

**TOWNSHIP OF FALLS  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING**

**ROLL CALL:**

<b>JEFFRY E. DENCE, CHAIRMAN</b>	<b>PRESENT</b>
<b>ERIN M. MULLEN, VICE-CHAIRPERSON</b>	<b>PRESENT</b>
<b>BRIAN M. GALLOWAY, SECRETARY</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
<b>JEFFREY M. BORASKI, SUPERVISOR</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
<b>JOHN W. PALMER, SUPERVISOR</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>

The meeting was called to order at 5:37 p.m. with roll call and pledge to the flag. Chairman Dence and Member Mullen were present. Member Boraski, Member Galloway and Member Palmer were absent. Also present were Township Manager John Shepherd, Chief Code Enforcement Officer & Zoning Officer Matthew Takita, Township Solicitor Michael Clarke, Township Solicitor Lauren Gallagher. Chairman Dence said we do not have a quorum so we cannot vote on anything tonight but this is a budget workshop presentation. Tonight is the first meeting with our Manager John Shepherd. Welcome Mr. Shepherd.

**ITEM # 1 EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mr. Clarke said we held an Executive Session to discuss personnel matters.

**ITEM # 2 PUBLIC COMMENT – FIVE MINUTE LIMIT PER PERSON  
FORTY-FIVE MINUTE MAXIMUM**

Ms. Nicole Paschke expressed safety concerns on upper Thornridge Drive, from the top of Tanglewood Lane to Teaberry Lane. She and her husband purchased their Thornridge home three years ago. She would like to say they have had a good experience but that has not been the case. On August 10<sup>th</sup>, her 7, 6 & 2 year old were playing outside when a vehicle exceeded the 25 mph speed limit, jumped the curb and drove across the sidewalk. It went across her driveway and into her yard, nearly claiming the lives of her children, her husband and herself. They spend most of their days in their front yard. Since this has happened, going outside is terrifying. They fear for their safety every time they walk outside or hear a speeding car. This accident was just a matter of time. Since 2015, her family has been advocating for safety measures to take place on this portion of the drive, but sadly they have been dismissed. Over the years, there have been multiple cars that have been totaled and trees have been hit. Ms. Paschke is asking for your consideration to apply for a Department of Community and Economic Development grant to help fund improvements to her part of the drive. They stated their concerns to Falls Township Police, the Traffic Control Committee, Falls Township Engineer and the Board in 2015, but these discussions are ongoing and the dangers have only increased. On a daily basis, she sees cars, trucks, school buses and delivery trucks race around the bend where the speed limit is 25 mph. These bends are tight and they should be posted 10-15 mph. They are speeding along long stretches, swerving, and slamming their brakes through the narrow roads and bends. They



## Board of Supervisors – September 9, 2025

have an impaired line of sight, making a right or left hand turn onto the drive. Our drive is also used as a cut through during school hours. These roads were built in the 40's and 50's and are not designed to accommodate today's modern-day traffic. Delivery trucks make frequent stops, park in the middle of the road and completely block traffic. There are more people in our community since the 50's therefore, cars are not only parking in the driveways, they are parked along the side streets. Cell phone usage causes distractions. We have to keep up with the needs of our modern-day community. The speed limit for the entire drive is 25 mph with only one stop sign. North Park has seven stop signs and painted lines. Although they do have bends, North Park has three stop signs on a straight path. Birch Valley has two stop signs and painted lines. Vermillion Hills has six stop signs and painted lines. How did these stop signs get approved? For stop sign approval, you have to have a history of multiple accidents, a traffic volume threshold, conflict of turning vehicles and problems with sight distance. How does Thornridge Drive not meet this criteria? We will be requesting a Right To Know for all of these stop signs and how they were approved. The stop sign is not the only answer. We want a collaborative approach with the police, community members, traffic control boards, Township Engineer and youth to come up with the best way to make Thornridge Drive a safe place to live. Thornridge is home to many elementary and high school students who have no choice but to walk to school. Our children are walking, biking or riding their scooters 180 days out of the year. Many of our neighbors, caregivers with special need individuals, and families with young children, including herself, are walking these streets daily and experience the dangers. How many accidents have happened outside of your home? How often are you afraid to take your trash cans to the curb without being hit by a speeding vehicle going past your house? Have you ever been robbed of your peace and comfortability while playing with your children by your side? This is the fear of living on Thornridge Drive. This is an election year. If her children lost their lives that day, every one of you would be wondering why safety measures in this area were not put into play. This has been brought to the attention of the engineer, the police, the traffic committee and this Board again. It is time to be proactive instead of retroactive. Please consider the state grant through the Department of Community and Economic Development to help fund improvements that need to be made on upper Thornridge Drive. Let's work together to help make our community safe. Chief Whitney said he is familiar with the traffic crash which Ms. Paschke is referring to. This involved a DUI driver. Our traffic safety Sergeant and Engineer are looking into options and we are doing another study. This is definitely an area we can give further examination to and we can work together. Chairman Dence said we, as a Township, cannot just put in stop signs without PennDOT approval. As to why some roads have them and some do not, Chairman Dence said he does not know why. We will take this seriously. Remington Vernick was at the Traffic Advisory meeting the night before as well as Officer Fanelli. Chairman Dence said they did put a stop sign on Thornridge Drive, maybe in 2009. It was a big deal to get it. Something that reduces speed is striping. Some of these bigger roads, people drive on like they are on a freeway. Member Mullen asked when the last study was done. Chief Whitney said they are about to implement technology that will give us the ability to look back 12 months and get real-time speed data on every street in the Township. We'll be able to look and the public will be able to view it as well. Ms. Paschke said in 2021, her Mom had a



## Board of Supervisors – September 9, 2025

speed trap placed up there. Every other day there was a technician trying to fix the equipment. As soon as people see this, they slow down. It was collecting inaccurate data. It was presented and we were dismissed because it was not indicating that people were speeding. Chairman Dence said our local police cannot use radar. Ms. Paschke said she understands this is a process but something needs to happen. Member Mullen suggested that Ms. Paschke also contact State Representative Prokopiak. Ms. Paschke had reached out to him and he has provided his office for them to meet with PennDOT on Thursday.

Ms. Sarah Kirk is here to discuss the data center that was approved for Falls Township. She understands the Governor is pushing this through as one of his top agenda pieces, but she is deeply troubled by this. Ms. Kirk has concerns about the amount of electric grid needed for a data center. You need to constantly have a surplus of energy going into this. Do we have that kind of infrastructure? She understands there are power plants on site to help power this data center. Are we going to have blackouts? Are we going to have enough energy to sustain our life today? Ms. Kirk said she is being told our bills will increase. How much water will be needed for this data center? They do recycle water but she understands they use millions of gallons a day. Will our water be safe to drink? Who will monitor the emissions? Ms. Kirk said she heard that it will bring 1,200 jobs into the area. You need a high degree and you also need training for these jobs. These positions are data and system engineers. How many residents fit into that category? Once this data center is running there will be hardly anyone on site. There is no benefit to Falls Township for this data center. Ms. Kirk said she reviewed notes from past meetings. Someone asked at the March 25, 2025 meeting if this would be using public utility, what would the impact be to businesses and residents within Falls Township? You didn't know how much energy would be needed for this data center so you couldn't tell us if there would be blackouts. That is not fair to the residents. Chairman Dence said everything we use in Falls Township is not just coming from Dominion. When this was a steel mill that area used far more electric than what a data center would be using. Chairman Dence highly doubts if our electric bills will increase because of the data center. As far as the water and cooling on site, the water comes from Upper Bucks. The only thing they will use water for is cooling. The emissions coming from this are steam. We have a power plant that has been down there for about 20 years. The majority of the jobs that are there will be full-time maintenance jobs and they are appealing to people. A lot of the local data centers use CBRE. There are a lot of people who work for CBRE doing maintenance. Ms. Kirk does not believe there will be numerous jobs down there in a few years. Chairman Dence said he is not saying you are wrong, but people are reading a lot of information that may not be accurate, especially for that site.

Ms. Amy Fox said she thinks there needs to be more communication and more visibility throughout the Township. Mr. Clarke said the fourth Monday of every month is the Board of Supervisors meeting at 7:00 p.m. Chairman Dence said we have regular Board of Supervisors meetings. Ms. Fox said on Beaumont and Queen Anne there is a huge issue with traffic. She sees Pennsbury School buses go through the stop sign. Ms. Fox and her husband have almost gotten hit numerous times, as late as last week. Ms. Fox thinks there needs to be more police patrolling the areas around school zones. Ms. Fox also wanted to ask about road conditions. In Fairless Hills between the high school (Hood Boulevard) and



## **Board of Supervisors – September 9, 2025**

all the way down to Giant, it is an obstacle course. Chairman Dence said the majority of the roads that are bad are state roads. As an example, we have been advocating to get the New Falls and Tyburn Road intersection worked on. It is on the list somewhere. Route 13 is the same thing. We, along with the State Representative, have been trying to get these roads done. Ms. Fox said Beaumont is a mess and we have a neighbor who uses a walker. One neighbor called and they came and patched it after it rained but there were still puddles. They had their block party in June and children were picking up the asphalt patches. It looks like a swamp. Chairman Dence said he will touch base with our Engineer. If you can send an email to the Township, we can investigate this.

### **ITEM # 3 BUDGET WORKSHOP**

Manager Shepherd said they are just getting started in the budget process. He has been meeting with some of the department heads. Mrs. Reukauf will provide information on the budget timeline, discuss some ongoing capital projects, report on some revenue projections and talk about where we are going in the future. There will be additional meetings in October and November. The idea is to get this ready to go for approval and authorization for public advertisement in November. The budget will need to be approved before the end of the year. Mrs. Reukauf provided the budget timeline. We will start with tonight's budget workshop and have scheduled additional meetings on October 14<sup>th</sup> and November 12<sup>th</sup>. Mrs. Reukauf said she can meet one on one with Board members any time through November 19<sup>th</sup> to get additional input and answer questions. Please email her to set up a meeting so everyone can be on the same page. The budget presentation to the Board is scheduled for November 24<sup>th</sup> with authorization to advertise at that time. The public notice will go in the newspaper the next day. The public will be able to inspect the proposed budget from November 26<sup>th</sup> through December 16<sup>th</sup> at which time we plan adoption of the 2026 Budget at that public meeting. Mrs. Reukauf spoke about the 2025 Budget versus actual main revenues. We are standing in a good place as far as revenue collection. We are on track with all of our main revenue sources. Some of them are collected earlier in the year so we are already at 95% or above. Some are only half because they're collected every quarter. Everything is on track and nothing is falling below projections as far as our main revenue sources such as our real estate taxes, real estate transfer taxes, our earned income tax, local services tax and mechanical devices – all of these are more than 50%. The building permits, electrical permits, HVAC and plumbing well exceed budgeted figures due to the construction at NorthPoint on the data center. Our recycling number is up at 115% projected due to the incoming 904 grant that we get for recycling. Revenue is right on track or exceeding. Next is the status of the capital projects that were approved for this year's budget for 2025. Again, we are at completion on multiple of these projects: resurfacing at the parks, the pickleball court installation, playground replacement, items at the pool and the purchase of trucks that Public Works needed. Mrs. Reukauf has spoken to each department head and has reviewed their capital requests. Everything is either complete or will be completed by the year end. If it hasn't been completed, they have been informed to carry it forward into the 2026 Budget. Another item regarding 2025 status are the budgeted projects that are handled through the Township Engineer and outside contractors. We will be



## Board of Supervisors – September 9, 2025

looking for Board input on prioritization of what projects you want to see moving forward as far as drainage projects, ground water issues and culverts so we can get an order to them. We received a listing of roads from our Public Works Director for mill and overlay that would need to be contracted out. Manager Shepherd said he hasn't priced those yet. That was a late addition so we will get some numbers and see what makes sense there. Mrs. Reukauf said the only road they are looking to do next year, in-house, is East Tyburn Road. For the 2026 capital requests, a large portion is from the parks department. They are looking to renovate the Penns Grant park and they will be applying for a DCNR grant. They are looking to refurbish some of the parks, get back on board with the soccer field maintenance program, update the park signage and complete renovations to the hockey rink. There are some small projects at the Pinewood Pool including a new vacuum, a handicap shower replacement, some chairs and security cameras. Around the perimeter and the parking lot, there have been some thefts from vehicles and some altercations which required police projects. For Public Works, there are a couple of items that will carry forward because they will need to go into the new building, like the vinyl cutter. They are requesting two new pick-up trucks, an asphalt roller with a tow package, a zero-turn mower and continuation of tree removal throughout the Township. We are projecting forward to 2027 with this budget and replacement of our street sweeper. The Fire Marshal has nothing new. No new vehicles are being requested. Administration is a cleanup of items carrying forward from this year. This includes development signage, the road cleanup program with T.A.G. and our intersection improvements which are funded through grants. We are only responsible for a Township match. We would like to do a study for a traffic impact fee and a revenue generation analysis for the amphitheater. The Code Department is carrying forward the IMR scanning project as well as blight remediation that will be continuing. From HR, we would like some additional software for our on-boarding process for new employees. The police are looking to purchase four patrol vehicles, replacing some body armor that has expired and purchase five new AEDs. We will need to review the list from the department heads. They will be available at upcoming budget workshops to answer any questions from the Board. We are looking for general direction from the Board and any capital projects that you may be aware of that have not been listed yet so we can get it on paper. Member Mullen said for the blight remediation, the approved amount in 2025 was \$200K but only \$11K was spent. Are we requesting the full \$200K for 2026? Mrs. Reukauf said yes. It will be a standard amount to carry forward and may or may not be used. Member Mullen said she has several questions for department heads, but will save them for another time. Member Mullen said she has strong support for two of the Parks & Rec requests. One is for the renovation of the Penns Grant tennis court repair and resurfacing. With pickleball, this gets a lot of use. The other thing Member Mullen would like to see is a Safety Town. Safety Town is the little town that is created in a space which includes crosswalks, stop signs, and bus stops. Kids go there around preschool/kindergarten age where they learn safety in a smaller controlled environment. She has seen this done in other communities and would love to have this here in our community. Hearing some of tonight's public comment, we can't be too safe on either side. Chairman Dence said we need to reconsider the road program. There are still a lot of streets that were never completed. There was a schedule and then we put the brakes on it for a little while. He will ask Mr. Jones to check with Mr. Arnao. He feels we have to revisit this. This workshop is

**Board of Supervisors – September 9, 2025**

an excellent start and he knows a lot went into this. Mrs. Reukauf said they are in the midst of scheduling a meeting with the engineer to discuss these issues.

**ITEM # 4    CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL OF A CONSTRUCTION  
CHANGE DIRECTIVE TO RYCON CONSTRUCTION, INC. FOR  
THE TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL BUILDING RENOVATION PROJECT**

Chairman Dence said this agenda item will not be addressed. Mr. Clarke said this item was going to be removed anyway after consultation with the Manager, Mr. Takita and the representative from the architect. We will be proceeding in a different manner.

**ITEM # 5    MANAGER COMMENT**

Mr. Shepherd said he appreciates the welcome from the elected officials and staff. He appreciates the residents coming out to this meeting.

**ITEM # 6    BOARD COMMENT**

Chairman Dence – no comment.

Member Mullen – no comment.

Member Mullen moved to adjourn the meeting; Chairman Dence seconded the motion; all board members were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 6:18 p.m.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Brian Galloway, Secretary