

Chairperson, Mark Petros, on Wednesday, December 20, 2023, at 6:00pm, called the Regular Meeting of the Sewickley Township Board of Supervisors to order as advertised in the Tribune Review on Saturday, January 7, 2023. The members of the Board of Supervisors present were Mark Petros, Bill Dull, and Linda Harvey. Also attending the meeting were Solicitor Lee Demosky, Michael Gray, Chad Albert, Bruce Zarnick, Michael Manley, and Susan Leukhardt.

Mark Petros led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

An Ordinance for the Township of Sewickley, County of Westmoreland, modifying the Sewickley Township Code Chapter 28, Section 805, Subsection (H)(3) to permit freestanding signs. The amendment would allow freestanding signs to be placed in the Agricultural/Land Conservation Zoning Districts and would only be permitted to alert the public of safety and health hazards.

Madison Hinkle from the Mountain Watershed Association explained in more detail the limitations of these signs. Solicitor Demosky asked Ms. Hinkle if she had an opportunity to review the proposed Ordinance. She responded yes. He then asked if this Ordinance would allow the signs that she's spoken of at the past few meetings. She replied yes. Solicitor Demosky and Township Manager Gray agree that it is in the best interest of the Township if this Ordinance is voted on and passed.

An Executive Session was held on Wednesday, December 13, 2023 at 10:00am to discuss personnel matters.

Report from Secretary-Treasurer, Susan Leukhardt

Account	Beginning Balance	Deposits / Interest	Transfers / Payments	Ending Balance
NOVEMBER, 2023				
FNB General Fund	\$ 31,522.02	\$ 262,259.00	\$ 108,976.81	\$ 184,804.21
PLGIT General Fund	\$ 448,961.01	\$ 123,510.22	\$ 150,000.00	\$ 422,471.23
FNB Reserve Account	\$ 148,564.99	\$ 293.06	-0-	\$ 148,858.05

Report from Township Manager, Michael Gray

STREET MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR:

- Replaced numerous stop signs, speed limit signs, and School Bus Stop Ahead
- Cleaned debris from catch basins and culvert ditches.
- Installed a new 2' x 4' catch basin and 15' of 12" discharge pipe on Harris Drive.
- Repaired two (2) sections of guard rail and posts on Limerick Road that were damaged from a hit-and-run accident.

FACILITY & VEHICLE MAINTENANCE:

- Serviced Backhoe, Ram 5500 Dump Truck, and Ford F250 Pickup.
- Collected and hauled away leaf waste at Crabapple Park.
- Received the two (2) new Ram 5500 salt and plow trucks, currently prepping them for the winter season.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS:

- Submitting payment request to the Commonwealth Financing Authority for the Local Share Account Cat 4 Funding in the amount of \$88,300.00 for the CimLine Crack Sealer.

- Working on preparing various amendments to Township ordinances and some new ordinances. We reviewed them in-house and they have been sent to our Solicitor for review. We will put them out for advertisement and will have some public hearings about ordinances. Ordinances include everything from fire departments to EMA to animals, outdoor burning, fireworks, nuisance, quality of community, vehicle regulations, solid waste, landlord/tenant registration and vacant and abandoned house registration.
- Discussed with Hallie Chatfield from the Redevelopment Authority funding options for the demolition of blighted properties. Our Ordinance Officer provided me with a list. I added a few of my own on that we'll review to see what we can do each year to get CDBG grants to remove some of the blighted properties in the Township.
- The lowest bid was received by Minniefield Demolition for the demolition of the Recreation Center in the amount of \$97,380.00, of that \$25,737.00 is the responsibility of the Township.
- We will have bid openings on January 12th for the repairs for the Crabapple Pool. I know we didn't budget for the Crabapple Pool this year, but we're going to have the bid openings moving forward to see what the repair costs would be for that.

Report from Recreation Director, Chad Albert

Crabapple Lake Park:

- The park remains open to walkers and visitors year-round. Reminder for everyone's safety... No hunting on park property and use of any off-road utility vehicles is prohibited.
- Repairs at the Park's large pavilion are near completion, including the replacement of the 50' x 30' concrete floor, steps, and surrounding pillars.
- Park maintenance has sanded & stained all the benches & picnic tables located at the Butterfly Garden and lake areas.

Recreation Center:

- The Recreation Center inventory project is near completion. All chemicals, and hazardous items-such as old paint has been collected, to be properly disposed of. All historic items and documents have been safely relocated to the temporary Library or Township building records room.

Past & Upcoming Events:

- Special thanks to Herminie Business Association & Cultural Commission for organizing our community Light Up Night celebration in Herminie on Saturday, December 3rd.
- The Sewickley Township Volunteer Recreation Committee met last Wednesday, December 15th to plan more events for 2024. We are also accepting volunteers to join the committee. Please contact the Recreation Office if you or someone you know is interested in volunteering.
- Sewickley Township Volunteer Recreation Committee is seeking approval tonight to plan our 4th Annual Father/Daughter Dinner Dance at the Crystal Ballroom in Herminie to be held on February 24th.
 - Open to all Yough area residents
 - Tickets will be for sale one day only at the Sewickley Township Municipal Building. Ticket sales will take place on a Saturday, one month before the event.
 - The event is being planned for the end of February.

Report from Ordinance Officer, Bruce Zarnick

This month, there were approximately 19 ordinance investigations. Of those, one (1) animal complaint, one (1) garbage complaint, three (3) junk complaints, three (3) illegal burning complaints, one (1) high grass complaint, two (2) permit violations, four (4) blighted or dangerous structure complaints, and four (4) parking complaints.

Several letters were sent out and four (4) new citations were issued about ongoing issues. A verbal warning was given to a resident who does have a plan to take care of his blighted property.

Sent out four (4) invoices to property owners for Township intervention for the cutting of high grass and weeds that were not in compliance even after citations were issued. This was done for health and safety reasons.

On the 14th of this month, I attended a court hearing about one of our blighted properties harboring junk. The defendant has made some improvements to the property but has a lot more clean-up to do. The Judge is staying on him and will hold another updated hearing in March to check his progress. I sent an updated list to Michael of the most blighted and dangerous properties that need action to be taken so that he can work with the county to try to get these properties taken care of. This will be a process, but it is in the works for this coming year. As always, if anyone has any questions or concerns, please reach out to me anytime or see me after the meeting.

Report from Emergency Management Director, Michael Manley

Notable Incidents, Events and Training

Structure Fire – 12/2/2023 – (19:07) – 301 Limerick Road

Herminie and Hutchinson VFD along with mutual aid companies responded to smoke conditions inside the multi-unit apartment unit. Identified to be a water pump overpressure and smoking in the basement of the structure.

Structure Fire – 12/3/2023 – (19:18) 1044 Yukon Road

Hutchinson VFD along with Township and mutual aid companies responded to a reported building fire. This structure was the same structure that had burned previously this year. Upon arrival, heavy fire conditions were encountered, and a defensive attack took place. No injuries were reported. PSP Fire Marshall was notified for further investigation.

Motor Vehicle Accidents:

11/23/2023 – 1188 Herminie West Newton Road

11/29/2023 – Clay Pike at Mars Hill Road

10/20/2023 – 1401 Greensburg Pike

Weather Events – None

Community Nixle Alerts Sent:

11/20/2023 – Wind Advisory

12/17/2023 – Winter Storm Watch and Advisory

Notable Meetings / Trainings / Tasks and Noteworthy Meetings

11/15/2023 – LEMC Meeting, 911 Meeting – Planning Meeting

11/29/2023 – Community Outreach, St. Edwards Boy Scout Preparedness Demo with West Newton EMA

12/6/2023 – EMA Monthly Staff Meeting – EOC – Winter Preparation

Report from Gibson-Thomas Engineering

Report was available for anyone to review.

No Public Comment on Agenda Items Only

Mark Petros made a motion, seconded by Linda Harvey, to approve the agenda as presented below. Voting: Mrs. Harvey, Mr. Petros, Mr. Dull; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Linda Harvey made a motion, seconded by Mark Petros, to enact Ordinance 2-2023 modifying Chapter 28 – Zoning, Article 8, Section 805, Subsection (H)(3) of the Sewickley Township Code to permit and regulate freestanding signs. Voting: Mrs. Harvey, Mr. Petros, Mr. Dull; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Bill Dull made a motion, seconded by Mark Petros, to approve the minutes of the Sewickley Township Board of Supervisors Special Meeting held on July 11, 2023 and the Regular Meetings held on July 19, 2023, August 16, 2023, and September 20, 2023. Voting: Mrs. Harvey, Mr. Petros, Mr. Dull; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Mark Petros made a motion, seconded by Linda Harvey, to disburse 2022 EMS Tax funds on behalf of Sewickley Township Emergency Management as follows:

Bearcom – monthly maintenance on portable radios	\$ 92.00
Comcast – monthly EOC phone & internet	\$ 186.94
Jason Ritchie – reimburse for battery backup plug	\$ 11.83

Voting: Mrs. Harvey, Mr. Petros, Mr. Dull; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Mark Petros made a motion, seconded by Linda Harvey, to disburse 2022 EMS Tax funds on behalf of Herminie Volunteer Fire Company as follows:

Flashover Fire Apparatus – foam for fire suppression	\$ 204.00
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Voting: Mrs. Harvey, Mr. Petros, Mr. Dull; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Bill Dull made a motion, seconded by Mark Petros, to disburse 2022 EMS Tax funds on behalf of Rillton Volunteer Fire Company as follows:

Schulte's Towing & Repair – 1994 sutphen air repairs	\$ 2,000.00
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Voting: Mrs. Harvey, Mr. Petros, Mr. Dull; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Mark Petros made a motion, seconded by Bill Dull, to disburse 2022 EMS Tax funds on behalf of Lowber Volunteer Fire Company as follows:

WestCom Wireless, Inc. – mobile radio and accessories	\$ 3,924.20
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Voting: Mrs. Harvey, Mr. Petros, Mr. Dull; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Linda Harvey made a motion, seconded by Mark Petros, to adopt Resolution 34-2023 fixing the 2024 annual tax rate for General Township purposes and other purposes as the following: General Township Purposes as 11.25 mills; Fire Hydrants and Fire Hydrant Water Service as .25 mills; Light the Highways, Roads, and other Public Places in the Township as .75 mills; and Ambulance, Rescue, and other Emergency Services as 2 mills. This reflects no tax increase from 2023. Voting: Mrs. Harvey, Mr. Petros, Mr. Dull; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Mark Petros made a motion, seconded by Linda Harvey, to adopt the General Fund, Recreation, and Special Funds Budgets for the Township of Sewickley for fiscal year 2024. Voting: Mrs. Harvey, Mr. Petros, Mr. Dull; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Bill Dull made a motion, seconded by Mark Petros, to advertise the Reorganization Meeting for the Board of Supervisors to be held on Tuesday, January 2, 2024 at 3:30pm located at the Sewickley Township Municipal Building. Voting: Mrs. Harvey, Mr. Petros, Mr. Dull; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Mark Petros made a motion, seconded by Linda Harvey, to approve Jakomas Construction Inc. as lowest bidder for the block work repairs and repointing to the Crabapple Park Large Pavilion in the amount of \$ 1,200.00. Voting: Mrs. Harvey, Mr. Petros, Mr. Dull; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Linda Harvey made a motion, seconded by Mark Petros, to adopt Resolution No. 35-2023 approving the Plan Revision for New Land Development of the Shaner Housing Sanitary Sewer Extension for the installation of sewer tap-ins and sewer extensions for the Westmoreland County Housing Authority as proposed in the Sewage Facilities Planning Module. Voting: Mrs. Harvey, Mr. Petros, Mr. Dull; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Mark Petros made a motion, seconded by Linda Harvey, to adopt Resolution 36-2023 allocating funds from the American Rescue Plan Account (\$57,663.57) and General Fund (\$46,386.43) for two (2) upfit packages, plows, and spreaders for our 2023 Ram 5500's through Costars Contract # 25-E22-432 in the amount of \$104,050.00. This will deplete and close out the ARPA funds/account. Voting: Mrs. Harvey, Mr. Petros, Mr. Dull; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

The following proposals were received for the annual financial audit for the year ending December 31, 2023.

A & B Accounting and Tax Services, LLC	\$6,000.00
DeBlasio & DeBlasio Associates	\$8,800.00

Linda Harvey made a motion, seconded by Mark Petros, to adopt Resolution No. 32-2023 to appoint DeBlasio & DeBlasio Associates as an auditor for the annual financial audit for the year ending December 31, 2023. This was tabled on November 15, 2023. Board Comments: Mrs. Harvey stated that this is due to not receiving the 2022 audit as of yet. Voting: Mrs. Harvey, Mr. Petros, Mr. Dull; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Bill Dull made a motion, seconded by Mark Petros, to ratify the payment of \$25,737.00 from the MSATS Sale Account to the Redevelopment Authority of Westmoreland County for the Township's portion of demolition of the Recreation Center. Voting: Mrs. Harvey, Mr. Petros, Mr. Dull; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Linda Harvey made a motion, seconded by Mark Petros, to approve closing the Crabapple Park and Pool Fund and the Crabapple Fundraising bank accounts and combine those funds into the Recreation Fund bank account. Voting: Mrs. Harvey, Mr. Petros, Mr. Dull; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Linda Harvey made a motion, seconded by Mark Petros, to approve the hiring of Jason Pastva as a full-time Public Works Equipment Operator at the rate of \$21.16 per hour for a 90-day probationary term. Voting: Mrs. Harvey, Mr. Petros, Mr. Dull; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Linda Harvey made a motion, seconded by Bill Dull, to renew Property and Casualty Coverage for all Sewickley Fire Companies with Varine-Slavin using FirstFire Insurance at the premiums below. Policy is effective from January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024.

Herminie Volunteer Fire Company:	\$ 13,817.00
Lowber Volunteer Fire Company:	\$ 16,876.00
Rillton Volunteer Fire Company:	\$ 17,471.00
Hutchinson Volunteer Fire Company:	\$ 14,197.00

Voting: Mrs. Harvey, Mr. Petros, Mr. Dull; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Bill Dull made a motion, seconded by Linda Harvey, to adopt Resolution 37-2023 authorizing an agreement between Sewickley Township and the Westmoreland County Transit Authority to provide public transportation within the community. Based on population, population density, and the number of trips within the community, the share assessment for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 will be \$850.50 and paid in January, 2024. There is no increase for this service. Voting: Mrs. Harvey, Mr. Petros, Mr. Dull; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Mark Petros made a motion, seconded by Bill Dull, to approve the Recreation Department and Sewickley Township Volunteer Recreation Committee to plan and host a community Father/Daughter Dinner Dance to be held on Saturday, February 24, 2024. Voting: Mrs. Harvey, Mr. Petros, Mr. Dull; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Mark Petros made a motion, seconded by Bill Dull, to approve the following bills for payment:

General Fund:

Checks 13517 to 13529 - \$ 10,550.56 (11/15/23)
 Checks 13530 to 13553 - \$ 26,005.09 (12/4/23)
 Checks 13554 to 13558 - \$ 1,929.68 (12/5/23)
 Check 13559 - \$ 25,737.00 (12/8/23)

MAWC - \$ 185.85 (12/19/23)

ACH Payments: UPMC Health - \$ 36,148.24 (11/16/23)
 MAWC - \$ 185.85 (11/17/23)
 MAWC - \$ 62.13 (11/17/23)
 First Energy (8 invoices) - \$ 598.71 (11/29/23)
 Columbia Gas - \$ 129.81 (12/4/23)
 Incoming Wire Fee - \$ 22.00 (12/6/23)
 First Energy - \$ 43.22 (12/11/23)
 MAWC - \$ 62.14 (12/19/23)

ARPA:

Check 1005 - \$ 88,300.00 (11/20/23)

Crabapple:

Checks 5034 to 5036 - \$ 656.07 (11/15/23)
 Check 5037 - \$ 197.20 (12/4/23)

MAWC - \$ 53.68 (12/19/23)

ACH Payments: First Energy - \$ 46.47 (11/29/23)
 First Energy - \$ 36.12 (11/29/23)
 MAWC - \$ 230.17 (11/30/23)
 MAWC - \$ 189.98 (11/30/23)
 First Energy - \$ 120.58 (12/11/23)
 First Energy - \$ 100.31 (12/11/23)

Liquid Fuels:

Check 545 - \$ 5,054.00 (11/20/23)
 Check 546 - \$ 995.00 (12/5/23)

Payroll / Paychex ACH Liabilities:

Paychex - \$ 155.60 (11/17/23)
 Paychex - \$ 133.56 (11/20/23)
 Paychex - \$ 151.75 (12/1/23)
 Paychex - \$ 147.90 (12/15/23)

Payroll Liabilities - \$ 5,848.71 (11/16/23)
 Payroll Liabilities - \$ 6,074.99 (11/30/23)
 Payroll Liabilities - \$ 5,821.67 (12/14/23)

Recreation:

Check 3014 - \$ 1,145.00 (10/24/23)

MAWC - \$ 95.00 (12/6/23)
 MAWC - \$ 77.14 (12/6/23)
 MAWC - \$ 28.90 (12/19/23)

ACH Payments: MAWC - \$ 123.90 (11/17/23)
 MAWC - \$ 30.97 (11/17/23)
 First Energy - \$ 22.78 (11/27/23)
 First Energy - \$ 324.15 (11/29/23)
 First Energy - \$ 15.19 (11/29/23)
 Columbia Gas - \$ 47.13 (12/4/23)

Street Light / Fire Hydrant:

ACH Payments: First Energy - \$ 2,729.66 (12/4/23)
 First Energy - \$ 626.44 (12/7/23)
 First Energy - \$ 394.13 (12/7/23)

Voting: Mrs. Harvey, Mr. Petros, Mr. Dull; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Linda Harvey made a motion, seconded by Bill Dull, to approve the following payrolls for payment:

Employees Payroll: 12/1/2023 - \$20,851.93
 12/15/2023 - \$19,312.44

Voting: Mrs. Harvey, Mr. Petros, Mr. Dull; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

General Public Comment

Daryl Dermotta asked why the Reorganization Meeting time is being held at 3:30pm. Mr. Petros responded that due to everyone's schedule here, it was better for most of the staff to move the time. Mr. Dermotta then asked if we paid the auditor for the 2022 audit. Mr. Gray responded no. Mr. Dermotta: Regarding the ballfield. You have companies from all over the place using that field. Mark: You are correct. That's something we're going to try to work on.

Madison Hinkle thanked the Board of Supervisors for passing the Ordinance. We will still need to get your approval for the signs we want to put up. An application will be emailed. The signs have been updated so they are no longer red "Danger". Now they are orange with "Warning". This is geared more toward OSHA standards.

Ron Wolfgang, Public Safety Director, Adamsburg Borough - Regional Police Coverage

Mr. Wolfgang spoke about possibly having regional police which would include a number of municipalities. The discussion is in the very early stages with the Board of Supervisors needing more information before more discussion continues.

Old / New Business

Mrs. Harvey requested having the following motions be placed on the Reorganization Meeting agenda.

1. Motion to authorize Gibson-Thomas to prepare a plan and cost estimate for a recreation area on land designated as Project 70 in Rillton.
2. Motion to release \$3,000 that was withheld from the Rillton VFC portion of the Township EMS service tax in 2021.
3. Motion to hold a monthly public workshop prior to the Board of Supervisor meetings.

Mrs. Harvey added that she believed these motions would have been on tonight's agenda to vote on. Since they are not, she wants them on the January 2nd agenda. She went on to state that the Chairperson of the Board sets the agenda, what is on it and what is not.

Discussion and details regarding the Project 70 land behind Rillton VFC and the \$3,000 sanction. These both have been discussed at previous meetings.

The Township Building will be closed on Friday, December 22, 2023, Monday, December 25, 2023, and Monday, January 1, 2024.

The Board of Supervisors is looking for any persons interested in serving on the Sewickley Township Planning Commission, Zoning Hearing Board, Sutersville-Sewickley Municipal Sewage Authority, or Cultural Commission. Please send letters of interest to the Sewickley Township Municipal Building for consideration.

We would like to wish everyone a Happy, Healthy Holiday Season!

With no further business to come before the Board, Mark Petros made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Bill Dull. Voting: Mr. Petros, Mr. Dull, Mrs. Harvey; yes. Meeting adjourned at 7:25pm.