Typed: July 23rd, 2019

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Cass Township was held on Wednesday, June 26th, 2019 at the Township’s Municipal Building, Duncan, PA.

Present at the meeting were: Mary Lou Bergan, Mike Sorokach, Kayla Sep, Matt Joy, Devan Joy, Donna Kalovcak, Antoinette Purcell, Michael Kulpcavage, Jeremy Slifko, John Kalovcak, Bob Helt, Chris Ternowchek, John Pritz, Richard Twigg, Marian Twigg, Rick and Barb Pielacha.

Brenda Helt calls the meeting to order.

All recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Meeting start time: 6:38pm.

Roll Call of Officers:


Other attendance/absentees:

Donald G. Karpowich, Solicitor – present.

Evelyn J. Bergan, Secretary – present.

Richard C. Clink, Chief CTPD – present.

Chairperson Helt states that the minutes from the May 2019 minutes have been placed at each seat. Helt calls for a motion to dispense the reading of the minutes and to accept them as printed if there are no corrections or omissions. Brennan makes the motion. Helt seconds. Motion passed. Roll Call: Unanimous Favorable Vote.

Helt calls for discussion from the audience.

Mike Sorokach, Owl Road – Asks for clarification on the information for the loan that was discussed at last month’s meeting to fund the road program – the amount was $750,000.00 for (10) years – to be paid back with Liquid Fuels allocations – he asks if that is correct. The Solicitor states that the amount of the loan depends on income and expenses, but he believes that would be the maximum amount the Township would be allowed to borrow under the program. Mike asks if that would take all of the liquid fuels
money as repayment for the next (10) years. The Solicitor replies yes, but in speaking with the Supervisors, their thought is that they are repairing roads/potholes now – but if the roads are fixed, they won’t need to do those things anymore. Mike expresses his concerns that there would be no liquid fuels funds left for other road projects. This discussion continues. The Solicitor states that the loan application will be submitted and we will see what PennDOT has to say – they won’t give us any more than they feel the Township can afford.

Mike Kulpcavage, 263 High Road – states that he has a question for Elvin – and asks how much of liquid fuels allocation of $86,000 was spent on all expenses such as the roads, tools, equipment, etc. so far this year. Elvin states that he doesn’t have the numbers – but he knows last year, $25,000 was spent on blacktop – that includes the patch on the High Road (where the water washed it out) was over $10,000 – and the rest of it was spent on pothole patching. Mike asks if all of the allocation was spent. Elvin replies no. Mike asks what the total was that was spent from the allocation. Elvin replies probably between $30-35,000 but he doesn’t have the numbers. Mike states the reason he is asking is because with this loan, the Board will have to turn over the liquid fuels allocations to pay it off – so with all the expenses, how will the road department run every year without that allocation. Elvin replies that we won’t have the expense because the Board is going to get it to the point that the roads will be done. Mike replies that $750,000 is not going to fix all of the roads in this Township. This discussion continues between the Solicitor, Mike and Elvin. Mike asks what was done with the $320,000 that was received over the last four years in liquid fuels funds. He adds that obviously over $30,000 is spent per year to run the road department (adding up all the expenses) – so the amount of this loan, in his opinion, is not going to do what the Board thinks it’s going to do.

Jeremy Slifko, 67 South Maple Ave – States that he feels that before all this money is spent on fixing the roads, a lot of work needs to be done to fix the drainage because everyone in this Township has water problems – he feels that needs to be addressed before any paving is done. The Solicitor states that the drainage will be included. Jeremy states that drainage is a huge job – and if the water isn’t addressed, it will ruin the roads – that’s why all the patches are peeling up. Supervisor Helt states that the Board said they were going to get the roads done; they didn’t say they were going to get them done all at one time. There are (4) main roads that they are concentrating on – which are Schaeffer’s Hill Road, High Road, Woodside Road and Condor’s Lane. They are the most heavily traveled so they are the ones the Board would like to be fixed – so before the resident’s money is spent, proper drainage will be addressed. This discussion continues. Jeremy also expresses concerns about tying up all future liquid fuels allocations to pay back the road project loan.
Rick Pielacha, Forest Lane – Asks the Board for assistance with the clean-up of the Yurkonis property (Tunnel Road) that burned a few months ago since nothing has been done at the property since the fire. The Solicitor states that it’s under litigation; it was discussed during the executive session; and the Township is pursuing it. Rick also asks the Board if they can help with a lot adjacent to his property that is owned by one of the coal companies; he has tried to maintain the property by cutting the grass & weeds, but he can no longer do it. The Solicitor states that he will look into both issues.

John Kalovcak, South Maple Ave – asks if the Township still has code enforcement – because when he worked here, if a property wasn’t cut, he would have to cut it – but now there are properties throughout the Township that are grown in and not being cut. The Solicitor states that the Board is trying to get away from that and get the people to cut their own grass.

Antoinette Sep, High Road - asks if there is an ordinance about grass – relating to cutting the whole property and not just what’s by the road – the Board responds yes. She asks if it’s different for vacant lots. The Solicitor states that he will look it up and let her know.

John Kalovcak, South Maple Ave – Had several complaints for Chief Clink about the traffic going in and out of the property (owned by Schuylkill County) on the High Road. He and Jeremy Slifko both state that the preacher who lives there complains about the traffic and drug activity that occurs on the property at all hours of the day/night. They ask the Chief for police presence and assistance to help curb the activity at this property. John also has complaints about the ATV’s on the roadways.

Jeremy Slifko, South Maple Ave – Had several complaints for Chief Clink about traffic and drug activity at the County owned property on High Road. He adds that he feels that the police should stop and talk to the residents while they are on patrol; he also has complaints about ATV activity on the roadways as well. This leads to a very lengthy heated discussion between Jeremy and Chief Clink – as well as other residents. Jeremy also speaks to the Board about ideas he has regarding generating revenue for the Township from off-road activities/races.

Hearing no questions or comments; Supervisor Helt closes the discussion.

Helt moves onto the items on the agenda.
Ratify Hiring – (2) Summer Help Employees – Helt explains that she would like to ratify the hiring of Brett Chikotas and Dominic Pizzico – both high school students who started working for the Township on June 18th. Their hourly rate is $9.00 per hour; no benefits. Helt makes a motion. Brennan seconds. Motion passed. Roll Call: Helt – aye. Brennan – aye.


Vacancy – Planning Commission Member – Helt states that Mike Stone’s resignation leaves a vacancy - so if anyone is interested, please inform the Board. She states that the PC members received $50 per meeting attendance.

Emblems – Municipal Truck – Helt states that there has been many complaints about the (green) dump truck not having the Township’s logo/emblems on the doors like the other vehicles; she made a motion to approve the work to be done at a cost of $212.00 (by Gear Signs). Brennan seconds. Motion passed. Roll Call: Helt – aye. Brennan – aye.

Treasurer’s Report: Chairperson Helt states that both the Public Summary and the List of Transactions for the month of May 2019 have been placed at each seat for review. Helt makes a motion to accept both of the Treasurer’s reports as printed and to pay all outstanding bills as can be paid at this time. Brennan seconds. Motion passed. Roll Call: Brennan – aye. Helt – aye. All Treasurer Reports are kept on file in the Township Office for review upon request.

Planning Commission/Engineer’s Report/ARRO Consulting, Inc.: Approval of the RAC plans – Municipal Building Property – Helt explains that Reading Anthracite Company gave the Township 6.34 acres – so Cass Township now owns the property on which the building sits. The Planning Commission held their meeting (on June 13th, 2019); they approved & signed the plans. Helt makes a motion to approve the RAC plans as explained. Brennan seconds. Motion passed. Roll Call: Brennan – aye. Helt – aye.

**Road Foreman’s Report:** Chairperson Helt states that the Road Foreman’s report has been placed at each seat. Helt makes a motion to accept the Road Foreman’s report as printed. Brennan seconds. Motion passed. Roll Call: Brennan – aye. Helt – aye. Copies of all Road Foreman reports are on file in the Township office for review upon request.

**Recap – 06/20/2019 Work Session** - Helt states that she feels that everything was covered during the public comment, however, she adds that even though there is no guarantees, the Board will apply for the loan for a road project – and after obtaining more information, she will set-up another work session to bring the public up to date.

John Kalovcavak asks if the 6.34 acre property acquired from Reading Anthracite Company is here/this property. Brenda Helt replies yes – and the map is here if anyone would like to look at it. John asks what happens down the road – he thought it was rented property. She states that the Township now owns the property, but there’s a stipulation in the deed that the Township cannot sell it – if we ever go to sell it, it would get returned to Reading Anthracite – but since we were renting the property, we couldn’t get any grants to do anything to this building because it was on rented property. Helt states that the roof (on this building) is bad and leaking; this place is just a money pit.

Mike Kulpcauvage asks if the Board realizes that this property is a floodplain. Helt replies yes; she is not saying there are any plans of moving anywhere, but let’s just say that future Supervisors would choose to build somewhere else, they could always keep this property for the road equipment/machinery. Mike asks if the Board would seriously consider trying to build a building on this property. Brenda states that she wasn’t considering building on this property at all; she saw the Township was paying rent – even though it was minimal, it was still money being paid out – so she spoke to Reading Anthracite about getting the property from them – now the taxpayers aren’t paying rent any longer. Mike asks what was the cost of the whole transaction. The Solicitor replies nothing – except the surveying cost of $4,000. Mike asks if there were attorney’s fees. The Solicitor states he’s sure he charged fees – of maybe $100.00. Brenda states that she believes the whole transaction was under $5,000; it wasn’t a big expense at all. The Solicitor states that there will be a fee for recording the deed, but the expense was nominal. Mike states it was a waste of money. The Solicitor asks Mike – if they (RAC) threw us out tomorrow, where would we go – we need a place to function. Mike comments about where the Township should be, but won’t get into that – but states that this building that we are in right now has flooded twice in the past year.

Chris Ternowckeh states that the taxes didn’t go up – not like if the new building would have went up; the taxes would have been sky high. Mike replies that the taxes wouldn’t
have gone up at all. Chris replies yes, they would have. This discussion continued among Chris, Mike, and the Solicitor.

John Pritz, High Road – Asks if any thought has been given to renting out some of the space in this building. The Solicitor replies that they have discussed it. John states that he feels an indoor flea market would be fantastic. Helt states that renting space has been discussed – but before there are any thoughts of it, the sidewalks need to be fixed, etc.; money has to be put out for repairs on this building before anything can be done.

Correspondence:

Donation – Reading Off Road Riders, Inc. – Helt states that the annual enduro race was held again this year by Matto Cycle; and a donation check in the amount of $300 was received from Reading Off Road Rider, Inc.

Old / New Business:

Loan Application - The Solicitor states that the Board needs to make a motion to authorize him to prepare the loan application with the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Bank for up to the maximum amount allowed under the program based upon the projects previously discussed during the work session on 06/20/2019. Helt makes the motion to authorize the Solicitor to complete the loan application as explained. Brennan seconds. Motion passed. Roll Call: Helt – aye. Brennan – aye.

Resolution - The Solicitor states that the Board needs to make a motion to authorize him to prepare the resolution that they requested (during executive session) which would support the efforts being made by the local municipalities that are trying to avoid serial right-to-know requests that are made just for the purpose of harassing the municipality/municipalities. He states that it will hopefully allow legislation to have a review committee that would review requests to determine if the requests are vexatious or if they are for a specific purpose. Helt makes a motion to authorize the Solicitor to prepare the resolution as explained. Brennan seconds. Motion passed. Roll Call: Helt – aye. Brennan – aye.

Motion to Adjourn: With no further business, Chairperson Helt makes a motion to adjourn; Brennan seconds. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned.

Meeting Adjourned.
ATTEST: Brenda M. Helt, Chairperson
TIME MEETING ENDED: 7:48PM

ATTEST: Elvin E. Brennan Jr., Supervisor
TIME MEETING ENDED: 7:48PM

The next regular monthly meeting of the Cass Township Board of Supervisors will be held on Wednesday, July 31st, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. at the Municipal Building, Duncott, PA.