

Palmer Township, Northampton County

Stormwater Authority Meeting Minutes

March 19th, 2025, 5PM, 3 Weller Pl, Lower-Level Municipal Meeting Room

1. Executive Session – 4:30pm

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call

- a. Present: Robert Blanchfield, Robert A. Lammi, Kendall M. Mitchell, Matthew Gunther, Craig Swinsburg, Luke Gibson, George White, James Farley, Rebecca Frederickson, Karen Celia, Phillip Godbout, Scott Kistler and Zach Trexler.
- b. Absent: None
- c. The meeting was called to order at 5:01PM.

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes from February 19th, 2025, and March 11th, 2025.

- a. Mitchell made a motion to approve the minutes from February 19th, 2025, and Gunther seconded the motion. The minutes passed unanimously by voice vote. Lammi abstained.
- b. Lammi made a motion to approve the minutes from March 11th, 2025, and Swinsburg seconded the motion. The minutes passed unanimously by voice vote.

5. Public Comment, Other Communications

- a. Tim Fisher – 68 Moor Drive
 - i. Came to the meeting to introduce the Highlands of Glenmoor Stormwater Management Director, Pat McIvor.
- b. Pat McIvor - 23 Devonshire Drive
 - i. Explained how long he has lived in the Township and his role with the HOA in his development, the Highlands of Glenmoor, and their buildings and grounds department. He also discussed the history of the HOA's stormwater management program, as well as the infrastructure they manage. Handed out and discussed the HOA's annual stormwater report. Asked how the HOA can be raised from a 16% credit to the full 20% credit. Gunther stated he would discuss the request further with HRG.
- c. Mark Kittle – 2673 Northwood Avenue
 - i. Asked if Palmer maintains the inlets on Northwood Avenue and asked if the Street Sweepers maintain Northwood, because they are contributing to the Stormwater issues. Kistler stated that PennDOT is responsible for both of those activities on every state road such as Northwood Avenue.
- d. Steve DeWalt – 1270 Tatamy Road
 - i. Asked Blanchfield if anything else was needed from him at the time and Blanchfield stated no. Asked why there was no flow in the Schoeneck Creek, Kistler explained the sinkholes that had opened. Blanchfield

mentioned the upcoming sinkhole presentation on March 23rd for all to attend.

e. Christine Decker – 1137 Keane Street

- i. Stated she received a letter from the Township instructing her not to park her vehicle on her yard, which asked her to put pavers in her yard which would have increased her impervious surface. Godbout stated the letter would have come from the Code Department, and that the ordinances would need to be reviewed to check for any conflicts with Stormwater regulations. Gunther said he would review this with the Code Department.

6. Reports

a. Solicitor

- i. No report at this time.

7. Committee Reports

a. Engineering

- i. White submitted the March Engineering Report. Old Nazareth Road is out to bid, and bidding ends next week. We have received a lot of interest so far considering the size of the project.
- ii. Schoeneck Creek is being value engineered. Blanchfield asked about the utility easement, and White said he was working on it, but it would not interfere with any of our project.
- iii. 25th street is continuing to move along, with a potential grant being discussed at the committee meeting.
- iv. White handed out the Draft MS4 General permit revisions that the State is proposing for the general permit. We assume the revisions will also apply to the individual permit that the Township possesses. White said HRG submitted 6 pages of questions to the DEP already. Stormwater volume reduction will be the focus, rather than sediment reduction for the revised permit. Other notable changes include the elimination of credits for street sweeping, as well as stream restoration work, which does not affect the quantity, only the quality. Kistler asked White about the specifics of the Hobson Street project. Blanchfield asked if there were any other municipalities forming together in opposition of some of the new rules, and White said PSATS is hosting these discussions. Blanchfield asked if a letter should be drafted to our local officials, and White said he recommends waiting until the individual permit revisions are received. Gunther said we should have a game plan in place for when those specific revisions are released. Bellis asked if any stream restoration projects should be pushed back 3 years, and White said now is the time to do them considering we may not be receiving credit for them under the new permit. Lammi stated that it seems like everything we do up until 2028 will be

thrown out the window by the state. White said right now, we are completing the projects that we are required to do under the current permit. Kistler asked if we are overperforming in our sediment reduction with the Hobson Street project, and White said we still have 4 more projects to complete along with Hobson Street in order to meet our requirements. Gunther asked if any news as far as fines go for not completing projects as required by the permit, and White said that the EPA is currently all over Scranton due to failures to comply with their permit.

b. Public Works

- i. Kistler said we took delivery of the vac truck 3 weeks ago, with training taking place the next week prior to working in the field every day. He said we hit 34 inlets today, where we used to average about 12 with the old truck. He said we are jet flushing as well as cleaning when able to. He said the truck is working great and the guys have picked it up quickly. He said street sweeping has also commenced with a lot of material being gathered all around the Township.

c. Finance

- i. No report at this time.

8. Township Staff Comments

a. Public Services

- i. No report at this time.

b. MS4

- i. Gunther thanked the street sweeping and cleaning crews from Public Works for keeping the streets clean. Public Works has identified 453 inlets needing cleaning and 360 inlets needing repairs. Gunther said we are looking to finalize the MS4 inspection schedule by the end of April. Gunther said easements went out to residents for the Old Nazareth Road project.
- ii. Gunther stated there was a spill at Sheetz, with our Fire Department responding quickly and using play doh to help in the cleanup efforts. Gunther said no fuel oil reached any of the stormwater infrastructure.

9. New Business

a. March Invoice Package

- i. Blanchfield said we have expenses from Entech for \$1160.00, Grim, Biehn & Thatcher for \$247.00, audit team for \$6000.00, Salzmann & Hughes for \$8451.50, and from HRG for \$132,434.53 for a grand total of \$148,293.03 in total monthly expenses. Mitchell made a motion to pay the March invoice package and Lammi seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

b. Management Agreement: PTSA & Palmer Township Equipment Purchases

- i. Blanchfield said we purchased the vacuum truck and have come up with a way of paying for it as well as taking care of maintaining it. This agreement allows the Authority to purchase something and for the Township to own it, insure it, operate and maintain it. Gibson explained the addendum to the existing agreement already in place. Lammi made a motion to approve the Management Agreement addendum and Mitchell seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.
- c. Old Nazareth Road Drainage Improvements Supplement #1
 - i. Blanchfield said this was tabled last month due to the high cost. Phase 1, \$7000.00 is done, phase 4 final design, \$18,000.00, is done, phase 5 bidding docs are done, phase 7 construction administration, \$88,000.00, will be done, and phase 8 construction observation, \$235,000.00, which is an extremely high costing phase. White said this is a time and materials price assuming the worst-case scenario. We will have a top-level engineer there 8 hours a day for 181 days. Construction should be shorter, and observations don't need to take place 8 hours a day, like when critical work is not being done that day, such as site cleanup. The hourly number we used can be reduced, as well as the hourly rate. White said we are hoping to come in 25% lower than that expected cost, and Lammi said he hopes so. Gunther said he will help with the inspection process to help minimize cost where we can. Swinsburg made a motion to approve Supplement #1 and Gunther seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.
- d. 25th St. CFA Small Water & Sewer Grant Assignment Agreement
 - i. Blanchfield said this agreement is up for approval for a cost of \$4,900.00 agreement. White said there is a great opportunity to get a grant to aid in funding this project, and this funding would allow HRG to pursue this grant. Lammi said this was developed by the Capital Improvement Plan team. He said he thought it would be done in 2025 and is budgeted for 2025, but he now understands it will not be done until 2026 due to the timing of the grant application and review process. White said the grant funds up to \$500,000.00, but we do not anticipate receiving the full amount. Gunther said we have money in escrow to use for the 15% match. Swinsburg made a motion to approve the Assignment Agreement in the amount of \$4,900.00 and Gunther seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.
- e. Fox Run Retrofit SCM Project Assignment
 - i. Project assignment for a total cost of \$99,000.00. Lammi made a motion to table until the April meeting and Gunther seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

- f. Old Orchard Park SCM Project Assignment
 - i. Project assignment for a total cost of \$99,000.00. Lammi made a motion to table until the April meeting and Gunther seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.
- g. Parkview Estates PRP SCM Project Assignment
 - i. Project assignment for a total cost of \$89,000.00. Lammi made a motion to table until the April meeting and Gunther seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.
- h. Stones Crossing PRP SCM Project Assignment
 - i. Project assignment for a total cost of \$86,000.00. Lammi made a motion to table until the April meeting and Gunther seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.
- i. Updated 2025 Budget/Re-Approval
 - i. Lammi said adjustments were made since approval. \$5,000.00 was budgeted for the 2024 audit but it came out to \$13,500.00. Also, \$257,000 needs to be paid back to the Township for startup fees owed back to them. This will be split up into 4 quarters. All changes of the budget were sent out for review. If approved, we need to put it on the website. Blanchfield explained that the bottom line did not change after making these adjustments. Lammi made a motion to approve the revised 2025 budget including the additions discussed and Mitchell seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.
- j. Earth Day Celebration: Poster & Materials
 - i. Blanchfield said the Earth Day celebration is approaching April 19th at Fairview Park, and an expense popped up. The sweeper and vac will be on display, and it's a good idea to have some signs on display with the vehicles to explain what they are and what they are capable of doing throughout the year. Total cost is about \$50 dollars. Gunther made a motion to approve the signs and Lammi seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

10. For the Good of the Order

- a. Lammi said the Capital Improvement Plan is continuing to be developed by a team of people to truly go into detail looking at every aspect of every project that needs to be completed. One is a master list of projects that consists of over 80 projects needing to be looked at, which we got together and did. Lammi said the list has been cut down, with David Pyle putting together a revised list right now, as well as ranking the importance of them one at a time. We will also be discussing grants at our upcoming meeting this Friday. Godbout asked if the plan will be posted to the website, and Lammi said probably eventually but not until it is finalized.

- b.** Blanchfield stated that the Sinkhole presentation is coming up on March 25th, and Gunther said roughly 30-35 RSVP's have been received so far.
- c.** Blanchfield said there was a Kiwanis club presentation this morning that was received well by everyone there regarding stormwater and MS4 activity.
- d.** Bellis thanked the Authority and White for holding the public meeting for the Old Nazareth Road project.

11. Next meeting: April 16th, 2025

12. Adjournment

- a.** Lammi made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Gunther seconded. The motion was passed unanimously by voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 6:14PM.