**Waterford Township Supervisors**

**Regular Business Meeting**

**Wednesday, January 16, 2019**

The regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Waterford Township was called to order by Chairman Coffin at 7:00 p.m. at the Waterford Township Municipal Building, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Coffin presided over the meeting with Supervisor Senger in attendance. Supervisor Malinowski was absent. Also in attendance was Sec’y/Treas. Sharon Risjan, Roadmaster Kevin Cromwell, Gina Cimino, Tom Alcorn (PaDOT), Brian McNulty (PaDOT), Darren Myer (HRG), Leslie (Buck) Brace, Larry Thompson, Sylvia Skelton, Mike Wokulich.

**PUBLIC COMMENT  
Buck Brace** – His son, Doug, is going to buy both storages in Waterford Township. The other building by the road is in McKean Township. He questions if they have to do anything in particular to do this. Chairman Coffin advised that an attorney should know. He does not know why it should make any difference. Buck described why the ramp is there which is half in Waterford Township and half in McKean Township. Back when they said the ramp was not much of a thing so they wouldn’t tax it. He asked if they could have two houses and one driveway. Chairman advised that we will have to talk to the zoning officer about that and let him know. It is the driveway that goes to his house down in the woods. Chairman will look into it and get back to him.

**Gina Cimino** **9801 Hamot Road, Waterford, PA Phone 881-5262** – Wanted to know if she could apply for a conditional use for property she owns at 11808 Route 19, B-1 zoning. There are two separate living areas. There are two kitchens and she thought it was a rental. Now she wants to sell the property and it is becoming an issue. It is on two acres. If she applied to change the zoning to a two-family dwelling, could she do that? There are two kitchens, two bathrooms, two bedrooms in each. Marilyn had told her she needs to talk to the supervisors. Chairman advised that we will talk to Marilyn and get back to her, and if she doesn’t like the answer, she can have a hearing and go from there.

**Larry Thompson** asked why all the planning members are gone. Chairman advised that there was no reason given; they sent a memo signed by all members resigning their positions, and thanked the supervisors for allowing them the opportunity to serve the residents of Waterford Township. That was it. He has tried for the past three days to get some information and has not been able to do so. So, we will move forward. Brief discussion ensued on whether it is necessary to have a planning board at all, and if just one person could do it. Consensus was that more than one person would be necessary, and that the planning board is a recommending body to the Board of Supervisors.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion by Senger, seconded by Coffin, to approve the minutes of the 2019 Reorganization Meeting/Regular Business Meeting, and the January 7, 2019 Regular Business Meeting meeting, as presented.**

**Vote: 2/0**

**NIEMEYER ROAD COVERED BRIDGE DISCUSSION**:

Supervisor Senger had asked for representatives of HRG and PaDOT to be present at this meeting to explain the delay of completion of this bridge. He has heard rumors that this bridge is being put off another year and would like to know if it is, or if it has gone out for bid; what’s going on.

--Darren Myer (HRG) stated that the design was done; getting ready for bid. Final estimates are a bit higher than the funding that PaDOT had allotted and his understanding is they will have to postpone it until the next TIC (total installed cost) which would be August of next year to get it into the cycle for bidding.

Senger: What’s a little higher?

Darren: About 2.2M. That’s the total project cost.

Senger: How much was it three years ago?

Darren: About 8 years ago it was 1.4M. A lot of it was going through the design. We are trying to keep it so that you can drive utility trucks so the load posting won’t be the 3 ton that it is today. So, with the geo-technical review, the foundation was determined that we can’t support the additional load because we are putting steel beams to support the structure and then putting the covered bridge back on it and we can’t support all that with the soil and existing foundations. So, there are new foundations to be placed under the bridge and that’s the bulk of the extra cost in addition to some of the time lapse and additional requirements.

--Senger: So we have to put new bridge abutments to support all that. Correct. Why can’t we drill caissons to support the steel beams behind the original abutments? And without disturbing the creek, leave those abutments there.

--Darren: Part of that would be the structure length; he believes they did look at some of that and essentially it is going to be micro-piles in the foundation so we have to take the bridge off to put the beams back in; he doesn’t know if that would be a much more cost-effective solution. It may, but then you have the existing abutments working with that new structure and he thinks they are trying to set this up so that it is something that is going to last for hopefully another 100 years.

--Senger: We signed an agreement to extend for billing purposes through the end of December of 2019. No one said anything about the cost going up and we are going to have to extend the project another year. This project has gone on long enough; it’s been six years in design. It doesn’t take six years to design a covered bridge that is already existing.

--Darren: Agrees; it’s been a long process and he had hoped it wouldn’t be this long.

--Senger: We were told that (and he has minutes) that there wasn’t going to be any more delays.

--Darren: Agrees; last year they didn’t anticipate the delays but when we got to the time where it was about to be bid, the funding wasn’t there.

--Resident: When was that meeting; he was at a meeting about three years ago and all that was supposed to be in there; the new abutments, the concrete; all that was supposed to be in there. It took him six months to find out why it wasn’t done; it was the mussel study. Is that part of that?

--Darren: To expand on some of the progress through the years, yes there was the mussel study that had to be done; there’s some time, it being a historic bridge, and federal funds involved, we have to make sure that anything we do doesn’t compromise the status of the historic structure from FHWA (Federal Highway Administration) so that’s where we have to get it through that process. They looked at exploring the concrete deck option at one point so that took some time back and forth and, unfortunately, they couldn’t do that because of the adverse effect. That’s some of the causes for the time issues.

--Coffin: With the higher weight limit, is it wide enough and high enough for vehicles of that weight?

--Darren: The assumption in the scope was like a smaller truck or something like that if you wanted to drive across it; UPS truck obviously can’t fit across that structure. The scope was actually defined even before he was involved in the project at HRG.

--Coffin: Doesn’t want to, after the fact, spend the extra money for weight if trucks that size couldn’t go through it anyways. Just wanted to make sure that they were still okay.

--Brian McNulty (PaDOT): He received the design unit there; won’t say he knows all the details about this project, but Tom and Darren do; Is HRG contracted through PaDOT or through the Township? Response was through the Township. The funding is 80% Federal and 20% State, so it’s 100% covered and the frustration is the time element.

--Senger responded that, yes, frustration is the time. We are going on eight years to design a bridge that is already there where we are basically just putting new bridge abutments in and putting some steel beams underneath it to help support a little additional weight and re-fab what is there. This is kind of ridiculous.

--Brian: Understands the frustration. They deal with it too, and HRG is a great partner of theirs. Most of the time, if they are doing any other bridge rehab or a complete replacement, it’s a year or two tops; for right of way and all those things. This bridge is, and we’ve got others like it in the district, other municipalities that are suffering through similar situations, the things that Darren mentioned are all stacked against us. It sounds like, to me, the only barrier is funding.

--Tom: We are just waiting for the funding to become available so we can advertise.

--Senger: So, is it federal funding that is being held up or state funding that is being held up?

--Tom: That would be federal funding.

--Coffin: So, when the new funding is allocated, if it’s allocated for this, would it be done in 2019.

--Brian: It’s possible to find funding for this; but this is a Township sponsored project. He doesn’t know who was here when it was initially funded. Assuming it was like any other project, someone approached the MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization) and asked them to fund this project. If we need an increase now; if this project needs another million dollars, someone has to go to the MPO and ask for that.

--Kevin: Asked Darren, while they were doing the study for this, if they ever ran across what that bridge would support as is, without the steel beams. If the structure is repaired, the rotted wood, etc.

--Darren: It probably would support vehicular traffic but the design for the scope was established to carry that.

--Brian: Understands the Township’s frustration and after this much time working on this bridge he really wants to see this project come to fruition himself. You probably could do more cost effective and quicker methods to rehab it, but with getting the federal dollars he thinks we are meeting the criteria we need to meet and it’s going to be the best project you can have.

--Senger: Does this mean we need to sign another extension? Because the extension we signed will end December of 2019 and we may not even see this bridge by December of 2019. We are tired of signing extensions. You said everything is on plan and ready to go. We signed it to give us billing payment to December 2019, at the end of completion. No one came back and said that this was 1M over budget.

--Larry Thompson: And you’re saying now that that money may not be available in August, so that will delay it who knows how long.

--Senger: That will delay it even longer.

--Brian: A 1M increase is not a small chunk of change for the Erie MPO.

--Larry Thompson: When does the study on the snails expire?

--Tom: The permit is good for five years. Study responsibility – Work in coordination with PaDOT’s consultant to use on environmental services.

--Senger: Understands there are a lot of bridges that you have to fix. But where is all this bridge money going. We are paying the fuel taxes, registrations, and everything else. We keep getting requests for extension requests on excuses.

--Brian: Has PaDOT’s TIC (total installed cost) with him and the Township is welcome to have it when he leaves. It’s the budget for the Erie MPO. They get about 22M per year; they usually spend about 30% or so of that on bridges – about 7M a year, and there are bridges all over Erie County.

--Senger: How many bridges have been going on for seven years?

--Brian: Very few. Their standard bridge is, if there is no ROW, they can get it out the door in nine months to a year. If there’s a ROW, 2 years. If it’s a historic bridge with an endangered species under it, you are looking at a long time. Tom has projects that have been in design for 12 years or more. Tom responded that for a historic bridge it’s very normal to be in design for 8-10 years.

--Brian: We don’t make those rules; we don’t like this situation, but there’s nothing that we can do about it to get around federal endangered species, acts, or historic preservation. That’s not something that PaDOT made up or the consulting community. Those are federal laws that we have to follow.

--Coffin: Really disappointed that now the weight limits have changed to extend it for a small covered bridge like that. He not an engineer, but he’s not sure how much it should hold. It almost seems to us like a money grab in a way to extend the weight that possibly wouldn’t handle things that could go through it anyways. But he does know, in his personal opinion, that we realize environmental law has us doing things that cost the taxpayers an incredible amount of money and some could say it’s worth it and some could say it’s not. Most say it’s not. But we have come too far also to ruin this project and, if the Township has to pay for it, out of our funds, it would be closed for a long. He doesn’t want to do anything to inhibit it getting finished, but it does make you mad that it is taking this long.

--Senger: It’s his opinion too. We signed extensions and we are told that it’s going out for bid and it will be done by October and bills be paid by December and we’re done. And now, we off another year again.

--Coffin: A lot of people are talking about it, and that’s probably why this meeting is here and why you are called because every week someone is asking about it. So, somehow, we have to have a definite answer of what’s going on and he appreciates having them help to answer that.

--Brian: how long has the bridge been closed?

--Kevin: Since 2012.

--Brian asked Tom if it was FHWA (Federal Highway Administration) that pushed for a greater weight limit or a greater posting?

--Tom: It was in the scope. The Township had input in that 8-10 years ago when the scope was established.

--Brian: This project has some special funding on it and he put in a request to central office to see if there is any more of that. In other words, it would not necessarily, if there is more available, come from the Erie MPO TIC which would be the easiest way. So far, the answer is no, there’s none of that kind of special earmarked funds left for covered bridges.

--Kevin: At some point there was a meeting and part of the reason it didn’t end up being a concrete deck was because a historic representative was here from the State and she said they would not fund it with a concrete deck. It was then that they probably started scaling back because a concrete deck would have gone full width. She did say they would allow steel beams if they were placed high enough in the structure where they were not easily seen. It didn’t seem like it could have been scaled back at that point; not put the beams in and now we have the weight limit. That isn’t what they did.

--Tom: We have to follow the Department of the Interior standards.

--Brian: We can ask that question a little more directly because it was in the scope. We can circle back and ask if there’s any way we can leave it at 3-ton weight limit; we can push for that. It doesn’t sound promising to him, but it’s a possible way this project can be sped up. If it can stay at 3 ton, maybe the abutments are adequate. Is that what he’s hearing.

--Darren: He would have to confirm with the structural engineers but there may be a way to change it at this point.

--Senger: Wasn’t here under the original scope and what was done, but is trying to help the residents and the community with the frustration of the bridge being closed this long, and the extensions continuing.

--Coffin: How much does a F550 weight. Response was 16,000 pounds.

--Coffin: There’s the problem.

--Senger: He was asking about caissons because the hotel on the bayfront drilled caissons and then put the I-beams on that to hit bedrock.

--Darren: Would be happy to get their structural engineering team to ask them different questions.

--Senger: We were telling people, after you were here in August, that it’s going through.

--Tom: When he was here in August, we were getting ready to get the final design package in and he hadn’t had the construction estimate yet. So, he was unaware that the project was going to double in cost. He found that out after the meeting.

--Senger: So, when do we expect this to actually go out for bid now?

--Tom: When construction monies are secured.

--Senger: So, 2025?

--Brian: This is a Township sponsored project and, in any other similar situation, the Township would go to the MPO and request additional funds. They just had a tac meeting for the MPO today. He can give us Emily Aloiz phone number and e-mail. If you know her at all, she is the person to reach out to first, and PaDOT can help you through the process of asking for more money.

--Senger: Please leave that information for us. He wants to get this going.

--Kevin: One other question: Could the bridge be made structurally sound and safe and closed to traffic.

Tom: If you use federal funds, the road has to be open.

--Darren: HRG has reached out to some contacts they have in the FHWA to see if there is any funding available as well. We understand your plight.

--Senger: At this point, anything you can do to help us to get this project done.

It was noted that Enviro Science does the mussel studies.

**TREASURER’S REPORT**

**ROADMASTER’S REPORT**

* They had a couple of days where they were able to fix washouts.
* Then there were snow events.
* They are continuing on with winter maintenance. Nothing major.
* Has three estimates to repair the one garage door. The bottom section is shot and also the opener is getting iffy. Estimates range from $1,550 to $2,300. Miller Overhead will be out tomorrow.
* New truck needs state inspection and a few other things. Hopefully it will be here any day.
* Salt Brine – He needs to check with other municipalities to see what they call it.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Logging Ordinance – Chairman asked Kevin to look over the one that was written but not enacted years ago. Kevin noted that, if nothing else, they should have to get a permit so we can know where they are. That would help a lot. This will be on the next meeting agenda.

**NEW BUSINESS** - None

**CORRESPONDENCE**

* PA Municipal Planning Education Course – 3/5, 3/12, 3/19/2019
* Resignation of Planning Commission Members
* PaDOT – Permit applications to PADEP for Old Wattsburg Road Bridge
* Erie County Health Department – 1663 Bagdad Rd Sewage Inspection Results

It was noted that we have posted on the Township’s website that we are looking to appoint new Planning Commission members.

**RECEIPTS**:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 614912 | Erie County Tax Claim | Delinquent Taxes | 1,039.35 |
| 614913 | Mag District Court | Local Fines | 165.70 |
| 614914 | Wtfd Municipal Authority | 4Q2018 Sewer/Water | 1,757.18 |
| 614915 | Wtfd Tax Collector | 2017 Per Capita | 5.50 |
| 614916 | Wtfd Tax Collector | Real Estate Tax | 10,980.31 |
| 614917 | Berkheimer | Local Services Tax | 5.32 |
| 614918 | Berkheimer | Earned Income Tax | 136.00 |
| 614919 | Berkheimer | Earned Income Tax | 2,911.30 |

**Payroll**:

Payroll Period: 12/29/18 – 01/11/2019

Check Date: 01/16/2019

Net Payroll: $ 8,848.37

Taxes: $ 3,431.86

Total: $12,310.23

**MOTION TO PAY BILLS   
Motion to pay the bills was made by Senger, seconded by Coffin.**

**Vote: 2/0**

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

**Motion to adjourn was made by Senger, seconded by Coffin at 7:45 p.m.**

**Vote: 2/0**

Approved: Respectfully Submitted:

Bruce Coffin Date Sharon Risjan

Chairman Secretary