

Chairperson, Mark Petros, on Wednesday, October 19, 2022 at 7:00pm, called the Regular Meeting of the Sewickley Township Board of Supervisors to order as advertised in the Tribune Review on Thursday, January 6, 2022. The members of the Board of Supervisors present were Mark Petros, Linda Harvey, and Bill Dull. Also attending the meeting were Tom Methven, Solicitor Lee Demosky, and Susan Leukhardt.

Mark Petros led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **Report of Township General Fund Accounts, Susan Leukhardt**

<b>Account</b>	<b>Beginning Balance</b>	<b>Deposits / Interest</b>	<b>Transfers / Payments</b>	<b>Ending Balance</b>
<b>SEPTEMBER, 2022</b>				
FNB General Fund	\$ 59,063.07	\$ 111,580.03	\$ 65,664.34	\$ 104,978.76
PLGIT General Fund	\$ 340,073.94	\$ 55,599.77	-0-	\$ 395,673.71
FNB Reserve Account	\$ 142,275.47	\$ 302,118.52	\$ 300,142.92	\$ 144,251.07

#### **Report from Public Works Director, Tom Methven**

Patching potholes are being done as complaints come in. Now that we have moved to a project first schedule, we will patch holes during inclement weather or breakdowns.

Right-Of-Way mowing is still occurring on the roads. If you see the tractor mowing, PLEASE slow down and pass when possible, with care. If you own trees, especially decorative trees that have grown out over the side of the road, please trim them back. Larger vehicles need clearance for height and mirrors. We are trimming back bushes and trees this year so progress is taking longer than past years. Please be patient. If your road hasn't been mowed yet, he will get there. Next month, after most of the leaves are off, we will begin trimming back trees to limit the amount of damage to our trucks when we are plowing and spreading this winter.

Theft of street signs is still a problem. If you notice a STOP sign down or damaged, please call the Public Works Department immediately. We want to get those replaced as soon as possible. We have been re-setting the same STOP sign every few weeks at the intersection of Curry and Cool Springs Roads. Having a STOP sign there is in the public's interest to avoid a vehicle collision and whomever thinks it shouldn't be there should just leave it alone. It has become a drag on Township resources to continually work on it. The cost of sign supplies this month have gone up \$10-\$20 per item depending on what we order.

12-inch and 24-inch cross drainpipes were replaced on 8<sup>th</sup> Street in Hermine. These pipes were found deficient during the gas lines excavation. 8<sup>th</sup> Street was closed for a week for the large pipe replacement and was completed on schedule.

The Columbia Gas Line Replacement project in Hermine is in progress. This will last until the end of next month while NPL crews are working in phases to update the gas lines. Please be patient and aware there will be daylight street closures and flaggers during the length of the project.

The new contractors have started the residential gas line tap-in installation. This will require the crews shutting your gas service off then checking your homes for gas leaks and re-lighting pilot lights. They have started on Wilps Drive and Meadow and will be working up the path to the Recreation Center. They will follow the same path as the main line installation.

If you walk in Crabapple Park, please use caution the next couple weeks. A contractor working for the Municipal Authority of Westmoreland County will be installing a new pump and sewage line at the pavilion bathrooms. The new line will run across the lower walking trail. Then uphill along the lower road and up to the main park road. It will

continue along the main road to approximately where the dumpster is then down the bank across the lower parking lot the into the main sewage line. Please watch for open ditch lines and tripping hazards.

Please slow down and drive through our work areas with caution.

### **Report from Recreation Director, Chad Albert**

#### **Introduction:** Chad Albert, Sewickley Township Parks & Recreation Director

- Experience running facilities (skating rink) from everyday maintenance to running programs. This is my fourth week on the job. I've been working with Janet Schork, former Recreation Director. I will oversee the pool, parks, and recreation center. Here to serve the residents. Lots of loose screws identified. Have been making small improvements at the park. Recently hired assistant Justin.

#### **Crabapple Pool:**

- Once Fall baseball, soccer, and football conclude at the end of October, water can be turned off and we can finish facility winterizing at the pool, park, and ballfields.
- The last day that Crabapple Park will be open to vehicular traffic is October 31st. However, the park is open year-round for fishing, to walkers, runners, and pets (on leash) from 8:00am to dusk. We ask that cars do not block park gates in case of an emergency.
- Parking is available at the ball-field lot (across from H.W. Good Elementary School).

#### **Recreation Center:**

- I am currently accepting reservations for the 2022-2023 gym season at the Recreation Center – residents first, then non-resident reservations.
- Most weekday evenings are filled as well as our returning morning senior groups.

#### **Fitness Classes:**

- Reminder that we offer P90X, STEP, and Body Sculpt classes at the Recreation Center on Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday mornings. Yoga classes Wednesday nights, CPR/AED classes every 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month. Full schedule is available on the Township website.

#### **Trunk-or-Treat:**

- The Sewickley Township Library and the Sewickley Township Parks & Rec Department hosted our Trunk-or-Treat last Saturday, October 15<sup>th</sup> at Crabapple Park. We had over thirty (30) volunteers decorate their vehicles and over 140 children registered to trick-or-treat from car to car. Volunteers from the Sewickley Library and Recreation Committee helped decorate the pavilion and handed out free hot chocolate, hot dogs, and candy to all participants.

#### **Other:**

- The Recreation Committee's next planned event will be the Father Daughter Dance in February. Date to be announced.
- Monday, Wednesday, and Friday's are my business hours. Tuesday and Thursday's available by appointment.

### **Public Comment on Agenda Items**

Rick Critchfield asked about Township Manager motion. Why do we elect three Township Supervisors to do a job then you want to hire someone at \$52,000 a year to do the job for you?

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

Linda Harvey made a motion, seconded by Mark Petros, to approve the minutes of the Sewickley Township Board of Supervisors Regular Meeting held on Wednesday, August 17, 2022. Voting: Mr. Dull, Mr. Petros, Mrs. Harvey; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Mark Petros made a motion, seconded by Linda Harvey, to disburse 2021 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	\$ 311.74

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

Linda Harvey made a motion, seconded by Mark Petros, to disburse 2021 EMS Tax funds on behalf of Rillton Volunteer Fire Company as follows:

Schulte's Towing & Repair – inspection & repairs on quint 14	\$ 4,607.26
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Voting: Mr. Dull, Mr. Petros, Mrs. Harvey; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Linda Harvey made a motion, seconded by Mark Petros, to enact Ordinance 6-2022 establishing No On-Street Parking on New Block Drive, Township Route No. 540. Voting: Mr. Dull, Mr. Petros, Mrs. Harvey; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Bill Dull made a motion, seconded by Mark Petros, to adopt Resolution 31-2022 approving the RWS Office Building Resolution for Plan Revision for New Development and the accompanying letter of transmittal. This was recommended and approved by Mike Stack, Building, Sewage, and Zoning Officer. Voting: Mr. Dull, Mr. Petros, Mrs. Harvey; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Linda Harvey made a motion, seconded by Mark Petros, to adopt Resolution 32-2022 implementing Act 57 of 2022. Act 57 requires taxing districts that impose taxes on the assessed value of real property to adopt a resolution directing the Tax Collector to waive additional charges for real estate taxes in certain situations. Board Comments: Mrs. Harvey explained that this has to deal with deed transfers. Voting: Mr. Dull, Mr. Petros, Mrs. Harvey; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Linda Harvey made a motion, seconded by Mark Petros, to adopt Resolution 33-2022 whereas the Township is desirous of adopting Consultant Selection Procedures including a designated selection committee consisting of a minimum of three (3) people based on requirements set forth by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, to advertise for an engineer of record for a five (5) year period. Voting: Mr. Dull, Mr. Petros, Mrs. Harvey; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Linda Harvey made a motion, seconded by Mark Petros, to prepare and advertise an Ordinance to confirm Sewickley Township's abandonment of Wren Lane referenced during a public meeting held December 11, 1975. Voting: Mr. Dull, Mr. Petros, Mrs. Harvey; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Linda Harvey made a motion, seconded by Mark Petros, to approve the Public Works Director to proceed with preparation and issuance of a request for quotations to purchase a 2023 half ton pick-up work truck for the Parks and Recreation Department for maintenance work. Voting: Mr. Dull, Mr. Petros, Mrs. Harvey; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Mark Petros made a motion, seconded by Bill Dull, to purchase Bituminous Stockpile Patching material (cold mix) through Hei-Way, LLC which is also through the COSTARS program. Voting: Mr. Dull, Mr. Petros, Mrs. Harvey; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Linda Harvey made a motion, seconded by Mark Petros, to adopt Resolution 34-2022 acknowledging the receipt of the Minimum Municipal Obligation for the non-uniformed pension plan in the amount of \$35,876.00 and incorporate the amount into the 2023 General Fund budget as the State Aid Pension payment and the Township payment to the Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System. Voting: Mr. Dull, Mr. Petros, Mrs. Harvey; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Mark Petros made a motion, seconded by Bill Dull, to terminate the code enforcement agreement with K2 Engineering effective October 13, 2022. Voting: Mr. Dull, Mr. Petros, Mrs. Harvey; yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion to ratify the advertisement for a full time Township Manager with a salary up to \$52,000 per year. No motion made.

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

**General Fund:**

Checks 12791 to 12819 - \$ 79,243.83 (10/3/22)

First Energy - \$ 39.55 (10/11/22)

MAWC - \$ 62.79 (10/18/22)

**ACH Payments:**

First Energy (8 payments) - \$ 601.41 (9/28/22)

S & T Loan - \$ 2,487.28 (9/30/22)

Columbia Gas - \$ 35.74 (10/3/22)

**Act 13:**

Checks 1143 to 1145 - \$ 3,359.05 (10/4/22)

**Crabapple:**

Checks 4959 to 4961 - \$ 903.55 (10/3/22)

Credit Card Machine - \$ 26.36 (10/11/22)

**ACH Payments:** First Energy - \$ 246.03 (9/28/22)

First Energy - \$ 19.20 (9/28/22)

First Energy - \$ 111.53 (10/11/22)

First Energy - \$ 92.42 (10/11/22)

**Payroll / Paychex ACH Liabilities:**

Paychex - \$ 129.15 (9/23/22)

Paychex - \$ 132.80 (9/30/22)

Paychex - \$ 170.75 (10/7/22)

Paychex - \$ 153.10 (10/14/22)

Payroll Liabilities - \$ 2,445.82 (9/23/22)

Payroll Liabilities - \$ 2,476.38 (9/30/22)

Payroll Liabilities - \$ 3,056.02 (10/7/22)

Payroll Liabilities - \$ 3,037.87 (10/14/22)

**Recreation:**

Check 2980 - \$ 173.72 (10/3/22)

Columbia Gas - \$ 46.08 (10/3/22)

**ACH Payments:** First Energy - \$ 21.25 (9/26/22)

First Energy - \$ 302.75 (9/28/22)

First Energy - \$ 12.63 (9/28/22)

**Street Light / Fire Hydrant:**

**ACH Payments:** First Energy - \$ 2,103.85 (10/7/22)

First Energy - \$ 570.90 (10/7/22)

First Energy - \$ 359.14 (10/7/22)

MAWC - \$ 3,038.50 (10/17/22)

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

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

**Employees Payroll:**    09/30/22 - \$ 8,901.83  
                                     10/07/22 - \$ 11,490.48  
                                     10/14/22 - \$ 10,849.71

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

### **General Public Comment**

Nancy Bickus-Neel – She was recently appointed to the SSMSA Board and had her first meeting in September. She was not informed that the October meeting was cancelled. She apologized to those who tried to attend. She asked the Solicitor if the Board of Supervisors only have authority to appoint/remove members of the Sewage Board. Solicitor Demosky confirmed that was the case. They have no authority over rates. At the first meeting, a lot of residents expressed concerns over the sewage rates. She called twelve (12) municipalities in Westmoreland County to see if their rates were comparable with the Township resident rates. On June 3, 2022, residents were notified that rates went from \$58 to \$63 per month and were allowed at that time a minimum of 2,000 gallons before they were being charged. Anything above that went from eased from \$6 to \$8 per 1,000, a 9.5% increase in their sewage bills. In October, 2022, residents were notified rates went up from \$63 to \$80 per month and the minimum amount of sewage was eliminated. This was another 25% increase from the previous increase. Total increase for 2022 was 40% in a short period of time. She then provided the Board of Supervisors with a spreadsheet.

SSMSA has 492 customers who pay \$80 per month plus usage. Of the twelve (12) municipalities reviewed, SSMSA has the least amount of customers. Any extra cost is divided by that amount of customers. More customers should have been involved in the sewage. Most other municipalities have 2,000 to 10,000 customers so incurred costs are covered over a larger spectrum of people. A lot of others are charged flat rates such as Derry Township. New construction in that area pay for those lines directly. The municipality is billed quarterly rates and are still lower than SSMSA. We have the highest per gallon usage - \$9 for one gallon of sewage. Most of the others have their own sewage plants. Only two others have to outsource. Having own plant keeps cost down. Of the twelve, six have commercial rates where businesses are charged more than residents. SSMSA does not do that.

Residents asked Ms. Bickus-Neel questions regarding the SSMSA situation and multiple discussions were held.

A resident asked if it is possible to build our own sewage plant in Scott Haven. Solicitor Demosky suggested that the residents attend the SSMSA meetings. To build a plant is a major undertaking and extremely expensive.

Another asked how long a term runs on the SSMSA Board. Mr. Petros responded five (5) years. Mrs. Harvey added that there are six (6) members on the SSMSA Board. Sewickley Township Board of Supervisors can appoint three (3) of these positions. Sutersville Borough can appoint the other three (3). We currently have positions available so please submit a letter of interest to the Township for consideration. If there is not a quorum, that Authority can not meet.

Mark Ghion gave a detailed account of when he was appointed to the Authority. They originally looked at having one sewage plant, but they were not permitted to build there due to an endangered plant. The engineering firm started doing drawings, ground testing, and soil samples in the area encompassing Lowber, Gratztown, top of Sutersville Hill, etc. Some watersheds were not included because it was too expensive to run plumbing to one or two homes. They finally found a place the engineers thought was a suitable location. This was the Scott Haven property. They bought enough acreage to handle a sewage treatment plan and any possible expansion. Once the drawings were done, engineers came up with a number for public bid. The lowest bid was \$4M over budget. An economic study was performed, and it was noted that the area is relatively low-income residents. They set a limit of what residents could afford. If it was above that, they would abandon the project. It was ultimately determined that it was too expensive. They thought about going to West Newton, but they couldn't accept us because their plant is older, and they didn't have the capacity. Also proposed to go across the river into Rostraver, also neglected. Other option was with Elizabeth Township. They had just finished an expansion and said they would be able to accept Sutersville.

Multiple discussions were held between the residents regarding SSMSA.

Donna Fontanesi lives on Chopp Street. Her house is located very near Sutersville firehall. She proceeded to read a statement supporting Sutersville being the first responder to her home in an event of an emergency. She is asking the Supervisors to readvertise the Ordinance and voting in favor of it.

Daryl Dermotta asked about the motion to purchase a half ton pickup work truck for Parks and Recreation. Mr. Petros stated previous recreation employees used their own vehicles and turned mileage in. It would be used in the park and all playgrounds for mulch, garbage, etc.

Dean Komlenic asked for an update on Tomajko Road. Solicitor Demosky stated that it is in litigation and a monthly report is provided to the Supervisors. Westinghouse has two pending lawsuits against the Township and MAWC. The Township is represented by its insurance company which has assigned an attorney to the pending case. That attorney has hired a professional civil engineer to conduct an analysis of the hillside. A complaint has not yet been filed with that docket at this point, only the writ of summons. You're not going to see any repairs any time soon.

Tom Couch asked about the motion regarding the engineer of record for five (5) years. Mr. Methven explained that this is for our bridge inspections. We must state our committee, advertise, and receive proposals and PennDOT must approve this through their ECMS website.

Jamie Dubinsky lives on Chopp Street and spoke in favor of Sutersville VFD. They are extremely qualified and wishes the Ordinance be placed back on the agenda.

Paula DeClaudio spoke for her aunt who lives on Brunazzi Road. Thank you to the Supervisors and Road Crew for always making sure the road is open. She is home-bound and has family and nurses caring for her. The Road Crew has done an excellent job whether it's for a tree across the road or snow removal. Her family is very grateful.

Rich Critchfield asked what is going on with the possible new Recreation Center and Dollar General, both in Rillton.

Mark Ghion spoke about Lowber failing their ISO rating in 2017. He found out by his homeowner's insurance policy which had doubled. In addition, we are now paying so much for sewage. Think about the issues from the resident's perspective. It always comes down to money. It came up here with the sewage. When we signed the petition, they knew that their tax money was going to the Township, and they knew where they wanted the money to go. Background checks: Why is the Township allowing convicted felons in our fire companies and to have access to our tax dollars? Also, firetrucks are crashing on their way to and from the fire incidents. Why would you deny the residents the opportunity to reduce their homeowner's insurance by allowing Sutersville Fire Company serve them?

## **Old / New Business**

Sewickley Township has been awarded \$187,590.00 through the Westmoreland County Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. These funds will be used for Phase 1 Stormwater Improvements in the Rillton area.

The Sewickley Township Supervisors would like to remind all people who live and work within the Township that our storm sewer inlets, curbs and gutters, drainage ditches, and storm pipes discharge directly and untreated into the Youghiogheny River, Sewickley Creek, Little Sewickley Creek, and other natural waterways within the Township. In order to keep our rivers, streams, and lakes clean, we remind residents and businesses not to discard leaves onto the street, into the storm drains, streams, or other waterways. Clean up after your pet. Don't let pet waste get washed into the street or down the storm drain. Together, we can protect and preserve the streams, lakes, and rivers in our community.

Board openings within the Township... Sutersville-Sewickley Municipal Sewage Authority and Township Auditor. Please send letters of interest to the Sewickley Township Municipal Building for consideration.

The next Regular Meeting of the Board of Supervisors will be held on Wednesday, November 16, 2022 at 7:00pm.

An Executive Session is being held following this meeting to discuss personnel matters.

With no further business to come before the Board, Linda Harvey made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mark Petros. Voting: Mr. Petros, yes; Mrs. Harvey, yes; Mr. Dull, yes. Meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

Susan D. Leukhardt  
Secretary-Treasurer