

**TOWNSHIP OF FALLS
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING**

ROLL CALL:

JEFFRY E. DENCE, CHAIRMAN	ABSENT
JEFF BORASKI, VICE-CHAIRMAN	PRESENT
JEFFREY ROCCO, SECRETARY	PRESENT
BRIAN M. GALLOWAY, SUPERVISOR	PRESENT
JOHN PALMER, SUPERVISOR	PRESENT

The meeting commenced at 6:30 p.m. with roll call and pledge to the flag. All Board members were present with the exception of Chairman Dence who had a work commitment. Also present were Township Manager/Chief Code Enforcement Officer & Zoning Officer Matthew Takita, Township Solicitor Michael Clarke, Township Solicitor Lauren Gallagher, and Township Engineer Joe Jones.

PRESENTATION OF AWARDS FOR THE FALL PHOTO AND HOLIDAY HOUSE DECORATING CONTEST WINNERS

Mr. Brian Andrews presented awards to winners of the Holiday House Decorating contest. They were: 1st Place – Ryan & Joanne McGettigan, 234 Waltham Road and 2nd Place – Charles Klimás, 438 Lakeside Drive. Winners received a \$25 gift card and certificate. Mr. Andrews presented awards to winners of the Annual Photo Contest. They were: Wildlife – Bernadette Druckenmiller; Architecture – Angela Efaw; Plants and Flora – Pamela Kennedy; Other – Judy Caggiano; and Landscape – Dawn Denner. Winners received Allen’s Camera \$25 gift cards and framed photos.

**ITEM # 1 PUBLIC COMMENT – FIVE MINUTE LIMIT PER PERSON
FORTY-FIVE MINUTE MAXIMUM**

No one called in for public comment.

ITEM # 2 CONSIDER ADOPTING ORDINANCE AMENDING HOUSING STANDARDS – CHAPTER 138 – UPDATING THE CHAPTER TITLE; UPDATING THE RESIDENTIAL AND NON-RESIDENTIAL DWELLING INSPECTION GUIDELINES; REQUIRING A NON-RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY INSPECTION WHEN THERE IS A CHANGE IN USE; CREATING A RESIDENTIAL RENTAL LICENSE PERMIT PROGRAM; CREATING A RESIDENTIAL RENTAL INSPECTION PROGRAM; CONTAINING A SAVINGS CLAUSE AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE

Ms. Gallagher said this is a rather extensive change to the township’s housing and building ordinance. There are two main components to this ordinance; the first is eliminating the

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current inspection process which happens when there is a residential transfer of property and it would replace that with certifications of the major safety systems in any residence that is being transferred. This is also implementing a rental unit inspection program. We have reviewed this with several of the owners of the apartment complexes to discuss their concerns and also some individuals from the Realtor's Association. There are some changes which have occurred since this was advertised but it does not require any re-advertising. Ms. Gallagher reviewed those changes. Manager Takita said the township will no longer do inspections of any resale of single-family dwellings. They will require certifications for the heater, chimney flue, electrical, and sewer system. Once we receive those certifications and the application, we can issue a Certificate of Occupancy. We will focus on all rental properties in the township. These would include single-family residential rentals as well as any apartment complexes we have in the township. All of the apartment complexes and rentals will be subject to an annual common area inspection and then we will do unit inspections every three years. For every apartment unit that has been occupied for three or more years, we will enter that unit and do an inspection of the interior. Member Rocco asked when this will start. Manager Takita said it will begin this year. We will reach out and start a registration list. Member Rocco said the U&O always protected the buyer. In your opinion, does it still protect the buyer? Manager Takita said with the way the real estate and private home inspections and all the other forms they have to fill out, there is a lot of protection for the buyer. With the level of inspections that are done privately, it is far greater than what the township provided. There will still be a property history review. Any open violations or open permits will be listed on the certificate when it is issued so the buyer is aware of anything outstanding. Member Palmer asked who would keep track of all the rental properties in Falls Township. Manager Takita said it would be the Code Department. Member Palmer asked how the program would be funded. Manager Takita said there is a charge for common area inspection. It is a \$15 per unit inspection and then for the three-year inspection, there will be a \$50 per unit charge. Member Palmer asked if this is consistent with other municipalities. Manager Takita said this is consistent with all other municipalities. Member Boraski said he wanted to be clear. We ask questions about the U&O process. Does this only pertain to residential? Manager Takita said this only pertains to residential, apartment complexes and residential resales. The commercial standards will stay the same. Member Boraski said we will still be requiring a chimney, electrical, heater, and sewer certs and home inspection. Manager Takita said we do not require home inspection, that is between the buyer and the seller. Member Boraski thanked Jamie Ridge from the Suburban Realtor Alliance for all of his help with this. Member Galloway moved to adopt Ordinance # 2021-1 amending Housing Standards – Chapter 138 – Updating the Chapter Title; Updating the Residential and Non-Residential Dwelling Inspection Guidelines; Requiring a Non-Residential Property Inspection When There is a Change in Use; Creating a Residential Rental License Permit Program; Creating a Residential Rental Inspection Program; Containing a Savings Clause and Providing for an Effective Date, including the changes as noted by Ms. Gallagher; Member Palmer seconded the motion; all board members were in favor. (4-0)

**ITEM # 3 CONSIDER AUTHORIZATION FOR ADVERTISEMENT FOR
ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 172 – SMOKING – TO ADD
ARTICLE III – TOWNSHIP OWNED PROPERTY**

Ms. Gallagher said this would prohibit smoking or use of smokeless tobacco or vaping on any township-owned properties except in designated areas. Member Boraski asked if we already had designated smoking areas at the township building. Manager Takita said we do not have any designated areas. Member Galloway moved to authorize advertisement for Ordinance amending Chapter 172 – Smoking – To Add Article III – Township Owned Property; Member Palmer seconded the motion; all board members were in favor. (4-0)

**ITEM # 4 CONSIDER PROPOSAL FOR GEESE MANAGEMENT SERVICES
AT THE FALLS TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY PARK**

Mr. Brian Andrews said we have been conducting the geese management program for several years now. In the past we have had one company that did the harassment and then another company to provide border collie service. This new company will do everything. Ms. Gallagher said we have prepared an indemnity agreement that mirrors what we have done in the past. Mr. Lenny Torro represents the Geese Police of Philadelphia. Member Rocco asked if Mr. Torro was familiar with the township park. Mr. Torro said he did a demonstration at the park about 12 years ago and he spoke with someone last year. Yes, he is familiar with the park. He is not familiar with the location of the nests, but he will do his own research. Member Rocco asked about Mr. Torro's plan for the border collies. Mr. Torro said they will be there six days a week, multiple times a day, day and night. He doesn't want to reduce the amount of geese; he wants to get rid the property of them. His goal is to keep them from overnighting. Member Rocco asked if they do capture as well. Mr. Torro said no, it is illegal for them to capture. Member Rocco asked where their closest client was. The company currently services the Bucks County Business Park, they are getting ready to start work at Jefferson Hospital and they service a couple of residences in New Hope. They have proposals and have been in discussions with Bristol Township, Sesame Place, and Oxford Valley Mall. Member Rocco asked if there are any products Mr. Torro would recommend to treat smaller areas. Mr. Andrews said the township purchased Flight Control last year and they also installed one of the intermittent lights at the pond. They plan on hitting it hard this year and trying the product in that area at Martha Circle and Martha Drive. Member Boraski was glad Member Rocco brought up about the Fallsington pond. He understands the product should have been put down in the spring, but things came up. He said this is the third year he is mentioning this area and really hopes this year we can hit the ground running. Member Boraski asked if we notified the residents of Martha Circle and Martha Drive last year. Mr. Andrews said he will look into this and follow up. Member Boraski said it is important to let the residents know. He will work with Public Works for spraying and checking the area. Mr. Torro asked if the geese nest in that retention area. Mr. Andrews said he does not know for sure, but he will show it to Mr. Torro. Member Rocco asked when these services would start. Mr. Torro said he plans on starting as soon as his proposal is signed and dated. This is a 12-month program. Member Galloway moved to approve the Geese Police of Philadelphia proposal for geese

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management services in the amount of \$1,400 per month; \$16,800 for the year, contingent on them executing an indemnity agreement with the township; Member Palmer seconded the motion; all board members were in favor. (4-0)

ITEM # 5 CONSIDER PURCHASE OF POLICE VEHICLES FOR THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Chief Whitney said this purchased is for four of the five vehicles that are in our budget for this year. This is for purchase of four 2021 Ford Explorers. We are replacing two Ford Explorers and two Dodge Chargers. Member Boraski asked if they would match the current fleet. Chief Whitney said they would have four black and white and one ghost. Member Palmer asked if the Ford Explorers are comparable to the Charger during high-speed pursuits. Chief Whitney said these Explorers are pursuit rated but they are not as fast as the Dodge Charger. Member Galloway moved to open public comment; Member Palmer seconded the motion; all board members were in favor. (4-0) Ms. Toni Battiste asked if the vehicle destroyed in the crash was covered by insurance. Chief Whitney said there was an insurance pay out, but not for the full cost. Member Galloway moved to close public comment; Member Palmer seconded the motion; all board members were in favor. (4-0) Member Galloway moved to approve the purchase of four 2021 Ford Explorers off of the COSTARS list through Fred Beans; Member Palmer seconded the motion; all board members were in favor. (4-0)

ITEM # 6 CONSIDER PURCHASE OF A VEHICLE FOR THE FIRE MARSHAL'S DEPARTMENT

Fire Marshal Dippolito said this is for purchase of a 2021 Ford Explorer for the Fire Marshal Department. This will replace a 2004 Ford F-150. They try to replace a vehicle every two years. Mr. Dippolito said they will sell the old vehicle which is 17 years old. Member Boraski asked if this purchase and the police vehicles are all purchased off of the COSTARS program. Chief Whitney said yes. Member Galloway moved to approve the purchase of a 2021 Ford Explorer off of the COSTARS list through New Holland Auto Group; Member Palmer seconded the motion; all board members were in favor. (4-0)

ITEM # 7 CONSIDER RESCHEDULING THE FEBRUARY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING

Member Galloway moved to reschedule the February Board of Supervisors meeting to Tuesday, February 16, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.; Member Palmer seconded the motion; all board members were in favor. (4-0)

ITEM # 8 APPOINTMENTS TO VARIOUS BOARDS, COUNCILS, COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS

Member Rocco moved to approve Resolution # 2021-3, appointing Mr. Doug Molle to the Zoning Hearing Board; Member Galloway seconded the motion; all board members were in favor. (4-0)

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Member Rocco moved to approve Resolution # 2021-4, appointing Mr. Brian Binney to the Township of Falls Authority (TOFA) effective immediately for a full term; Member Galloway seconded the motion. Member Palmer asked Mr. Clarke if he had to abstain. Mr. Clarke said no since your vote on this does not have any financial benefit to you or any member of your family. A vote was taken and all board members were in favor. (4-0)

Member Boraski moved to appoint Mr. Colin Henderson to fulfill the term of Mr. Tom Hughes on the Planning Commission; Member Palmer seconded the motion; all board members were in favor. (4-0)

Member Boraski said last year we approved to change the Planning Commission from seven members down to five members. We had trouble filling that board and there was difficulty getting a quorum. With the board being full he would like to know what needs to be done to make an alternate to the Planning Commission. Would it be a conflict of interest if the member was a member of another board or the Board of Supervisors? Mr. Clarke said he will take a look at those issues and report back to the board.

Member Rocco said if anyone has submitted a letter to any of the boards and have not heard back, it is probably because the board hasn't been meeting due to COVID.

Member Boraski moved to appoint Mr. Brian Binney to the Planning Commission; Member Galloway seconded the motion; all board members were in favor. (4-0)

ITEM # 9 MINUTES – DECEMBER 21, 2020 & JANUARY 4, 2021

Member Boraski had a change to the December 21, 2020 meeting, item # 11 – he thought he seconded the motion. Member Boraski moved to approve the December 11, 2020 minutes as amended as well as the January 4, 2021 minutes; Member Galloway seconded the motion; all board members were in favor. (4-0)

ITEM # 10 ENGINEERS REPORT

Mr. Jones said there were four new land developments, two new earth disturbance projects, and one new flood plain permit application submitted. All projects are in various stages of review, approval, and/or construction. A couple updates on the land developments: MM Metals, J.G. Petrucci, and Al Rose Steel are all underway with earth moving activities. MM Metals is starting erection of the second building. The AirGas project is moving along as well. The four projects and new submissions are in various stages of review and approval. The Britton Industries project is the former junk yard and they are in the process of converting that under a lease into a mulch storage area. NorthPoint Phase 1 has been submitted. That is the 1,000,000 sq. ft. warehouse on River Road. The Stalwart LLC project is for a 990,000 sq. ft. warehouse and office space on Pennsylvania Avenue. The NorthPoint project will come out of review and will be presented to the Planning Commission this month. For the earth disturbance projects, there are a lot of pools and all but one are substantially complete. KPK Development is a project where they are reclaiming the lake across Wheatsheaf Road near the community park. They found a way to

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convey material under Penn Valley Road so it appears they will not need to use our roads to deliver material to that site. In terms of ongoing township projects, for the 2020 Road Program, we have sidewalks and aprons constructed on Gilbert Drive. We have stone aprons and no sidewalk on Simons Drive. We may hold off on concrete work for the winter but will report back next month. For the 2021-2023 Road Program, survey work was done on Elderberry Drive and the design is substantially complete. We will probably come back to authorize advertising in March. The survey work for Pinewood is about halfway done so we will be moving into the design on that section. Member Rocco asked about Stalwart. Mr. Jones said this is about a 1,000,000 sq. ft. warehouse and office along Pennsylvania Avenue. The plans are under review. That was subject of the text amendment. We anticipated there would be some issues with the flood plain and we will work through those issues with them. It is a work in progress, and it will probably be at the March Planning Commission once we resolve those issues. Member Galloway moved to accept the Engineers Report; Member Palmer seconded the motion; all board members were in favor. (4-0)

ITEM # 11 BILL LIST

Member Rocco provided a summary of the bill list. Member Galloway moved to approve the bill list for January 18, 2021 in the amount of \$2,427,752.02; Member Palmer seconded the motion; all board members were in favor. (4-0)

ITEM # 12 EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Clarke said the board held an Executive Session prior to tonight's meeting to discuss several matters involving personnel.

ITEM # 13 POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORT

Chief Whitney provided the following updates:

- A. During the month of December, there were 33 out of 62 shifts where manpower was at or below minimum staffing for at least part of the shift. This amounts to 53% of the time in December. This is down from 50% in November. The objective is to be at minimum staffing no more than 25% of the time.
- B. There were 3 overdoses in December. The yearly total is 123. There were nine fatal overdoses for the year. There were 1,494 calls for service for the month of December. At the end of December, we were up to 17,877 calls. There were 236 medical calls in December with 2,255 for the year. There were 91 traffic accidents in December bringing the year-to-date total to 999.
- C. There were 86 arrests in December bringing the year-to-date total to 788. This includes 427 year-to-date drug arrests.
- D. Chief Whitney provided information on township hotels and motels.
- E. An arrest was made for the shooting homicide that occurred at the Commons of Fallsington on December 1, 2020. The detectives are investigating a shots fired call on Harding Drive. There was a cell block incident on December 18, 2020.
- F. Chief Whitney reported that the Certified Recovery Specialist, who will ride with

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- our police EMTs, will start on February 1, 2021.
- G. A Crowd Control policy has been established. Training was conducted for the entire police department.
 - H. The police will undergo training for a Missing Kids Readiness Program (MKRP). This is a partnership with the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) to join the MKRP. Falls Township Police Department will adopt the NCMEC model policy on missing children.
 - I. New software is being phased into use by the police. This turns the forward facing WatchGuard camera into a license plate reader.
 - J. Chief Whitney reviewed the trends in 2020. This includes an increase in traffic pursuits, an increase in shootings, and a decrease in fatal overdoses. The calls for service totals for 2020 was provided.

Member Rocco asked where the crowd control training takes place. Chief Whitney said he sent two officers to a Homeland Security Instructor School in December. When they were certified as instructors, we took the IACP model policy on crowd control and modified it to work with the equipment and people we have. Those two instructors performed the training, partly in the patrol room and partly in the parking lot. Chief Whitney said he thought this was a skill set everyone should have. Member Rocco asked if they were set for equipment. Chief Whitney said they are set for what they do. Member Palmer said the mental health number is 233. With the social worker coming on board, will they be involved with overdoses and also mental health? Chief Whitney said the social worker we are bringing on board is a Certified Recovery Specialist. They are specially trained to respond to help people who are dealing with substance abuse in their life and connect them with recovery treatment. We do not have a social worker riding with us specifically for mental health. For these individuals dealing with mental health, we refer them to the Lenape Valley Mobile Crisis Team. Chief Whitney said we have had a wonderful relationship for many years with them. Member Palmer asked where they were with expanding the sectors with development back at the mill. Chief Whitney said Sergeant Clark is working on that resource allocation project. We will be better served and the community will be better served with a different sector plan. Member Boraski asked about the calls for service for overdoses; and you were talking about substance abuse. Would there also be calls for alcoholism or something else? Chief Whitney said it could be any calls that involve any kind of connection with substance or drug abuse. It would be any kind of call for service for someone who needs help. Member Boraski said it is a good start to go with the 233 number and as we get through 2021, a social worker could have responded to 400 calls. Member Boraski asked Chief Whitney if he could discuss the timeframes regarding drug buy back and the shredder event. Chief Whitney said there would be one in the spring and one in the fall and he will find out more information. Member Boraski asked if there were any retirements coming up. Chief Whitney said we had Chief Wilcox retire and Lt. Pletnick is retiring this year. There are other officers on D.R.O.P. this year. We currently have 25 applications from the Consortium and we will be reviewing those. Member Boraski asked Lt. Whitney if he could take a few minutes to discuss the transition into the Chief role. Chief Whitney said it has been a big difference moving into the Chief position. It is a mixed blessing knowing the things that need to be fixed. He tried to prioritize the training issues and the policies issues

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that he believes are important. We have taken a page from the S.W.A.T. community and that is a good model to follow. He has his staff working with him on defining the capabilities that we have or want to have and then define training toward those capabilities and drafting an annual training plan. He thinks we will all be out there managing critical incidents and those are the things that worry him. He looks at the trends that are taking place. He spends a lot of time trying to prepare for that next event. He had a good conversation with Middletown's Chief the other day and they spoke about partnership and helping each other. Chief Whitney said it is exciting to prepare everyone for various incidents.

ITEM # 14 PRESENTATION OF FIRE MARSHAL'S YEAR END REPORT

Fire Marshal Rich Dippolito presented the year end report. He thanked John Weiss for compiling the presentation. Mr. Dippolito said there are five full-time employees in the Fire Marshal Office (FMO). They are the Director of Emergency Services & Fire Marshal, three Fire Inspectors, and one Fire Marshal Clerk. Mr. Dippolito reviewed responsibilities of the Director of Emergency Services and the Fire Inspectors. There were 962 annual fire inspections performed in 2020. Township volunteer fire companies responded to the following number of calls: Falls Township Fire Company, Station 30 (629 responses); Fairless Hills Fire Company, Station 31 (546 responses); Levittown Fire Co. No. 1, Station 32 (342 responses). Emergency Medical Service (EMS) statistics show 1,813 calls for Advanced Life Support (ALS) responses; 1,017 Basic Life Support (BLS) responses for a total of 2,830 EMS responses. We offer fire safety training consisting of fire safety lectures and fire extinguisher training. We currently have four Public Works employees who are fire fighters and they, along with the FMO staff, respond to fire calls during the day. The Fire Marshal's office visits schools during Fire Prevention week each October and other establishments upon request to provide fire safety and prevention information. They also provide fire prevention information utilizing the smoke trailer. We have been partnering with Channel 6 ABC Operation Save a Life. The FMO offers free smoke detectors and installation for Falls Township residents. This year they installed 26 new smoke detectors and 38 new batteries in existing smoke detectors in 12 Falls Township homes. The yearly revenue was approximately \$232,554. This is collected from annual fire inspections, fire permits, fire reports, and fire review fees. Mr. Dippolito said they started a food drive and have donated about 15,000 lbs. of food to various food pantries in our area. This comes with help from our town. We have Waste Management and Penn Warner Club partnering with us, we have various residents who generously donate every month and we have the North Park residents who are great supporters of this program. Mr. Dippolito reviewed their accomplishments. Each Fire Marshal vehicle has an AED. There have been many policies due to the COVID Pandemic. If anyone has questions with the food drive or for help with smoke detectors, please contact our office at 215-949-9000 ext. 255. Board members thanked Mr. Dippolito and said they appreciate all the help with the food drive. Member Rocco said he appreciates the way Mr. Dippolito runs the department. Member Palmer said your department works hand in hand with the community to help take care of the compromised folks in our community; thank you. Member Galloway said great job on the food drive program. Member Boraski said he thinks this is good for the residents to see

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what you are doing on a daily basis and to stay proactive for Falls Township. He also said good job on the presentation.

ITEM # 15 MANAGER COMMENT

- A. Member Galloway moved to approve escrow release # 2 for MM Metals USA LLC in the amount of \$291,691.62; Member Palmer seconded the motion; all board members were in favor. (4-0)
- B. Member Galloway moved to approve construction release # 3 for the Mill and Overlay of the Road Program \$136,802.88; Member Palmer seconded the motion; all board members were in favor. (4-0)
- C. Member Galloway moved to approve the separation agreement between Falls Township and J.S.; Member Palmer seconded the motion; all board members were in favor. (4-0)
- D. Member Galloway moved to approve waiver of the \$1,000 variance filing fee for the Falls Township Fire Company; Member Palmer seconded the motion; all board members were in favor. (4-0)

ITEM # 16 BOARD COMMENT

Member Rocco said the Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) is meeting on Zoom. Member Rocco moved to appoint Eileen Donahue and John Bentz, both to a 3-year term on the EAC board; Member Palmer seconded the motion; all board members were in favor. (4-0) Member Rocco moved to appoint Rochelle McIntyre to a 5-year term on the Parks and Rec board; Member Palmer seconded the motion; all board members were in favor. (4-0) Member Rocco hopes everything goes smoothly this Wednesday and he wished everyone a good night. Member Rocco thanked Member Boraski for filling in for Chairman Dence.

Member Galloway – no comment

Member Palmer – no comment

Member Boraski said good work for both of the PowerPoint presentations. He asked if both of these presentations could be uploaded to the township website and create links off of Facebook. Member Boraski said he thinks it is necessary for the residents to see. The public only sees the red or blue lights going by and there is so much more that they do. He would like the presentations added each month. For the Drug Buy Back and Shredder event, this is something he brings up so everyone will know when it will be held.

Member Galloway moved to adjourn the meeting; Member Rocco seconded the motion; all board members were in favor. (4-0) The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.



Jeffrey Rocco, Secretary

