

**MINUTE - RALPHO TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS REGULAR MEETING**  
**SEPTEMBER 11, 2007 – 6:30 PM**  
**Held in Municipal Building Meeting Room, 206 S. Market Street, Elysburg, PA 17824**

**MOMENT OF SILENCE WAS OBSERVED IN REMEMBRANCE OF VICTIMS  
OF THE SEPTEMBER 11, 2001 ATTACKS ON THE UNITED STATES**

*Chairman Howard Shadduck called meeting to order and led the group in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. Responding to roll call were Supervisors Blaine Madara, Ed Payeskie, Howard Shadduck, Joseph Shirvinski and William Wetzel. Also attending were Solicitor Todd Kerstetter, Township Manager Joseph Springer, Code Officer Howard Howal, Engineer Michele Aukerman, Police Chief Stu Appel, Roadmaster Bill Hoy and Township Secretary/Treasurer Joan Baskin, approximately 50 to 60 residents and members of the media.*

On behalf of the Supervisor Board, Chairman Shadduck went on record commending all the volunteers involved with the recent All Home Days Association celebration and tribute to Ralpho Township's and our nation's veterans.

**CITIZEN INPUT ON AGENDA ITEMS**

Departing from the usual procedure, Board agreed to hear from interested parties concerning open burning in Ralpho Township. Shadduck explained that comments would be limited to 2 minutes; no profanity or vulgarity would be tolerated - violators would be removed from the meeting room.

**Charles Shultz**, Vista Terrace presented a petition bearing 128 signatures against opening burning. Mr. Shultz also mentioned the health and safety issues brought about by opening burning.

**Robert Dluge, Jr.**, 124 Penn Avenue presented a petition containing 166 signatures "for" burning. Mr. Dluge also presented some alternative language for use in a proposed ordinance revision.

**Carol Phillips**, Sunnyside presented a petition with 107 names "for" burning.

**Janet Labusky's** petition had 170 names "for" burning.

**Allen Madara** of 198 Penn Avenue said he will continue burning his trees, no matter what the ordinance says.

**Frank Berger** of Market Street went on record for "no burning".

**Pat Shultz**, Circle View Drive spoke again burning.

**Mark Talarovich**, Horne Drive asked "why do the four of you gentlemen want to stop burning?".

**Amber Einsig**, Sunnyside, said that for the sake of the farmers, burning in some form needs to be in place.

**Mrs. Schoch**, 158 Lindy Acres Road told of her family's breathing problems and getting smoke in their home from neighbors burning. Also reminded the township that they could be sued for allowing burning under the Americans with Disability Act.

**Dennis Wydra**, 39 Circle View Drive said now he is not opposed to burning. Feels that the current township ordinance is a good ordinance.

**Code Officer Howard Howal** addressed the group telling of the numerous recent violations of the ordinance during the drought-related burn ban. Howal stressed that residents do not abide by the ordinance.

**Mickey Reiprish**, Overlook said he can't keep his windows open either; he gets the sweet, stinky smell coming from Clark's. Will that be looked into? Since that is not open burning, the ordinance being discussed does not apply.

**Jim Becker**, Richards Road, said that clearing his land and not being able to burn the removed trees would have cost him additional thousands of dollars.

**Pauline Strahosky**, Rte 54 said she burns and does tend her fire. She has a hose hooked up and sits with the fire while it burns.

**Ray Walnock**, Jeremiah Avenue, Lindy Acres thought this issue was "put to bed" when the current ordinance was adopted. The existing ordinance is good; wouldn't object to needing to getting a permit to burn - so long as there are provisions to dispose of yard waste.

**Rose Fullmer** asked where the majority of the complaints are from? Couldn't an ordinance be drafted to address developments if that's where the majority of the complaints are coming from?

**Ken Snyder** asked could AF zones be allowed to burn.

**Ben Lipsky** was told "Yes", as of now the burn ban is still on.

**Bob Katalenas** said that burning plastic is what causes the stench.

**Lynn Hoagland** said some allowance should be made to allow burning farm residue such as his fertilizer bags.

**Ed Gappa** from 10 Deerfield Drive also owns property on Sleepy Hollow Road; he can see both sides of the issue; lives in a development and does recycle most items that he can, but would like to see burning continue in AF areas

**Charles Shultz** said that in accordance with the PA Code it is illegal to burn anything beyond residential use. It would appear that if you are a business and you are burning anything at all, you are in violation of the Pennsylvania Code.

**Craig Richards** from 213 Richards Road raised concern for agricultural areas. Said it would be inconvenient to get a permit every other day when he needs to burn his agricultural waste.

**Mickey Reiprish** mentioned that Coal Township no longer requires separation of No. 1 and 2 plastic containers - just remove the lids.

**Dennis Wydra** agreed with Mr. Shultz that commercial burning is banned; however, he believes that agricultural waste is treated differently than commercial.

**Tom Poploski** suggested the matter be put up to the voters via a referendum.

Supervisor Madara mentioned he is in favor of allowing burning; however, thanked everyone for their comments tonight. Many good points were brought out. He commended Mrs. Strahosky for having a hose ready and watching her fire; however, he feels she is in the minority. The current ordinance is good; unfortunately most of the people violate it and do not burn properly.

Chairman Shadduck echoed Madara's opinion and thanked everyone for their testimony. The township has a unique problem with its diversified zoning districts.

Payeskie thanked everyone for coming and was very proud to be part of this meeting.

Madara/Wetzel motioned to lift current burn ban effective Thursday September 13. Motion carried unanimously. On the question: for clarification, contrary to popular belief, the burn ban was instituted because of the drought conditions and on the recommendation of the PA State Forestry Service, not to ease into a total burn ban.

Meeting recessed at 8:05 and reconvened at 8:20 PM.

**MINUTES** of August 14, 2007 Regular Meeting were approved on Payeskie/Shirvinski motion and carried.

**TREASURER'S REPORT** was approved as presented on Payeskie/Madara motion and carried.

**BILLS** were approved for payment on Wetzel/Shirvinski motion and carried.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

- Annual convention of North'd Co. Assoc. of Township Officers will be held Thursday October 25. Activities begin at 5:45 in the Sunbury Social Club.
- Department of the Army wrote concerning the M60A3 Combat Tank which is on display at the Home Days Association park. Madara motioned, seconded by Wetzel to assume responsibility for the tank as required by the Department of the Army. Motion was unanimously approved.
- Results of PaDOT traffic study on SR 2018 were received. Neither speed reduction nor mid-block crosswalks are warranted. "Hidden Driveway" and "Farm Machinery" signs are warranted. Roadmaster was directed to order and install signs in accordance with PennDot regulations.
- City of Shamokin requested information concerning Overgrown Lawns. Matter was referred to Code Officer Howal.
- Renewal notice for GHP coverage was noted. Any requested changes to the plan must be made prior to September 16. Premiums will increase by 5%.
- John Kerschner, Vice President of Eastern Development & Planning wrote concerning the requested additional piping and berming relative to the Deerfield Townhomes. He feels the requested work is beyond the scope of maintenance and not in keeping with the approved development plan. Eastern Development will do nothing on this matter.
- PaDOT issued a favorable report pertaining to the August 23<sup>rd</sup> random monitoring review of the Liquid Fuels Fund. The Township was commended for maintaining a well-managed investment program and earning \$6380.62 interest during calendar year 2006.
- Dennis Wydra wrote asking for a copy of the "unofficial minutes" from August 14<sup>th</sup> meeting. Mr. Wydra wants to review them prior to the September 11

meeting and before the Supervisors take action on them. Solicitor replied to Mr. Wydra's letter. Mr. Wydra was granted permission to speak; he told of his telephone conversation with officials in Harrisburg. He was advised that the matter is a "gray area" with regards to the Sunshine Law. Those officials suggested that he ask the township to change its policy and make draft minutes available for residents' review.

- Sandra Tharp offered suggestions concerning outdoor burning/burning ban.
- Beth & Todd Jones also made suggestions concerning burning.
- Jim and Kay Maurer wrote in favor of proposed burning ban.
- Betsy Medon wrote asking for the burn ban to continue.

### **COMMITTEE/DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

#### **STREET DEPARTMENT –WETZEL**

- Line painting contractor will be here this week.
- Truck radio for 2008 truck was installed. Authorization given to replace broken radio in F450 truck.
- No new developments on disposal of the old traffic signals and control box.
- Old spreader is listed for sale on PSATS site and on display at the garage. To date the only offer has been from a local resident.
- Ten (10) Job applications were received for part time helper position; Wetzel will review applications and interviews will be scheduled.

#### **BUILDINGS – SHIRVINSKI & MADARA**

- New Office doors were delivered; will soon be installed.
- Hallway floor retiling project – Contractor reported he will have it completed by October 15.
- Student Community Service - Shirvinski will coordinate with Howal.
- Listing of Vendors to call for Emergencies will include Supervisors' contact numbers and be distributed.

**POLICE DEPARTMENT/PUBLIC SAFETY –PAYESKIE** read monthly activity report.

- Properties – With one exception, sight problems have been taken care of.
- Awaiting PaDOT's response to our request for additional traffic studies concerning two (2) additional traffic signals and changes in some lane markings.
- Verbal price for 25 x 25 6' chain link fencing with 3 barbs was \$2000 plus gates. Have requested written proposal.
- Officer Chowka was given permission to continue working with the Dare Program. Program will entail between 20 and 25 hours.

**ZONING OFFICER'S REPORT – SHADDUCK** reported that during the month of August, 16 permits were issued for \$2393.40 in fees.

Howal will conduct further research about Township's responsibility regarding report of lead based paint in a cottage at Knoebel's.

**RECREATION – MADARA** - street department personnel to check with local vendor about possible replacement parts for coin box.

Playground maintenance log now in use for monthly inspections.

**RECYCLING – SHADDUCK** reported that magazines are now being accepted. Popularity and participation in recycling program continues to grow.

**MANAGER’S REPORT - SPRINGER**

- Work continues on recreation grant that is due by April 208.
- Act 904 Recycling Performance Grant due October 1 nearing completion.
- Ralpho’s web site is [www.ralphotownship.org](http://www.ralphotownship.org). General Code offers online access to our code through a link on our site. The cost is \$995 for the first year and \$550 per year thereafter.

**PLANNING COMMISSION** – no plans were submitted for consideration.

- Vacancy remains to be filled

**SOLICITOR’S REPORT:**

Ordinance 164 that establishes 25 m.p.h. as maximum speed on Bear Hollow Road between All Saints Road and Happy Hollow Road and also designates Kase Street from S.R. 487 to Hillside Avenue one-way from Hillside Avenue to S.R. 487 was adopted on Payeskie/Wetzel motion and carried.

Burn Ordinance revision tabled to October meeting.

Solicitor wrote to Mr. Henry about the property on Bottle Drive advising he would be cited if corrective action is not taken to be in compliance with his approved plans as pertains to paved areas.

**ENGINEER’S REPORT:**

Deerfield Development stormwater – awaiting further direction as to any support they can provide to Supervisors with regard to connecting adjacent swale to the detention basin.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

- Payroll Direct Deposit – in progress
- Meadow Brook Manor - Wetzel/Payeskie motioned to send letter telling them to select the option they want the Township to follow; i.e., let it the way it is or enclose the pipe we installed. Motion carried unanimously.
- Vacancy needs to be filled on MART

**NEW BUSINESS:**

2008 MMO contributions were calculated for both pension plans. The figures must be approved and forms signed not later than September 30. 2008 Municipal Obligation for Police Pension is \$13,026 and \$17,992 for the Non-Uniformed Plan. Payeskie/Shirvinskies motioned to accept 2008 MMO’s as report and authorized signing necessary forms. Motion unanimously approved.

**CITIZEN INPUT**

Dennis Wydra thanked the Board for running a fair meeting.

Jim Becker, referring to the suggestion of referendum, said the Supervisors are elected to make decisions for the people – not place matters on the ballot. If he doesn't like what they do, he can vote against their re-election.

**ADJOURNMENT** - there being nothing further for discussion, meeting adjourned at 9:50 PM on Payeskie/Shirvinski motion and carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan E. Baskin, Secretary