

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

April 3, 2020 @ 9:00am

HELD VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM

Call to Order:

- A. The meeting was called to order at 9:03am followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Establishment of a Quorum:

- A. Board members Amanda Babinec and Steve Blacketer were present. Board President Shane Sommers sent his regrets.
- B. Also present were Trustee Don Hodson and members of the Washington Township staff

Public Comment:

- A. There were no public comments.

Trustee Comment:

- A. Hodson reminded the Board of the steps the Township had already taken toward social distancing
 - a. Parks and programs were closed and cancelled as of March 9
 - b. All non-essential employees were sent home to work remotely as of March 19
 - i. Hodson said employees were doing an excellent job of documenting their at-home work and getting work done
- B. Hodson also told the Board that the Avon Collaboration Group was meeting virtually weekly to coordinate efforts
- C. Hodson commended Deputy Trustee Britt Woodard and the rest of the Township Assistance "call center" for their work fielding a huge increase in applicants
- D. Hodson commended all of our first responders for their work and their leadership
- E. Hodson commended EMS Chief Ted Allen for his leadership and his efforts to get supplies
- F. Hodson announced to the Board that he planned to extend the work-from-home order to May 1

Department Reports

- A. Fire – Presented by Fire Chief Dan Smith
 - a. The department leaders have been working to put together a workforce reduction plan in the event that the department needs to shut down equipment as a result of a staffing shortage. Typically, Chief gives 30 days' notice of new policies, but he has the authority to make them effective immediately. He will be sending out the plan after the meeting.
 - b. Chief noted that he will not be approving any new leave until at least June 1, but will revisit this in mid-May
 - c. Chief also informed the Board that the FFCRA (Families First Coronavirus Relief Act) exemption was causing a stir in the department, but he and the other chiefs were doing their best to answer questions

- d. Both Babinec and Blacketer thanked Chief for his department's hard work and for the communication
- e. Chief asked Blacketer to thank the Avon Chamber of Commerce for providing lunch to the crews
- f. He also recognized the company Fastenal for donating N-95 masks
- B. Parks – Presented by Parks Director Lora Helmick
 - a. Helmick stated that all in person programs have been cancelled through the end of April
 - b. She told the Board that the department has been working to create virtual programming, including a virtual egg hunt
 - c. Helmick noted that many of her remote staff members were helping with the Township Assistance “call center”
 - d. Lastly, Helmick emphasized that the maintenance staff were working safely, using designated vehicles and gloves, and maintaining social distancing
- C. Human Resources – Presented by HR Director Tracy Justice
 - a. Justice noted that she had been doing extensive HR training and learning on the job
 - b. She has been meeting with our vendors to gain a better understanding of our benefits
 - c. Justice has also been closely studying the FCCRA to make sure the Township is in line with it
- D. Township Assistance – Presented by Deputy Trustee Britt Woodard
 - a. Woodard presented the assistance numbers to date from the packet and said that the “call center” process has been going well. She also thanked Trilby Berry-Tayman's wife, Lisa, for providing the Township with a free Formstack account to get applicants' documents virtually during the lockdown.
 - b. Blacketer asked about the denials. Woodard responded that they were the result of incomplete applications with the exception of one person who applied for mortgage relief, which the Township does not provide. In that case, the applicant was referred to HUD.

New Business

- A. Review of the Township Exercising The Exemption For Public Safety Personnel
 - a. Township Counsel Jeff Bellamy presented
 - b. He stated that the Department of Labor issued guidelines last Saturday (3/28/2020)
 - i. For employers of fewer than 500, leave provided for those impacted by COVID-19 includes two weeks of paid sick time and blended FMLA leave at 2/3 salary
 - c. Bellamy also noted that Congress recognizes healthcare and first responders as essential workers and therefore employers can choose to exempt them.
 - d. He noted that the Township had decided that the best course of action was to try to keep multiple first responders from triggering the 12 weeks of leave outlined in FFCRA. It would drain the Township's resources and place a strain on those workers who remained.
 - e. Blacketer motioned to support Hodson's notice of policy adoption. Babinec seconded the motion. The motion passed 2-0.
- B. Township Personnel Changes Needing Board Approval

- a. Bellamy summarized the changes presented in the Board packet and emphasized those portions pertaining to township equipment (it still remains Township property) and PTO (Hodson may reject requests off for employees who are not sick).
- b. Babinec motioned to support Hodson's personnel changes. Blacketer seconded the motion. The motion passed 2-0.
- C. Resolution 040320-01: Declaring Surplus Property
 - a. Hodson and Smith informed the Board that this resolution addresses outdated equipment that is taking up a lot of room in the auxiliary building
 - b. Blacketer asked if there was a department that could use the equipment
 - c. Smith said that the department usually tried to donate if they can, but they do dispose of property that is too old or that they cannot donate
 - d. Blacketer motioned to support the Resolution. Babinec seconded the motion. The resolution passed 2-0.

Public Comment:

- A. There were no public comments.

Wishes to be heard:

- A. Hodson informed the group that the April 14, 2020 Board meeting would be cancelled
- B. Hodson publicly recognized all staff for their hard work and adaptation to this new environment
- C. Babinec thanked Bellamy for his help
- D. Bellamy recognized Hodson for being one of the most proactive townships and included the whole staff in his praise

Adjournment:

- A. Amanda Babinec motioned to adjourn at 9:51am. Steve Blacketer seconded the motion.

These minutes were approved May 12, 2020.

Shane Sommers,

Amanda Babinec,

ATTEST:

Steve Blacketer,

Don Hodson, Trustee

Next Meeting:

Tuesday, May 12, 2020 at 3:00pm at the Washington Township Government Center*

*This has since been changed to a virtual Zoom meeting to be streamed on the Fire Department's Facebook page (Britt Woodard, 4/30/2020)