

Board of Supervisors

MINUTES
April 22, 2025

MEETING HELD AT PASSER COMMUNITY CENTER

Supervisors' Present: Bill Ryker, Pete Kade, Jim Hopkins, Dave Long and Lorna Yearwood.

Also present: Rich Pursell (Township Manager), Scott MacNair, Esq. (Township Solicitor), & Michael McDonald (Chief of Police).

Mr. Kade called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Executive session regarding litigation matters will be held after the public meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Jim Nilsen (UBREMS Representative) addressed concerns raised in a recent Township statement regarding UBREMS EMS funding and coverage. Clarified UBREMS covers 92% of Springfield Township geographically, citing county data, disputing the 65% figure mentioned in the statement. He noted communication with the county confirmed different interpretations of the data. Highlighted the high call volume to a specific nursing home (Valley Manor) affects statistics but reassigning was the right decision for residents. Expressed concern that the Township's statement was misleading and potentially influenced other municipalities. Stressed the importance of the service, rising costs, and the need for continued support, advocating for a two-station model. Mentioned Springfield's historical leadership in funding but proposed a per-resident funding model for all municipalities UBREMS serves. Stated other municipalities were assuming Springfield's support was a "done deal," which is not UBREMS' impression.

Mr. Hopkins' response acknowledged satisfaction with UBREMS' service quality and stated the focus is on financial data to move forward, emphasizing open communication. Proposed allowing UBREMS to post a statement on the Township website/Facebook to show ongoing dialogue.

Bruce Whitesell (Resident) expressed appreciation of the public discussion on the critical issue and the positive communication he observed between the Township and UBREMS.

Anthony Mills (UBREMS President) reiterated that county data confirms UBREMS is first-due in 91-92% of the Springfield area they serve. Mentioned cost-saving initiatives UBREMS has undertaken (reducing overtime, bringing subscription process in-house, online payments, new billing system). Explained the subscription service (\$75 individual, \$100 family) helps residents cover co-pays/deductibles not covered by insurance. Clarified the budget deficit and the need for increased municipal contributions for 2026, noting a loan is needed to sustain operations through 2025. Mentioned a grant is expected May 1st. Stated four municipalities (Durham, Riegelsville, Bridgeton, Nockamixon) have agreed to the proposed funding model. Highlighted the frequency of needing both ambulances simultaneously (ALS calls, transports).

Tim Southern (Resident/Paramedic/UBREMS Board Member) expressed support for the two-station model, emphasizing the need for two paramedics on critical calls like cardiac arrests. Stated that while mutual aid is good, having the second ambulance closer (10 vs 30 minutes) is crucial. Explained lower insurance reimbursement percentages compared to urban services are due to lower call volume in rural areas, but the reimbursement per transport is comparable.

Mr. Ryker noted the proposed contribution for two stations (\$187,177) is more than double the current contribution (\$85,000). Suggested recognizing the value of the Township by providing the station facility.

Nick Radford (Resident): Stressed the vital importance of EMS, comparing it to needing heat in winter, and urged the board to find the necessary funding, acknowledging the tax burden but emphasizing the need for the service. Appreciated the board's service.

Mr. Hopkins discussed the complexities of funding, including tax limits, the differences between per capita vs. mileage-based funding, the limitations of state legislation on tax rates, and the challenges of using municipal authorities. Emphasized the need for continued communication and education.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. Kade stated the financial report and balances are posted.

Motion made by Mr. Ryker, seconded by Ms. Yearwood and unanimously carried, approving the financial report as presented.

Fund Balances as of February 28, 2025

General Fund	\$1,157,433	Capital Reserve CD	\$237,000
General Fund Reserve	\$312,056	Liquid Fuels Fund	\$368,741
General Fund CD	\$237,000	Liquid Fuels CD	\$236,000
Escrow Fund	\$997,812	Open Space Fund	\$818,866
Street Light Fund	\$1,473	Open Space CD	\$237,000
Dedicated Fire Tax Fund	\$57,434	Act 537 Escrows	\$88,597
Capital Reserve Fund	\$1,062,086	Dedicated EMS Tax Fund	\$2,299

Payment of Bills

(March 16, 2025 – April 15, 2025)

General Fund	\$82,894.91	Escrow Fund	\$4,747.65
PLGIT Credit Card	\$1,715.13	Dedicated EMS Fund	\$0
Liquid Fuels Fund	\$0	Dedicated Fire Fund	\$0
Capital Reserve Fund	\$45,908.81	Open Space Fund	\$42.14
Street Light Fund	\$573.82		

Motion made by Mr. Ryker, seconded by Ms. Yearwood, and unanimously approved the payment of bills from March 16, 2025 – April 15, 2025.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Mr. Hopkins, seconded by Mr. Ryker and unanimously carried approving the March 25, 2025, meeting minutes, as presented.

BUSINESS ITEMS

Ratification of Part-Time Administrative Position – Motion by Mr. Hopkins, seconded by Mr. Kade, and unanimously carried to ratify the offer to Kelli Mackey for the Part-Time Administrative Assistant position at \$25/hour.

Request for Fire Police - Quakertown Borough – Motion by Mr. Hopkins, seconded by Mr. Ryker, and unanimously carried to authorize the fire police request for Quakertown's Memorial Day parade on May 26th.

Consideration of Opening CDs - Four CDs mature on May 16th. Recommendation to renew/fund up to near the \$250k FDIC limit, likely around \$239k based on current rates (approx. 4.4%). Decision not to open additional CDs from the Open Space fund currently but potentially revisit in 3-4 months.

Motion by Mr. Hopkins, seconded by Mr. Kade, and unanimously carried to authorize renewing the four CDs as recommended.

Consideration of Awarding 2025 Road Project Bid - Bid includes base roads (Salem Rd, Quarry Rd, Hickory Ln, Magargee Ln) and an alternate for Kunsman Rd seal coating. Kunsman Rd was last done in 2015 and is a good candidate for preservation. Doing the alternate now is considered wise given potential future cost increases and road tax uncertainties.

Motion by Mr. Hopkins, seconded by Ms. Yearwood, and unanimously carried to accept the bid from Asphalt Maintenance Solutions (implied low bidder) including the base bid and the alternate for a total of \$226,199.54.

Discussion on Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) Ordinance - Solicitor presented a draft ordinance amendment (updating existing H1 Accessory Apartment use) based on Planning Commission work. Key points: allow 1 ADU per lot (single-family or townhouse), owner occupancy required (in principal or ADU), size limits ($\leq 30\%$ of principal or 800 sq ft, max 2 bed/1 bath), parking requirements, registration required. Currently proposed to exclude existing homes in HC/PI districts. Potential inconsistency noted: draft allows ADU without a kitchen, but ordinance definition of "dwelling unit" requires cooking facilities. Question raised about excluding twin/village houses. Clarified ADUs can be attached, detached, or internal. Tiny houses could fit if they have a foundation.

Motion by Mr. Long, seconded by Mr. Kade, approved with one opposed (Mr. Ryker) to authorize the Solicitor to send the draft ADU ordinance to the Springfield Township Planning Commission and the Bucks County Planning Commission for review and comment.

Discussion on Township Memorialization Policy - Solicitor presented cleaned-up Resolution 2025-4 based on a prior unadopted draft. Policy covers memorials (trees, benches, monuments) on Township-owned property (parks, facilities, rail trail) requiring supervisor approval. Discussion ensued regarding the section prohibiting ad-hoc memorials in road rights-of-way. Consensus was reached to remove this section as the policy only applies to Township-owned property. Two Park benches are currently in stock; more may be ordered for rail trail requests.

Motion by Mr. Hopkins, seconded by Mr. Ryker, and unanimously carried to approve Resolution 2025-4 with the removal of the section regarding memorials in road rights-of-way.

Award of Engineering Firm for MAP Grant Study - RFP issued for study of villages and Route 309 corridor funded by MAP grant (\$50k grant, \$50k Township match). Three firms submitted, one incomplete. Two interviewed. Unanimous recommendation to select Gilmore and Associates. Firm is local and familiar with the Township. Study will provide research and legwork for water/sewer needs and future solutions.

Motion by Mr. Hopkins, seconded by Mr. Kade, and unanimously carried to approve the contract with Gilmore and Associates to begin the study, not to exceed \$100,000.

Discussion on PPL Hickon Road Substation Site - Revisited PPL's obligation from a PUC settlement to convey a "substantial portion" (proposed ~54 acres) of the Hickon Rd substation site to the Township. Plan shows natural resource constraints (wetlands, buffers, power line right-of-way) and PPL retains rights for future transmission lines and requires Township maintenance of a buffer zone. Significant concerns exist about the feasibility and cost (\$13k+ subdivision) of developing the site, even for a cell tower, due to setbacks and restrictions. A cell company (Diamond Communications) expressed interest.

The board agreed to have the interested party (Diamond) perform the initial feasibility/engineering analysis before the Township commits to subdivision costs. Lorna will reach out to Diamond, providing the prior subdivision plan and the PPL letter outlining restrictions. PPL's obligation to convey is still valid per the PUC order.

The consensus of the Board was to wait for additional information before a decision could be made.

Discussion on Springtown Water Authority Grant Application Support - Springtown Water Authority (SWA) is applying for a PA Small Water & Sewer Grant (due April 30th) for system improvements. Project includes utilizing Well #2 (at Fire Station) for fire protection/emergency water supply for the region, looping pipes, increasing hydrant access, and adding a generator at the well site. This aligns with Township Emergency Management goals and comprehensive plan. A letter of support from the Township is needed for the grant. One map piece is still needed from the Authority's engineer. Gilmore & Associates (newly hired) is familiar with this grant program.

Motion by Mr. Hopkins, seconded by Mr. Kade, and unanimously carried to authorize the Township Manager to send the drafted letter of support to SWA and authorize up to \$500 for Gilmore & Associates to assist with grant review/submittal if needed, should the final map not arrive promptly.

REPORTS / COMMENTS

Zoning - Report posted

Police

- Received 5 radar boards from a \$27k grant; submitted for final grant payment.
- Received a small mini-grant check from the county.
- Planning to build small trailers for 2 of the 7 total radar boards to allow for more flexible placement, estimating \$2k each vs. \$11k quote for commercial trailers. A resident donation is anticipated to cover costs.
- A grant application for police vehicles is pending.
- High speeds (90+ mph) still being recorded on Route 212.

Fire & EMS - Covered extensively during public comment.

Roads - Report posted

Solicitor - Two litigation matters require executive session.

OTHER BOARD COMMENTS

Planning Commission - Continuing to work on the scenic overlay

Parks & Recreation - Member (Jerry) is traveling. PLPB has open positions, no quorum available for last meeting.

Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) - Full board (5 members), Laura Gardner is the new Chair, Mike Clime is Vice Chair.

CORRESPONDENCE

None mentioned

PUBLIC COMMENT

None offered

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Ms. Yearwood - An Emergency Management meeting needs to be scheduled; Tony is available Wed evenings. Noted a relevant session at the upcoming PSATS conference on Sunday morning.

Mr. Ryker - Reminded everyone of the Richlandtown Fire Company (Shelly Station) Cheesesteak Night fundraiser on Friday, April 25th.

Mr. Hopkins - No further comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. Hopkins, seconded by Ms. Yearwood, and unanimously carried to adjourn the public meeting at 9:10 PM

EXECUTIVE SESSION

To be held following the public meeting to discuss litigation matters.

Respectfully submitted,



Rich Pursell
Township Manager