

Abbott Township

November 6, 2023 Meeting Minutes

The monthly meeting of the Abbott Township Board of Supervisors was held on Monday November 6, 2023 at 7:00pm at the township building.

1. Present at the meeting was Lee Gardner, Jared Lazorchak, Beth Kreiser, Jeff Lazorchak, Lisa Lazorchak, Pat Schellhorn, Joe Shellhorn, John Nordquist, Mary May, Brian Budjanec, Kristen Gardner, DJ Woltz, Ken Loiacono and Cory Shifflett
2. Meeting was called to order by Chairman Jared Lazorchak at 7:00pm.
3. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
4. Jared made a motion to approve the meeting minutes for the last meeting that was held on October 2, 2023. Lee seconded; AIF motion carried.
5. Jared made a motion to approve the financial reports as presented, second by Lee, AIF motion carried.
6. Jared made a motion to pay the bills. Lee seconded; AIF motion carried.

CONTINUED BUSINESS:

Lee gave an update from the Roadmaster. He stated the Township hired a part time grader Rob Beacker to help get the roads ready for winter. They have been out grading and filing holes and will continue to do so. Lee also mentioned that Rausch Road phase I has been approved and is complete. We will start the planning for phase II that will occur next year. Lastly it was stated that we have all the cinders we believe we will need for winter here at the building and ready to go.

NEW BUSINESS:

Jared made a motion to increase the pay for Road employee Alexander Bailey to \$16.75 per hour. Alex has completed his probationary period and is doing a good job. Jared also made a motion to hire Robin Beacker as a part-time operator at a rate of \$16.75 per hour. Lee seconded both motions and all were in favor, motions carried.

Jared made a motion to approve the minutes and financial reports as presented from the October 18, 2023 Abbott and West Branch Dumpster meeting. Lee seconded, AIF motion carried.

John Nordquist presented a subdivision proposal for David Elliott to John and Karen Hoskinson. This would be an add on to the Hoskinson's current parcel of approximately 12 acres, therefore no sewage permits needed for this transaction and Terry Myers did review and approve the proposal. Jared made a motion to approve this transaction, Lee seconded AIF, motion carried.

Jared presented a subdivision proposal for the Welfling Family Irrevocable Income Only Trust. They are looking to divide the property into 3 lots. Jared made a motion to approve this request, Lee seconded. AIF, motion carried.

Jared commented that the 2024 Budget has been proposed and will be adopted at the December 4, 2023 meeting. The budget will be available for public review starting on Monday November 13th. Notice will be posted in the newspaper.

Jared made a motion to approve the contract with Stewardson Twp for winter maintenance from November 1, 2023 thru May 1, 2024. Lee seconded the motion, AIF motion carried.

Jared stated we need to set the millage rate for 2024 along with the penalty rate. This was tabled for further review until the December meeting.

Jared made a motion to request a 50% advance of the grant funds for the Rausch Road project Phase II in the amount of \$114,464.00. Lee seconded the motion, AIF motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

Jared made a motion to approve the Agreement with E&M Engineers for the Kortz Run crossing that will be in phase II of the Rausch Road project next year. Lee seconded the motion, AIF motion carried.

Jared brought up the Gale Hose Ambulance Contract again and noted that DJ Woltz from Gale Hose Ambulance was in attendance to clarify and answer questions. There was much discussion from the public and several questions asked. Some of the highlights of the conversation were: The cost that is being asked for in the contract will be used to cover the salaries of 2 full-time EMT's, per diems to cover vacation hours of the employees, and a 7% overtime rate along with other benefits for the employees. Other funds that the Ambulance receives (state grants, insurance money, donations, etc.) will be used to cover costs like vehicle and building maintenance, supplies and other costs. It was noted from DJ that there are currently only 2 grants available for Ambulance services, one is \$15,000.00 and the other is \$7500.00 per year. He stated the cost for everything is increasing and people volunteering is down. The main problem is that the people who are willing to volunteer are also employed full-time so during the week there is no one available to go on calls, this is why they are looking to cover Monday-Friday 7-3. He stated evenings and weekends it is easier to get volunteers for the calls. It was asked if there was any consideration to more than one shift or options to cover evenings and weekends, DJ stated he feels they have enough volunteers available to cover these times and most of the missed calls are during the timeframe they are looking to have full-time employees. He does have some volunteers who are available during the week but are just drivers so he could potentially have 2 crews running one paid full-timer with a volunteer driver for each. It was discussed that Gale Hose is contracted with the following Townships for services: Elk, Gaines, Galetton, West Branch, Abbott part of Ulysses and Stewardson, and Hector. It was asked if local people will be filling the full-time positions. DJ answered that they will have to post the job and conduct interviews, but that he is hoping at least one or both would be locals. It was discussed that if the Townships do not pay or agree to the contract then there will not be full-time employees hired and coverage will continue as is, there are no funds available to cover the costs without all Townships willing to participate, it is an all-in to make this proposal work. It was asked if the Ambulance had any liability if they were unable to take a call due to no volunteers and the time to respond causing a significant negative impact to the injured party? It was noted that the Ambulance has no liability as it is the Township who is responsible for mandating or providing the service to its

residences. It was also discussed that the ambulance would still be sending out membership applications, but that all property owners would be covered due to the cost paid by the townships. It was discussed that the state's suggested .5 mills is not enough to cover all the costs involved but that the .75mills would be enough to cover. It is unknown if the contract price would remain at the .75 mills each year it would have to be determined and reevaluated as it goes. If all Townships agree to the contracts there is a plan to have quarterly advisory board meetings which would include the EMA representative from each covered township and would make all financials and reports available. Township contracted funds would be kept in a separate account and expenses tracked. It was asked if the ambulance would be doing transfers during the week and using the paid employees for these types of services. DJ stated only if he would still have a crew remaining on site for emergency calls, the first priority would be keeping the townships covered with available services. Jared was questioned if there were any townships from the PSATS meeting he participated in that had paid Ambulance services and what their fee was. Jared stated pretty much all the townships paid something and that several paid more than one Ambulance Company and many of them had a separate Emergency Services tax for such services. There was discussion on if it would maybe be a better option to assess a flat fee instead of a millage cost so that the cost was more evenly distributed rather than based on the assessed value of properties. Jared asked if Abbott is the only township that has not agreed to the contract yet, DJ stated Hector and Gaines are not yet on board, but all others are. After all questions were answered and discussion ended Jared stated that we will continue to weigh our options and will make a decision before the end of the year.

Correspondence:

Lee brought up a late request for a subdivision approval that was received for Donald Snyder and David Latila on Germania Overlook. They are proposing to split the current lot into two parcels each proposed for a single-family dwelling. Jared made a motion to approve the request and Lee seconded, AIF motion carried.

Jarod mentioned the Township received a letter of invitation to the ATV Pilot Legislative Report Feedback Session and Post 2023 Riding Season Municipality Meeting on Monday November 13, 2023 from 5-8pm at the PA Lumber Museum. Jared will try to attend in order to give feedback and to try to push to get the Township additional funding to cover some of the cost of additional road maintenance due to the ATV use of the roads and the damage caused. He wants to make sure to pass along that the biggest concerns are road conditions and enforcement of the rules. It was discussed that he should request additional signage for along the roads. The original signs were provided by a local ATV club and are very small and hard to see. It was noted the pilot program is now over and if Legislation passes the program, it is a done deal moving forward. Jared also commented he would like to see the state tar and chip all the pilot roads in the township as this would help to reduce the damage to roads that the ATV's cause as well as would reduce dust. A comment was made regarding speed limits for ATV's, and it was talked about that more traffic studies would need to be completed and even if posted we have no way to enforce it at this time.

Public Comment (2 minutes Per Person)

Mary May asked if either of the supervisors were able to go to the County Convention over the weekend. Jared stated they were both unavailable at the time.

Jared made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:00pm. Lee seconded the motion.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Kreiser
Assistant Secretary
Abbott Township Board of Supervisors