

**West Vincent Township  
Meeting Minutes - FINAL  
Board of Supervisors  
February 18, 2025 7:00 PM**

**Attendance:** Dana Alan, Chair; Bernie Couris, Vice Chair; Jim Wendelgass, Interim Manager; Tom Dyer (for Dave Onorato), Township Solicitor; Christina Casey, Township Secretary; **Missing:** Charlene Briggs, Member; Dave Onorato, Township Solicitor

Mrs. Alan called the meeting to order at 7:04pm and announced that executive sessions were held on January 24, 2025 (personnel) and February 18, 2025 (personnel and legal).

**Minutes:** **MOTION** by Mr. Couris to approve the Minutes of January 21, 2025, meeting; second by Mrs. Alan. *There being no comments or questions, Motion carries unanimously.*

**Announcements:**

- Butterscotch Café Conditional Use continuation will be Monday, February 24, at 7pm.
- Ms. Briggs is unable to be here tonight due to the flu.
- On March 3rd, there will be a workshop to discuss the scope of the ordinance for Human Relations Committee.
- March 4th is the rescheduled presentation by the Historic Resources Committee regarding West Vincent's role in the Underground Railroad.

**Public Hearing – Ordinance No. 211:** An ordinance amending chapter 338 of the code of the Township of West Vincent pertaining to traffic and parking regulations in the Township of West Vincent (“No Parking and Stop Signs Ordinance”).

This ordinance has been duly advertised in the paper. This ordinance amends two sections of the code to add stop signs and no parking signs at select locations in the township. Tom Dyer opened the floor for questions and comments of which there were none. Public hearing was closed.

**MOTION** by Mr. Couris to adopt Ordinance No. 211 – No Parking and Stop Signs Ordinance; second by Mrs. Alan. *There being no comments or questions, Motion carries unanimously.*

**Public Hearing – Ordinance No. 212:** An ordinance amending chapter 239 of the West Vincent Code of Ordinances amending the peddling and soliciting provisions of the code and providing for a do not knock list and regulations (“No Knock Ordinance”).

This ordinance has been duly advertised in the paper. This ordinance expands upon the No Solicitation Ordinance that was previously in place. It aims to have a more defined solicitation application process as well as further definitions regarding solicitations or peddling. It also serves to enact a penalty and enforcement provision for individuals who violate this section of the code. Mr. Couris asked if it includes political electioneering, which it does not. **George Dulchinos** asked if this ordinance is the same as what was presented in the previous meeting, which it is. No additional questions or comments so the public hearing is now closed.

**MOTION** by Mr. Couris to adopt Ordinance No. 212 – No Knock Ordinance; second by Mrs. Alan. *There being no comments or questions, Motion carries unanimously.*

## **PRESENTATIONS:**

- **Chris Herr (Maille) presents the Draft 2023 Audit:** Mr. Herr noted the audit is in draft-form, but the numbers are done. Management discussion is still needed to finish the audit, so he expects about a week turnaround before the final audit can be issued.

Briefly, Mr. Herr wanted to touch on three documents that will be issued:

1. **Financial Statement:** Opinion is unmodified meaning free of material misstatement and it complies with the modified cash basis of accounting. The General Fund had a pretty significant decrease from about \$1mm to \$500k. The main driver is that transfer taxes (revenue) dropped about \$400k and expenses went up by about the same amount. It was largely driven by the public safety expense line. Mr. Herr likes to look at General Fund cash as a percentage of annual expenses. With \$500k in the bank at the end of 2023 and annual expenses of around \$5mm, the number is 10%, meaning if no money is coming in, you'd run out of cash in 5 weeks. Mr. Herr usually advises municipalities to have 2-3 months' cash to be on-hand in the bank at year end because you do not typically see a lot of your revenue streams hit in January and February. Hopefully the cash comes back up in the 2024 audit.
2. **SAS 114 Letter:** This is a standard letter of which the purpose is to openly communicate and advise on matters related to the financial statement audit process and relay any issues found as they relate to the division of responsibilities between the auditor and management, management disagreements, audit adjustments, and the audit adjustments. The biggest key item in the letter is the audit adjustments at the back of the letter. There are 4 pages of adjustments equating to 24 adjustments which is about three-times the number that Maille had to do in 2022. A lot of changes were made to cash accounts and inter-funds.
3. **SAS 115 Letter:** This is a letter to management identifying what the township can improve upon such as having the bank reconciliations match the trial balances; identifying status of long-term outstanding checks; offsetting between inter-funds; better record keeping for revenues; and budgeting suggestions, among others.

**John Eldridge** had questions on modified cash basis. He was also wondering if he could receive a copy of the draft audit. The BOS said no because it is a draft document. Mr. Wendelgass said we will have the final within a week. He also inquired about non-spendables. Mr. Eldridge said he has always advocated for a stronger accounting presence here which he believes is supported by Mr. Herr.

**George Dulchinos** assumed the recommendations that resulted from the 2023 audit would not be reflected in the 2024 numbers. Mr. Wendelgass said some of the recommendations have happened. Since Mr. Wendelgass has started, the reconciliations have been done by third party accountant. Financial controls have also been put in place. Mr. Dulchinos asked if 2024 audit will be done on a typical schedule. Mr. Wendelgass assumes it might have a little delay but more typical schedule than this. Mr. Dulchinos asked if the 2023 audit will be posted prior to adoption by the BOS. Mr. Wendelgass said that once we get a final audit, it will be posted.

**Jamie McVickar** asked if the issue was the bank reconciliations being tied to the trial balance, and Mr. Wendelgass confirmed that the third-party consultant is doing the bank reconciliation and tying it to the trial balance. Mr. McVickar asked if Mr. Wendelgass is overseeing that it is being done, and Mr. Wendelgass said no, but Mr. McVickar recommends that he should do this. Next, Mr. McVickar noted that the General Fund was

around \$500k at the end of 2023, and now it is \$1.4mm. Mr. Wendelgass said it was \$1.362mm as of December 31, 2024. Mr. McVickar pointed out that many items found are items that John Eldridge has been asking to be done over the last few years. Mr. McVickar does not understand Mr. Wendelgass' statement that posting the draft is problematic, both for minutes or the audit. Mr. McVickar does not see a downside for the residents to be able to see those before they are approved. He wanted more clarification on this statement. Mr. Wendelgass can not address minutes but can address audit. There is a week's difference between the draft and the final. Mr. McVickar thinks it might be better to make comments before the final comes in. Mr. Wendelgass disagreed. Discussion continued with Mrs. Alan, as well, regarding draft minutes and audit. Finally, Mr. McVickar brought up the elected auditors who have always asked to be involved in the audit process and see the draft. Mr. Wendelgass said the elected auditors have a role under state law which says that where the township appoints auditors as opposed to elected auditors the role of the elected auditors is determine the compensation of supervisors. Mr. McVickar said they have never done that. Mr. Wendelgass said it was done years ago. Mr. McVickar said they do two jobs: 1.) elect Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary of auditors; and 2.) approve the mileage reimbursement rate. The auditors have never been asked to do more, but the auditors have asked to do more but not been allowed. Mr. Wendelgass said it is because there are no supervisors who also work for the township who get paid by the township other than as a supervisor.

- **Chester County presentation on Bertolet School Bridge (Bridge #196):** Presenters include Sandy Martin and Tiffany McClure (McCormick Taylor design engineers for Bridge #196); Eric Quinn (Chester County Bridge Program Manager); Brett Coleman (county engineer at TPD); Genevieve Kraidman (McCormick Taylor).

The existing bridge is located on Bertolet School Road over French Creek in East and West Vincent Townships. It is a one-lane, 8 ton, 86' riveted steel warren pony truss constructed in 1905 and currently used for vehicular and recreational traffic. It provides the only means of ingress and egress from the 13 residential properties in WVT on Bertolet School Road. It has a current weight restriction of 6 tons, down from 10 tons. It is eligible for National Register of Historic Places which makes it hard to just tear the bridge down and put up a new one. It is surrounded by Camp Sankanac.

The bridge is deteriorating. The project would create a new two-lane concrete bridge for traffic with the original bridge repaired for safety and used for camp and pedestrian traffic. The estimated cost for this project is \$12mm. The purpose of the presentation per Ms. Martin was to get concurrence from the WVT BOS in favor of progressing with project. For the best information on this project, please view the videotaped BOS meeting. Ms. Martin said she will send the presentation to WVT to post on the website.

**Police Report:** **Sargeant Russell** read the report. Report on file and will be posted on the Police website.

**Ludwigs Corner Fire Company Report:** **Deputy Chief Jeff Kimes** read the report. Report on file and is posted on the Fire Company page of our website.

**Public Works Report:** Mrs. Alan said we will not ask for the report to be read, but we will begin to post this report which was a request from Barry DiLibero to bring this report back.

**Treasurer's Report:** Mr. Wendelgass read the summary of funds as of January 31, 2025. Total for unrestricted funds was \$5,973,633.89; total restricted funds was \$5,310,493.13; non-township funds total \$838,291.83. Total of all funds is \$12,122,418.85. Mr. Eldridge posed some questions prior to the meeting which Mr. Wendelgass addressed: yes, the Capital Road Fund increased by \$177k plus interest because we received a refund check from an asphalt supplier; ARPA fund balance was spent in January to purchase a police vehicle, and if there is a mistake there, it will be corrected.

- **John Eldridge** noted a loss of \$317k in the General Fund. Mr. Wendelgass said that January is a very slow income month, and in February, the Township has already received close to \$300k in earned income tax. Mr. Eldridge believes there is a lot missing from the P&L that is posted online. Mr. Wendelgass agreed and said he did not post the accounts in which the only transaction was interest. Mr. Eldridge noted the \$184k in the Capital Road Fund; Mr. Wendelgass reminded Mr. Eldridge that he already had mentioned the \$177k asphalt refund check (plus interest) to the Capital Road Fund which made up the \$184k. Mr. Eldridge also noted the ARPA funds which were listed for parks, but Mr. Wendelgass did note that it was for the police vehicle mentioned earlier and would reflect that once corrected. Finally, Mr. Eldridge entered the Township budget numbers into a spreadsheet and was getting a surplus while the book balance was different. Since Mr. Wendelgass does not know what numbers were entered into the spreadsheet, he offered to have Mr. Eldridge send it to him for review.

**Expenditures/Bills List:** Mr. Wendelgass noted the Bills List totaling \$197,033.23. **MOTION** made by Mr. Couris to approve the Expenditures List for all Township Funds in the amount of \$197,033.23; second by Mrs. Alan. *Motion carries unanimously.*

**Manager's Report:** Mr. Wendelgass was asked by the Road Crew for residents to please be aware of downed wires in the roads after our recent storms; please don't go over the lines in case they are energized. Also, residents may be seeing activity on the Bennet property on South Chester Springs Road. A PA One Call for that property indicating small excavations on that property for Toll Brothers, not McKee.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

**Acknowledge receipt of Conditional Use Application from Potthouse-Kimberton (986 Pottstown Pike; parcel 25-6-70); Set date for Conditional Use** – Mr. Couris set the hearing as March 17, 2025.

**Authorize pipe-lining under state contract in Kimberbrae** – Up to 32' of old drainage pipes need to be relined rather than excavated and replaced. This is being done under state contract, so there is no bid. **MOTION** by Mrs. Alan to authorize pipe-lining under state contract in Kimberbrae; second by Mr. Couris. *Motion carries unanimously.*

**Authorize release of escrow balance for McKeone (2043 Remington)** - **MOTION** by Mr. Couris to release escrow for McKeone; second by Mrs. Alan. *There being no comments of questions, Motion carries unanimously.*

**Approval of resolution appointing new Township Manager** - **MOTION** by Mrs. Alan to approve Resolution 8-2025 appointing the new township manager, Tommy Ryan, with compensation of \$160,000 starting on March 17, 2025, with a bond of \$3mm; second by Mr. Couris. *There being no comments of questions, Motion carries unanimously.*

**Approval of Township Manager Employment Agreement** - **MOTION** by Mrs. Alan to approve the Township Manager Employment Agreement for Tommy Ryan starting on March 17, 2025; second by Mr. Couris.

- **George Dulchinos** asked if this document will be posted, and Mrs. Alan said it will be posted along with the resolution.
- **Jaime McVickar** asked if the Board could give any additional information on Mr. Ryan. Mrs. Alan noted he is coming from East Cocalico Township where he has been manager for two years. He served seven years in Warminster, Montgomery County; five years in West Bradford, Chester County. The Board is expecting Mr. Ryan to save the Township a lot of money. Mr. Couris also said that Mr. Ryan teaches for PSATS and at Millersville. Mrs. Alan was most impressed with him as he is all about transparency and communication. She noted that he writes the newsletters; Mr. Eldridge will be excited by his budgets and how he handles the finances and how he explains them. Mr. Ryan is interested in making plans for our roads and open space. And he's interested in sustainability, as well. He hit all the buttons for us.
- An audience member asked if \$160,000 was his salary, which it is. Mrs. Alan said that from the process the Township was really underselling. Mr. Couris noted that the manager from two positions ago was making \$160k. Also, Mrs. Alan said Mr. Ryan will be taking over certain functions that will save the Township considerable money.
- **Mr. Dulchinos** asked if the township will be hiring a full-time treasurer. Mrs. Alan said these are decisions that the new manager will make and is excited to make. Mrs. Alan noted that he will solve all those problems that we haven't yet and were troublesome for us. The Township received a lot of good personal recommendations for him that he's the real deal.

*Motion carries unanimously.*

#### **Public Comment on Agenda and Non-Agenda Items**

- **George Dulchinos** shared his thoughts about posting draft minutes during the meeting once they are approved. Mrs. Casey said it would be tricky to do this during the meeting. Mr. Dulchinos would like people who had comments to be able to ask questions during that same meeting. She would like the residents to have these minutes, but she understands the issues.
- **John Eldridge** explained how he cleans his driveway when it snows and then plows push it back in the driveway. This was in response to the snow pop-up message on the website.
- **Barry DiLibero** said draft minutes were posted for several years in the back of the room before they were posted online with no problems. He recounted a memory from previous minutes where it claimed a piece of equipment had been stolen, but the video Mr. DiLibero had showed the individual said "missing." It was pointed out, and the supervisors still agreed that he said "stolen" so the wrong minutes can still be voted in. He feels there is no harm in draft minutes.
- **Julia Braendel** commented on the Bennet property. She said it sounds like Toll Brothers has a contract with a two-year due diligence period ending sometime in 2027. They want to build 50 homes, and Ms. Braendel wanted to make sure the Board has same position it had with McKee which is not being open to granting relief for higher density. She doesn't believe that property will ever be conserved; something will be built there, so sticking to 50 homes is important.
- **Jaime McVickar** asked if the new Township manager will be at the next BOS meeting. Mrs. Alan noted it will be his first day, so it will be up to him to decide if he wants to jump in. Mr. McVickar said the reason for the question was to thank Mr. Wendelgass in case he is done attending these meetings.

*There being no further comments or questions, the meeting adjourned at 8:43pm.*

Respectfully Submitted, Christina Casey (Township Secretary)