

Benezette Township Meeting Meeting Minutes – September 5th, 2023

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

FLOW OF THE MEETING: Supervisor Ruffo reminded all guests about the flow of the meeting. The supervisors will solicit questions when needed, but if a guest has any questions, please hold them off until the public forum portion of the meeting.

MOTION TO ACCEPT AUGUST 2023 TOWNSHIP MEETING MINUTES:

FIRST: Supervisor Mong COMMENTS: Terry Briggs questioned why the Meeting Minutes are not posted prior to the meeting. He feels they should be posted and marked with "Draft".

SECOND: Supervisor Hanes YES: 3 NO: 0

MOTION TO ACCEPT AUGUST 2023 TOWNSHIP TREASURER'S REPORT:

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

MOTION TO ACCEPT AUGUST 11, 2023 SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES:

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

UPCOMING GRANTS:

ACT 13 grant application was submitted August 31, 2023 for the Reedbed Rehabilitation. This will clean 2 of the reedbeds out and replant them. Project estimated at \$14,430 and funding amount requested is \$10,000.

Dirt & Gravel through the Conservation District application is due September 22. We will apply for Medix Grade Road to add more cross drains that need replaced. Jeff met with the Conservation District about this project. We have a cross drain by the Bed & Breakfast on top of Winslow Hill that is giving us some problems and needs replaced that we will submit for the Low Volume Grant through the Conservation District. (also due Sept. 22) Neither project will be done unless we get the money. Jim Borza questioned about the 2 cones that had washout by Black Snake. Sup. Ruffo commented the cones just needed picked up. They had already fixed the area.

Local Shares Grant comes from the online gambling. Last year we put in for a skid steer, but did not get anything. We are putting in for a skid steer and a mini excavator this year. They need to be turned in by November 30th. Bob Davis questioned what was the purpose of a skid steer and mini excavator when the Township already has a backhoe and front loader. Sup. Ruffo reiterated that we are not spending money unless we get the grant money. The mini excavator is more agile and easier to get on narrow roads. We have rented a mini excavator and it gets the job done quicker, easier and more efficient than the loader. The skid steer would help for loading. If something happens to the loader in the middle of winter, we would have no way of loading the trucks. The loader is an old piece of equipment. John Roush also added that when the backhoe was being used at another location there was nothing here to load trucks. Tom Wilson also agreed it was more efficient and it would be free if we get the grant. We need to get support letters from Armanini and Dush.

2nd STREET MAINTENANCE GARAGE: 2nd Street Garage was repainted. There will be a new roof being put on and clean up the soffit. There was weed eating done and the rest of the grass will be cleaned up. They will be putting down some of the millings on the driveway. The hope is to make it look better and for it to be in better use. The "boys" have gone in and cleaned up the inside. There was an inventory done of 2nd Street and also the main garage.

TOWNSHIP BUILDING: We put on a new roof and it appears as though the bats are gone. We called a company to come in and do a cleaning of the upstairs. Mammoth Restorations quote us with \$3,650 to clean the 2nd and 3rd floors. They came in and cleaned up all the bat feces and wiped everything down. The files were relocated from the middle room into another room so they are ready to be gone through. Everything was sterilized with an antimicrobial fog to kill any of the harmful bacteria. They ran a fog on the first floor as well. Donna McKain asked whether the window with the hole will be fixed. Supervisor Ruffo answered that patching it is an option.

ROADMASTER REPORT: No questions or comments regarding the roadmaster report.

TOWNSHIP PUBIC FORUM:

Terry Briggs – questioned about the minutes at the end where people ask questions, but the answers are not given. Can the answers be put in there? People that can't come to the meeting don't know what the answers were. Supervisor Ruffo responded by saying that sometimes there are not answers, but this gives the opportunity to address the question at the next meeting.

Terry Briggs – also brought up what he had heard about Elk Co. Riders and what they were trying to pursue. He wanted to know what the Twp. knew about it.

Donna McKain – brought up the pavilion picnic tables that have been having the paint picked off of them. She asked if there was more brown paint and said that she will paint them herself. Sup. Ruffo said he will make sure it gets on the guys' list of things to do.

Jim Borza – wanted the Twp. to know that the Sheriff of Elk County put a car at his home in Benezette. It will be in town for the duration of the "Benezette" season.

Dee Chaney – questioned if anyone knew what the loud "booming" sound was that has been going off. This created a bit of discussion and many attendees also heard it and commented about it, but no one knew where it was coming from.

Dee Chaney - asked Brandi if there was any more information on the military flags. Sup. Brandi Hanes responded that she received the permit and now will need to look at the next phase. We have submitted the sizes and have been approved for the poles.

Dee Chaney – questioned if there could be stop sign coming down Winslow Hill on the corner as there is a lot of foot traffic and vehicles do no slow down coming down and zip around the corner. Jim Borza suggested sitting there with the patrol car during the busiest times. Sup. Ruffo commented that they could put up a slow pedestrian sign up. He will look into it.

Dee Chaney – understands that the zoning ordinance is not happening, but wondered about ordinances for different things like sound, light, signs.... Sup. Ruffo responded that at this time they are not looking to get into any ordinances.

John Roush – told the supervisor's that he was sorry for what they had to go through during the zoning hearing. He understands that people have their feelings, but it was brutal. Some things happened and things were said that no one deserved. He commented that the he thinks the supervisors all have done a wonderful job.

John Roush – commented about the "ice cream thing" up the hill needs to be addressed for public safety. He suggested a sign about oncoming traffic coming out of a driveway. He asked about a driveway permit. Sup. Ruffo responded that Russ Braun is taking care of the driveway permits now. He will talk with him and see what his recommendations would be.

Bob Davis – commented that we have had some heavy downpours in August that are causing a lot of runoffs. Blue Sky and other driveways have a lot of gravel coming onto Winslow Hill. There needs to be a protocol. It is a safety issue and someone is going to go down. Sup. Ruffo commented that Blue Sky has been notified about the issue. Sup. Mong will notify Blue Sky again to see if we can get it addressed. Sup. Ruffo also commented that the guys have been up and cleaned out all the storm drains.

Jerry Willaman – asked about the zoning and who's idea was it? Sup. Ruffo explained that the township has been talking about this for quite some time... What do you want Benezette to look like in 10 years? The zoning hearing was to get feedback from the audience. If people would have just given their thoughts and reasons, but it turned into a bunch of personal attacks.

TOWNSHIP PORTION OF THE MEETING ADJOURNED:

FIRST: Supervisor Mong

COMMENTS: None

SECOND: Supervisor Hanes

YES: 3

NO: 0

SEWAGE MEETING MINUTES

MOTION TO ACCEPT AUGUST 2023 SEWAGE MEETING MINUTES:

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

MOTION TO ACCEPT AUGUST 2023 SEWAGE TREASURER'S REPORT:

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

SEWAGE FACILITIES PLANNING MODUAL: Sup. Ruffo presented the Resolution for Plan Revision for New Land Development that needs to be signed for a private sewage facility off Quehanna Hwy. Bob Davis questioned if it was in a flood plain his concern was the sewage going into the water stream. Sup. Ruffo commented that it is an approved system with DEP. Sup. Mong made the motion to approve the Resolution for Plan Revision for New Land Development. Sup. Hanes made the second motion. All in favor.

SEWAGE OPERATOR'S REPORT: In the packets.

SEWAGE PUBLIC FORUM:

Bob Davis questioned whether we are experiencing any fines right now or bad readings? Sup. Ruffo commented that DEP is trying to get us off of this consent order. Two areas that need fixed is the Pump Station that we are trying to get a grant for from PennVest and the other area is the 2 reed beds that need replanted. There was one fine in August. The plant has been running pretty efficiently. Holly oversees things. Jeff Stefanak is being groomed to be the plant operator as Holly wants to give it up at the end of the year. Holly, Jeff and Ray work closely together on what they can do to improve things at the plant. Bob Davis questioned what is the capacity per day. Sup. Ruffo commented about 30,000 gpd. At the peak season we get about 10,000 gpd.

SEWAGE MEETING ADJOURNED:

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

Meeting Minutes transcribed by Secretary Krista Meyer