We sent a note to the tax collector and asked her if she could attend the meetings occasionally and what good contact information would be. We are hoping this will be informational and improve communication.

ADMINISTRATION FEES: Resolution 2023-1 was adopted to asses a 10% administrative fee to all building & sewer permits that are issued within the township. This includes all permits required by the Benezette Township Building Code and Sewer Code. Supervisor Ruffo made the motion to adopt Resolution 2023-1. Supervisor Hanes made the second. All were in favor.

MILITARY FLAGS: Brandi Hanes is working with Hometown Hero's Banner program. She has been in touch with West Penn Power in regards to placing the military flags. There are some permissions and restrictions on the size, etc. West Penn said they are replacing poles and possibly could get poles through a program they have. We will need to figure out where we want them and will have to come up with the pole numbers. Jim McCluskey has a list of how many we may need. We can put in grant applications through the legion. Donna McKain gave a personal experience she had with purchasing a flag for her dad.

ROADMASTERS REPORT: Supervisor Hanes talked about the tar & chipping projects we are hoping to accomplish this year depending on the oil prices. We have allotted \$15,000 to tar & chip. We are planning on doing Summerson, Dents, Grant, Hulett and Dollinger. We did Summerson, Dents and Grant last year, but we want to make sure it has a good base and go over them again. Supervisor Ruffo brought up a challenge we have in having enough staff for snow plowing. We have offered a position to Troy Hanes to help with the plowing and he has accepted & will be added to the payroll. Jeff Stefanak updated on the salt and antiskid inventories saying they are in good standing. Supervisor Hanes commended Aidan with helping out with making a road sign holder and working on an inventory. He also has started plowing now that he has turned 18. Supervisor Hanes discussed the reflectors on the guardrails that we installed on Devil's Elbow. We are planning on getting more reflectors as they have worked well. Dee Chaney questioned about the ice on Winslow Hill by Elk Life and in Medix across from the Medix Hotel.

TOWNSHIP PUBLIC FORUM:

Gail Gearhart – Questioned whether she lives in the city limits. She gave a scenario of almost getting hit because of the roads not being plowed and who owns the road because it is privately owned.

Gail Gearhart – For the dilapidated building ordinance was passed and added to the garbage; she questioned if there was a way to enforce it.

Bob Davis – Questioned if they need to bring the issue to the supervisors.

John Roush – Asked the supervisors if they could explain to him how Dewey Road where only one person lives gets plowed, where Blue Sky does not. He doesn't understand why the township cannot take care of Blue Sky's roads. This created a lot of commotion and comments throughout the attendees.

TOWNSHIP PORTION OF THE MEETING ADJOURNED:

FIRST: Supervisor Ruffo COMMENTS: None SECOND: Supervisor Hanes YES: 3 NO: 0

SEWAGE MEETING MINUTES

MOTION TO ACCEPT DECEMBER 2022 SEWAGE MEETING MINUTES:

FIRST: Supervisor Hanes COMMENTS: None SECOND: Supervisor Mong YES: 3 NO: 0

MOTION TO ACCEPT DECEMBER 2022 SEWAGE TREASURER'S REPORT:

FIRST: Supervisor Mong COMMENTS: None SECOND: Supervisor Hanes YES: 3 NO: 0

GRINDER PUMPS: We ordered 8 pumps last year and they finally came in. We were able to pay for them through the sewage budget which was a bit over \$51,000. Our goal is to get them sold so we are not sitting on these grinder pumps. Our responsibility is to get after the people that needs to get hooked up to the sewage which is mainly people in Blue Sky. Supervisor Ruffo said that we are going to send out letters to the different ones to let them know we received a shipment and they need to get theirs purchased. We have 2 replacement pumps back there. We do not have any rebuilt units.

DEP FOLLOW-UP INSPECTION: We have the follow-up inspection this Thursday.

DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS: There has been a lien placed this month for a sewage account that is delinquent.

SEWAGE OPERATOR'S REPORT: no questions

SEWAGE PUBLIC FORUM:

SEWAGE MEETING ADJOURNED:

FIRST: Supervisor Hanes COMMENTS: None SECOND: Supervisor Mong YES: 3 NO: 0

