

The agenda meeting of the Northampton Township Board of Supervisors was held at 6:00 p.m.

Present were:

Adam M. Selisker
Paula Gasper
Dr. Kimberly Rose
Robert Salzer
Joseph Pizzo
Amanda Fuller
Robert M. Pellegrino
William Wert

Agenda items were reviewed and discussed.

The regular business meeting of the Northampton Township Board of Supervisors was called to order at 7:03 pm. Members of the Board present were:

Adam M. Selisker
Barry Moore
Paula Gasper
Dr. Kimberly Rose
Robert M. Salzer

Members absent were:

Barry Moore

Others present were:

Robert M. Pellegrino, Township Manager
Amanda Fuller, Township Engineer
Joseph Pizzo, Township Solicitor
William Wert, Assistant Manager

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/MOMENT OF SILENCE

Chairman Selisker led the Pledge of Allegiance and held a moment of silence in support of the military, and emergency service personnel.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None was heard.

CONSENT ITEMS

The Board meeting minutes of November 15, 2023, were presented by Mrs. Gasper.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

The accounts payable for November 29, for \$391,867.15, and for December 13, 2023, for \$1,325,537.50 were presented by Dr. Rose.

A motion was made and seconded (Salzer-Gasper) to approve the consent items. All consent items were approved by Unanimous Consent.

NEW BUSINESS

Authorize a Public Hearing for Zoning Ordinance Amendment Related to Accessory Structures, the Keeping of Chickens, and other Miscellaneous Changes

Mrs. Gasper stated based on a periodic review of our ordinance requirements, attached is a comprehensive zoning ordinance amendment with changes as follows:

1. To eliminate an obsolete definition;
2. To allow decks and patios to encroach a maximum of 25% into the rear yard setback. This is a resident-friendly provision that will eliminate the time and expense of variance requests while still maintaining a significant setback to protect neighboring properties;
3. To allow structures such as gazebos and pool houses to meet the same setback as detached garages thereby resulting in a more consistent and uniform application of the ordinance;
4. To allow the keeping of chickens in all zoning districts subject to specific criteria. Currently, our ordinance requires a minimum of five acres in limited districts within the Township, which is restrictive given the trend for people to raise their own chickens. As a result, this amendment will address this issue while also including significant safeguards within the ordinance that will protect neighboring properties.
5. Finally, criteria related to special events will be removed from the Zoning Ordinance into a separate section of the code to establish a more comprehensive process to administer these events.

Upon authorization for advertisement, this ordinance will be forwarded to the Township and County Planning Commissions as required by the Municipalities Planning Code.

A motion was made and seconded (Gasper-Rose) to authorize the advertisement of a public hearing on Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 7:00 PM at the Township building to consider an amendment to the Northampton Township Zoning Ordinance to amend sections related to definitions, accessory buildings, and structures, permitting the keeping of chickens in all zoning districts subject to specific criteria, and deleting special event provisions.

Chairman Selisker called for Board and public comment. None was heard.

Motion Passed 4-0.

Authorize a Public Hearing for Ordinance Amendment Related to Special Events, Boards, and Commissions

Mr. Salzer explained the proposed ordinance amendment establishes an updated and more comprehensive process with respect to managing special events in Northampton Township. In addition to establishing a permit and inspection process, the ordinance establishes specific criteria to more efficiently coordinate these events between Township administration and all aspects of emergency management.

In addition, the proposed amendment reduces the Planning Commission from seven to five members to more efficiently handle meeting logistics and quorums.

A motion was made and seconded (Salzer-Rose) to authorize the advertisement of a public meeting to consider an ordinance amending the Northampton Township Code related to special events and the membership requirements of the Planning Commission for Wednesday, February 28, 2024, at 7:00 PM at the Township building.

Chairman Selisker called for Board and public comment. None was heard.

Motion Passed 4-0.

Consider Resolution Adopting a Records Retention Policy for the Building and Codes Department

Dr. Rose noted as part of a comprehensive records management program, it is recommended that the Building and Codes Department implement the records retention policy established in the Municipal Records Manual from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission on an annual basis.

In addition, to storage limitations over time, the implementation of the program is a cost savings to the Township by eliminating the need to scan documents of limited value. However, the Township will still maintain records of key information that is often requested by residents such as whether a particular permit has been submitted for a property.

All in all, this approach is a structured program that balances limited storage space, cost savings, and the retention of key information for residents and businesses.

A motion was made and seconded (Rose-Gasper) to approve Resolution No. R-23-16 to adopt the records retention policy for the Building and Code Department.

Chairman Selisker called for Board comment and public comment. None was heard.

Motion Passed 4-0.

Consider Final Approval of the 2024 Proposed Budget

Chairman Selisker deferred to Mr. Pellegrino the Township Manager to present the Final Budget.

The proposed 2024 Budget was advertised for public inspection on November 17, 2023, and a copy has been available in the Township Administration Building and on the Township website since the Preliminary Budget adoption by the Board on November 15, 2023.

Mr. Pellegrino presented a review of the proposed 2024 budget and explained the variables that affect revenues and expenditures. He noted changes from 2023 to 2024 and stated there is a recommended tax increase of 6.39 Mils in the proposed 2024 budget.

The total Township real estate tax levy will be 28 Mils if the budget is approved as presented.

The tax millage is allocated to the Operating Funds as follows:

General Fund	11.40 Mils
Fire and Emergency Medical Services	5.00 Mils
Library Services	1.73 Mils
Parks and Recreation Services	2.20 Mils
Road Maintenance Services	1.00 Mils
Road Equipment Fund	0.57 Mils
Debt Service	<u>6.10 Mils</u>
	28.00 Mils

The Administration did not receive any public input on the proposed budget and no one visited the Administration building to review the document. The Preliminary Budget is ready for final adoption unless the Board has any changes.

A motion was made and seconded (Salzer-Rose) for the final adoption of the 2024 Preliminary Budget.

Chairman Selisker called for Board comment.

The Board all agreed this budget is a forward-thinking, well-planned, public safety-driven budget. Chairman Selisker noted this budget is meeting the needs of the community. This budget was a catch-up in the safety arena and prepares for the future of First Responding agencies.

Chairman Selisker called for public comment. None was heard.

Motion Passed 4-0.

REPORTS

Dr. Rose made the following announcements:

- On Tuesday, November 28th the center participated in Giving Tuesday. It's a day dedicated to giving back to an organization that holds a special place in our lives and the community.
- The Senior Center has many classes, educational programs, special events, parties, and bus trips for ages 55 and older. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to call (215) 357-8199 for more information or stop by the center located at 165 Township Road for a tour. The center's hours are Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 9 a.m. – to 3:30 p.m., and Tuesday and Thursday 9 a.m. – to 8 p.m. Another great source of information is the center's website at northamptonsc.com.
- You should have received the Winter Brochure from the Parks and Recreation Programming Team. Do not miss important 2024 Camp Information, registration for preschool for the 2024-2025 school year, and tons of exciting new programs and events, including a Puzzle Palooza competition for all puzzle lovers and new computer programs in conjunction with the Free Library of Northampton.
- Register your home to be in the running for the Best Holiday Light display! There are also several opportunities for kids and adults to make that special gift or create a new holiday decoration at one of the art workshops planned for December. For more information visit www.northamptonrec.com or contact the Parks and Recreation Department.
- Congratulations to Betty Satterly from the Parks and Recreation Department on her retirement. We wish her the best and want her to know she will be greatly missed.

Mrs. Gasper made the following announcements:

- The Annual Wreath Laying Ceremony took place on Saturday, December 2, 2023 at the Union Cemetery at 11:00 am, it was a wonderful turnout.
- The Library's Annual Appeal hit mailboxes in November and so far has received approximately \$7,800 in the first month. This is the Library's largest mail distribution list in several years.
- This has been the most successful year for the Library in proctoring exams. The Library received approximately \$4,800 in fees provided by the testing.
- Conversation at the Board meeting continued regarding ideas on how best to approach the implementation of the Strategic Plan Priorities. Initial ad hoc committees have been formed for each of the Strategic Plan's four priorities amongst Board members. The Director will coordinate staff participation with the committees based on their interest level and skill sets.

Mr. Salzer made the following announcements:

- No Report

Chairman Selisker announced Mr. Moore's absence.

- No Report

Chairman Selisker made the following announcements:

- The Police Department in coordination with eight (8) other Police Departments hosted the annual Shop with a Cop. Approximately 325 children participated.
- At Station 83 the Fire Company hosted Saturday with Santa on December 9th from 10:00 am until 2 pm and approximately 200-300 families attended.

MANAGER'S REPORT

- To serve as notice to the Board Dr. Rose will be participating in the Township Health Insurance Plan.

ASSISTANT MANAGER'S REPORT

- From December 16th through March 31st yard waste will now be considered trash and should be placed in your trash receptacle. Christmas Trees will be collected the 3rd week of January, leave them out with your regular trash. If your trees are over 6' you must cut them in half.
- Do not bag your Christmas Trees for disposal.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

- Thanked the Board and the employees. Mr. Pizzo stated that Northampton Township is the Gold Standard when it comes to Townships.

ENGINEER'S REPORT

- Echoed Mr. Pizzo's comments.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None was heard.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paula Gasper, Secretary