

Cherrytree Township Board of Supervisors  
Regular Monthly Meeting  
December 4, 2023  
6:00 p.m.

A regular monthly meeting of the Cherrytree Township Board of Supervisors was held on Monday, December 4, 2023, at 6:00 p.m., at the township building. In attendance were Jim Waugh, Dave Zdarko, and Rob Kellogg, Supervisors, and Christine Kurelowech, Secretary-Treasurer.

**Call to Order**

Jim Waugh called the meeting to order.

**Pledge**

**Moment of Prayer**

Jim Waugh led those in attendance in a moment of prayer.

**Public Comment**

There was no "Public Comment".

**Minutes/Treasurer's Report**

The minutes, from the regular monthly meeting held on Monday, November 6, 2023, were read, accepted, and approved, on a motion made by Dave Zdarko, seconded by Rob Kellogg, and carried unanimously.

The treasurer's report, for November 2023, was read, accepted, and approved, on a motion made by Jim Waugh, seconded by Rob Kellogg, and carried unanimously.

**Correspondence**

Venango County Tax Claim Bureau – Distribution of Upset Sale Monies

*The township has been notified that it will receive \$1,499.33 in delinquent tax money from the county's recent upset sale of 706 Shreve Road.*

Venango County Regional Planning Commission–Liquid Fuels Award for Fiscal Yr. 2024

*The township has been notified that it will receive \$45,000.00 in 2023-2024 County Liquid Fuels Aid to be used towards paving an approximate 1.00-mile stretch of Old Route 8 (Breedtown Road to city/county line) during the summer of 2024.*

PennDOT Newsletter

**Zoning**

**Permits**

Z-2020-09 Tim and Karen McGrath 1066 Cherrytree Road extend existing barn and new storage shed  
(reissue)

**Zoning Report**

Tim McGrath, Zoning Officer, reported that 1 permit was reissued during the month for a project that had been previously permitted, but not started.

The Zoning Hearing Board will hold a hearing at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 6, 2023 to consider granting a variance to Shane Goodman for an approximate 500 sq. ft. billboard at 2778 State Route 8. The zoning ordinance does not allow a billboard to exceed 300 sq. ft. in size.

Tim McGrath reported that he recently sent 5 enforcement letters to property owners and several have responded. The owner of 1722 Breedtown Road (former Trojak property) called Tim McGrath to discuss the situation. He was not aware that the occupants of the house left after throwing the contents of the house into the yard. The owner was supposed to hire someone local to clean the property, but that arrangement fell through, so he is considering other options. He said that he did not know if he would be able to have the entire property cleaned by the end of the year and Tim McGrath told him to keep moving on it. The owners of the Bliznesky property at 1220 South Perry Street have not responded to the most recent enforcement letter. The owner of the Raven property (vacant) on Route 8 has not responded to the most recent enforcement letter. Enforcement letters were sent for new structures that were not permitted. Glen and Shannon Nikolaison have applied for a permit for a new shed that was discovered on a report from the Venango County Assessment Office and Jackson Humanic was sent an enforcement letter for a new garage, but it was discovered that he did obtain a zoning permit and a building permit in 2020 for the structure, so enforcement has been dropped on his property.

Tim McGrath reported that Grand Valley Manufacturing is still in the process of purchasing approximately 50 acres on Petroleum Center Road, across from Electralloy. Supposedly, the property has been leased to a solar company and Grand Valley Manufacturing did not know about the lease until it agreed to purchase the property. Tim McGrath has recently spoken to attorneys representing Grand Valley Manufacturing regarding the property.

Tim McGrath reported that Chrissie Kurelowech recently contacted Alan Shaddinger, Township Solicitor, in an effort to lay out the steps that must be followed if a property owner wishes to appeal to the Zoning Hearing Board after receiving an enforcement letter. Using Alan's suggestions, Tim McGrath can now, when writing enforcement letters, let each property owner know how to make an appeal in the event that the property owner does not agree with the Zoning Officer's decision that the property is in violation.

## **Administrative Action**

### **Resolution #23-46 – 2024 Budget – Vote to Adopt**

On a motion made by Rob Kellogg, seconded by Jim Waugh, and carried unanimously, the Supervisors voted to adopt Resolution #23-46 (2024 Budget). Anticipated income for 2024 is \$695,404.82 and anticipated expenditures total \$695,379.82. There will be no tax increase.

### **Roughneck Gravel Roubaix Event – May 24, 2024 through May 27, 2024**

Chrissie Kurelowech told the Supervisors that she was recently contacted by Adam Diem, who represents the Roughneck Gravel Roubaix. The group is planning an organized bike ride, scheduled for May 25, 2024, that will take bikers over several roads in the township. Roads included are: Trout Run, Breedtown, Stone Springhouse, Fairview, Cherrytree-Plum Line, Dutch Hill, Miller Farm, Pioneer, Shreve, Turkey Farm, Route 8, Buxton, Barker, and Dempseytown-Gresham. The event will take place on Saturday, May 25, 2024, but the organizers would like use of the roads from May 24, 2024 through May 27, 2024 to be able to set up and remove signs. Because the bikers will cross a state highway in the township, PennDOT requires a letter from the township granting permission for the bikers to use the roads. Adam Diem noted that the roads will not be closed, traffic patterns will not be interrupted, Cherrytree Township will be specifically listed on a waiver and release of liability, Cherrytree Township will have its own Certificate of Insurance (additional insured), and only bicycles, not motorcycles, will be involved in the ride. On a motion made by Jim Waugh, seconded by Rob Kellogg, and carried unanimously, the Supervisors voted to approve the request made by the Roughneck Gravel Roubaix to use

township roads for an organized bike ride from May 24, 2024 through May 27, 2024. The Supervisors stressed that they were not giving approval for any roads to be closed or traffic patterns to be interrupted and Chrissie Kurelowech said that she would make that point clear to Adam Diem. Chrissie Kurelowech will send a letter of approval to Adam Diem that he will give to PennDOT.

### **License Agreement – VFD – Use of Township Building**

Tom Huffman, VFD Fire Chief, told the Supervisors that the VFD is in the process of obtaining a loan through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to purchase a truck (used). By going through the USDA, the VFD will get a low interest rate (3.87%) and a \$20,000.00 grant towards the truck. Interest rates offered elsewhere are currently over 7.00%. The USDA is requiring proof that the new equipment will be stored inside a building for the length of the loan. Since the VFD does not own the township building, the VFD contacted Alan Shaddinger, Township Solicitor, and asked him to draft a license agreement between the VFD and the township giving the VFD permission to occupy the township building for 15 years. On a motion made by Rob Kellogg, seconded by Jim Waugh, and carried unanimously, the Supervisors voted to enter into the 15-year license agreement presented by the Cherrytree Township Volunteer Fire Department. Ron Stewart suggested that a conflict of interest existed because Jim Waugh, a member of the VFD, voted to enter into the agreement and should have abstained. Jim Waugh said that there was no conflict because he would not benefit financially from the agreement.

## **Committee Reports**

### **VFD**

Tom Huffman, VFD Fire Chief, reported that there were 10 calls since the last meeting. All 10 calls were in Venango County. Of the 10 calls, 3 were building fires, 2 were EMS, 1 was an MVA with no injuries, 2 were searches for people, and 2 were unintentional alarm system activations.

The VFD is in the process of purchasing a used truck from Bradford Township (outside the City of Bradford) and is still in the process of obtaining a loan through USDA.

The VFD is printing tickets for an upcoming tool/cash raffle.

### **EMA**

Tim McGrath reported that a meeting was recently canceled and rescheduled. The Venango County Department of Public Safety is searching for new leadership.

### **Road**

Lew Staub, Roadmaster, reported that the road crew spent 11 days blowing leaves, 2 days grading bad spots, and checked the roads once. They pushed 1 tree off of a road, put antiskid down 4 times, and spent 1 day patching bad spots.

As for equipment, the oil and filters were changed in the 2014 Dodge and in the 2009 International. The spreader chain was fixed and the plow blade was changed on the 2002 International. The road crew also installed 3 LED bay lights in the north half of the garage.

## **Old Business**

### **2024 Township Fee Schedule**

At the regular monthly meeting held on November 6, 2023, the Supervisors decided to raise the fee for a conditional use hearing to \$1,000.00, the fee for a special exception hearing to \$1,000.00, the fee for a variance hearing to \$1,000.00, and the fee for hearings related to appeals and Zoning Officer decisions to \$500.00 for 2024. Chrissie Kurelowech said that she checked with other municipalities through the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors (PSATS) discussion group to see if their fees for hearings are

comparable and she found that many municipalities are charging \$1,000.00 and higher for hearings. This is because the hearing expenses have increased significantly over the past several years. The new fees will appear on the 2024 Fee Schedule, which will be adopted at the regular monthly meeting/annual reorganization of the Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, January 2, 2024. Any money paid by the applicant that is not needed to cover hearing expenses will be refunded to the applicant after the hearing occurs.

## **New Business**

### **PSATS Boot Camp for Township Officials – Shari Nelson**

Chrissie Kurelowech asked the Supervisors for permission to register Shari Nelson (newly elected Supervisor) to PSATS Boot Camp for Township Officials in Meadville. Three sessions will be held (December 12, 2023/March 9, 2024/March 16, 2024) and the cost is \$199.00. The Supervisors were in favor of sending Shari Nelson to the training.

### **Regular Monthly Meeting Times for 2024**

Chrissie Kurelowech asked the Supervisors to consider changing the meeting time for regular monthly meetings to 5:00 p.m., instead of 6:00 p.m., on the first Monday of each month, due to a scheduling conflict with one of the Supervisors. They agreed to change the meeting time to 5:30 p.m., beginning in 2024.

### **Bridge Inspection Report – Fairview Bridge**

The township has received a report from STV Incorporated regarding an inspection of the Fairview Bridge that took place on October 25, 2023. On a scale of 0 to 5, with 0 being the most critical and 5 being the least critical, there were several recommendations marked as 3 (“schedule”) including backfill scour hole, remove trees, update transitions, and repair abutment (beam 9). There were several recommendations marked as 4 (“program”) including remove pavement bump, repair delaminated diaphragm, repair bridge railing spall, seal deck cracks, and repair abutments (seal cracks in abutments and replace stem/wing wall joint material). The only recommendation marked 5 (“routine”) was clean/flush deck. A copy of the recommendations was given to Lew Staub, Roadmaster.

### **Dave Zdarko – Departing Supervisor**

Dave Zdarko congratulated Shari Nelson on winning the Supervisor race and wished her luck. He thanked Jim Waugh and Rob Kellogg for the years they served together. Dave Zdarko has served as a Supervisor since January of 2018 and did not seek re-election. Shari Nelson will replace him in January of 2024.

## **Adjournments**

The meeting adjourned at 6:21 p.m.

The bills were reviewed by the Board of Supervisors.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine C. Kurelowech, Secretary-Treasurer