

LEHIGH TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

March 10, 2026

- I. CALL TO ORDER. The Lehigh Township Board of Supervisors held their regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, March 10, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was held at the Lehigh Township Municipal Building, 1069 Municipal Road, Walnutport. Chairman Mike Jones called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance and roll call.

Present: Cindy Miller
David Hess
Mike Jones
Janet Sheats (via telephone)
Jerry Pritchard
David Backentoe
Alice Rehrig
Mike Muffley
Roxann Colfer
John Henry
Frank Zamadics

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

- A. February 24, 2026. Cindy Miller made a motion to approve the minutes. David Hess seconded the motion. Cindy Miller noted the following corrections to the minutes: Page 4, it was stated that moving forward there would be a written agreement; Page 6, second line should be you, not your; Page 13 when discussing changing email providers, it was stated that the Board of Supervisors needs access to all their prior emails; Page 18, last paragraph, Janet Sheats' comment was that 14 year olds had to pay and Mike Jones commented about the money sitting in an account and running out of land. Jerry Pritchard noted it was also stated that he didn't think we needed a contract with the Fire Company. All voted aye to approve the minutes with these corrections.

III. APPROVAL OF THE BILLS

- A. General Fund Checks 29447 to 29483. Cindy Miller made a motion to approve these checks, excluding Check 29476 to Pennoni Associates. David Hess seconded the motion. Janet Sheats commented she noticed there were quite a few bills associated with work done on vehicles. Were these for normal wear and tear or just in general? Frank Zamadics commented he believes it was normal maintenance. There were quite a few police vehicles due for inspection. Linda Roman questioned Check 29482 regarding the cost of training. John Henry commented the training was a week long Posit training class that Officer Ball was going to be attending. All voted aye. Motion carried.

- B. State Fund Checks 1644 to 1646. David Hess made a motion to approve these checks. Cindy Miller seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Jerry Pritchard made a motion to amend the agenda to add the Northampton School District Fire Tax on the agenda. Janet Sheats seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried. This item will be added to New Business.

IV. ALTERNATE TO ZONING HEARING BOARD

- A. Thomas Szoke. Mr. Szoke and his family have been lifelong residents of the Township. In 1983, he started a welding and steel business and was able to grow the business to the point of being recognized from the American Institute of Steel Construction as a certified fabricator. He has dealt with architects, engineers, codes and specifications his entire career, and he feels his experiences can help interpret and understand things with the Zoning Hearing Board. He doesn't have experience with the Zoning Hearing Board, but he realizes that he would be an alternate and can attend meetings but doesn't have a vote.

Attorney Backenstoe noted that the Zoning Hearing Board is a five person Board. The Chairperson may choose to appoint an alternate to the Board if there is a quorum present, but not a full Board. If a quorum is not present, then they appoint the alternate to make the quorum. Once an alternate is appointed to a case, they will continue to serve on that case until it is completed.

Janet Sheats questioned why Mr. Szoke didn't express an interest in the Zoning Hearing Board when it was initially stated there was an opening. Mr. Szoke commented he didn't realize there was an opening until it was mentioned at a meeting that no one had submitted to be on the Board. The next day he contacted Alice Rehrig to discuss what he would need to do. Janet Sheats also questioned if Mr. Szoke would be willing to attend meetings even if he was not needed to get the feel of how things work. Mr. Szoke commented he is willing to attend and assist in any manner that he can.

Cindy Miller questioned why Mr. Szoke was interested in being on the Zoning Hearing Board. Mr. Szoke commented with his background, he felt he could make thorough decisions. He is at a point now where he has some time he can spend and dedicate to the Township. His children are grown and the business is at a level where his sons are pretty much taking over the business so he would have the time to commit to the Township. Cindy Miller questioned if Mr. Szoke would be able to put his personal preferences aside and be able to make a determination based upon the facts that are presented. Mr. Szoke indicated that yes, he absolutely could.

Katherine Mack commented she believes Mr. Szoke would be a good addition to the Zoning Hearing Board. She feels he has a lot of interest in the Township and believes him to be an intelligent individual and would be an asset to the Township and Zoning Hearing Board. If appointed, she would also like to request his presence at the hearing on Thursday as they will be short one member.

Jerry Pritchard questioned if Mr. Szoke would have an open mind as to what is right by each case because there are times when matters could be in a gray area. Mr. Szoke commented he absolutely would have open mind.

Katherine Mack reminded everyone that the Zoning Hearing Board is bound to go by the ordinances that the Supervisors approve. There are usually two types of hearings to amend these ordinances, a variance and a special exception. When someone is applying for a variance, it is a more difficult process. They need to show a hardship. A special exception is something that is permitted by right but parameters can be set. The Zoning Hearing Board is bound to follow the laws that the Board of Supervisors put in place.

David Hess made a motion to appoint Thomas Szoke as an alternate to the Zoning Hearing Board. Jerry Pritchard seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

V. PLANNING RELATED ITEMS

A. Extension of Time for Plan Recording.

1. M & U International. Aaron Sisler of Verdantas and Eric Hague of M & U were present to represent this plan. Mr. Sisler starting working on this project last fall to assist in obtaining an NPDES permit. In December, they were hired as the engineer of record. Over the past three months, they have been working to tweak the site design to what they really need for truck access and long term maintenance of stormwater management. They would like to request a six month extension of time because they need time to apply for and obtain the NPDES permit. Initially there was an underground infiltration system under the parking lot. They are now moving the system to the grass area which will provide for better long term maintenance. Now that the weather broke, they will be able to schedule the testing and pursue their NPDES permit. Mike Muffley commented they have been actively working on the NPDES submission, and the new site layout is better for the site.

Cindy Miller made a motion to approve an extension of time to record the plan until September 30, 2026. David Hess seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

- B. Engineer's Report. Mike Muffley commented he reviewed a five lot subdivision on North Granger Road. It is his understanding that the plan was tabled as Jim Milot had attended the Planning Commission meeting in his place.

Cindy Miller noted the Planning Commission primarily discussed moving the new zoning ordinances ahead. The Planning Commission had provided a letter regarding Pennoni's request for payment. The Planning Commission is recommending that payment not be made and that Pennoni attend the March 24th Board of Supervisors meeting to provide an update on the ordinance moving forward and that a final draft be completed and provided to the Township by May 26, 2026. The office has easily spent over 80 hours trying to get through this. She has spent last week and the entire weekend going page by page comparing the old zoning to the new zoning. There are so many changes and edits that need to be done. When the changes are provided to Pennoni, the ordinance comes back without the changes being made. It's a constant back and forth and it is not getting done. The Planners want to get it done, but they are being stifled by the consultant. They are not showing what edits have been completed so each time a draft comes back, they need to review the entire 350 pages. There are times where things that were okay in one draft were changed by the time the next draft was received and were not okay. We need to get to the bottom of what is going on so this ordinance gets done.

David Hess commented he feels as though we are paying twice with taxpayer money to get this completed. We have to pay the consultant to do the work and we are also paying the office to do the review as well. Cindy Miller commented we need to bring them in and find out what is going on and get a draft that the Planners can work with.

Jerry Pritchard commented something doesn't make sense. They are under contract. There is no benefit to them to delay the project. There is no reason for this to drag out as long as it has.

Cindy Miller made a motion to not release any payment to Pennoni and have them attend the next Board of Supervisors meeting on March 24th and to have a deadline for completion of May 26th. Any staff or consultants working on the ordinance should also attend that meeting. David Hess seconded the motion. Tim Bartlett questioned if the attendance at the meeting could be construed as billable time and they shouldn't be paid for attendance to address what should have already been completed. Janet Sheats commented the last time we spoke with them, they indicated that they would be more than willing to discuss things as needed. Katherine Mack commented she thinks the person who actually deals with the computerization of the project should also be at the meeting. Cindy Miller commented there are two individuals who are working on this. Jerry Pritchard commented there should be no charge to the Township for this meeting. Brandon Hoser commented there seems to

be a communication issue. The drafts should be returned to them until they provide a redlined document. Mike Muffley commented the Township is receiving what is supposed to be a final draft, but we are finding that there are inconsistencies or issues that were not there previously so things move forward, but then go back and it becomes a loop of never getting to the final product. All voted aye. Motion carried.

VI. DEPARTMENTAL/ORGANIZATIONAL REPORT

- A. Recreation Report. Keith Hantz commented the Rec Board met on February 16th and had some good discussions. The baseball teams are starting to come in to get scheduled for their season.

The Rec Board is looking at Playground Equipment for Indiantrail Park and to work with the Jaindl group regarding the money that is being set aside for this from their project.

The Rec Board also reviewed the Recreation Resolution and will be proposing some changes to it. They are expecting to finalize it at their meeting next week and make a recommendation to the Board for the March 24th meeting.

They are working on putting an event list together so that the Supervisors and the staff are aware of what activities are scheduled at the parks.

There has been some discussion of placing a pavilion at Berlinsville. They are aware of the concerns with parking and will be keeping that in mind. The size may be slightly larger than the one that is in Delps Park. Jerry Pritchard questioned if parking couldn't be expanded into the area where the trees were removed. Mike Jones commented he believes that area is wet and a parking lot may not be able to be installed. Mike Jones commented the lot seems to be large enough. Frank Zamadics commented it does get quite full when there is baseball and soccer games taking place. David Hess commented it will come down to a matter of scheduling.

Mike Jones commented over time he has spoken with the Public Works Department and they have some good ideas for the parks based upon what they see when they are out there. David Hess commented that he and others from the Rec Board want to meet with them.

Janet Sheats requested the Rec Board start discussing placing the smaller trees around the track now before it becomes too late to move that forward. She also questioned if there is an issue with parking, should the tree lighting continue in Berlinsville. Keith Hantz commented he doesn't believe parking has been an issue with the tree lighting.

Monica Brown questioned the status of the Rainbow Bridge. David Hess commented they are supposed to be reaching out to Frank Zamadics to schedule a meeting at the sight.

Linda Roman questioned if anything was done with adding more concrete to an area at the dog park. David Hess commented they want to get the shelters in place to see if that helps with the situation since everyone won't be congregated at the entrance.

David Hess also noted there was an issue with the gates for the fence being kicked in. Jerry Pritchard suggested a sign be added to the gates that indicates the dog park is closed and for what period of time. Monica Brown commented a sign would be helpful because there are people coming to the park from out of the area and don't realize the park is closed. Frank Zamadics commented the crew talked to a gentleman who saw when the gates were kicked in and also saw a dirt bike driving through the fields, but it was a week after the incident occurred. When residents see an issue taking place, they need to call the police while it is occurring.

Katherine Mack questioned if a grant was received for the park consultant. Cindy Miller commented it was discussed, but the grant has not yet been applied for. She has not worked on it; she can. Jerry Pritchard commented it is not a priority right now.

Katherine Mack questioned if the Rec Board or the Township will be doing anything for the 250th anniversary of the Country. She would hope that we would consider reaching out and being proactive about situations rather than reactive. If groups work together, something can be accomplished rather than wait until it becomes detrimental. Cindy Miller commented the Historical Society newsletter has an article that it is their 25th anniversary this year and they are planning on reorganizing and refreshing the museum and creating a time capsule that will be opened at their 50th anniversary. Janet Sheats suggested something could possibly be incorporated into National Night Out for the 250th Anniversary.

David Hess noted the Rec Board would like to develop sub committees to help the Rec Board work through these different events. He would invite the public to attend the Rec Board meetings if they have an interest in any particular event. Paul Nikisher commented he believes there are groups, such as the Lions, who would be willing to help with events.

- B. Public Works Report. Frank Zamadics commented after reviewing his notes, the vehicle repairs that Janet Sheats was questioning was for maintenance to the paver and roller. They also serviced the backhoe and loader and while during that they

noticed some hoses were starting to weep so they repaired those as well. There were three trucks that had oil changes and police vehicles needed inspection. At the end of the storms, they have also been cleaning their trucks and checking for any issues.

Janet Sheats questioned how the new employees were working out. Frank Zamadics commented they are working out well and fitting in well with the crew.

Jerry Pritchard questioned if the gates were installed at the park. Mike Jones commented they should be getting started in the next two or three weeks now that the weather is warmer.

Frank Zamadics commented they have started some street sweeping and will continue with that. They will start opening the parks and turning the water on around April 1st. The final water testing is usually completed around April 20th. The spring leaf collection will also be starting the first full week of April. The summer help also indicated that they would be willing to return this year.

- C. Zoning Report. There were 31 permits issued in February. There are 10 open code enforcement cases. Two are with the Magistrate, two have orders to vacate, two have pending filing this week and one is going to be appearing before the Zoning Hearing Board for a short term rental use. Last month there was a zoning hearing for a variance which was approved with conditions.

Katherine Mack commented she looked through the current ordinance pertaining to an Airbnb. The ordinance requires a fee and a license. The fee and license have never been established. Roxann Colfer commented she has created an application and it is in the process of being reviewed. Attorney Backenstoe commented the requirements of the application have nothing to do with the hearing that is before the Zoning Hearing Board.

- D. Police Report. In February, the Department responded to 327 calls, 12 reportable crashes, 6 non-reportable crashes, 17 summary violations, 21 repair orders, and four people were processed through the booking center. There were also 6 arrests which included a public safety and penalty where a dog attacked another dog and people, and an arrest for terroristic threats and endangering another person which was a domestic incident involving a gun. The incident ended peacefully. The staff at the Northampton County 911 center did an amazing job. The dispatcher, Latoya, was able to talk the individual into putting the gun down and surrendering peacefully.

Chief Henry spoke with Jason Sandler of Meadow Landscaping who will be the contractor to remove the encampment on the PPL property. A supervisor will be viewing the site tomorrow and he is hoping to get it taken care of shortly.

Interviews have been scheduled for the next two Fridays for creating the list of potential new hires. When the interviews are completed, he would like authorization to have a third party conduct the background investigations for successful candidates.

Without a detective, it would be difficult to complete them in a timely manner. The last time they did them in house, it took the detective almost three months. Janet Sheats made a motion to authorize the use of an outside contractor to conduct the background investigations. Cindy Miller seconded the motion. Jerry Pritchard questioned if it was just background investigations or interview. Chief Henry commented it is the background investigations and polygraph. The department conducts their own interviews. Janet Sheats questioned how many background investigations are expected to be conducted. Chief Henry commented he is expecting that there will be four that are needed. If the background investigations come back successful, then they will be brought to the Board for their final interviews. Sherri Szoke commented when someone goes to work for a school district, they are required to have their background checks done at their own expense. Chief Henry commented these background checks are more in depth and there is a lot to it, including conducting interviews. All voted aye. Motion carried.

- E. Fire Company Report. Rick Hildebrand commented he will provide the activity reports for the next meeting. The new ladder truck is expected to be delivered on March 18th. There were a few compliance issues that needed to be resolved before delivery. He also questioned if the Board would have an objection to them bringing the ladder truck to the first meeting in April if anyone would like to see the truck. They would park it in the area of the Public Works Building.

The old ladder truck is currently for sale. So far, they have not had any strong interest in the truck; however, there is a department that is willing to rent it for a few months while their truck is being repaired. David Hess questioned where the money from the rental or sale of the truck would be going. Rick Hildebrand commented the money would be going into the truck account. Cindy Miller questioned how it will work from an insurance standpoint with the truck being rented. Rick Hildebrand commented the insurance company is the one that brought the idea of renting the truck to the Fire Company. The company that is renting the truck has the same insurance company and the other fire company's policy would cover the liability and accident insurance.

The Fire Company had about 15 to 20 people take a tactical casualty care course which would create a team to work with law enforcement in the event there ever is a situation that required a tactical response.

Mike Jones questioned if the Fire Company discussed having a liaison to the Board of Supervisors so there would be a contact for issues involving the Fire Company. Rick Hildebrand questioned if it would be the President or the Vice President. Mike Jones commented it didn't matter who it was, just so that there is someone who can relay information so that there is not a hiccup like what came to light at the last meeting.

Rick Hildebrand commented periodic meetings will help with that because there would be a full slate of individuals. It was also brought up about a signed agreement or contract which will also help. Mike Jones commented he doesn't know that a contract is necessary, but something needs to be done to keep everyone on the same page. Rick Hildebrand commented there was no specific communication. Rick Hildebrand commented when there is something big taking place, there typically are several meetings and the officers of the Fire Company are usually involved in the discussions.

Janet Sheats commented there should be a standing meeting scheduled for a specific date or week every September so that both the Board and Fire Company know when it will be so we don't keep running into the scheduling problem. Cindy Miller suggested it be done in July or August because by the time September gets here, we are already looking at drafts of the budget.

Janet Sheats commented a point person is needed when there are specific questions of the Fire Company. If the Fire Company wants to appoint Rick Hildebrand as a point of contact that is fine, but there needs to be a specific point of contact. Rick Hildebrand commented he is not the President and the body hasn't spoken. There can be an email or a phone call to the President to follow up with the body, but he can't arbitrarily give an answer of the Fire Company unless it was something that was voted on.

Rick Hildebrand also reminded everyone now that the warmer weather is here, they should be mindful and careful if they are going to be burning. Janet Sheats suggested posting the burning ordinance to the website and social media as a reminder.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Amendments to Chapter 107-7, pertaining to Alcohol in Township Parks. Alice Rehrig provided the Board with three concepts addressing Chapter 107 regarding alcohol in parks. The first concept would be expanding upon what currently is in the ordinance requiring permits for the consumption of alcohol; the second would be to remove language pertaining to alcohol so that it wouldn't be addressed at all; the third option would be to completely prohibit it in the parks.

Janet Sheats commented she is leaning towards the second concept. Mike Jones commented he would agree. He thinks it could be difficult to issue a permit for a park because you will not know who is part of which group. Chief Henry commented there is not an enforcement issue with the current ordinance. He believes the question of updating the ordinance came from a situation where there were some baseball players drinking after a game. No one was visibly intoxicated, but it is not permitted so they needed to address it. There haven't been any issues associated with people having alcohol at the pavilions.

Jerry Pritchard questioned where the liability to the Township would fall. Attorney Backenstoe commented if you are going to permit alcohol, you need to have regulations and they need to be enforced. If you don't enforce the regulations or prohibitions that you have, he believes you have liability. If you don't regulate it and are silent on the issue, he doesn't believe the Township has liability. It would be up to the individuals to do the right thing and if they don't and the police are called, they could be cited for public drunkenness, disorderly conduct, or other issues that the Police Department would normally deal with. Chief Henry commented regardless of which what the Board would choose, the enforcement would fall under the Police Department. To date, there hasn't been any issues, but if there are, they would have to deal with them.

David Hess commented he likes the second option, but questioned why the Township moved off of that and went to allowing alcohol by permit. Alice Rehrig commented the old ordinance specifically prohibited alcohol. They went from prohibiting alcohol to allowing it by permit only. She thinks the Board at that time wanted to regulate it.

Cindy Miller questioned what the Police would do if they found a team drinking in the parking lot after a game. Chief Henry commented if the people are of age and there is not an issue, it would be the officer's discretion if he was going to issue a citation. If there is no alcohol, then they would have to cite. Cindy Miller questioned if it is not regulated and an officer came across someone drinking and they didn't take any action, is there any liability on the Township. Attorney Backenstoe commented if it is not regulated and there is no issue, it is not an issue. If they come across someone who is clearly intoxicated or if they are called because of an issue, the Police would need to act in accordance with Pennsylvania law. Cindy Miller wanted to clarify if they are drinking at the park and there are no issues taking place, then that would be okay. Attorney Backenstoe commented if someone comes to the park and drinks a beer, there is no prohibition against it; however, if they get drunk and intoxicated and the police are called, they would need to respond like they would anywhere else. There is no liability to the Township because there is nothing in place

that needs to be followed. If you are going to regulate it, then you need to make sure the regulations are followed. If you don't follow your ordinance and something happens, there could be some liability.

Mike Jones commented his concern with completely prohibiting alcohol is that the people who are renting the pavilions and getting the permits may not want to continue to rent the pavilions; over 50 percent of our rentals get the permits. People who don't get the permit or follow the rules and bring in alcohol will continue to do that. Attorney Backenstoe commented if someone brings alcohol and doesn't get caught, they get away with it; people do get away with crimes, unfortunately that is our world. If they bring alcohol and the police get called, they are going to get cited.

Cindy Miller commented she has looked at our pavilion rentals, and they have gone down. She doesn't know why, but they have. To say that no longer permitting alcohol will cause people to walk away, she doesn't believe that will have a bearing.

Jerry Pritchard questioned how many issues there have been with baseball teams drinking at the park. Chief Henry commented there have not been any calls that there were issues. There was an occasion where an officer was driving through and saw them drinking after a game. Jerry Pritchard commented he feels that Option 2 could create problems of bad behavior because there is no regulation. There may not be a liability on the Township, but it could create additional problems because we are basically leaving our parks wide open.

Janet Sheats commented the parks are for the community. The police saw one time where a team was drinking after a game, so we are really basing this discussion on one incident. Cindy Miller commented the police came and said there is an enforcement issue which is why this discussion opened up, or at least this is what was said to her. Chief Henry commented the question came up about this when an officer saw people drinking. It also goes with the noise ordinance. The officer is very involved, does research, and questions a lot of things, so here we are with the alcohol part of things. What started as people having a beer in the park morphed into this could be a widespread problem and we need to address it and what should we do about it. Chief Henry commented he agrees it is appropriate for the Police to take action when they need to. If there are people there and they are out in the open carrying on, then they need to cite them under the ordinance. The reason it came about was there were some revisions that were being looked at with other ordinances and it just snowballed.

Jerry Pritchard questioned if it wasn't linked back to the concerns that were taking place at the pool hall. Chief Henry commented it was all around that same time. One of the questions that came up was if you could sit in the parking lot at the pool hall

and tailgate. When this question was asked, Sergeant Roth had commented he had just come across baseball players who were having some beer after a game and the question came up of can they do this, should they do this, and how can we enforce it. If it is no drinking or no alcohol on the property, then they would have to enforce it.

Cindy Miller commented Berlinsville Park is posted No Alcohol. If a police officer comes up and someone is sitting there drinking, should they not be cited? Chief Henry commented it is officer discretion as to whether they should be cited. It doesn't mean that they are not enforcing the ordinance. In this particular case, the people were told to stop and shut it down. There were no signs of intoxication, they complied, so there were no citations issued. It has not been a widespread problem at any of the parks. They deal with what they need to when they come across it.

Monica Brown commented the people obtaining the permits should be providing a copy of their homeowner's insurance regardless of whether they have an alcohol permit or not. That would transfer the liability to their insurance in the event something should happen. Attorney Backenstoe commented he does agree that a waiver and insurance should be provided from any organization that is renting our parks. Mike Jones commented the insurance is provided from organizations that rent the parks. The individual homeowner wouldn't be providing insurance. Attorney Backenstoe commented if a homeowner is obtaining a permit for alcohol, they should be providing a certificate of insurance. If it is just a pavilion rental, it would be a policy decision by the Board. Whether the Board wants to allow alcohol by permit, not allow it, or not address it is a policy decision by the Board. In listening to the Chief, it also appears that there is not an issue with the current ordinance. At this point, maybe nothing really needs to be changed. David Hess commented when they discussed it at the Rec Board, they thought there was an issue with the current ordinance which is why they tried to create other ideas.

Daniel Ziegenfuss commented he thought this whole thing started because the sign said no alcohol permitted and the officer didn't know if he could cite or not so the discussion was to make things uniform across the parks. Mike Jones commented he didn't think there was an issue with knowing if they could cite or not. Chief Henry commented they were looking at other ordinances and the question came up as to whether or not this should be addressed.

Keith Hantz commented it was brought to the Rec Board for review and amendment, but after hearing the discussion tonight, he thinks it is best to leave it as is and let the police handling that as necessary. The Rec Board was looking to make it universal, but it really doesn't appear to be necessary as we haven't been having any problems with it. He does see the benefit in getting the insurance. Attorney Backenstoe

commented it can be left as is with the addition of individuals who want the permit should sign a waiver and indemnification agreement and provide a copy of their homeowners insurance.

Linda Roman commented the Police Department should not be put in a position of having to determine what they need to do. There is no reason to have alcohol in the park. If people want to drink, let them rent the fire hall.

Nate Houck commented he is not a proponent of drinking in the park. He questioned how the liability would work. Attorney Backenstoe commented if the Township allows it, they have a duty to regulate it. By obtaining the insurance certificate and waiver, the initial responsibility if something were to happen would shift to the person providing the certificate. If there were excess damages beyond the insurance, then it would revert to the Township as a secondary party.

Janet Sheats commented it is always discussed about not regulating and micromanaging things; therefore, she made a motion to amend the ordinance with Option 2 which does not address alcohol. Mike Jones seconded the motion. Cindy Miller commented the current ordinance only permits alcohol when they rent the pavilions. Attorney Backenstoe commented the only change he would recommend to the current ordinance is adding a requirement for insurance. Cindy Miller commented she thinks we should stay with what we have. Janet Sheats commented that is why she is suggesting no to regulate it. Tom Szoke questioned what happens if someone already has a permit for alcohol at the park. Cindy Miller commented they would be grandfathered. Janet Sheats and Mike Jones voted aye. David Hess, Jerry Pritchard, and Cindy Miller were opposed. Motion did not carry.

David Hess made a motion to keep the ordinance the way it currently is with the addition of the insurance requirement. Jerry Pritchard seconded the motion. Alice Rehrig commented the current ordinance does not have any requirements listed for obtaining a permit. Attorney Backenstoe commented it would just be a simple addition to the ordinance requiring a certificate of insurance. Mike Jones commented he doesn't agree with having Officers checking for permits. If we are going to regulate it, they won't have a choice. Cindy Miller commented there is no harm in asking someone to see the permit. The office can continue to provide them with copies of permits that are issued. They will know who is there with a permit. A resident commented the enforcement doesn't have to necessarily be a citation. In listening to what was said, if they see someone drinking somewhere other than by the pavilion and there is no issue, they can simply tell them to stop and if they comply, they don't have to issue a citation if there is no public drunkenness. David Hess, Cindy Miller, and Jerry Pritchard voted aye. Janet Sheats and Mike Jones were opposed. Motion carried.

- B. Property Maintenance Code. Roxann Colfer provided the Board with a rough draft of a property maintenance code with certain sections removed. The remaining sections would be used in an effort to address life and safety issues. Mike Jones commented he was of the impression that our current ordinances address the issues. Roxann Colfer commented the current ordinances do not address all of the items. Mike Jones commented he thought they address what can be seen from the road. He does not agree with entering someone's home to look for violations. He feels this will become more of a weapon rather than a prevention of problems. Jerry Pritchard commented he too is concerned that it would become a weapon.

Attorney Backenstoe commented the draft ordinance is stating that the Board would be adopting the entire property maintenance code except for the provisions that are excluded in the draft ordinance.

David Hess made a motion to table this matter until the Board has an opportunity to review the Property Maintenance Code to see which sections are remaining. Wendy Kleintop questioned if the public would be able to get a copy of what is being proposed. Mike Jones commented it would not be available until it was finalized and being advertised. Right now, it is a draft that has not been approved for advertising. Attorney Backenstoe commented once the Board decides on the final version of the proposed ordinance, they will need to authorize it to be advertised. At that point it would be made available to the public. All voted aye. Motion carried.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Resolution 2026-10, Appointing Members to the Zoning Hearing Board. Cindy Miller made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-10. David Hess seconded the motion. Katherine Mack commented this is first time she recalls seeing a resolution to appoint members to the Zoning Hearing Board. Why is this changing? Alice Rehrig commented it was brought to her attention that the Municipalities Planning Code requires members to be appointed by resolution rather than by motion as what was done in the past. There have been instances where it was being made an issue in other municipalities, so rather than waiting until it becomes a problem, she drafted the resolution and will continue to do so moving forward. All voted aye. Motion carried.
- B. Resolution 2026-11, Appointing Alternate to the Zoning Hearing Board. Cindy Miller made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-11. Jerry Pritchard seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.
- C. Resolution 2026-12, Sewage Enforcement Fee Schedule. Cindy Miller made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-12. David Hess seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

- D. Proposed Changes to Ordinances pertaining to Noise. Alice Rehrig commented noise is currently addressed in three different areas of our ordinances. She prepared a comprehensive ordinance that combines the current ordinances into one ordinance and also addresses some of the issues that the Police Department routinely receive calls about. She is thinking it will be an amendment to the nuisance ordinance, but for right now, she is looking for input on the content.

Janet Sheats commented she feels that Items G and H were too restrictive and would like to see them amended. She would actually prefer to see Section H eliminated. Mike Jones commented he would agree. Janet Sheats also questioned F because she thought when the two chemicals were mixed for Tannerite, it became illegal. Mike Jones noted that cannons can also vibrate a neighbors home.

David Hess made a motion to table this. Janet Sheats seconded the motion. Keith Hantz questioned where the ordinance originated from. Alice Rehrig commented the definitions originated from another Township, other parts were from our existing ordinances, and some were suggestions from the Police Department based on calls they receive. John Henry commented some of the issues started with a situation where two neighbors hated each other and one of them had a large party and hired a band for the purpose of annoying their neighbor. There was nothing that the Department could do about it. There may not be anything that can be done, but it should be explored because we are not so rural that neighbors are not affected by things that their neighbors do. Daniel Ziegenfuss commented if these are being generated by complaints, there needs to be a balance because we can't continue to regulate everything because someone doesn't like something. Nate Houck commented he understands there are problems with neighbors getting along. He understands that the Board needs to try to solve problems, but sometimes in trying to solve a problem, you end up creating another problem. There may be times when things can't be enforced, but it may be for the betterment of everyone. He would also ask if the Board is looking at changing noise ordinances, they be mindful of park noise because of the close proximity of the homes to the park. It can get very loud at times. It is frustrating when you can't open the windows because of the noise or when you have someone's music blaring into your home, but that being said, he also wouldn't want to impose restrictions on everyone. There has to be a give and take within a community. A resident questioned if there is going to be a specific decibel level set, will the officer's be equipped with a decibel meter. Mike Jones commented a decibel meter can be purchased. Roxann Colfer is certified for using the meter. Roxann Colfer commented the certification is not required, but it is helpful when you need to enforce a restriction. Cindy Miller noted the decibel levels are already existing in our current ordinance. Michele Dotta questioned if there was consideration given to the noise that is generated from a data center. Cindy Miller commented there is a data center ordinance in process that will address that. Michele

Dotta commented a Right to Know request can be filed to obtain a copy of what is being discussed. Attorney Backenstoe commented if there is an ordinance or resolution that the Board is voting upon, it is available to the public through a Right to Know request. The matter that is currently being discussed is a bunch of concepts and no where near ready for voting to advertise for adoption and would not be subject to Right to Know. In order for this to be something that the Board could even consider for adoption, they would need to finalize the content, then authorize an ordinance to be prepared, and then authorized for advertisement. Once it is authorized to advertise the ordinance for adoption, it would then be made available for the public to review. After the ordinance is advertised, it will be on the agenda for adoption and the public can comment on it. If there are comments that the public makes that makes the Board change their mind, they would change the ordinance and readvertise it for adoption. The advertising requirements are different depending upon the type of ordinance that is being adopted. Janet Sheats suggested the Board come up with a list of things they want to change or discuss for the next meeting. All voted aye. Motion carried.

- E. Manager's Report. Jeff Wieder from the American Legion had approached Alice Rehrig regarding the Board adopting a resolution so they could apply for the next Lehigh Northampton LSA Grant Funding because they would like to build an addition with a new kitchen. In reviewing the eligibility requirements of the grant, only Counties and Municipalities are eligible to apply for funding so we would need to apply on their behalf. Even though the Board would support the Legion, there was a concern that it could open the door for other organizations. Cindy Miller suggested they speak directly to the Legislators about the grant funding. They can help figure out where they can get funding. Alice Rehrig noted if the grant runs through the Township, they will need to follow the Township requirements for bidding and prevailing wage.

Alice Rehrig commented there will be a Planning Module coming before the Board at their second meeting in April. Becker Homes currently has their own sewer treatment plant and will be abandoning that plant and connecting to the public sewer lines that come from Walnutport. The project only involves running about 80 feet of pipe from the park to the lines. In order for them to do this, a Planning Module amending our Act 537 Plan needs to be completed. The project will not affect any other properties in the Township.

Cindy Miller questioned if there is an update on the three to five year budget. Alice Rehrig commented she has been working on it. She has the 2025 year end amounts updated, about 75 percent of the revenues completed, but the expenditures were more time consuming because there were quite a few changes.

F. Solicitor's Report. Attorney Backenstoe did not have anything additional to report.

G. Northampton Area School District Fire Tax. Jerry Pritchard commented he attended the School Board meeting last evening. The District is in a major deficit and their Solicitor is telling the Board that as a School District they do not have to pay the fire tax, but can make a donation if they choose, but are not required to do so. At the meeting, Jerry Pritchard had explained to them that when the Board enacted the fire tax, they had decided to include tax exempt properties and they needed to impose the tax on all of them. The School District has decided to not pay the Fire Tax or provide the donation. They took a vote and they are not paying anything. He explained to the District that the Fire Tax was enacted to support the equipment that the Fire Company needs. The Fire Company has a new ladder trucks coming. One of the reasons the Fire Company needed a ladder truck was because of the new elementary school that was built in the Township. Jerry Pritchard questioned what happens in this situation. Attorney Backenstoe commented if there is a potential for litigation to happen as a result of this, the discussion needs to continue in Executive Session. Jerry Pritchard commented part of their reasoning was because they are not paying it to other municipalities, but he did remind them that this is a tax that not all the municipalities have. Attorney Backenstoe commented most Township's that have the Fire Tax do not include the tax exempt real estate, but this Board felt that it was important to include everyone. The District would need to challenge it and eventually it would go to the courts to decide.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT. Tim Bartlett questioned what the School District did last year. Jerry Pritchard commented last year they made the donation. Mr. Bartlett questioned why that couldn't be applied to their fire tax. Jerry Pritchard commented it was. This year, they are choosing not to pay anything.

Janet Sheats wanted to make everyone aware that the specifications for the new fire truck were based upon the elementary school.

Zach Szoke commented the ability to vote on an Open Space Land Preservation program in the Township is important to a lot of people in Lehigh Township and the Supervisors should make a plan to get it on the November 2026 ballot.

Katherine Mack questioned what the work that Attorney Backenstoe did on the Open Space program cost the taxpayers. Attorney Backenstoe commented he believes it was around \$1,000 because he needed to draft multiple documents. Katherine Mack questioned if the documents still exist and are usable. Attorney Backenstoe commented they would be. He has them in a file.

A resident commented that she agrees with Mr. Szoke. The work has been done to proceed with land preservation, and she wants to be able to vote on something that will impact the whole community. She believes people should be able to vote on the matter, regardless of whether it is yes or no.

Linda Roman commented if it is a matter of voting on it, then the 16 year old who will be impacted should be able to vote.

Dan Ziegenfuss commented there is definitely false information going around regarding land preservation. He would caution the Board about that. Everyone likes their freedoms and voting, but it would not be fair to the public to take a vote when there has been so much misrepresentation.

- X. EXECUTIVE SESSION. The Board went into Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter and potential identifiable litigation. No action was taken.
- XI. ADJOURN. David Hess made a motion to adjourn. Jerry Pritchard seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.