**Western Cumberland Council of Governments**

**Regular Monthly Meeting**

**Minutes of February 12, 2024**

**West Pennsboro Township Building**

Pat Sangialosi called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

CITIZENS’ COMMENTS

SPEAKERS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of January 8, 2024 were approved on a Barrick/Swartz motion which carried.

ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT

The January 31, 2024 bank balances were as follows: Checking $7,759.25 Savings $30,760.44 and Regional Code MMA $258,281.91 West Pennsboro Township earned $877.80 for UCC building permit administration in January, the WCCOG earned $219.45 in the same period. The Bill List of $25,743.68 was approved on a Plasterer/Oldt motion which carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS – LEGISLATIVE REPORTS

COUNTY & STATE REPORTS

Representative Dr. John Joyce, 13th Congressional District of Pennsylvania, spoke to the members. He gave an update on things going on in Washington DC. He specifically mentioned broadband expansion to underserved areas as well as the community health service funding. He has visited Eagle Pass, Texas Border four times. He is very concerned about keeping the border secure. He feels there should be zero tolerance for immigrants crossing over into the United States. Representative Joyce mentioned the Assistance to Firefighter Grant (AFG) Program which has been developed, so fire departments can apply for grants.

Joshua Reynolds from Representative Barb Gleim’s office reported that they have been receiving Food Processing Residual Resolutions (FPR) from local municipalities requesting stricter guidelines be put in place. A letter was sent to the DEP Secretary Shirley asking them to take immediate and necessary actions to update the regulations including FPRs. The letter signed by Senators Rothman, Mastriano, Dush, and House members Ecker and Gleim. A group of forty individuals met for the third time to work on updating the regulations regarding FPRs. The process is challenging as ACRES Act and The Right to Farm Act cannot be contradicted. The focus of this meeting was to establish clear definitions and differentiating between unharmful and harmful categories. The next meeting will be held on February 29th. The goal is to have the regulations completed and ready for implementation in May. The State Budget for 2024 has a $3.2 Billion deficit. Appropriation hearings start next week. Most likely the Senate will start prioritizing any spending or as the media likes to coin the phrase “investment”. Representative Gleim will be hosting a 2024 Senior Learning Series: Boomer Bash on March 1st and A Concealed Carry Seminar on April 11th.

Cumberland County Commissioner Gary Eichelberger mentioned that he was the WCCOG liaison for several years. He said the Municipal Advisory Board is celebrating twenty years of existence. Gary encouraged everyone to attend the meetings.

Kelly Neiderer introduced herself as the newest Cumberland County Commissioner. She serves on the Agricultural Farmland Preservation, CADEC, and the Planning Commission Boards. She said the Food Processing Residuals issue is being discussed at the County level. She mentioned the Commissioners will be meeting later this week to vote on increasing tax millage for 2024 to fix the budget deficit. Cumberland County is not getting the State funding necessary to maintain many crucial programs.

Jean Foschi mentioned that Cumberland County Commissioners will be voting on Wednesday to increase the tax millage by fifteen percent to generate $8.7 million additional dollars. Mental health and 911 both have a deficit of $3 million and the P25 tower project has a deficit of $1 million. Each department in the County has been tasked with trying to find ways to save money within the department. Cumberland County hired a grant administrator, Katie Zimmerman, to seek grant opportunities for the County. In the past no one ever has had the time to dig through the grant paperwork. The Cumberland County Election Bureau is preparing for the presidential primary election that will be held in May.

SOLICITOR’S REPORT

Marcus McKnight reported that he invited Brightspeed to attend the March or April WCCOG meeting to discuss broadband. Students need to have reliable high-speed internet to be able to have virtual school days.

MUNICIPAL REPORTS

**Cooke Township** – Pat Sangialosi said that the backhoe has been repaired. The Township will be meeting with DCNR on February 22nd to discuss the twenty-seven dead trees located on their property that need to be taken down. The key being whose responsibility is it to pay for the removal.

**Dickinson Township** – Larry Barrick mentioned the Township BOS recently held a workshop. The plan is to start doing this monthly to discuss Township goals. The road crew has been working on the walking trail at Stuart Park utilizing some Cumberland County Grant Funds. This year’s road project will be a total reconstruction of Peach Glen Road. There are approximately twenty-three culvert pipes that need to be replaced as part of this project.

**Lower Frankford Township** – Karen Heishman mentioned that the Township recently added a 92-acre farm to its Agricultural Security Area.

**Lower Mifflin Township** – Jake Fealtman reported the road crew is preparing for tomorrow’s snowstorm. The BOS is holding a special meeting today to discuss possible weight restricting roads to keep the hauling of FPRs from destroying the Township roadways. The hauling is being done at night and waking up the Township residents.

**Mount Holly Borough** – Tom Day said that the one-mile portion of Ridge Road located in the Borough is the steepest part of the road. DCNR abandoned the road years ago. There are constant flooding issues including the flooding of Borough resident’s basements. The water needs to be diverted every several hundred yards. An eleven-foot-deep lake formed in Trine Park. The Borough hauled in hundreds of loads of fill to resolve the issue. The flooding is now affecting State Route 34 near Deer Lodge. It caused a ravine on the one side of the road. The Borough is working with the Cumberland County Conservation District and DCNR to come up with funding to fix these issues. Carlisle School District is planning to close Mount Holly Elementary School. Since 1968 the Borough has had an agreement with the District to maintain the ball fields and walking trail on the school’s 11 acre property. The future of that agreement is unknown.

**Newville Borough** – Ed Sinkovitz mentioned that the Borough is still waiting on the District Attorney’s Audit of the Borough’s finances. They are hoping to install a splash pad at the park with money received from a DCED Grant. The Fountain Festival will be coming back.

**North Newton Township** – Mike Gutshall said that the old Oakville Elementary School is being torn down. The windows and bricks will be saved. The Township road crew has been doing truck maintenance. They have been trimming trees and cold patching potholes.

**Township** – Corrie Wadel mentioned that the road crew is trimming trees and doing some excavation at the park to install playground equipment. The playground equipment was purchased with a Cumberland County Grant.  An addition to the Township’s Agricultural Security Area was recorded at the courthouse last week.  A traffic study warrants that a new red light needs to be installed at the northbound ramps at exit 37 off Interstate 81. Penn Township is working with PennDOT, West Pennsboro Township and all the other involved entities to facilitate the best plan moving forward.  Kirk Stoner will help facilitate these upcoming discussions.

**Shippensburg Borough** – Kevin Plasterer said the Borough has issued request for proposals to help them figure out the best solution to replacing its fifty plus year old public pool. A new pool would cost $4.2 million. The council needs to decide if that is the best option as a new pool would require on going upkeep and maintenance. The Borough is working with DCED, it was suggested to hire HRG to perform a strategic management assessment for the last five years. They will specifically be looking at all the funding that the police department requires. The assessment could take eight months. The goal is to find ways to save the Borough money.

**Shippensburg Township** – Steve Oldt reported Parx Casino is doing well. They opened an entertainment room. On Friday and Saturday evenings its host a comedian. Exit 29 off Interstate 81 needs some improvements and PennDOT is not cooperating with the Township. Everything with Arby’s, Popeyes, and Chipotle is moving forward.

**West Pennsboro Township** – Evelyn Swartz reported the Township road crew is getting ready for the next snow storm. They are finishing up the repair to a pavilion at the Township Park. They are also working on the shoulders on Green Hill Road and tree cleanup on Fairway Drive. The BOS recently interviewed two prospects for the Township Manager position.

OLD BUSINESS

LTAP Classes have been scheduled Asphalt Roads Common Maintenance 2/14/2024, Drainage: The Key to Roads that Last 3/13/2024, and Traffic Signs Basics 3/14/2024.

Flagger Training has been scheduled for 3/7/2024. It will be held at West Pennsboro Township Firehall because of the large class size. Zac Zook is hosting the training for free. Purchasing Zac a $100 restaurant gift card was approved on a Plasterer/Barrick motion which carried. Donating $100 to the West Pennsboro Township Volunteer Fire Company for the use of its facility was approved on a Barrick/Plasterer motion which carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Kevin Plasterer asked the Cumberland County Commissioners for help with issues he is having with PennDOT. There are approximately three to four miles of State Roads in the Borough. PennDOT has always maintained the inlets and outlets, but now they are trying to push the maintenance onto the Borough. Kevin stood firm last year when PennDOT resurfaced King Street and PennDOT made the necessary improvements for the storm water, but Kevin is worried about the future.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:20 p.m. on a Barrick/Plasterer motion which carried.

Respectfully submitted by Karen M Heishman, Administrator/Secretary/Treasurer.

February 12, 2024

WCCOG Attendance Record:

PA 13th District, John Joyce, MD

PA 13th District, Nancy Bull

199th District, Joshua Reynolds

Gary Eichelberger, Cumberland County Commissioner

Jean Foschi, Cumberland County Commissioner

Kelly Neiderer, Cumberland County Commissioner

Bob Kough, Penn Township Volunteer Fire Department

Pat Sangialosi, Cooke Township

Larry Barrick, Dickinson Township

David Bachman, Lower Frankford Township

Jake Fealtman, Lower Mifflin Township

Tom Day, Mount Holly Borough

Ed Sinkovitz, Newville Borough

Mike Gutshall, North Newton Township

Corrie Wadel, Penn Township

Kevin Plasterer, Shippensburg Borough

Steve Oldt, Shippensburg Township

Evelyn Swartz, West Pennsboro Township

Peter Conlow, MDIA

Marcus McKnight, WCCOG Solicitor

Karen M. Heishman, WCCOG Administrator