

**MINUTES OF MEETING  
MONTGOMERY TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
NOVEMBER 11, 2024**

**1. Call to Order:** The November 11, 2024 action meeting of the Montgomery Township Board of Supervisors was held at the Montgomery Township Municipal Building, 1001 Stump Road, Montgomeryville, PA. Chairwoman Candyce Fluehr Chimera called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Chair Candyce Fluehr Chimera  
Supervisor Tanya C. Bamford  
Supervisor Beth A. Staab  
Vice-Chair Audrey R. Ware-Jones  
Township Solicitor John Walko, Esq.

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

Police Chief William R. Peoples  
Fire Chief William Wiegman  
Director of Planning & Zoning Marianne McConnell  
Director of Public Works Greg Reiff  
Director of IT Richard Grier  
Public Information Coordinator Derek Muller  
Recording Secretary Deborah Rivas

**ABSENT:**

Supervisor Annette M. Long

**2. & 3. Pledge of Allegiance and Public Comment:** Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Ms. Chimera called for public comment and there was none. Ms. Chimera made the following announcement regarding Veterans Day: Thank you to the veterans of the Montgomery Township community and across the nation for your honorable service, sacrifice, and bravery. We are incredibly proud of our veterans here at the police department. Thank you for all your dedication and commitment to our country: Chief Peoples – US Army, Detective Sergeant Benner – US Marine Corps, Sergeant Wagner – US Navy, Detective Walter – US Army, Officer McGuigan – US Marine Corps, Detective DeJesus – US Marine Corps, Officer Rose – US Marine Corps/US Army, Officer Duessing – US Coast Guard, Officer Beebe – US Army, Officer Long – US Marine Corps, Officer Rardin – US Army, Officer Poekert – US Army, and Staff Services Sarnocinski – US Air Force.

**4. Announcement of Executive Session:** Township Solicitor John Walko, Esquire, announced that the Board of Supervisors met in Executive Session earlier this evening at 6:30 p.m. in the Township building to discuss personnel matters. Mr. Walko stated that the topics discussed are legitimate subjects of an Executive Session under the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania’s Sunshine Law.

**5. Consent Agenda:**

**MOTION:** Upon motion by Ms. Chimera, seconded by Ms. Bamford, and unanimously carried (4-0), the minutes of the October 28, 2024 Board meeting, the minutes of the October 25, 2024 Budget Worksession and the Payment of Bills for November 11, 2024 in the amount of \$763,567.90 were approved as submitted.

**Recognition:**

**6. Autumn Festival – Celebration of Staff:** Ms. Bamford stated that Montgomery Township is fortunate to have an amazing team of staff members who go above and beyond to create community events that engage and entertain residents and visitors. Many hours of planning and execution are involved in having a successful event. The Board acknowledged and celebrated the staff who planned and executed a very successful Autumn Festival event on Saturday, October 19, 2024. Angelina Cappozzi, Jenna Bertolli and Derek Muller were present and thanked for their efforts to plan and create the event.

**Introduction:**

**7. Swearing In of Police Chief William R. Peoples:** Ms. McCreary reported that Chief J. Scott Bendig retired effective September 20, 2024. Tonight we will be formally swearing in William R. Peoples to serve as the Chief of Police for Montgomery Township. Bill Peoples was hired as a patrol officer in the Montgomery Township Police Department in September of 1997. During his 27-year career, he has served in various roles, including DARE instructor, Expandable Baton Instructor, Bicycle Officer, JNET Coordinator, Citizens Police Academy Instructor, Field Training Officer, Field Training Supervisor and PLEAC Accreditation Manager. He was promoted to the rank of Officer in Charge in 2002, to Corporal in 2008, to Sergeant in 2010 and Lieutenant in 2012, and has been serving as the Acting Chief since September 20, 2024. Born and raised in West Chester, PA, Chief Peoples served in the United States Army from 1989 to 1994 as an M1A1 Abrams Tank Crewman and is a Veteran of Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm. He has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Administration of Justice and a Master of Science Degree in Criminal Justice and he attended the FBI National Academy in 2018. Ms. McCreary stated that he brings a wealth of knowledge, management skills, abilities and vision to the Police Department that will well serve the department, the Township and the residents of Montgomery Township. The Honorable Stanley R. Ott (Ret.) was in attendance to administer the loyalty oath of law enforcement to Chief Peoples.

**MOTION: Upon motion by Ms. Chimera, seconded by Ms. Bamford, and unanimously carried (4-0), the Board approved Resolution 2024-22, authorizing the appointment of William R. Peoples as the Chief of Police of Montgomery Township.**

**8. Appointment of Shade Tree Commission Member – James Rall:**

**MOTION: Upon motion by Ms. Chimera, seconded by Ms. Bamford, and unanimously carried (4-0), the Board appointed James Rall to the Shade Tree Commission for the remainder of the five-year term which expires on January 1, 2027.**

**Planning and Zoning:**

**9. Advertisement of Proposed Ordinance #24-346 – BP Zoning Text Amendment:** Ms. McConnell reported that Daniel Dunleavy owns the two adjacent properties located at 1008 Upper State Road. In 2008, these properties and several adjoining parcels along Horsham Road were re-zoned from Residential (R2) to BP – Business Professional with a corresponding zoning text amendment, Special Regulations, where a BP property abuts a residential zoning district. The applicant is proposing the following text amendments to this provision of the ordinance:

1. A text amendment to the 5,000 sq ft building size provision; specifically increasing it to a single floor area of 10,000 square feet provided that (1) the property provides a minimum lot area of 70,000 square feet, (2) the lot sits wholly within the BP zoning district, (3) complies with regulations set forth in 230-79, (4) vehicular access adequate for emergency services and daily ingress and egress, and (5) off-street parking is provided as required by Section 230-83B.
2. Include parallel and temporary sign provisions.
3. Add Animal Hospital use allowed by Conditional Use (Veterinarian use is currently allowed by Conditional Use within the BP District).
4. Provide parking requirements for Animal Hospital Use.

The proposed amendments would also apply to each property within the BP-Business Professional zoning designation.

**MOTION: Upon motion by Ms. Chimera, seconded by Ms. Bamford, and unanimously carried (4-0), the Board authorized staff to advertise the proposed amendments to Chapter 230-83K of the Code of Montgomery Township as presented.**

**10. Re Plus Airport Square/Panera Bread Preliminary/Final Land Development – Amendment to Approved Resolution:** Ms. McConnell reported that at the September 23, 2024 Board meeting, the Supervisors adopted a resolution approving the Re Plus Airport Square / Panera Bread Preliminary/Final Land Development. The applicant has requested that the approval resolution be amended to provide further details and clarification to the conditions discussed during the September 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting. Specifically, the discussion surrounding the location of the requested sidewalk installation along Bethlehem Pike.

**MOTION: Upon motion by Ms. Chimera, seconded by Ms. Staab, and unanimously carried (4-0), the Board adopted Resolution No. 2024-23, approving the amended preliminary/final land development application, with requested waivers, submitted by Re Plus Airport Square, LLC c/o The Wilder Companies, LTD.**

**Presentations:**

**11. 2025 Proposed Montgomery Township Municipal Sewer Authority:** Shannon Drosnock, Executive Director, presented the proposed 2025 budget. Ms. Drosnock indicated that the Authority Board has discussed Major Operating Goals for 2025, which include Personnel – Major attention to training, Personnel – Year Four of Region One Internship Program, Treatment – Implementation of new disinfection system and Plant – Warehouse Building. Ms. Drosnock was pleased to announce that investment in personnel was a goal for 2024 and the authority has achieved that goal with a full staff of 12 personnel at the Eureka Plant. Ms. Drosnock also indicated that the current budget is on track with steady revenues and net expenses approximately 4% under budget. The authority is seeing increased costs in every aspect of its operation. Capital projects were discussed, including the need to move several projects into 2025 and later years. The operating budget for 2025 is expected to be \$6,292,250.00, with operating expenses at \$6,074,700.00. No fee increases are necessary this year.

**12. 2025 Proposed Township Budget and Authorization to Advertise:** Ms. McCreary reviewed details of the 2025 budget process, noting the detailed discussion held during the presentations made at the budget worksession held on October 25<sup>th</sup>, which highlighted current operations and Department goals for 2025 and how some of the proposed capital expenditures tied into these goals. She stated tonight's presentation would be more of an overview because of the level of detail provided at the worksessions. An Executive Session was held on October 28 to discuss personnel matters.

Ms. McCreary stated a budget is a tool for the staff, reflecting the Board's priorities and who we are, and what we value. It also reflects the Township's obligations to provide public safety, emergency services, public works, and recreational/quality of life opportunities residents expect.

She noted the 2025 budget process began earlier this year as the Department Heads focused on long-term expenditures relating to both capital and operations. This laid the groundwork for the preliminary discussions she had with the Department Heads.

Four funds account for 93% of the \$31.0 million proposed expenditures for 2025, including the General Fund (\$16,250,980), Fire Fund (\$2,008,140), Community and Recreation Center Fund (\$1,345,400), and the Capital Reserves Fund (\$9,408,124).

General Fund operating expenditures are increasing by 8.9%, which is due in part to continuing inflationary pressures we are experiencing across all sectors of the economy. In the General Fund, the largest expenditure is for Police services which account for 53% of the budget. Chief Peoples is moving forward with the plan to hire two new officers in addition to replacing one officer as a result of the recent promotions within the Department. Ms. McCreary noted 86% of the operating revenue is comprised of property and Act 511 taxes. She stated that Act 511 taxes include earned income, business privilege, and mercantile taxes. These estimates are provided by Berkheimer Associates, the tax collection agency responsible for collecting them. She also pointed out that due to recent property tax appeals and negotiated settlements, the Township's

total valuation has decreased by about \$5 million. This is something that will continue to be monitored. Ms. McCreary pointed out that the current millage rate of 2.94 ranks the Township 19 out of 38 Townships in the County.

The Fire Protection Fund comprises dedicated real estate and earned income tax revenue to pay for the career staff, stipends paid to the volunteer firefighters and other operating expenditures. Ms. McCreary stated in 2025 she and Chief Wiegman will continue to discuss the transition to a fully paid 24/7 career staff that is supplemented by volunteers.

The Community and Recreation Center (CRC) is expected to see a 5.0% increase in revenues and a 6% increase in expenditures. She noted per the Board's direction at the budget worksession, staff will make a recommendation to increase fees for CRC members and other users.

The Capital Reserves Fund has fully committed or expended the \$15 million borrowed in 2021 at a rate of 1.76% to pay for the purchases and projects outlined in the Capital Investment Program. Ms. McCreary reminded the Board that the Township no longer can rely on General Fund surpluses or developer fees in lieu of replenishing the fund which is why the Board increased the real estate tax. The increase will provide a consistent revenue stream into the Capital Fund. However, projects and expenditures will need to be prioritized across all Departments and then reprioritized based on the needs of the Township as a whole. Ms. McCreary stated with the budgeted transfer of \$2 million from the General Fund it would still leave the fund balance at the level recommended by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA).

Ms. McCreary completed her presentation and answered questions from the Board, noting they need to adopt the budget by December 31<sup>st</sup>.

**MOTION: Upon motion by Ms. Chimera, seconded by Ms. Bamford, and unanimously carried (4-0), the Board authorized the advertisement of the proposed 2025 budget (all funds) as being available for public inspection.**

### **Administration and Finance:**

**13. Renewal Agreement with Constellation Energy to Supply National Gas:** Ms. McCreary reported that the current two-year contract with Constellation Energy for natural gas for five Township locations is set to expire in November of 2024. The Township has contacted Constellation to procure new rates. The current price is \$0.77530 per ccf. On average, the Township uses 35,562 ccf per year for all five locations at the cost of \$27,571.22. Constellation provided a fixed price quote of \$0.6055 for a 36-month term. Based on current usage, this would decrease the Township's cost by \$6,038.43 for a total of \$21,532.79 per year. Discussion followed, and the Board agreed to enter into a 36-month agreement.

**MOTION: Upon motion by Ms. Chimera, seconded by Ms. Staab, and unanimously carried (4-0), the Board authorized staff to execute all necessary documents to lock in natural gas prices for all locations in the Township for a period of 36 months.**

**New Business:**

**14. Adjournment:** Upon motion by Ms. Chimera and seconded by Ms. Bamford, the meeting was adjourned at 8:36 p.m. The Board then entered into an Executive Session to discuss personnel matters.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah A. Rivas, Recording Secretary