

LEHIGH TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

March 24, 2026

- I. CALL TO ORDER. The Lehigh Township Board of Supervisors held their second monthly meeting on Tuesday, March 24, 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
Jerry Pritchard
David Backentoe
Alice Rehrig
Mike Muffley
Roxann Colfer
Lori Lambert

- II. PENNONI ASSOCIATES—ZONING ORDINANCE UPDATE. Matt Wanamaker of Pennoni Associates was present to discuss the status of the new Zoning Ordinance. He met with Township staff about two weeks ago. They resolved some communication issues and went through a list of items that need to be addressed, and worked on getting a plan to go forward. They learned that the source document was not as completed as they had expected so they needed to take steps to reformat that and that process is ongoing. They are almost finished with that portion, and then they will adjust the table of contents and work on some map changes. His staff should have the document completed in the next day. Mike Muffley commented during the meeting they hashed through most of the comments and a lot of the issues involved formatting. He believes the last round of comments have gotten us in the right direction.

Cindy Miller questioned if the draft will be in editing format so that the entire document doesn't need to be reread line by line. Matt Wanamaker commented he will provide an executive summary with all the edits and where to find the changes that were made. Cindy Miller commented she is looking for measures to be taken so that she and the staff don't need to go through the document line by line for a second or third time. Matt Wanamaker commented he didn't realize that there were as many individuals looking at the drafts from all perspectives, including formatting. He thought it was more from a technical viewpoint. Cindy Miller commented the Board will need to review the ordinance before the hearing, but she wants to make sure that we are not duplicating the efforts again. Matt Wannamaker commented there were multiple copies going around so by the time some people looked at a copy, there were already changes made to another which was causing issues. When they started this, he had staff locally that could have been managing this issue, but she currently is not working and it is a ball they dropped.

Cindy Miller questioned if there was a timeframe as to when the document would be coming back to the Planning Commission for their review. Matt Wanamaker commented he received word from his staff that they have completed the formatting through page 249 and expects to finish the document tomorrow. The substantive changes have been incorporated. They are doing the final sweep for spacing, spell check, and similar items. After that he will have to review it for QA/QC and also speak with Lori Lambert regarding map changes. It is not a long way off.

Jerry Pritchard commented this project needs to keep moving. It has been worked on for over two years. When will it come back to the Board? Cindy Miller commented the staff and Mike Muffley must review it when it is done, then it goes to Planning for review, and then after that it will come back to the Supervisors. Mike Muffley noted the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission also needs a 30 day review period. If things go completely smooth, you are looking at a minimum of three months.

Katherine Mack questioned if there was a way to make it more concise for the public to know what the changes are, such as highlighting, so that no matter who looks at it can easily identify the changes. Matt Wanamaker commented the executive summary will have that information. Katherine Mack commented that will still require you to reference two documents rather than having everything on one page. The Supervisors should have a reasonable understanding of what is in their ordinances for when questions come up. Mike Muffley commented normally, they would be looking at a digital file which could have the track changes, comments, etc. It can be difficult on a printed document because there have been things that have been changed, reorganized, and combined with a different section to make the ordinance more clear for the users. It is not as simple as highlighting or coloring.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A. March 10, 2026. David Hess made a motion to approve the minutes. Cindy Miller seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE BILLS

A. General Fund Checks 29484 to 29493 and 29594 to 29615. Cindy Miller made a motion to approve these checks. Janet Sheats seconded the motion. Janet Sheats questioned if this includes Check 29476 to Pennoni Associates. Alice Rehrig commented that check is still being held. All voted aye. Motion carried.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Ordinance for Adoption

1. Ordinance 2026-1, Fireworks. Repealing and replacing existing ordinance.

Cindy Miller made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2026-1. Janet Sheats seconded

the motion. Jerry Pritchard questioned what changes have been made. Alice Rehrig commented the ordinance is the same as what was previously before the Board, basically being replaced to bring our ordinance in line with the State regulations. Sandy Hopkins questioned what the specific changes were as she was not at the last meeting. Attorney Backenstoe commented definitions were added that conform with the State and Federal regulations, distinguishing commercial fireworks from consumer fireworks. There are specific strict requirements for commercial fireworks as well as consumer fireworks and the hours as set forth by the State. Overall there were no major changes other than making our ordinance consistent with the State and Federal requirements for fireworks. Katherine Mack questioned if a commercial firework display must be approved by the Board of Supervisors. Attorney Backenstoe commented the Board does not need to approve them. They need to complete the required application. There is a provision for obtaining Board of Supervisor approval for a display that will exceed 30 minutes. All voted aye. Motion carried.

- B. Amendments to Noise Ordinances. The amendments to the noise ordinance would combine all the current sections into one ordinance. To make the discussion somewhat easier, the changes were broken into two parts, nuisance and disturbances, and zoning. If the Board is agreeable to having the zoning items moved into the noise ordinance, Alice Rehrig will combine everything into one ordinance. The benefit of moving the noise requirements from zoning is that the Police will be able to enforce the requirements if there is an issue when the Zoning Officer is not working. The Board agreed that everything pertaining to noise should be in one ordinance.

The proposed changes to the nuisance and disturbance chapters were as follows:

- Fireworks will be exempt from the noise ordinance since there is a separate ordinance pertaining to fireworks.
- Hours when noise is prohibited. The current hours are 11:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. Fireworks are required to end by 10:00 p.m. It was suggested to make the noise match the fireworks. Cindy Miller and Janet Sheats felt it should be changed to match the fireworks. David Hess, Jerry Pritchard, and Mike Jones felt the time should stay the same.
- Proposed language was added allowing Code Enforcement or a Police Officer to make verbal contact with a property owner whose tenant was creating a nuisance for the neighborhood and give them two hours to get their tenant under control. This would be considered to be a first notice and if it doesn't resolve, the property owner would also be cited in addition to their tenant.

The Board agreed with the language but felt there should only be one hour to get things quieted down before they would be cited in addition to their tenant.

- Currently, there are no restrictions pertaining to the use of Tannerite, but it is something that the police receive quite a few complaints about when people are using it. The Board agreed that the hours for use should be 10:00 a.m. 7:00 p.m. and all State and Federal regulations pertaining to firearms would need to be adhered to.
- The Board was not in favor of adding restrictions on the use of ATVs or requiring large gathering to notify the Police Department.

The proposed changes to the current zoning ordinance which would be incorporated into the revised noise ordinance were as follows:

- The current requirements in the zoning ordinance set different decibel levels for each zoning. The proposed changes would set one level for residential districts and one level for commercial and industrial districts. The purpose of this section is to support someone making a complaint about a neighbor creating a nuisance with loud noises during the day. It was noted that a decibel meter will need to be purchased. Cindy Miller questioned how this will impact the Planning Commission's review of a commercial plan. Roxann Colfer commented the warehouse and data centers will still have dba requirements.
- Jerry Pritchard raised a concern about restrictions of the unloading and loading of boxes. He also questioned the need to list emergency generators if they are not being regulated. Janet Sheats commented since they are exempt, you would want them in the ordinance as exempt so that if there is a question about the noise, it is clear that they are exempt. Cindy Miller commented the restriction on the loading and unloading of boxes is needed if there is a commercial business. Katherine Mack commented there are often times when the noise levels are questioned when there is a business seeking relief before the Zoning Hearing Board. The Zoning Hearing Board will need to be advised of what the ordinance states.

Marc Kerksmar suggested a chart be added to the ordinance for people to reference because most people do not have a decibel meter.

Linda Roman questioned if these requirements will apply to the parks. Mike Jones commented it would. Roxann Colfer commented right now, the Police Department cannot enforce the dba limits because they are in zoning.

Alice Rehrig will combine the sections into one document for final review by the Board.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Oplinger Hower Legion—addition. No one was present to discuss this matter.

B. Resolution 2026-13, Establishing scheduling priorities, fees for use of facilities. The Rec Board is recommending changes to this resolution which include scheduling priorities for youth teams who are in playoff games and establishing a deadline for the payment of field use fees. Cindy Miller commented her only comment is for 2G. She believes the field use fees should be paid at the time the field is scheduled rather than giving them 30 days to pay. The fees and insurance should be paid at the same time. This would eliminate the office from having to chase after fees that are not paid. Jerry Pritchard commented that can be difficult because sometimes games are canceled or rescheduled. All the teams are now paid. There is not an issue. Cindy Miller commented it doesn't matter that they are paid. Why would the Township wait for 30 days to get the payment and put it on the office to chase after the team to collect the fee? She would rather have to refund a fee than have the office chase after someone for months to get the fees that are due. This would help streamline the process. Alice Rehrig commented home teams provide rosters, insurance, and non-resident fees at the beginning of the season. The non-township teams are the only ones who schedule on a game by game basis. She had one team that comes in and asked for a certain number of games and paid for the season. The problem that occurred this past year was because a third party asked her to schedule a game. That has been changed in the resolution.

Monica Brown commented it would be easier if the fees were paid upfront rather than having to chase after someone.

Sandy Hopkins questioned why you would want to give someone 30 days to pay their fee. Home teams do not have to pay per game. The other teams should pay when they schedule a game so that Alice Rehrig doesn't have to chase after them. It should be up to Alice Rehrig to tell them they need to pay prior to getting placed on the schedule for the field.

Mike Jones questioned how it would work if someone used the lights. Alice Rehrig commented she would have to bill them after the light use. In that case, she would give them 30 days to pay. There has not been an issue with collecting the light fees.

This resolution was tabled so that Alice Rehrig could revise the resolution to make the fees due at the time the game is scheduled understanding that if lights are involved, there would need to be a bill sent.

- C. Resolution 2026-14, Miscellaneous Fees. This resolution has been amended to include annual licensing fee of \$150 for short term rentals and bed and breakfast facilities.

Janet Sheats made a motion to adopt Resolution 2026-14. David Hess seconded the motion. Cindy Miller noted that “rental” should be added to Item #10. Alice Rehrig commented this has been corrected on the final draft. Katherine Mack noted that she feels that \$150 is cheap for a short term rental license. Some other areas charge over \$1,000. All the fees should be looked at. It takes time and personnel to review things. These are big businesses. Roxann Colfer commented the \$150 is a starting point. She needs to do a general inspection to renew their licenses. Also, they will need to go before the Zoning Hearing Board initially in order to get their approval. Janet Sheats amended her motion to table this resolution and have the zoning officer look into what is charged in other areas. David Hess seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

D. Ordinance for Advertising

1. Ordinance 2026-2, Amending Chapter 107-7, Consumption of Alcohol in Parks. Cindy Miller made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2026-2. Jerry Pritchard seconded the motion. Paul Nikisher questioned if people will be able to obtain the insurance. He was not able to check with his insurance carrier. Jerry Pritchard commented insurance companies provide these all the time. Linda Roman commented she does not believe it is proper or necessary for alcohol to be in any of our parks. Zach Szoke questioned whether this was the option that provided the least amount of liability to the Township. Attorney Backenstoe commented not allowing alcohol provides the least amount of liability. Attorney Backenstoe commented the highest liability would be if you allowed alcohol and didn't require insurance. Janet Sheats questioned the liability pertaining to the option where alcohol was not regulated. Attorney Backenstoe commented if the consumption of alcohol is prohibited in Township parks, he believes that is the least amount of liability. If alcohol is not regulated at all, it would be the next level of liability. The third level of liability would be if it is regulated or permitted and insurance certificates are required. The highest level of liability would be if it is regulated or permitted and no insurance is required. Jerry Pritchard commented if you are really looking out for the Township, then you wouldn't allow it at all. Paul Nikisher commented if it is not allowed, it would not only be less liability for the Township, but for the residents as well. Mike Jones commented if alcohol is not permitted and the police don't enforce it, then the Township is liable. Cindy Miller commented if the alcohol is not permitted, she would hope the police would be enforcing it. Attorney Backenstoe commented if alcohol is not permitted and the police see it, they must act. Janet

Sheats commented we don't want to tell people what to do when it comes to safe living conditions, but yet we want to tell them what to do pertaining to alcohol. Jerry Pritchard questioned if the Township could end up in court if alcohol is not regulated. Attorney Backenstoe commented someone could come up with some creative legal issue, but if it is not regulated people would be responsible for their own actions, absent some intoxicated individual who is causing a nuisance, then the police would need to act. Jerry Pritchard and David Hess voted aye. Janet Sheats, Cindy Miller, and Mike Jones were opposed. Motion did not carry.

Alice Rehrig questioned if there is a direction that the Board was looking to go since everything is now back to the way it was and insurance is not required. Cindy Miller commented she doesn't believe that alcohol should be permitted. She feels we need to start over with the ordinance. Attorney Backenstoe suggested Alice Rehrig contact the insurance carrier to see what their stance is on this matter.

- E. Agenda Items. David Hess commented there are times that Board members place a one word item on the agenda. He feels that there should be more information provided so that the rest of the Board knows what is going to be discussed. He is wondering if there should be some type of policy indicating that information should be provided. Janet Sheats commented she would agree, especially if it is something that the Board will need to be voting on. Attorney Backenstoe commented if everything is of the consensus that items being placed on the agenda should have a concept as to what is being proposed rather than a single word, there is no need for a formal policy. The Board would just need to agree and when you want something placed on the agenda, provide a simple one sentence explanation to Alice Rehrig for when she places it on the agenda.
- F. Manager's Report. The Rails to Trails group is requesting to utilize the meeting room as they did in the past for their monthly meetings on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. Cindy Miller made a motion to approve the request of the Rails to Trails to utilize the meeting room for their meetings on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. conditioned upon them providing a certificate of insurance. Jerry Pritchard seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Alice Rehrig reported she has been doing some preliminary investigation into another vendor for the financial software. The current company has been purchased by another company and the costs associated with switching to their software is expensive. At this point, there is no end date for the current software, but she wants to be prepared for when that time comes. The vendor she has been looking at will be able to import at least three years of data from the current software. Cindy Miller

questioned what the difference would be between using a customized software as opposed to something more general like Quicken or QuickBooks so that we are not relying on proprietary software and it seems like a lot of municipalities are using that. Alice Rehrig commented she has very limited knowledge of QuickBooks. She has seen their financial reports, and they are not as detailed as what she currently has. Monica Brown questioned if there was software that was specifically designed for municipalities. Cindy Miller commented that is what is being referred to, but it is usually proprietary and we become dependent on them.

- G. Solicitor's Report. Attorney Backenstoe commented he attended the Zoning Hearing Board meeting for an Airbnb on Bishops Place. The Zoning Hearing Board found that the cease and desist was properly issued and there were no equitable rights to the use. The formal decision will be issued to the applicant within 45 days and they would have a 30 day appeal period after the decision is rendered.

Katherine Mack commented that there was an Executive Session at the last meeting in regard to possible litigation regarding the School District not paying their fire tax. She was wondering what the Board was going to do about that. She does not believe that is right that they be exempt from that. The churches and cemeteries are all paying and the pressure needs to be put on them. Attorney Backenstoe commented this is not something that the Township takes lightly and at the appropriate time they will take the appropriate action.

- VII. PUBLIC COMMENT. Dan Ziegenfuss questioned when the property maintenance will be back on the agenda. Roxann Colfer commented there is nothing before the Board at this time. The matter was tabled.

Patty Ingles questioned who would be responsible to inspect a commercial property such as restaurants for fire and grease traps. Roxann Colfer commented the Township doesn't have an inspection process for commercial properties unless there is a change of use. When there is a change in use, there is a life and safety inspection. Janet Sheats commented the State does come out once a year to inspect kitchens in restaurants. Ms. Ingles also questioned if there were any type of inspections required for rental properties. Roxann Colfer commented the Township does not have a rental inspection requirement.

Paul Nikisher suggested the Township look at 250th Anniversary flags and consider putting one up at the Township complex. He also questioned if there was going to be something special or unique done for the 250th Anniversary. Janet Sheats commented she has spoken with Chief Henry about doing something and combining it with National Night Out. Paul Nikisher noted that the Lions would be willing to participate with an event.

Katherine Mack questioned when the sign in front of the Municipal Building will be updated. The current sign is not doing any justice to the Township. Mike Jones commented the Township applied for a grant and they haven't received it. John Knoblach commented there is some congressional spending that the Senators have and he would be willing to contact them.

Cindy Miller commented she received quite a few calls regarding Route 248 above the intersection with Route 145, especially after the accidents this morning. There has been black ice on the hill from all the water running on the road. She contacted Representative Mako's office who in turn contacted PennDOT. The response they got from PennDOT was that they were aware of the problem and once the weather stops freezing, they will be flushing the drains and cleaning it up. The Board was on Zoom meetings with PennDOT before they did the work at the intersection and told them that it was a major problem and asked them to fix it when they did the updates to the intersection. PennDOT told them that it was not in the funding or the scope of work. Her only suggestion to the residents is to be very careful when they are in that area because there are no immediate plans for taking care of the problem.

Mike Jones commented it was brought to his attention that it was brought up at the Rec Board about making changes to the pavilions/dog shades at the dog park. The Board voted on two structures and the deposits have been paid. Items that have already gone through the Board of Supervisors should not be getting changed by the Rec Board. The Board's decision is what should stand.

Zach Szoke showed the Board and the public an aerial map what Lower Macungie looked like in 1999 and what it looks like in 2020. The difference that took place over 20 years shows the reason the Supervisors should make a plan to have an open space referendum on the ballot for November so that every citizen can voice their opinion as to whether they want to make a small sacrifice to keep a township looking the way it does now.

- VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION. The Board went into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters. No action was taken.
- IX. ADJOURN. Janet Sheats made a motion to adjourn. David Hess seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.