

BRIAR CREEK TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS

Supervisors Meeting

December 4, 2023 at 7:00PM

Briar Creek Township Municipal Building, 150 Municipal Rd., Berwick, PA 18603, Columbia County, PA

The Meeting of the Supervisors of Briar Creek Township, Columbia County, PA was held at the Township Municipal Building on December 4, 2023, at 7:00 PM. Present were the following: Supervisors G. Naus, J. Gallagher, M. Sitler, Road Master S. Rauch, Police Chief T. Frace, Secretary/Treasurer M. DeStefano, Zoning/Codes Official L. Frace, Residents D. Gabsweics, D. Sarge and J. Snyder.

AGENDA

- Call Meeting to Order Vice-Chairman M. Sitler called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Public Participation (limited to 5 minutes per person; inappropriate language will not be tolerated)
- Appoint individual to take meeting minutes during meetings, draft meeting minutes documents for BoS review, and complete follow-up actions from meetings until new Secretary/Treasurer is hired.
- Pass the minutes from the following meetings:
 - 06NOV2023 Supervisors Meeting. Motion to accept meeting minutes made by G. Naus and seconded by J. Gallager. Motion passed 3-0
 - 13NOV2023 Work Session. Motion to accept meeting minutes made by J. Gallagher and seconded by G. Naus. Motion passed 3-0
- Solicitors Report
 - Ruckle Hill Road Solar 1, LLC Appeal - Review and motion decision on the Settlement Stipulation for appeal; follow-up with Attorney Trathen on decision.
- Maintenance Report
 - Updates on the following:
 - Davis Hill Road Repair
 - Yost Hollow Road Culvert Replacement Project
 - 7th Avenue Bridge Repair Assessment
 - Motion to accept Maintenance Report was made by G. Naus and seconded by J. Gallagher. Motion passed 3-0.
- Police Report
 - Review and motion decisions for the following:
 - Columbia-Montour S.W.A.T. (Special Weapons and Tactics) 2024 Annual Membership/Allocation (\$800.00).
 - Cordico Law Enforcement Wellness App for 2024 (\$1999.00)
 - Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association 2024 Annual Membership (\$150.00).
 - Motion to accept Police Report was made by J. Gallagher and seconded by G. Naus. Motion passed 3-0.

 - Max Sitler mentioned a Big Thank You to the Police Dept., Police Chief our Road Crew & Road Master Slade and everybody that helped on Thanksgiving Day for the Community Event Run for the Diamonds. It's great to see everyone working together for such a successful event.
- Sewer Authority Report
 - Ordinance authorizing BAJSA to collect delinquent bills and motion any related decisions for this process.
 - Motion to accept the meeting notes submitted by M. Fisher was made by G. Naus and seconded by J. Gallagher. Motion passed 3-0.
- Sewer Enforcement Report – no report available. Tabled until next meeting.
- Zoning & Codes Report – Motion to accept report given by L. Frace was made by G. Naus and seconded by J. Gallagher. Motion passed 3-0.
- Planning Commission Report - no report available. Tabled until next meeting.
- Fire Company Report – Motion to accept Fire Company Report made by J. Gallagher and seconded by G. Naus. Motion passed 3-0.
- Present Bills for Payment: Check #s 24672 to (# updated at meeting)/Electronic Payments 07NOV2023 through 04DEC2023. Motion to pay the bills made by J. Gallagher and seconded by G. Naus. Motion passed 3-0.

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- Motion to appoint M. DeStefano to serve as the temporary Township Secretary/Treasurer at the rate of \$22.50/hour for the purpose of the following: (1) process township financial transactions (i.e., payroll, state and federal taxes, bills & payments) during hiring transition and (2) sign off on township ordinances & resolutions as may be applicable during hiring transition.
- Motion made to keep Michelle until hiring process is complete. A motion was made by G. Naus and seconded by J. Gallagher. Motion passed 3-0.

- **Budgets**

- Review current General Fund, State/Liquid Fuels Fund, ARP Fund budgets.
- Motion to adopt Resolution #11 of 2023: RESOLUTION FOR FIXING AND LEVYING THE TAX RATES FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2024 FOR BRIAR CREEK TOWNSHIP, COLUMBIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA via roll call vote. If approved, send completed copy of resolution to Columbia County Tax Office.

Supervisor Name	Yes	No
C. Fisher		
G. Naus	X	
J. Gallagher	X	
M. Sittler	X	

- Motion to adopt 2024 Final Budget via roll call vote

Supervisor Name	Yes	No
C. Fisher		
G. Naus	X	
J. Gallagher	X	
M. Sittler	X	

- **Correspondence**

- **Ongoing Business**

- Supervisor Vacancy – Motion to appoint resident to supervisor vacancy with term ending 31DEC2025. A motion was made that we offer the supervisor vacancy position to Patti Leighow by J. Gallagher and seconded by G. Naus. Motion passed 3-0.
- Motion to advertise 2024 Auditors Meeting; scheduled for 03JAN2024 at 6 PM at BCT Municipal Building; follow-up with Press Enterprise. Motion was made by J. Gallagher and seconded by G. Naus. Motion passed 3-0.
- Connect Humanity "Preparing Appalachian Communities for Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) and Digital Equity Act (DEA)" Grant Application Status
 - Recent updates: Invoice was submitted for first grant payment, but this was put on hold by Grantor due to Supervisor and Secretary/Treasurer transitions. BCT is the legal designee of the grant; Grantor requested an assigned Briar Creek Township contact as well as a meeting to discuss potential paths forward and township obligations to this program. As of 01DEC2023, Connect Humanity believes the best path forward is to terminate the current subaward contract and support an alternative path forward. If this is agreeable, the BCT BoS will need to contact S. Schartman, Connect Humanity Director, Philanthropic Programs. She will then schedule a joint meeting with all parties involved to discuss next steps and expectations for connectivity planning in this area. A formal letter of contract termination is being sent to BCT BoS. Tabled to next meeting.
- FEMA BRIC/FMA Grant re: Road/Environmental Situation at Hartman's Court & surrounding roads – C. Fisher was to contact A. Eldred to set up face-to-face meeting for further discussion. The sub-grant application, should a decision be made to proceed, is due 15DEC2023. Tabled to next meeting 11DEC2023.
- Township Banking: Decision on depository services is pending direct comparison of information. Tabled to next meeting 11DEC2023.

- **New Business**

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- Motion to adopt Resolution #13 of 2023: A RESOLUTION APPOINTING AN ACTING TAX COLLECTOR FOR BRIAR CREEK TOWNSHIP TO SERVE THE VACANCY IN THE OFFICE OF THE TOWNSHIP'S ELECTED TAX COLLECTOR. If approved, send a completed copy of the resolution to Columbia County Tax Office. A motion was made to adopt the resolution by G. Naus and seconded by J. Gallagher. Motion passed 3-0.
- Review and motion decision on township 2024 insurance policy; follow-up with insurance broker on decision. A motion was made to go with EMC by J. Gallagher and seconded by G. Naus. Motion passed 3-0.
- Review and motion decision for the following donations: (1) McBride Memorial Library (\$2,000.00) and (2) Dept. of the Aging/Meals on Wheels (\$1,000.00). The motion was made by J. Gallagher and seconded by G. Naus. Motion passed 3-0.
- Discussion of and any motions for ARP funding project allocations
- For the good of the order
- Adjourn - A motion to adjourn at 7:35pm and to begin executive session was made by G. Naus and seconded by J. Gallagher.