

**Black Creek Township Supervisors Regular Meeting Minutes
Thursday, November 14th, 2024 @ 6:00 P.M.**

The Regular Meeting of the Black Creek Township Supervisors, held on
Thursday, November 14th, 2024 @ 6:00 P.M.

Pledge of Allegiance

Attendance: Roll Call; Cheesman: Present; Yacowatz: Present; Feerrar: Present.

Public Comment on Agenda Items: There is a 5-minute time limit. Please state your name and address.

Mr. Steven Bruno had a comment on agenda item number 2. He clarified that he is still a resident of the township. He is in the process of trying to sell his house, however, he is unsure when his house will sell, but he is still a resident of the township.

Minutes:

A motion to approve the minutes of the October 10th regular meeting.

Motion by Supervisor Cheesman.

Seconded by Supervisor Feerrar.

All in favor: Yes.

***Supervisor Feerrar reviewed all financials and the report.**

Financial Report: October 1 st to October 31 st		Interest Rates
Mid Penn General Fund:	\$159,841.07	1.00%
Fire Escrow Account:	\$717.75	1.00%
PLGIT Class/Prime Savings:	\$107.63	PLGIT Yields
PLGIT Checking/Liquid Fuels:	\$103,298.42	Can Change On A Daily Basis
Total Checking/Savings:	\$263,964.87	
PLGIT Alumni Assoc.:	\$5,174.19	
Total:	\$269,139.06	

A motion to approve the financial report.

Motion by Supervisor Cheesman.

Seconded by Supervisor Yacowatz.

All in favor: Yes.

Bills: Payment of bills, as presented.

A motion to approve the bills as presented and to pay all bills in all funds that become due before the next regular meeting.

All in favor: Cheesman: Yes; Yacowatz: Yes; Feerrar: Yes.

Correspondence: Supervisor Cheesman reviewed the correspondence.

- **I-80 Nescopeck Creek Bridge winter emergency management services coordination meeting**

Reports:

Zoning Report: Supervisor Yacowatz reviewed the zoning report.

Fire Company: Fire Chief Joe Lescowitch reviewed the activity report.

Emergency Management: Bob reviewed the Emergency Management report.

Roadmaster Report: Supervisor Cheesman reviewed the Roadmaster Report.

Recycling Report: Supervisor Feerrar reviewed the recycling report.

Food Pantry: Donna Feerrar gave a report.

Old Business: NONE

New Business:

1. Knelly Subdivision Extension

A motion to approve the request for an extension on the Knelly Subdivision application due to the need to apply for zoning variances.

A motion by Supervisor Cheesman.

Seconded by Supervisor Feerrar.

All in favor: Yes.

2. Vacancy on the Board of Auditors

The Board of Supervisors has received information indicating that a vacancy has occurred on the Board of Auditors due to a relocation from the Township by a Board member.

A motion to **table** a replacement member to the Board of Auditors at the Supervisors meeting in December, said replacement to be a registered elector of the Township who has resided in the Township continuously for at least one year prior to the appointment.

A motion by Supervisor Cheesman.

Seconded by Supervisor Feerrar.

All in favor: Yes.

3. Review 2023 Financial Audit Report

Supervisor Feerrar reviewed the Financial Audit Report.

4. Solicitor to Advertise the Repeal of the ATV Ordinance

*Supervisor Yacowatz stated that no vote will take place on this due to it just being a reminder to do so.

5. *Advertise the 2025 Proposed Budget (added agenda item)

A motion to approve advertising for the 2025 Proposed Budget.

A motion by Supervisor Cheesman.

Seconded by Supervisor Feerrar.

All in favor: Yes.

Public Comment: There is a 5-minute time limit. Please state your name and address.

Mr. Shawn Labuda had a question about the Chicks Lane bridge. Supervisor Yacowatz informed him that he was in communication with Chris Goetz about it and he has not heard anything back on getting the bridge repaired just yet. Mr. Labuda also inquired about how to go about changing the name of the road he lives on from Youngman Lane to honor his great grandmother. Solicitor Karpowich informed him that we will need to notify the 911 Data department and

Mr. Rick Davis had a comment to state that he opposes the drastic ordinance changes and that the conditional use clause needs to be removed. Supervisor Cheesman told him to consider himself on record.

Mr. Joseph Dretzel had a question about an address for the new house he built. The Supervisors told him that they would look into it for him and took his information.

Mrs. Vicki Harman had a concern about Mountain Street and the poor condition of it. Supervisor Feerrar assured her that he was looking into getting grants for that road because the Supervisors are well aware of its poor condition. Mrs. Harman made it clear that nothing had been done to it for years and it is in really bad shape.

Another question was asked if a copy of the 2023 Audit will be given to the Township Auditors. Supervisor Feerrar & Solicitor Karpowich stated that they are more than welcome to look at it and have a copy of it since it is public record.

Mrs. Sharon Kashner from Windfield Village Road had a comment stating that she deeply opposes the ordinances they are trying to put through, and said that they are doing it for their own gain. Supervisor Yacowatz asked her to explain as to what she means by their own gain and what could they gain from it. Mrs. Kashner said that they are trying to drive the people out. Supervisor Yacowatz asked her why would they want to drive the citizens of the township out.

Mrs. Kashner stated that they want to push people out who have livestock and if that happens, that land will go up for sale and stated that she is sure from knowing Supervisor Yacowatz and Supervisor Cheesman's backgrounds and that she knows Supervisor Feerrar, to which Supervisor Yacowatz asked her what their backgrounds are. The discussion went back and forth and other comments were made. Supervisor Cheesman asked Solicitor Karpowich to go over the deal with livestock in the new proposed ordinance. Mrs. Kashner stated that when she originally bought her home, it was a C-1 and the township at the time wanted to change it to Residential and Solicitor Karpowich was part of it. She could not remember when at first, however, she followed up by saying it was about 2012. Solicitor Karpowich was asking everyone what section of the newly proposed ordinance they were referring to. Nobody was able to say exactly what section, however, another resident stated that it was the section where they believe the Supervisors want to get rid of livestock in the township and where residents would have to come pay a fee and come in front of the Supervisors for permission. Solicitor Karpowich asked the residents exactly what section of the ordinance states where they want to get rid of livestock. A lot of the residents spoke out all at once and discussion on the new Zoning Ordinance followed specifying what was meant by the conditional use.

Another resident asked the Supervisors meant by conditional use. To which Solicitor Karpowich explained what the conditional use means and that the new ordinance would not affect anyone and what they are doing now.

Mr. Rick Davis brought up a concern about his granddaughter wanting horses one day and fears she will not be able to have horses because of this conditional use and she will not be grandfathered in in this case.

Solicitor Karpowich went on to explain CAOs and CAFOs in the state of Pennsylvania and what the Attorney General's office allows. Discussion followed and the Supervisors and Solicitor Karpowich reminded the residents that there will be a special meeting advertised to review the new Proposed Zoning Ordinance.

Another resident, named Jack, had a comment stating that Black Creek Township is a redneck Township and anything the Supervisors do for the Township should be to keep that freedom of living in the countryside. Solicitor Karpowich stated that he completely understands and Supervisor Cheesman stated that they are prepared to do that, but wanted to err on the side of caution to what could come with doing that and maintaining that freedom.

Jack Peak had a comment asking if Solicitor Karpowich was involved with the case in Berwick with the pig factory. He continued by saying that the people do not realize that if they permit everything without conditional use, then someone who gets one pig it can turn into 2 and 3 and then so on and so on. He said the residents of Berwick are fighting the pig factory because of the smell and they are having a hard time with it because they permitted everything. Solicitor Karpowich responded with a situation he dealt with in a different township with a chicken farm. He concluded by reminding everyone that with an agricultural use, they must permit the CAFOs and CAOs and with those there are no set back requirements.

Mr. Joe Dretzel stated that the ordinance needs to be written another way to make it easier for residents to have such animals if they chose to without having to go in front of the Board of Supervisors to ask their permission. Discussion followed on the subject.

Other residents spoke out at the same time about the proposed Zoning Ordinance stating their disagreement and their opinions of how certain things are wrong to be changing.

Mr. William Ebert from Tower Rd had a question for Solicitor Karpowich to see if the proposed zoning ordinance is due to the fact of people having small acreage lots and are farming animals and contaminating wells and stated that once a well is contaminated there is no coming back from it. Solicitor Karpowich understood his comment and stated that the Supervisors are just going to permit everything and residents will have to face any consequences that may arise from that.

Another resident stated that she worked for the Penn state Cooperative extension and suggested for the Supervisors and Solicitor reach out to them regarding this issue. Supervisor Yacowatz stated that they will look into it.

Another resident asked if honeybees are allowed because she understood that they are not allowed. Solicitor Karpowich informed her that they are allowed and said that it is in the ordinance that they are allowed in an A-1 and C-1 by right. Mr. Rick Davis asked what "by right" meant. Solicitor Karpowich informed him that it is by submitting a permit. Mr. Davis then thought that that meant by going in front of the Supervisors and asking permission, to which Solicitor Karpowich told him that it does not mean that. It means simply filling out a zoning permit and submitting it. Another person asked if it cost something. Supervisor Cheesman stated that there is a permit fee, then other residents arose in contention wondering why people must ask permission to do things on their own property. Another person asked if they can have a garden next summer.

Another resident asked how big you are allowed in conservation for agricultural use to have a garden? Another stated that it is not allowed. Solicitor Karpowich informed them that it is allowed by conditional use in the proposed ordinance, but it will be changed to permitted by right.

Andy Harabin wanted to show gratitude to the Supervisors and road crew for the work being done in Weston. He contended the work done on Chicks Lane stating that it was done poorly, and followed by saying that the money spent on Chicks Lane could have been spent to do all of Weston.

Jamie Walsh, Pennsylvania State representative asked Solicitor Karpowich if they can do a set back requirement for the chicken farms and pig farms like they did in Lehman Township. He elaborated on the situation that happened with Lehman Township with the Solar farms. Solicitor Karpowich said that we have 150ft now for setbacks and we can do more, however, anything we do for a CAFO, we must do for the entire Agricultural operation.

Jamie Walsh then asked how many people were served at the Food Pantry and was really impressed at the good work the food pantry does for the people. He concluded by saying that Black Creek Township is going to be a lot of work for him and he knows that he won Black Creek Township by only one vote, but he said he is looking forward to working with everyone on everything. Mr. Walsh also mentioned that he is going to be having a round table meeting with different townships in the Northern Tier during the winter months and the Southern Tier sometime in March.

Supervisor Yacowatz added that they will be having a Special meeting specifically for the Zoning Ordinance to listen to everyone's concerns and opinions and may not adopt it just yet then either.

Two other residents Linda Yurish and Penny from Red Rock Road had a concern about possible surveying for solar farming in the township on land around her property. Supervisor Cheesman stated that he heard a rumor that Sugarloaf Township might have wrapped up on allowing it, however, the decision of the entire project relies on our decision. Solicitor Karpowich added that there would be a public hearing on that decision regarding Solar farming on the land because Ms. Yurish was concerned about how she would know about the hearing. Jamie Walsh added that he fought this in 5 other Townships and so far, he is 5 and 0. He said that if it comes here, he will be here too to fight it.

Supervisor Feerrar asked if there were any other comments.

Dr. Saura Rohrbach, from Hilltop Drive, had a question about the financial report from last month's meeting. It was \$7,821.00 for repairs spent on the Chevy at SJM. She inquired as to what happened to it and what bridge. Supervisors Yacowatz and Cheesman informed her of that information. She then inquired if there will be a check from the insurance to cover the costs. The Supervisors were unsure, at the moment. However, Supervisor Yacowatz assured her that a claim was filed with the insurance. She, then, had a comment about the livestock and chicken ordinance they went over last year. Solicitor Karpowich responded and discussion followed on what was already there in the ordinance and what was changed. The stand-alone ordinances were untouched and left alone. Miss Rohrbach concluded with a comment on the financial report to Supervisor Feerrar to which a discussion ensued.

Darlene Morgan, from Weston, had a comment on the financial reports asking if there could be a special meeting to go over the finances over the last 4 years. Supervisor Feerrar told her that he can show her everything she needs to see.

Carolyn Morgan, from Hilltop Drive, expressed concern about how people came to the meeting with claws out and how misinformation was given to these people on social media. She stated that the Supervisors are here to try to help and it is disheartening to see the hate that is spread on social media. The Supervisors agreed with that statement, to which Supervisor Cheesman stated that a perfect example was Mr. Joe Dretzel clarifying everything with Solicitor Karpowich with the keeping of pigs.

Supervisor Yacowatz concluded the meeting thanking everyone for coming out and that it was a really good meeting with everyone. He reminded everyone that the Supervisors are working in everyone's favor.

The next regular monthly meeting will take place on Thursday December 12th at 6:00PM

Adjournment: A *motion* to adjourn the meeting at 7:37 p.m.

A motion by Supervisor Yacowatz.

Seconded by Supervisor Cheesman.

All in favor: Yes.