

MINUTES

SWATARA TOWNSHIP

REGULAR MEETING I

FEBRUARY 2, 2022

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

1. **Call to Order:** President Zubeck called the Regular Meeting I of the Swatara Township Board of Commissioners to order at 7:09 p.m. Wednesday, February 2, 2022. The meeting was held at the Swatara Township Municipal Building, 599 Eisenhower Boulevard, Harrisburg, PA.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance:** President Zubeck led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. **Moment of Silence**
4. **Roll Call:** Commissioners Zubeck, Ellis, Tuckey, Varner and Boudier were present. Also present: Township Manager Jim Fosselman, Assistant Manager Kim Kaufman, Solicitor Kevin Hall, Lieutenant Dennis Krahling, Director of Public Works Todd Webb, Director of Planning and Zoning Robert Ihlein, Fire Chief Mike Ibberson and Secretary Karen Alleman.
5. **Announce Executive Session:** An executive session was held prior to this evening's meeting to discuss pending litigation and other legal matters.
6. **Visitors Requests and Comments:**
 - A. **Mary Klaus, 447 Pritchard Court, President of Chambers Hill Fire Company:** Invited everyone to the fire company's Friday Fish Dinners beginning February 25 and ending the Friday before Good Friday. Dinners are all you can eat, eat-in and take-out.
7. **Motion to Approve Agenda:** Commissioner Boudier made a motion to approve the agenda, Vice President Varner seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.
8. **Motion to Approve Consent Agenda:** Vice President Varner made a motion to approve the consent agenda item, seconded by Commissioner Tuckey.
 - A. Approval of Appointment to Police Citizen Advisory Council: Lisa Neiter
9. **Consideration of Minutes:**
 - A. **Regular Meeting II of January 12, 2022:** Commissioner Boudier made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2022, Regular Meeting II, as presented. Commissioner Tuckey seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
Rescind of Earlier Motion: President Zubeck suggested two changes to the agenda, under the heading, Regular Meeting II should be changed to Regular Meeting I. Number 11, Repeal of Ordinance 2017-07, Modifying the Code of Ordinances of Swatara Township, Chapter 295, Zoning, Article III, Use Regulations and Article IV, Advertising and Scheduling of Hearing should be moved to number 10. Number 10, Visitors Requests and Comments should be moved to number 11. Commissioner Ellis made a motion to rescind the earlier motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Vice President Varner. Motion carried unanimously.
President Zubeck made a motion to approve the agenda with changes, seconded by Commissioner Ellis. Motion carried unanimously.
10. **Repeal of Ordinance 2017-7, Modifying the Code of Ordinances of Swatara Township, Chapter 295, Zoning, Article III, Use Regulations and Article IV, Advertising and Scheduling of Hearing:** Commissioner Tuckey made a motion to bring the repeal of Ordinance 2017-07 up for consideration, seconded by Vice President Varner.
Commissioner Ellis had questions for Director of Building and Codes Ihlein. She asked if Board authorization was needed to give this matter to the Planning Commission. She asked what parcels are actually available in the districts where warehousing would continue to be permitted. Mr. Ihlein said there are several ways things can go to the Board for consideration,

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especially changes to the Zoning Ordinance. Any suggested changes would need to be reviewed and discussed by the Planning Commission, then given to the Board of Commissioners. He did not know how many parcels would be available, he would have an answer for next week's meeting.

Commissioner Ellis had several concerns. She wanted to make sure the repeal would not affect the Harrisburg Mall property and any future changes that could be made there. If the Board was accused of making a hasty decision in 2017, she recommends that the Planning Commission look into enhancing the buffer areas abutting residential areas, and the fifteen-acre requirement, which could encourage large warehouse facilities. She feels that repealing, rather than amending the ordinance, could lead to tax increases. She would like the Planning Commission to look into amending the ordinance rather than repealing it.

Commissioner Tuckey said this was brought up to the Planning Commission over a year ago. He would like the permissible areas to be looked at again and put more thought into it to make sure it won't affect the residents of this township. He is not for raising taxes. He feels the Board needs to act on this repeal for the resident's sake and make smart decisions from here on out. He is not against business, there is a real concern for the residents.

Commissioner Ellis wants to make sure developers are not going to overlook the township. She wants to make sure the burden for supporting a growing township is not placed solely on the tax paying residents.

President Zubeck said she is not in favor of raising taxes either. She is working to rein in spending. She asked Mr. Ihlein to have the Planning Commission revisit this and come back with more reasonable recommendations as to what areas are permissible for warehousing. She would like to have a hearing and healthy discussion regarding this matter. We wants businesses to know they are welcome here. She wants to look at smart development and make sure conditional uses are appropriate.

Vice President Varner asked Mr. Ihlein what would happen if the ordinance would be repealed, and a developer would want to place a warehouse on a property. Mr. Ihlein said the developer could ask for a zoning change or a variance request in front of the zoning hearing board.

Commissioner Ellis asked Mr. Ihlein how long it would take for the Planning Commission to look at enhanced conditions for this situation. He acknowledged it was a critical public policy decision. He thought a recommendation could be made within two to three months.

Solicitor Hall clarified that the motion and second includes scheduling of a hearing for March 9 at 7:15 p.m.

President Zubeck asked for a roll call vote:

Commissioner Ellis	No
Commissioner Boudier	Yes
President Zubeck	Yes
Commissioner Tuckey	Yes
Vice President Varner	Yes

Motion carried.

11. Visitors Requests and Comments:

- A. **Deborah Noles, 6080 Hocker Drive:** She asked the Board to read the recent newspaper editorial regarding warehouses. She was glad the Planning Commission was going to revisit the permitted warehouse areas, as long as the areas are not beside homes or schools.
- B. **Tom Garlic, 6050 Hocker Drive:** If a warehouse went into his backyard he would move, as well as other taxpayers. If a retail area went in behind his home, himself and the other homeowners would not be upset. Taxes would still be generated by retail space.
- C. **Anna Neiter, 459 Stikle Street:** The Board needs to listen to the residents. Voters put them into their positions, voters can take them out. Resident opinions do matter. She is concerned with the current tractor trailer traffic.
- D. **Rose Brown, 5600 Pleasant View Road:** Is concerned with tractor trailer traffic. Tractor trailers have ben backed up on Route 322 waiting to turn into the railroad and other areas every day in January. She would like to see more green space.

12. Possible Stormwater Violations: None at this time.**13. Commissioners Requests and Comments:**

- A. **Commissioner Ellis:** Offered condolences to the family of the person who perished in a recent fire in Royalton. Offered get well wishes to the firefighter who was injured in the fire. Thanked our fire chief for the training standards that have been implemented, which saves lives. She would like the Solicitor to write a resolution for next month opposing tolling of the I-83 South Bridge.
- B. **Commissioner Boudier:** Noted the warehouse issue is still before the Commonwealth Court. He voted initially against the warehouses. The warehouse issue is in the hands of Commonwealth Court.
- C. **Commissioner Tuckey:** Appreciates everyone that came out this evening.
- D. **Vice President Varner:** Asked Lt. Krahling about the crossing guard situation at Steelton-Highspire. Lt. Krahling said the police have been crossing students for the last two weeks. The company contracted to do the service has been dealing with labor shortages and illness.
- E. **President Zubeck:** Asked Chief Ibberson and Public Works Director Webb to provide fundraising information regarding the fire victims. She offered condolences to the families affected by the fire. Asked the Solicitor to have the resolution opposing the I-83 tolling ready for the March meeting per Commissioner Ellis. Thanked everyone for coming out this evening.

14. Adjournment: Commissioner Tuckey made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Ellis. Motion carried unanimously.


Karen Alleman, Township Secretary