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# **MINUTES**

## **SEPTEMBER 14, 2020**

### **Regular Public Meeting**

**Board of Commissioners**

**Township of Whitehall**

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**A. CALL TO ORDER**

- 1) The regular Public Meeting of the Whitehall Township Board of Commissioners was called to order at 7:06 p.m. on Monday, September 14, 2020 held virtually via WEBEX, with the following in attendance:

**COMMISSIONERS**

Philip J. Ginder, President  
Joseph J. Marx, Jr., Vice President  
Thomas Slonaker, Secretary  
Jeffrey J. Warren  
Charles G. Fisher  
Randy Atiyeh  
Michael D. Dee

**TOWNSHIP PERSONNEL**

Michael P. Harakal, Jr., Mayor  
John D. Meyers, Deputy Mayor  
John F. Gross, Esq.,  
Township Solicitor  
Michael Marks, Police Chief  
Frank Clark Engineer  
Lee Rackus, PZ&D  
Colleen L. Gober, Tax Collector  
Larissa Bruder, Executive Secretary

The meeting was formally opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and a note of thanks given to all serving in the Armed Forces, First Responders, Healthcare Workers, Grocery Store Workers, and Municipal Staff who are all seeing the community through this hard time.

President GINDER read the statement on fair housing as required.

President GINDER made a statement that an Executive Session was held via WEBEX after the conclusion of the September 8, 2020 Workshop Meeting regarding legal issues.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner FISHER moved, seconded by Commissioner ATIYEH to approve the Minutes of the following meeting:

Regular Public Meeting – August 10, 2020

Seven Commissioners were present and voted “yes”. Motion carried.

**B. COURTESY OF THE FLOOR**

Lori Ann Fehnel, 3107 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street stated that she strongly disagrees with the Township having Trick or Treat night. She also noted a concern with a broken bench at the Triangle

by the Growing Tree Daycare Center. Besides the bench needing repair, the group that is hanging out there should be monitored since there always seems to be destruction of property when they are present.

**C. PUBLIC HEARING AND VOTING ON RESOLUTIONS**

1. RESOLUTION NO. 3129

TITLE: A RESOLUTION GRANTING THE MAYOR THE AUTHORITY TO EXECUTE A REIMBURSEMENT AGREEMENT WITH PENNDOT FOR WINTER TRAFFIC SERVICES WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP OF WHITEHALL, LEHIGH COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA. (ADMIN/BOC)

President GINDER read Resolution No. 3129 to the Board.

Commissioner WARREN moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner DEE.

Commissioner WARREN thanked Jack MEYERS and PennDOT for reconsidering and correcting the reimbursement amount. Commissioner DEE thanked Commissioner WARREN for bringing this to light. Commissioner SLONAKER thanked all involved that corrected this issue.

2. RESOLUTION NO. 3133

TITLE: A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE STIPULATION OF SETTLEMENT BY AND BETWEEN THE PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, SULAIMAN ZAGHTITI AND MIRIAM ZAGHTITI AND WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP REGARDING A CONDEMNATION ACTION LOCATED ALONG ROUTE 22 IN WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP.

President GINDER read Resolution No. 3133 to the Board.

Commissioner SLONAKER moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner FISHER.

Seven Commissioners were present and voting “yes”. Resolution No. 3133 was approved.

**D. OTHER**

1. MOTION – A MOTION TO NOMINATE MARK MAZZITELLI FOR DEPUTY CHIEF OF POLICE.

Seven Commissioners were present and voted “yes”. Motion carried.

2. MOTION - TO APPROVE THE RELEASE OF ESCROW FOR COMPLETED AND WITHDRAWN PROJECTS, PER DEPUTY MAYOR MEYERS MEMO DATED, SEPTEMBER 3, 2020.

Seven Commissioners were present and voted “yes”. Motion carried.

***E. REPORTS OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS***

Commissioner FISHER gave a public service announcement regarding the importance of getting flu shots this year.

Commissioner WARREN noted the former Staples property comes before the Board he would like to see the low curbing into the parking lot be addressed. Frank CLARK noted that it is an item before PennDOT for resurfacing project next year.

Commissioner DEE stated that September is Suicide Prevention Month and with an incident last Thursday, that our Police Dept and Lehigh County handled very well, with the individual being talked down. If anyone knows somebody in distress, please get them help. During this Pandemic, not only suicide is an issue, but drug overdose is as well. Please get anyone help that you know or see that needs it. Lehigh County has agencies that can help along with National hotlines.

Commissioner MARX congratulated Mark MAZZITELLI on his promotion to Deputy Police Chief. Spoke w/Chief Marks regarding a COVID safe ceremony for any promotions and new hires. Chief MARKS thought it would be a great idea to recognize these individuals. He will come up with some dates and to possibly have it held at the Veterans Memorial.

Commissioner SLONAKER questioned Frank CLARK which island he was referring to earlier in the meeting. Frank CLARK advised is was the island in front of the WAWA.

President GINDER noted the passing of Curtis Walbert. Curtis passed away on August 27, 2020 and served most of his life on emergency services. He was former emergency management coordinator and Chief and past President of the Whitehall Emergency Squad, also served as an auxiliary police officer and President of Board of Commissioners. Sending condolences to his family. President GINDER also noted that resignation of David Howard from Traffic Impact Advisory Committee. David was an original member of the committee serving since its inception in the early 1990's and did a tremendous job. He will be sorely missed and wish him well. President GINDER questioned the Mayor regarding the Triad group and where are we with that group and grants. Mayor HAKAKAL advised that they submitted paperwork for a grant relevant to the pavilion and support us on RACP, despite not having a current contact. President GINDER would like to find a way in consolidating township and organizations applying for grants and keeping a record of what is being submitted. Mayor HAKAKAL stated he is impressed with Chad Helmer who has been assisting the Township with grants and is putting money in the budget for the coordination of an "ad hoc" committee. Commissioner WARREN said grants are on a cycle but we are always lacking in being ready to apply. The Township needs a list of projects so that lists can be monitored. Commissioner DEE can also be utilized to finding grants as long as he has a list of projects. President GINDER said the goal of the Board is to have this organized by the start of the new year. Commissioner WARREN also commented about his request for a Resolution for the LSA Grant, he would like to see it on the October Agenda. It will help fund the growing interest at the community gardens at the Prydun Farm. Commissioner GINDER advised that more coordination needs to be done with regards to moving forward with the Prydun Farm. President GINDER also questioned the Treasurer when the Board would receive the August thru December 2019 reports, as well as the August 2020 report. She apologized and will make sure they have all by the next Board meeting.

Mayor HAKAKAL advised that even though six weeks were lost, the building construction schedule is on track and will be able to actually be ahead of schedule if things go as planned. The Mayor Echoed President GINDER's sentiments on Curtis Walbert; he helped the Township all his adult life, and it's a sad day losing him. Mayor HAKAKAL mentioned that there are grants being awarded to two playgrounds through the Chamber of Commerce. He also noted that employees continue to work hard in maintaining COVID regulations in the building. He is sorry to hear about LoriAnn's experience with COVID; he does feel that with diligent parents that the kids can enjoy trick or treating.

Treasurer GOBER advised that she will have all reports by next meeting and have hired another person, so the department will run more efficiently. She has been surprised at the amount of tax money that has been coming in, but foresees that next year will be an issue with BP and EIT being effected.

***F. ADJOURNMENT***

MOTION – Commissioner ATIYEH moved, seconded by Commissioner FISHER to adjourn the meeting at 7:49 p.m.