

West Earl Township Board of Supervisors, 157 West Metzler Road, Brownstown, PA 17508

**In Attendance:**

Chairman:	John Ford	Police Department:	Sergeant Scott Ruth
Vice Chairman:	Harold Keppley, Jr.	Police Department:	Chief Eric Higgins
Member:	Keith Kauffman	Roadmaster:	Neil Stoltzfus
Member:	Dave Thornton	Zoning Officer:	Sara Service

Others present: Sylvan Fisher

Manager Jennifer Seesholtz and Member Richard Stover were absent.

Guests in Attendance

James Shopf, 550 Millway Road  
 Phil Machonis, West Earl Water Authority Member  
 John Friel, LNP

Call to Order

Chairman Ford called the December 16, 2019 regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Chairman Ford announced that the Board held an executive session on Tuesday, November 29, 2019 to discuss personnel performance issues.

Approval of Minutes

Vice Chairman Ford noted errors in the December 9<sup>th</sup> minutes.

1. Under the Public Comment Heading, Creek Hill HOA, first arrow point - Chairman Ford said that the HOA is within its right to work with the developer to move the mailboxes or signs to suit.
2. Under the Police Chief's Report heading – Chairman Ford said Eric Higgins has signed the employment agreement.

Moved by Vice Chairman Ford, second by Member Thornton to approve the December 9, 2019 regular meeting minutes as corrected. Motion approved unanimously.

Public Comment/Guests

**Sergeant Scott Ruth** – Sergeant Ruth addressed the Board and said he had commendations for two West Earl Police Officers. Sergeant Ruth read through each commendation. Officers Wendell Metzler and Jeremy Sorenson are recognized for their outstanding support of the West Earl Police Department during a difficult period for the staff of the Police Department. Officer Metzler provided over 297 hours of service to the Township and its citizens over a period of 22 weeks. Officer Sorenson provided over 100 hours of service to the Township and its citizens over a period of 18 weeks. Member Thornton asked that a press release be prepared as well. Moved by Member Thornton, second by Vice Chairman Keppley to recognize Officers Wendell Metzler and Jeremy Sorenson for their service to the West Earl Police Department, the Township and its citizens. Motion approved unanimously. The full commendations will be attached to the meeting minutes.

**Jim Shopf, 550 Millway Road** – Mr. Shopf was at the meeting to express his frustration with the on-going construction around his home. Mr. Shopf showed the Board members some pictures that he'd taken. Member Thornton explained that in April a stormwater pipe under Cocalico Creek Road collapsed and needed repaired. He further explained that the previous Roadmaster and road crew worked on repairing the pipe but had to stop the work in order to take care of other projects relating to State regulated stormwater management requirements. Member Thornton said Sylvan Fisher hired a subcontractor to finish the pipe work on Cocalico Creek Road and it is now repaired; however, the curbing and re-paving work will have to wait until spring due to the cold weather. Member Thornton apologized to Mr. Shopf for the situation and assured him that it would be taken care of in the spring. Mr. Shopf asked why the Township stores equipment and materials at the farm across the street from him. Mr. Stoltzfus explained that the Township unfortunately does not own enough right-of-way to store equipment and materials during road projects. Member Thornton

said the projects would take much longer to complete if the road crew had to run back to the Township building for materials and equipment and said it's a short-term pain for a long-term gain. Mr. Stoltzfus said that all the Township's equipment and materials have been cleared from the property. Mr. Shopf asked why there are still trucks parked on the property and showed the Board a picture. Member Kauffman said that they are Comcast trucks. Member Kauffman will discuss this with the representative from Comcast and ask that they be moved.

#### Old Business

**Leaf truck and grant money** – Mr. Stoltzfus said the truck is currently being completed and will be delivered by late spring or early summer. Once the Township takes delivery of the truck then DEP will release the grant funds.

#### New Business

1. **Adoption of 2020 Budget** – Chairman Ford noted that the 2020 budget does not include a tax increase. Moved by Member Kauffman, second by Member Thornton to adopt the 2020 West Earl Township Budget. Motion approved unanimously.
2. **Resolution 2019-21** – Establishing fines for violations of the Township code where Quick Tickets will be issued and approval of the Quick Ticket Form. Moved by Member Kauffman, second by Member Thornton to adopt Resolution 2019-21. Motion approved unanimously.
3. **Insurance Reimbursement Request** – Officer Jordan Byrnes has submitted a health insurance benefits waiver and reimbursement request as he is receiving health insurance benefits from an alternate source. Moved by Chairman Ford, second by Vice Chairman Keppley to reimburse Officer Jordan Byrnes \$329.33, prorated as of his employment start date. Motion approved unanimously.
4. **Secretary & Treasurer Appointment** – Moved by Member Kauffman, second by Member Thornton to appoint Township Manager Seesholtz as Secretary and Treasurer of West Earl Township effective immediately. Motion approved unanimously.
5. **Cloverbrook Development** – Moved by Chairman Ford, second by Vice Chairman Keppley that the Board of Supervisors authorize the release of the Subdivision and Land Development Bond issued to West Earl Township by United States Surety Company dated February 17, 2009, to serve as financial security for completion of the improvements required by the Final Subdivision and Land Development Plan for Cloverbrook Development, Inc., recorded at Subdivision Plan Book J-223, Page 86, conditioned upon the posting of substitute financial security in the amount of \$755,000 in a form acceptable to the Township Solicitor and authorize execution of an amendment to the developer's agreement relating to such plan to reflect the substitution of the financial security and the name of the developer posting the substitute financial security. Motion approved unanimously.
6. **Repair 2013 Police Interceptor** – Sergeant Ruth reported that the repairs will cost \$2,631.35 and there is a \$1,000 deductible. He said the repairs are purely cosmetic and this is one of the vehicles due to be replaced. Chief Eric Higgins said he is looking at purchasing a new Police vehicle next year but would like to keep the 2013 Police Interceptor and retire the old Crown Victoria. Vice Chairman Keppley said he feels the 2013 interceptor should be repaired. Moved by Vice Chairman Keppley, second by Member Thornton to make the repairs to the 2013 Police Interceptor. Motion approved unanimously.
7. **Employee Insurance Plan** – Chairman Ford said it's late in the game to make changes. Vice Chairman Keppley noted that the Township was supposed to get back to the insurance broker by December 9<sup>th</sup> and that now there is not much choice but to keep the same insurance plan. Moved by Vice Chairman Keppley, second by Member Thornton to approve the health insurance proposal by Trilog. Motion approved unanimously.

Chairman Ford mentioned the diagram that Mr. Stoltzfus provided to the Board. Mr. Stoltzfus said that it's a diagram of the drains in the shop. He explained that it is an MS4 issue that needs addressed. Options for the drains include the possibility of piping it into the septic system with a water and grease separator or install 2 holding

tanks with water and grease separators in them. Mr. Stoltzfus said this will be discussed further at the upcoming MS4 Committee meeting on Wednesday, December 18<sup>th</sup>.

#### Zoning Officer's Report

Provided the November report for the Board's review.

#### Payment of Bills

Moved by Vice Chairman Keppley, second by Member Thornton to pay the bills as presented. Motion approved unanimously.

#### Supervisors' Comments

**Keith Kauffman** – Member Kauffman said he's been dealing with more Comcast complaints and will be addressing them with the representative from Comcast.

**Dave Thornton** – Member Thornton said that Brian Brandt will be moving into the Zoning Office and also noted that he's worked with an organization that will visit the office and provide you with possible layouts for the space. Member Thornton said someone from the organization will be at the Township on Tuesday.

Member Thornton requested an executive session at the end of the regular meeting to discuss employee compensation and performance issues.

The Board took a brief recess at 7:53 p.m. and entered executive session at 7:58 p.m. The Board reconvened at 8:50 p.m.

Eric Higgins requested \$17,500 from current year funding for equipment and supplies. Moved by Vice Chairman Keppley, second by Member Kauffman to approve Eric Higgins' request. Motion approved unanimously.

#### Adjournment

Moved by Member Thornton, second by Member Kauffman to adjourn the December 16, 2019 regular meeting at 8:55 p.m. Motion approved unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted by:



Sara Service  
Zoning Officer



**West Earl Township Police Department**  
**157 W. Metzler Road, PO Box 787**  
**Brownstown, PA 17508**  
**(717) 859-1411**

**Scott H. Ruth**  
Acting Chief of Police

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West Earl Township Board of Supervisors  
157 W. Metzler Rd., PO Box 787  
Brownstown, PA 17508

15 December 2019

Dear President and Distinguished Members of the Board of Supervisors,

I would like to recognize Officer Wendell Metzler for his outstanding support of the West Earl Township Police Department during what was arguably a difficult period for the staff of the West Earl Police Department.

Brian Brandt retired at the end of May, 2019. And at the time of Brandt's departure, the West Earl Police Department found itself in the unfortunate situation of already being short-staffed as the result of an on-the-job injury sustained by Officer Riccelli in March of 2019. Then, shortly after the departure of Brandt, we were informed that Officer Ebersole would be leaving the ranks of the West Earl PD as well.

The injury and the subsequent departures left the department with half its full time staff and significantly affected the morale and the esprit de corps of the remaining officers with the West Earl Police Department.

**A Commendation:**

Officer Metzler, without being asked, offered significantly more time than would normally be expected to work. He was able to fill many more shifts than was typical for his work here at West Earl. It is particularly important to note that Officer Metzler, a West Earl Township native, already works full time for a neighboring police department. He has a wife and two children and is very active in their lives. And yet he chose, knowing the situation in which we found our agency, to give many more hours than is typical to work many open shifts that would otherwise have been covered by the Pennsylvania State Police.

Specifically, Officer Metzler provided over two hundred and ninety-seven (297) hours of service to and for the Township of West Earl and its citizens over a period of twenty-two (22) weeks.

While Officer Metzler is more typically scheduled to augment shifts already covered by another patrol officer, for these twenty-two (22) weeks, Officer Metzler was the only officer on duty during the hundreds of hours of service recorded above. Hours he sacrificed from being off-duty with family and friends for the sake of the citizens of West Earl Township. His sacrifice is greatly appreciated and noted herein.

In grateful acknowledgement,

Sgt. Scott Ruth, Acting Chief of Police



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15 December 2019

Dear President and Distinguished Members of the Board of Supervisors,

I would like to recognize Officer Jeremy Sorensen for his outstanding support of the West Earl Township Police Department during what was arguably a difficult period for the staff of the West Earl Police Department.

Brian Brandt retired at the end of May, 2019. And at the time of Brandt's departure, the West Earl Police Department found itself in the unfortunate situation of already being short-staffed as the result of an on-the-job injury sustained by Officer Riccelli in March of 2019. Then, shortly after the departure of Brandt, we were informed that Officer Ebersole would be leaving the ranks of the West Earl PD as well.

The injury and the subsequent departures left the department with half its full time staff and significantly affected the morale and the esprit de corps of the remaining officers with the West Earl Police Department. However, we weathered the storm and are now back at full-strength in terms of staffing.

**A Commendation:**

Officer Sorensen offered significantly more time than he would normally be expected to work. He was able to fill many more shifts than was typical for his work here at West Earl. I would also note that Officer Sorensen received additional, ongoing assignments as a result of our limited resources here at West Earl Township Police Department and he did so with a willing and professional attitude. Officer Sorensen is married and he and his wife enjoy very active lives. And yet he chose, knowing the situation in which we found our agency, to give many more hours than is typical to work many open shifts that would otherwise have been covered by the Pennsylvania State Police. Finally, Officer Sorensen withheld several vacation requests knowing that taking such time off would have left the township and agency with many fewer hours of service.

Specifically, Officer Sorensen provided over one hundred (100) hours of service to and for the Township of West Earl and its citizens over a period of eighteen (18) weeks. These hours represent time that Officer Sorensen sacrificed from being off-duty with family and friends for the sake of the citizens of West Earl Township. Additionally, Officer Sorensen has been tasked with a number of new duties including, but not limited to, TASER Instructor, PennDOT/CLEAN TAC Officer and PennDOT CRASH System oversight and review responsibilities. Finally, Officer Sorensen performed the task of Field Training Officer (FTO) and has been instrumental in assisting two new officers to become productive members of our police force. His sacrifice and service is greatly appreciated and noted herein.

In grateful acknowledgement,

Sgt. Scott Ruth, Acting Chief of Police