

**Ligonier Township Supervisors**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
*December 12, 2023*

The Supervisors of Ligonier Township met in regular session at 7:00 p.m. Present were Chair, Dan Resenic; Vice Chair, Erik Ross; Secretary/Treasurer, Stephanie Verna; Supervisor, D. Scott Matson; and Supervisor, John Beaufort.

Also present were Manager, Michael Strelac; Solicitor, Dan Hudock; Engineer, Ben Faas; Chief of Police, Michael Matronics; and Finance Officer, Bethany Caldwell.

**Comments from the Public**

1. Terrell Funk – Gave the board an update on the DCNR Pool Feasibility Study / Master Site Plan Grant committee meeting. The Friends of Ligonier Beach (FOLB) committed an extra \$5k to the project to cover incidentals. The committee approved a timeline and estimates the project will conclude in December 2025.

Supervisor Verna asked what is the next milestone. The committee will finish the RFP's scope of work and give it to the DCNR in January for their review / approval.

There was a brief discussion about planning another volunteer cleanup event at the Ligonier Beach in the spring.

**Comments from the Supervisors**

Supervisor Matson – Said there are lots of things that could've been accomplished at Ligonier Beach, it's a shame it's all talk and no action.

Supervisor Ross – No comment

Supervisor Verna – No comment

Supervisor Beaufort – No comment

Supervisor Resenic – Thanked Michelle Kent for her generous \$5k donation to cover the cost of the Ligonier Valley Police Department's protective gear.

- A motion was made by Erik Ross and seconded by Scott Matson to approve the minutes from the November 28, 2023 meeting. Motion carried.

**Correspondence List** (Note these items are not read aloud.)

1. Ed & Vickie Oles – Thank you letter for passing the local burning ordinance.

**Manager Report**

Mr. Strelac reported the 2024 budget plan and tax increase are on the agenda tonight for approval. As expected, expenses (i.e. staff) were cut first before seeking a tax

increase. For comparison purposes, the Township is in the 10<sup>th</sup> lowest percentile of tax rates in the tri-county area. Supervisor Resenic noted that includes funding a police department as not all municipalities have their own police.

Supervisor Verna asked Mr. Strelac for a list of open positions on the township's advisory boards and committees and a count of how many letters of interest have been received to date, so that the Supervisors might generate more interest if need be.

### **Engineer Report**

No report.

### **Solicitor Report**

Mr. Hudock reported he's going before Judge Sherer to get a hearing date scheduled and anticipates it will be sometime in February. He is working with staff to create a list of specific action items for Mrs. Sleasman to complete. Supervisor Resenic asked if any progress has been made and if Mr. Hudock might take some pictures to the hearing for the judge to see. Mr. Strelac noted some progress has been made on the property, but there is still a long way to go before it would be considered compliant.

Mr. Hudock requested an executive session to discuss the Laughlintown retaining wall.

Supervisor Matson asked about the 711 North at Owl Hollow code compliant. Mr. Strelac reported that there hasn't been a recent site visit.

### **Police Report**

Chief Matronics thanked Michelle Kent for her generous donation and reported that there was a lot of community support in 2023. Just off the top of his head, he recalled the Fairfield Boys Club donated \$150 to the K9 program and Jen Sausman gave \$1,000 to cover the cost of the new uniform patches.

### **Treasurer's Report**

<b>Fund Balances (month end)</b>	<b>November</b>
General Fund	\$ 627,940
General Fund Reserves	\$1,054,934
Liquid Fuels Tax Fund	\$ 112,940
Capital Fund Reserves	\$ 108,855
Ligonier Beach Park Fund	\$ 122,213
American Rescue Fund	\$ 168,847
Developer's Fund*	\$ 8,498
*Escrow	\$ 6,789
*Mill Creek Memorial Park	\$ 1,209
*Kids Corner grant	\$ 500
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>\$2,204,226</b>

\*denotes funds are restricted

- A motion was made by Stephanie Verna and seconded by Erik Ross to approve the bills as presented. Motion carried.

## **Unfinished Business**

### 1. Westmoreland County Stormwater Grant

- A motion was made by Erik Ross and seconded by Scott Matson to approve the Westmoreland County Stormwater Grant Agreement for \$100,000. Motion carried.

Supervisor Verna asked what process would be used to identify the priorities. Mr. Strelac explained that the money would be used to purchase \$100k worth of materials (e.g. headwalls) and the Township would work through that inventory until it was gone. How long do we have to spend the money, what is the deadline? This is ARPA funding, so it needs to be spent by the end of 2026. Supervisor Verna asked that the monthly Treasurer's Report be amended to include this grant data.

### 2. Residential & Commercial Sewage Line Inspection Testing – no action taken.

### 3. LVPD 2024 Budget Approval

Supervisor Matson said he supports the police and will make the motion to approve the budget, but he wants a "clean department" and there needs to be some accountability, specifically in the form of random drug testing and GPS tracking of the department vehicles.

- A motion was made by Scott Matson and seconded by John Beaufort to approve the Ligonier Valley Police Department's 2024 budget. There was a roll call vote and the motion carried unanimously.

### 4. Resolution 2023-R-26 2024 Real Estate Tax Rate – increase from 5 mills to 6 mills.

- A motion was made by John Beaufort and seconded by Scott Matson to approve Resolution 2023-R-26, 2024 Real Estate Tax Rate. Motion carried.

Supervisor Matson made the motion, but said he thinks there is still "too much fat on the steak."

### 5. Resolution 2023-R-27 2024 Fee Schedule

- A motion was made by Erik Ross and seconded by Scott Matson to approve Resolution 2023-R-27, 2024 Fee Schedule. Motion carried.

### 6. Resolution 2023-R-28 2024 Budget

- A motion was made by Stephanie Verna and seconded by Scott Matson to approve Resolution 2023-R-28, 2024 Budget. Motion carried.

## 7. Ordinance 2023-O-08 Zoning Ordinance

Supervisor Verna had questions / comments on a number of topics being proposed for amendment, including: solar energy system setbacks; solar energy transmission lines; short term rental registration; short term rental zoning occupancy; short term rental overnight parking; retreat centers versus rehabilitation centers; natural resource protection overlay districts; historic conservation overlay district; zoning permit start times; definition of parking lots; floodplains; noise of outdoor dining restaurants; updated fence/wall definition.

Discussion ensued on some of the topics, others were deferred pending additional research.

No action taken at this time.

### **New Business**

1. Resolution 2023-R-30, ARPA transfer authorizes the movement of funds allowing staff to purchase an F-350 out of the Capital Fund in January 2024.

- A motion was made by Erik Ross and seconded by Scott Matson to approve Resolution 2023-R-30, ARPA transfer. Motion carried.

2. Sewage Enforcement Officer (SEO)

Mr. Strelic reported that staff gathered SEO quotes per the Board's instruction earlier in the year and he summarized the responses. There was a discussion about enforcement and Supervisor Verna shared her personal experience where the neighbors were flushing sewage and it was dumping into her yard. Despite her complaints, the current SEO did not take any action. The sewage was rerouted to flow to route 30 and as a result, there were tomato plants growing along the highway. The situation was eventually resolved when the neighbors moved out.

Supervisor Beaufort asked about the Zoning Officer's interactions with the SEO and if there have been any other sewage related complaints.

Supervisor Resenic asked what control / authority do we have over these situations. We can appeal to the DEP if the SEO is not enforcing the laws.

- A motion was made by Scott Matson and seconded by Erik Ross to approve Michael D'Arrigo of Apex as the Township's Sewage Enforcement Officer in 2024. Motion carried.
- A motion was made by Erik Ross and seconded by Scott Matson to approve a \$1 an hour raise for the Finance Officer, effective January 1, 2024. Motion carried, 4:1.

Supervisor Verna asked what triggered this change in process. Mr. Strelac explained he would like to change the timing of staff reviews so that raises can be incorporated in the following year's budget. The personnel committee recommended a raise to keep the finance officers wages in line with other local municipal wages.

### **Comments from the Public**

There were no comments from the public.

### **Comments from the Supervisors**

Supervisor Matson – No comment

Supervisor Beaufort – The Waterford Fire Company is approaching 421 calls year-to-date and the other two fire companies are not far behind. There were three major wrecks along 271 and Darlington VFD had a major wreck on Route 30. While the Township is giving the departments more money, he would love to see more community volunteering. There are fish fries and bingo fundraisers coming up and they need people to work these events.

Supervisor Ross – Noted that surrounding areas are hurting too, the Township VFDs have been called to help outside of their normal coverage areas.

Supervisor Verna – No comment

Supervisor Resenic – No comment

### **Executive Session**

The Supervisors went into an executive session at 8:07 p.m. to discuss a legal strategy related to a code enforcement issue and resumed their regular meeting at 8:29 p.m.

- A motion was made by Stephanie Verna and seconded by Scott Matson to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Bethany Caldwell  
Assistant Secretary/Treasurer

**Ligonier Township, Westmoreland County, PA**  
**Bill Payments for All Vendors**  
**December 11, 2023**

Vendor	Type	Num	Amount
<b>Dec 11, 23</b>			
Total Service, Inc.	Bill Pmt -Check	ACH	183.24
AA Septic Tank Service	Bill Pmt -Check	25890	250.00
Andrews Sales & Service	Bill Pmt -Check	25891	6.56
APMM	Bill Pmt -Check	25892	165.00
Clark's Heating Service INC	Bill Pmt -Check	25893	172.50
Comcast	Bill Pmt -Check	25894	751.99
Daniel C. Hudock Attorney at Law	Bill Pmt -Check	25895	1,464.76
Fayette Parts Service, Inc.	Bill Pmt -Check	25896	113.55
First Commonwealth Bank	Bill Pmt -Check	25897	815.07
Glassmere Fuel Service	Bill Pmt -Check	25898	2,963.56
Justifacts Credential Verification, Inc	Bill Pmt -Check	25899	150.80
Laurel Valley Hardware Inc.	Bill Pmt -Check	25900	23.90
Ligonier Township Municipal Authority	Bill Pmt -Check	25901	120.89
Ligonier Valley Police Department	Bill Pmt -Check	25902	113,542.83
LVTech	Bill Pmt -Check	25903	1,719.31
Midway Parts & Service Inc	Bill Pmt -Check	25904	1,715.00
ODB Company	Bill Pmt -Check	25905	1,448.25
Pennsylvania Municipal Service Co.	Bill Pmt -Check	25906	218.44
Pennsylvania One Call System, Inc.	Bill Pmt -Check	25907	22.20
Rolling Hills Industries, Inc	Bill Pmt -Check	25908	422.00
Russ Berkey	Bill Pmt -Check	25909	141.60
SWIF	Bill Pmt -Check	25910	4,561.00
The EADS Group	Bill Pmt -Check	25911	9,104.21
The Fastener Stop	Bill Pmt -Check	25912	108.80
The Latrobe Bulletin	Bill Pmt -Check	25913	155.00
Tim Leonard	Bill Pmt -Check	25914	104.95
TKL Code Inspection Service, Inc.	Bill Pmt -Check	25915	18,153.86
Tricia Levander	Bill Pmt -Check	25916	700.00
UAW LOCAL 204	Bill Pmt -Check	25917	306.25
UniFirst Corporation	Bill Pmt -Check	25918	118.62
Valley Landscaping & Lawn Care	Bill Pmt -Check	25919	256.00
West Penn Power	Bill Pmt -Check	25920	9.92
Western Pennsylvania Teamsters and Empl...	Bill Pmt -Check	25921	15,449.31
<b>Dec 11, 23</b>			<b>175,439.37</b>

OK  
 JAV

12-12-23

5:23 PM  
12/11/23

Ligonier Township - Escrow Account  
Bill Payments for All Vendors  
December 11, 2023

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Vendor	Type	Num	Amount
Dec 11, 23 Reynolds Signature Homes LLC	Bill Pmt -Check	1055	500.00
Dec 11, 23			<u>500.00</u>

OK SA

12-12-23

5:16 PM

12/11/23

Ligonier Township-Liquid Fuels  
Bill Payments for All Vendors  
December 11, 2023

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Vendor	Type	Num	Amount
Dec 11, 23 West Penn Power 791	Bill Pmt -Check	1338	198.94
Dec 11, 23			<u>198.94</u>

OK  
SA  
12-12-23