

**TOWNSHIP OF BERN**  
**BERKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**

April 1, 2025

**SUPERVISORS MEETING**

**SUPERVISORS PRESENT:** Irene Reed, Chairperson  
Brian Eveland, Supervisor  
Daniel Tobias, Supervisor  
Jeffrey Thompson, Supervisor  
Dr. Boyd Wagner, Supervisor

**STAFF PRESENT:** Brian Potts, Township Manager  
Diane DeJesus, Secretary/Treasurer  
Keith Mooney, Esquire  
Brett Forry, Chief of Police  
Bobby Turner, Road Foreman  
Kent Morey, Engineer  
Bradley Pflum, Code Enforcement

**CALL TO ORDER-PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mrs. Reed called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Dr. Wagner moved to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Mr. Thompson. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson, and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

**FINANCE REPORT**

Balances as of April 1, 2025, General Fund: \$2,229,680.12 State Account: \$765,789.44, PLGIT: \$76,273.74, Certificate of Deposits: \$597,313.27, Expenses: \$22,048.59.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Eric Weaknecht, Pennsylvania State Representative and Representative Jamie Barton are here to present an award from the House of Representatives to Officer Heckman for his lifesaving action that took place on January 1 of this year.

Chief Forry asked Officer Santiago to step forward. On January 13, 2025, Officer Santiago stopped a vehicle, which contained a total of 25 large vacuumed sealed bags of marijuana, weighing 25 lbs. with an estimated street value of over \$50,000.00 which resulted in the arrest of the driver and passenger. Officer Santiago continues to show his dedication, commitment and excellence to himself and the Bern Township Police Department and the community he serves.

**Andrew Ninetto, 1183 Old Bernville** – Mr. Ninetto would like some clarification regarding the Bern Farm Property. It relates to their approval obviously under the Highway Commercial District and under their permitted use for recreation. Under the General Recreational use it requires that all buildings set back require a minimum of 150 feet, except on the Main Barn that they use for events is 10 feet and the level of noise emanating from the building shall not exceed 55 decibels. Mr. Ninetto asked if they were granted waivers from these code requirements? If they are not complying with these requirements, should they be cited?

Atty. Mooney stated they were given a Use Variance. The building is what is called Pre-existing Non-conforming Use. The building is existing and was situated prior to the development of the Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Ninetto asked about the decibel limitation, based on the noise ordinance they are not to exceed 55 decibels. Mr. Potts stated this would have to be investigated, if they are in true violation. Chief Forry was asked if he has received noise complaints recently, and he responded no, not recently.

**Atty. Steve Price** – Atty. Price representing Mr. & Mrs. Degenova at 1317 Hilltop Road, he stated that they have a summer house on their property and would like to convert it into Mrs. Degenova's esthetician business. Bradly Pflum, Code Enforcement Office has determined it would need a Use Variance because it is a non-conforming use in the IR district. Rather than having them spend money for a Zoning Variance, they would like to know the Boards feelings regarding this type of use.

**Sharon Henke** – Ms. Henke stated she understood the Fire Protection tax had to be raised. Ms. Henke stated that Bern Township in all the years has never supported financially Greenfields Fire Company. Mrs. Reed said that in the past 10 years Bern Township has given Greenfields Fire Company half a million dollars. Mr. Potts also stated that he reviewed the ledger book of the Fire Protection Tax and added up all the payments to the fire company and we averaged about \$50,000.00 a year for the past 10 years.

Mrs. Reed asked Ms. Henke since she has many facts about the Greenfields Fire Company, Bern Township would like to put together a Commemorative Display somewhere, so if we have questions or Ms. Henke has photographs, we would greatly appreciate her help.

Ms. Henke stated she is very upset about the third building that is going up at Acadia. This land was not designated for a hospital, but it is built as a hospital. Ms. Henke expressed her concerns about the roundabout in that area. Mr. Potts stated he wanted the roundabout instead of a traffic light.

Ms. Henke also brought up several other issues. Ms. Henke feels the Township is loaded with non-profit business that we see no revenue from. Mr. Potts commented that the property at Acadia is assessed at 20 million dollars. Ms. Henke stated that Tower Health is non-profit and does not pay Township taxes. Mr. Potts corrected her by stating that we receive real estate taxes from that property. Mrs. Reed recommended that Ms. Henke fill out a Right-to-Know to receive this information. Atty. Mooney stated that this is not a non-profit, that it is a partnership between Reading Hospital and the other corporation, and the other corporation owned the majority interest. Ms. Henke stated that Reading Tower Health's contract will be up in three years. Mr. Potts stated that he was not aware of this.

**Alice Hinkle, 1032 Cathy Drive** - Declined her time to speak.

### **TOWNSHIP MANAGER**

Mr. Potts reported that the township is still working on the billing software and trying to coordinate the software company with our printer to get the Yard Waste documents ready for mailing.

Mr. Potts stated that our building project is finally completed, all the contractors are paid in full, and last week the punch list was completed.

### **PUBLIC SAFETY & SERVICES**

**Discussion of Greenfield Fire Company-** Mrs. Reed asked if anyone had any comments regarding Greenfields Fire Company. Mr. Potts asked about the keys for the "knox boxes" and Chief Royce stated he reached out to the Knox Company to get a release of liability for the Officers but have not heard back yet. Mrs. Reed asked about the radios, Dylan Heckman stated he has reached out to Brian Gottschall.

**Justin Schlottman** asked about the money that was originally allotted to them for the first three months, how much of that has been spent; and how much of that is being returned back to the Fire Tax line item. Mr. Potts stated that \$20,000.00 a month for three months and estimated between \$6,000.00 – \$7,000.00 a month is what has been used. Greenfields has the money and the Township has asked for the money back. Mr. Schlottman also asked who owns the equipment? Mr. Potts responded that two pieces of equipment are owned by the Relief Association which is the utility and command vehicle, and the rest belongs to the Fire Company. Chief Royce agreed that this was correct.

**Discussion / Approval of the Run Cards Revisions-** Mr. Potts stated this is to add Station 66 as second due to all calls in Bern Township after today. There was a question as to why second due? Mr. Potts clarified that Station 66 would be second due until the Run Cards are formally changed. Dr. Wagner made the motion to add Station 66 as second due to all calls in Bern Township, seconded by Mr. Thompson. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

**Discussion / Approval of Return Fire Insurance Escrow to 2483 Leisz's Bridge Road –** Mr. Potts stated that the amount to be returned is \$10,333.07 to the resident at 2483 Leisz's Bridge

Road. Dr. Wagner made a motion to release to \$10,333.07, seconded by Mr. Thompson. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

**Emergency Medical Services Monthly Report** – Supervisors have the report.

**Emergency Management Discussion / Approval of Emergency Operation Plan Resolution and Promulgation** – Mr. Hinkle stated when the Emergency Operation was reviewed annually and signed off by himself and Brian, it was realized the resolution that was originally done needed to be revised. The Promulgation needs to be resigned so it satisfies the County requirements. Mr. Thompson made a motion to approve the signing of the Emergency Operation Plan Resolution and Promulgation, seconded by Dr. Wagner. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

**Police Department Discussion / Approval to send Chief to Leadership Training** - Chief Forry asked for approval to attend a one-day leadership training in Lebanon which is within driving distance. Mr. Thompson made a motion to approve sending the Chief to Leadership Training, seconded by Dr. Wagner. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried

**Discussion / Approval to Purchase (2) two 2025 Dodge Durangos** – Chief Forry asked for approval to purchase two Dodge Durangos. One of the vehicles will be purchased with General Funds and the other vehicle is totally paid for through a grant. Dr. Wagner made a motion to purchase the 2025 Dodge Durangos, seconded by Mr. Thompson. Mrs. Alice Hinkle asked if the Police Department has a preventative maintenance plan? Chief Forry responded that there is an extensive preventative maintenance plan, we keep track of mileage, oil changes, transmissions. Chief Forry explained that he continues to find other avenues to increase the fleet as to not burden the Township. Mrs. Hinkle asked about the increase of insurance rates. Mr. Potts responded that this falls under a fleet program and Chief Forry stated that the next section hopefully will answer her question. Dr. Wagner made a motion to approve the purchase of 2 2025 Dodge Durangos, one through the General Fund and one through the grant, seconded by Mr. Thompson. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

**Discussion / Approval to sell 2014 Dodge Charger and 2018 Dodge Charger** - Chief Forry stated that by selling these vehicles and keeping the fleet number the same, it does not increase our insurance cost. Mr. Potts added that the compensation for those two vehicles goes into his escrow program, so that we can use that money to purchase other vehicles in the future. A question was asked how the sale of these vehicles will be handled. Chief Forry stated it has been successful in the past by utilizing Municibid. Dr. Wagner made a motion to advertise the 2 Dodge Chargers on Municibid, seconded by Mr. Thompson. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

**Discussion / Approval to Assign Fire Police to World War II weekend on June 6, 7, & 8** - Dr. Wagner made a motion to assign Fire Police for the World War II weekend, seconded by Mr. Eveland. **YES** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

## **PLANNING/ZONING/CODE ENFORCEMENT**

**Engineer** – The Supervisors received a copy of the report.

### **Planning Commission**

**Discussion / Approval of C&B Development Final Land Development Plan** - Mr. Potts stated the Planning Commission recommended approval of this plan contingent upon the review letter dated March 5, 2025, by Spotts, Stevens and McCoy. Mr. Thompson made a motion to approve the C&B Final Land Development Plan, seconded by Mr. Eveland. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

**Discussion / Approval of Bethany Romanian Emergency Spillway Freeboard Waiver 149-12.C and 149-22.A(6)(c)** – Mr. Potts stated the Planning Commission recommended the approval of this waiver, to allow less than 1 foot of freeboard in the emergency spillway. The proposed freeboard is .58 feet instead of the 1 foot. Mr. Thompson made a motion to approve Bethany Romanian Emergency Spillway Freeboard Waiver, seconded by Mr. Tobias. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

**Discussion / Approval of Bethany Infiltration Rate Waiver 149-20.A** – Mr. Potts stated this will allow an infiltration rate of slightly less than the .5 inches per hour which is required. Dr. Wanger made a motion to approve the Bethany Infiltration Rate Waiver, seconded by Mr. Thompson. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

**Discussion / Approval of Bethany Romanian Berm Width Waiver 149.22.A(5)(a)** - Mr. Potts stated that the Berm Width Waiver was approved by the Planning Commission. This will allow the width of the berm to slightly less than 5 feet because of the constraints of the site. Dr. Wagner mad a motion to approve the Bethany Romanian Bern Width Waiver, seconded by Mr. Thompson. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

**Discussion / Approval of Bethany Romanian Outfall Pipe Size Waiver 149-22.A(5)(b)** – Mr. Potts stated this will be a 10” diameter pipe instead of 12” that the raisers required for basin routing and to pass the resulting flow. Dr. Wagner made a motion to approve the Bethany Romanian Outfall Pipe Size Waiver, seconded by Mr. Thompson **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

**Discussion / Approval of Bethany Romanian Riser Pipe Outlet Waiver 149-22.A(6)(a)** – Mr. Potts stated it will be a PVC riser pipe instead of a concrete riser. Dr. Wagner made a motion to approve the Bethany Romanian Riser Pipe Outlet Waiver, seconded by Mr. Thompson. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

**Discussion / Approval of Bethany Romanian Church Preliminary Land Development Plan** - Mr. Potts stated the Planning Commission recommended approval of this plan contingent upon the Spotts, Stevens McCoy, March 5, 2025, review letter. Mr. Thomas made a motion to approve the Bethany Romanian Church Preliminary Land Development Plan, seconded by Mr. Tobias. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

**Discussion / Approval of Ray T. Davis Monument Waiver 154-32.I.(4)** – Mr. Potts stated the monuments will be located in strategic positions because the land is being farmed. They did not want to put the monuments in and have them removed and turned up by the farming activities. Dr. Wagner made a motion to approve the Ray T. Davis Monument Waiver, seconded by Mr. Thompson. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

**Discussion / Approval of Reitnouer Municipal Improvements Agreement** – The Reitnouer Municipal Improvements Agreement is not ready for approval at this time. Atty. Mooney stated that this could be approved subject to engineer and solicitor review and when it is ready it can be executed. The plans must reference the latest date on the plans. Dr. Wagner made a motion to approve the Reitnouer Municipal Improvement Agreement, subject to review by the engineer and solicitor, seconded by Mr. Thompson. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Thompson and Mrs. Reed. **NO:** Mr. Tobias. Motion carried.

**Discussion / Approval of UGI Escrow Release** – Mr. Potts stated this is their first escrow release for this project, Mr. Morey did an analysis of their request, and he is recommending the amount of \$3,843,890.00 be released from the escrow. The remaining balance will be \$424,726.00. Mr. Thompson made a motion to release the amount of \$3,843,890.00 from the escrow, seconded by Dr. Wagner. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

### **Time Extensions**

**Bernville Business Center Preliminary Plan** - Dr. Wagner moved that if an extension of time has not been granted by the applicant, prior to the expiration date of April 14, 2025, that the plan be rejected for the reasons set forth in the latest Engineering review letter, seconded by Mr. Thompson. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

### **Code Enforcement**

The Supervisors have a copy of the report.

## **STORMWATER MANGEMENT**

MS4 Stormwater Report – Mr. Potts stated there were nothing to report this month

## **ROADS**

The Supervisors have a copy of the report.

**Discussion / Approval to Award 2025 Road Contract** – Mr. Turner stated copies of the bids have been distributed to the Supervisors for their review. Allan Myers came in with the lowest bid of \$391,438.05. Mr. Turner is asking for approval to accept this bid. This came in \$70,000.00 below the budget. Dr. Wagner made a motion to approve the bid for the 2025 Road Contract, seconded by Mr. Thompson. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

**Discussion / Approval to Close Seifrit Lane for Pipe Replacement** - Mr. Turner stated this road will be paved in-house this year. There is a pipe at the end of Grange that needs to be replaced. Mr. Turner would like to have this replaced before the black top process happens. The question was asked if this was a one-day job, Mr. Turner responded yes. Mr. Thompson made a motion to approve the closing of Seifrit Lane for pipe replacement for one day, seconded Dr. Wagner. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

**Discussion / Approval to Close West Leesport Road for Pipe Replacement** – A resident in the audience asked if this road will be repaved and if rumble strips could be installed at certain spots? Mr. Turner responded that the rumble strips are not used anymore. It was also noted that Cross Keys Road has the rumble strips and Mr. Turner replied this is a State road and that process was done by the State several years ago. Another resident asked if recessed reflectors could be installed. Mr. Potts stated that this could be looked at after the work is completed, because the Township would have to do this work on its own, as this was not included in bid package. Mr. Eveland made a motion to approve the closing of West Leesport Road for pipe replacement, seconded by Mr. Thompson. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

**Discussion / Approval to Purchase Chop Saw** – Mr. Turner stated this is a handheld chop saw and the one that the Township has is from 1979-1980 and needs to be replaced. A quote was received and the cost for a new one is \$1,195.00 and is asking for approval. Mr. Potts added that this will be paid out of the Road Escrow Account. Mr. Eveland made a motion to approve the purchase of the new chop saw, seconded by Dr. Wagner. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

## **SEWER/WATER/BERN TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY**

Nothing to report.

## **SOLID WASTE ADVISORY COMMISSION**

Monthly Report - Mr. Potts stated he had nothing to add other than what was next on the agenda.

**Discussion / Approval to Issue Request for Recycling Marketing Bids** - Mr. Potts stated our 3-year contract is coming to an end this year for trash collection in the trash districts and recycling collection on all the Township roads. Last time bidding happened we had everything bid together, trash collection, recycle collection and also the marketing of materials. Through that process the haulers were reluctant to bid on the hauling of the recyclables because they did not know where they would be hauling to. There are only two places in Berks County that haulers can take the recyclables to, one being Total Recycle which is owned by Mascaro in Exeter and Cogle's in Hamburg. It was decided to bid out the marketing and processing of the recyclables first, so that haulers would know, while they are in the bidding process, they know where they will be hauling the recyclables to. Mr. Potts explained there are two options being investigated for the bids. The first option is Dual Stream and the second is the Automated Method. The second option would involve getting cans to all residents but also could be a lot less money, due to the fact there is only one driver. Each of these options has an option for recycling glass. This bid will be for 5 years instead of 3 years, due to the expectation that some landfills could be closing. This RFP is for your consideration to put out in May. Concerns were made with the mechanical disposal method that cans could be left in the streets. If the hauler does not show up, will there be a penalty? Mr. Potts stated that he could not answer this question because the RFP has not been prepared at this time, but typically there is a penalty for a performance violation in the contracts. Dr. Wagner made a motion to approve the request for recycling marketing bids, seconded by Mr. Thompson. **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Tobias, Mr. Thompson and Mrs. Reed. Motion carried.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

**Discussion / Approval to Purchase Electric** – Mr. Potts stated that the Township purchases electric, so it makes it easier for budgeting purposes. Currently we are paying .5 a kilowatt-hour and the market is at .9 or .10, fortunately that was a 4-year agreement that we had. Going forward, we have 4 options, 2 years is 9.5 cents, 3 years is 9.7 cents and change, 4 years is 9.9 cents and change and 5 years is 10.2 cents per kilowatt-hour. Mr. Potts recommended the 4-year term. Constellation is recommended through the Municipal League. Mr. Thompson made a motion to approve the purchase of electric with Constellation, seconded by Dr. Wagner **YES:** Dr. Wagner, Mr. Eveland, Mr. Thompson and Mrs. Reed. **NO:** Mr. Tobias. Motion carried.

**Discussion of Special Events Ordinance Revision** - Mr. Potts is looking for guidance. The Berks Fair is asking to change the ordinance instead of having two events per month to have 24 per year. It was recommended that the word monthly be removed and use the word annually be used instead. Mr. Steve Mohn, Director of the Fair, clarified that they are not asking for an increase in events, just a better distribution of events. Typically, the number of people attending these events is between 300 – 600. The Fair generates about 1750. Mrs. Reed recommended they put together a draft and pass it onto Mr. Mooney.

**Next Meeting-** The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 6, 2025, at 7:00 PM at the Bern Township Municipal Building.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

We now have an executive session to discuss personnel, but there will be no action taken tonight.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane DeJesus, Secretary/Treasurer