

THE TOBYHANNA TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
Work Session Notes  
June 5, 2017

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The work session was called to order by Anne Lamberton at 8:00 a.m. in the meeting room of the Tobyhanna Township Municipal Building, 105 Government Center Way, Pocono Pines, PA.

Present were Supervisors Anne Lamberton, Brendon Carroll, Heidi A. Pickard, John Kerrick. John Holahan III participated via speaker telephone. Also in attendance were Solicitor Jonathan Reiss, Esquire, Township Manager John Jablowski Jr, and Zoning Officer Maureen Minnick.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

1. **Solicitor Report** - Will resend the email containing the amendments to the 3,000-square foot commercial land development zoning and SALDO amendments.
  
2. **Old Business**
  - A. **T.T.B.A. update**-Tobyhanna Township Business Association John Jablowski presents that the T.T.B.A. is now incorporated and had its first mixer on May 18<sup>th</sup> which was well attended. The T.T.B.A. has a nine-member board that welcomes all, and has several things planned for the summer. Mr. Jablowski acknowledges that seven small businesses have opened in Tobyhanna Township since October 2016.
  
  - B. **Proposed Sign Ordinance**

Anne Lamberton summarizes to the public in attendance the history of the sign ordinance that is being discussed. Ms. Lamberton explains that a committee was formed and worked diligently, meeting a few times a week over the past six months to draft a proposed sign ordinance.

Ms. Lamberton explains that there is consideration of a resort overlay near the interstate where digital would be allowed. The Board's main objective is to clean up the corridor along 940 and 115. Discussion takes place regarding electronic signs versus electronic billboards. Ms. Lamberton states that the committee worked so hard to put together an ordinance that would restrict the digital signs that would be allowed.

Maureen Minnick clarifies the difference between a digital billboard (an off-premise sign along 940) and a digital sign (freestanding, on premise sign).

Question arises about the trucks that have signs on them. Ms. Minnick answers that they are called vehicle signs and are allowed depending on the use.

Question arises whether a digital sign can change to show products offered at a place of business, etc. Jonathan Reiss answers that it is okay if it is a product that the place of business uses.

General discussion takes place about the cost of digital signs, the maximum size limitations of signs based on the square foot of business and the setbacks that are currently in place.

Brendon Carroll urges everyone to go on the township website and read the proposed ordinance. He suggests that the committee took substantial time in consideration of the effects of the digital sign.

Discussion continues about the comparison of brightness between street lights, interior lit signs, signs with spotlights and digital signs.

Maureen Minnick explains that internally lit signs can have all colors but the digital signs are restricted in color.

Discussion from public takes place suggesting that Tobyhanna Township should keep with the natural surroundings, small country town feeling that has existed there for years and years. Be unique and don't change a thing.

Mr. Jablowski explains that it is the intention of the Board to continue to foster a natural, small town feel however it is important to work with international developers to bring tax revenue and to do so there are some negotiations we must make. There must be some compromise to grow and encourage business and jobs but at the same time we don't want to become like other commercial areas close by.

Question arises if there is a maintenance requirement within the proposed ordinance for all signs. Mr. Carroll answers yes

there is. Mr. Jablowski adds that signs that are already existing that are nonconforming are grandfathered in but they must comply with maintenance requirements.

Question arises if portable digital signs are allowed. Mr. Jablowski answers that portable digital signs are only used for the needs of public safety and that in a case of emergency, all digital signs must be made available for emergency management.

Comment from the public suggests the Board consider a “dark sky” ordinance going forward.

Comment from the public suggests contacting Daktronics to get a digital light to show as an example.

Heidi Pickard states that while the board is trying to create some village overlays to create this quaint feel throughout the communities, adding digital signs seems counterintuitive. Suggests relooking at the village idea and reconsider the plans.

Comment from the public that instead of zoning policies there should be “good neighbor” policies.

Request from the public that the T.T.B.A. make some recommendations regarding whether it would be for or against the allowance of digital sign, as well as other comments they would have on this issue.

Anne Lamberton reiterates Brendon Carroll’s suggestion that the public read the proposed ordinance that is available on the Township’s website and welcomes any comments from the public.

Maureen Minnick comments that there are businesses waiting for this ordinance to become effective before they put up their signage, and it seems unfair to keep delaying them. Also suggests adding an entertainment district to accommodate them. Anne Lamberton asks Ms. Minnick to create a map with boundary of what she would consider the entertainment district to be. Ms. Minnick agrees.

3. **New Business**

- A. **Pocono Park Concept Plan - Pennoni Proposal**
- B. **Pocono Pines Concept Plan - Pennoni Proposal**
- C. **Capital Plan for funds received from Sale of WWTP**

All new business was tabled for the next meeting.

4. **Department Updates**

A. **Public Works**

Ed Tutrone presented that he contacted Hugh at Kalahari and walked through the Sewer District 1; Kalahari pump station and there were some maintenance issues that need to be corrected and once that is done the alarms should stop. Also recommends changing out the floats due to age.

Mr. Tutrone also comments that the bridge on Locust Ridge Road is open now. Finishing base repair being done and will start paving next week to be done by June 30<sup>th</sup>.

B. **Zoning**

Maureen Minnick discusses the joint board of appeals for building code which consists of Tobyhanna Township and a few other local townships. In order to have a hearing, it has to consist of 5 votes plus an alternate present at the meeting. Currently there are two votes from Tobyhanna, two from Paradise and an alternate, Tunkhannock is going to address. Ms. Minnick requests another alternate from Tobyhanna and Brendon Carroll volunteers. Ms. Minnick advises that once the seats are filled she would like to have a meeting to appoint Committee Solicitor, Chair, Co-Chair, et cetera. Mr. Reiss raises some questions with the writing of the intermunicipal agreement. Mr. Jablowski asks Ms. Minnick to forward a copy of the agreement to himself and Mr. Reiss. Ms. Minnick agrees.

C. **Finance**

Heidi Pickard requests the Board to approve payment of \$100,000 on the sewer plant. Board approves.

D. **Pocono Lions Club & Monroe County Historical Society**

John Jablowski requests the Board to approve contribution of \$100 to Pocono Lions Club and \$250 to the Monroe County Historical Society. Board approves.

**E. Task Tracker**

John Kerrick asks to add the task tracker to the work session agenda in the future.

5. **Public Comment** - None.
6. Meeting adjourned at 9:54 a.m.

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Notes recorded by Debra S. Jean.