

MINUTES

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SWATARA TOWNSHIP

REGULAR MEETING II

DECEMBER 14, 2022

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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1. **Call to Order:** President Zubeck called the Regular Meeting II of the Swatara Township Board of Commissioners to order at 7:09 p.m. Wednesday, December 14, 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:** Pastor Gary Lathrop led the audience in prayer.
4. **Roll Call:** Commissioners Christine Zubeck, Shaela Ellis, Michael Tuckey, Richard Boudier, and Jeff Varner were present. Also present: Manager Jim Fosselman, Assistant Manager Kim Kaufman, Solicitor Kevin Hall, Director of Public Safety and Sergeant at Arms Darrell Reider, Deputy Chief Tom Stauffer, Director of Planning and Zoning Robert Ihlein, Fire Chief Mike Ibberson, and Secretary Karen Alleman. Public Works Director Webb was absent due to preparation for an impending snow storm.
5. **Announce Executive Session:** No executive session was held this evening.
6. **Recognitions**  
President Zubeck presented Representative Sue Helm and Tom Mehaffie with proclamations for their support of Swatara Township. Because of redistricting Representative Helm retired and Representative Mehaffie will no longer represent Swatara Township.

President Zubeck, Director of Public Safety Reider and Fire Chief Ibberson presented the following Life Savings Awards for lifesaving actions taken during a medical emergency on Tuesday, July 26, 2022, where rapid administration of cardiopulmonary resuscitation resulted in the patient surviving and being discharged from the hospital. Mr. Andrew Knisley and his wife, Diane, were also present to thank the personnel who saved his life. Police Officer Brandon Ryder, Police Officer David Ritter, Firefighter Stephen Brubacher, Chief Scott Allen, Chief Brenden Orth, Firefighter Tegan Swank, Chief Shane Steele, Firefighter Robert Snavelly, Firefighter Dakota Shultz, Chief Michael Ibberson, Life Team Paramedics Joshua Erdman, Jack Wilson, EMT's Sarah Radic and Veronica Arroyo.

President Zubeck presented the Silver Life Saving Award to the following personnel for the lifesaving actions taken during a medical emergency on Sunday, July 18, 2021 where rapid administration of cardiopulmonary resuscitation resulted in the patient surviving and being discharged from the hospital. Chief Mark Bradnick, Captain Zach Reinhart, Firefighter Dakota Shultz, Firefighter Shane Heck, Firefighter Cory Noell, Firefighter James Edwards, Life Team EMT Creedin Coe and Paramedic Nicholas Kimmel.

MINUTES

---

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---

7. **Visitors Requests and Comments: Lisa Neiter, 6145 Hocker Drive:** Asked the Solicitor if he knew why the fire utility truck that was ordered will cost additional funds, and if the Township had to pay the additional funds. This question was asked by a resident at a previous meeting. Solicitor Hall had no additional information.
  
8. **Motion to Approve Agenda:** Commissioner Ellis asked if Item 16, Approval of Contract Amendment to Municipal Building Complex could be removed from the agenda. President Zubeck asked her to make a motion. Commissioner Ellis made a motion to remove Item 16 from the agenda. She feels the residents should have additional time to view the plans for the new complex, and have the architect present to go over the plans. Commissioner Boudier seconded the motion.

Commissioner Varner felt the open house was transparent and invited residents to come in to review the project.

President Zubeck said this project has been ongoing since at least 2018. This Board has been much more transparent on the reasoning moving forward with the building, implementing cost saving measures, cutting everything down to one phase. Residents are invited to call or stop by to look at the plans any time the municipal building is open. The prior Board, with Commissioners Zubeck and Varner voting no, chose to move forward with the project and authorized the president of the board to borrow up to \$26 million in 2020. There was very little information given to the public at that time regarding the project. The money has already been borrowed and this Board has a responsibility to move forward with the project. Just a few months ago the Board entered into a new contract with a different architect. Under the prior architect's agreement, the price for construction was \$37 million, and did not include an administration building or site development plan. This project will be much less than that. The exact price will not be known until the project goes out to bid.

Commissioner Tuckey said the \$37-38 million price was prior to inflation. It would have been a lot more expensive than what was projected then. He is concerned about the taxpayers. He knows the police department is in need of new facilities, he would like to see the project go forward.

Commissioner Boudier said about three or four months ago he was surprised to hear that the new project involved the administration building. He is in favor of the police and highway departments expansion but was unaware the administration building was included in this project. President Zubeck said the original plan from a few months ago that was \$37

MINUTES

---

SWATARA TOWNSHIP

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---

million did not include the administration building. The current plan includes an administration building and sitework. It's significantly less money.

Commissioner Varner said given the length of discussion regarding this topic for years now, it is a necessity to get a better space for the police department. It would be irresponsible at this point to hold the project up any longer. President Zubeck said the current police department was built for twenty officers, and we currently have fifty.

Commissioner Boudier agreed the police department has horrible working conditions, but that is the police, not the administration. Commissioner Varner said among other things, electrical outlets have been smoking in the administration area.

President Zubeck asked for a roll call vote to amend the agenda:

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

The motion failed.

Commissioner Tuckey made a motion to approve the agenda as presented, seconded by Commissioner Varner. Motion carried unanimously.

9. **Motion to Approve Items on Consent Agenda:** Commissioner Varner made a motion to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Commissioner Tuckey. Commissioner Ellis asked for an explanation regarding the Repository Bid for Parcel 63-027-042. Manager Fosselman said the lot in question is located on Manor Drive and is a BMP (retention pond area) and is not a buildable lot. The motion carried unanimously.
  - A. Monthly Departmental Reports
  - B. Committee Reports
  - C. Codes Report
  - D. Approval of Repository Bid for Parcel 63-027-042, Manor Drive by David Brown
  - E. Approval of Officer Gartland Request for Educational Incentive Request
  - F. Approval of Police Ride Along – Rachel Wentzel
10. **Consideration of Minutes: Regular Meeting I of December 7, 2022:** Commissioner Tuckey made a motion to approve the Regular Meeting I of December 7, 2022, as presented. Commissioner Varner seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.
11. **Reports:** All reports are posted in the lobby of the municipal building.

MINUTES

SWATARA TOWNSHIP

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BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

- A. **Manager's Report:** Nothing this evening
- B. **Treasurer's Report:** Commissioner Tuckey made a motion to approve the November Treasurer's Report as presented, seconded by Commissioner Ellis. Motion carried unanimously.
- C. **Solicitor's Report:** Solicitor Hall said a suit has been filed against the property owner on Union Street. He will have two tax assessment matters for the Board in January.
- D. **Swatara Rising Comp Plan:** Director Ihlein presented his report to the Board. He feels the residents are getting more involved through social media. He felt 2022 was a great year, there was a lot of commercial activity. He feels the Township does need the right kind of development in the right places.
- E. **EMS Report/Fire Services:** Director of Public Safety Reider presented the Fire Services report to the Board. Average response time was 5 minutes and 54 seconds. The average turnout was 8.3 with 68 active responders.  
Director of Public Safety Reider presented the Community Life Team report to the Board. There were 357 total calls. Average response time for Class One calls was 9 minutes and 57 seconds.
- F. **Director of Public Safety Report:** Director Reider presented his report to the Board. He reported a grant award of \$540,000 for equipment to replace body cameras, servers and everything needed for officers to perform their job. He gave credit to Deputy Chief Tom Stauffer and Jesse Suders of Dawood Engineering for securing the grant. The next Citizens Police Academy will begin on February 13 and run through May 31.
12. **Consideration of Ordinance: 2023 Budget:** Commissioner Tuckey made a motion to approve the 2023 Budget. Commissioner Varner seconded the motion. Commissioner Ellis wanted to confirm that a crew leader position was included in the budget for the recreation department. Manager Fosselman said the current employee will be paid a higher rate when working in that capacity, the position is a union matter. Playground equipment is in the 2023 budget.  
Manager Fosselman advised the Board that the assessed valuation decreased by \$2,444,829.00 which is a substantial decrease. The millage remains the same with no tax increase. Due to the assessed valuation change there was a decrease in revenues for 2023. The total general fund expenses only increased by 4.8%. There are a lot of things in the budget which we have no control over such as EIT, LST, and BP tax rates cannot be increased. Also, collective bargaining wages are set by contract through 2024. Additional areas for revenue will have to be explored.  
President Zubeck said wages and benefits comprise 72.37% of the budget. She is proud of the staff for making changes to the preliminary budget that saved money in many areas.

President Zubeck asked for a roll call vote:

Commissioner Ellis      Yes



are still on display. Residents are welcome to view the drawings, and they will be posted to social media. President Zubeck asked for a roll call vote:

Commissioner Ellis	Yes
Commissioner Boudier	Yes
President Zubeck	Yes
Commissioner Tuckey	Yes
Commissioner Varner	Yes

Motion carried unanimously.

17. **Subdivision/Land Development Plans:** Director of Code Enforcement Robert Ihlein presented the following to the Board:

A. **Release of Remaining Financial Security for Volant Development Company,**

**Sycamore Street:** Volant Development Company, Advantage Engineering Services LLC submitted a request for release of the financial security for the preliminary/final land development plan for the property between 2501 and 2645 Sycamore Street. The Township Engineer and Stormwater Engineer have also confirmed the completion of the work.

Commissioner Tuckey made a motion to approve the final reduction of M&T Bank Letter of Credit No. SB2234740001 that is being held for Volant Development by \$2,717.00. The remaining balance should be zero and the letter returned to the bank. Commissioner Varner seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

18. **Visitors Requests and Comments:** None

19. **Possible Stormwater Violations:** None

20. **Commissioners Requests and Comments:**

A. **Commissioner Ellis:** The total square feet for the building provided in October was 98,320. The estimated cost provided was \$26,907,600 to \$28,838,000. She asked an architect presentation be made to the Board in January. She congratulated everyone recognized this evening. She noted former 103<sup>rd</sup> District Representative Patty Kim was no longer a representative for Swatara Township due to redistricting. Dave Madsen would now be the only State Representative for Swatara Township, representing the 104<sup>th</sup> District. She thanked the audience members for attending. She wished everyone a happy holiday season.

B. **Commissioner Boudier:** Wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

C. **Commissioner Tuckey:** Thanked the Police Department, Detective Chris Seiler and the Attorney General's Office for a presentation they did today for senior citizens. He thanked audience members for attending the meeting and congratulated the award recipients. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

MINUTES

---

SWATARA TOWNSHIP

REGULAR MEETING II

DECEMBER 14, 2022

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

---

- D. **Vice President Varner**: Congratulated the award recipients. Thanked staff for working on the budget. Wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.
- E. **President Zubeck**: In regard to the cost of the municipal building, \$2.5 million has been received in grant money so far toward the cost. The prior architect's costs at \$37 million did not include administration or site development. Site development alone is \$5 million. That project would have been \$42 million. That cost was not acceptable, and so a new architect was hired. The new architect has addressed the needs of the township as well as residents. A presentation will be held in the future. The open house was for the public to tour the current building and see why a new facility is needed. She considers this Board to be responsible and will move forward with the new facility, to see the project through from start to finish. She looks forward to working with Representative Madsen. She thanked audience members for coming to the meeting and wished everyone a happy holiday season, and a happy new year.
21. **Adjournment**: Commissioner Ellis made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:43 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Boudier. Motion carried unanimously.

  
Karen Alleman, Township Secretary