

**HILLTOWN TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
REGULARLY SCHEDULED WORKSESSION MEETING  
Monday, February 12, 2001  
7:30PM**

The regularly scheduled worksession meeting of the Hilltown Township Board of Supervisors was called to order by Chairperson Kenneth B. Bennington at 7:35PM and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Also present were: John S. Bender, Vice-Chairperson  
Betty P. Snyder, Supervisor  
Gregory J. Lippincott, Township Manager  
Lorraine E. Leslie, Township Treasurer  
Thomas A. Buzby, Director of Public Works  
David W. Taylor, Code Enforcement Officer

Chairperson Bennington announced that the Board met in Executive Session prior to this meeting in order to discuss personnel matters.

A. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY: None.

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Action on the minutes of the January 22, 2001 S.B.A. Properties Conditional Use Hearing – Chairperson Bennington noted the addition of the following sentence to the motion made by the Supervisors, on page 6 – **“All local fire and emergency services shall have access and use of the proposed tower.”**

Motion was made by Supervisor Bender and seconded by Chairperson Bennington to approve the minutes of the January 22, 2001 S.B.A. Properties Conditional Use Hearing, as corrected. Supervisor Snyder abstained from the vote since she was not yet appointed to the vacancy on the Board of Supervisors at that time. There was no public comment.

Action on the minutes of the January 22, 2001 Board of Supervisors meeting – Chairperson Bennington noted that the last sentence of the first paragraph on page two should be deleted: **“The Hilltown Fire Company, once the Berry Brow Farm Subdivision is approved, will receive a much larger donation check than the Silverdale Fire Company received this evening.”**

Motion was made by Supervisor Bender and seconded by Chairperson Bennington to approve the minutes of the January 22, 2001 Board of Supervisors meeting, as corrected. Supervisor Snyder abstained from the vote since she was not yet appointed to the vacancy on the Board of Supervisors at that time. There was no public comment.

C. APPROVAL OF CURRENT BILLING – Chairperson Bennington presented the Bills List dated February 13, 2001, with General Fund payments in the amount of \$49,707.37, Debt Service Fund payments in the amount of \$53,456.59, State Highway

Aid Fund payments in the amount of \$23,699.94, and Escrow Fund payments in the amount of \$307.18; for a grand total of all payments in the amount of \$127,171.08.

Motion was made by Supervisor Snyder, seconded by Supervisor Bender, and carried unanimously to approve the Bills List dated February 13, 2001. There was no public comment.

D. TREASURER'S REPORT – Chairperson Bennington presented the Treasurer's Report with the following balances as of December 31, 2000:

General Fund Checking	\$ 65,744.67
Payroll Fund Checking	\$ 1,123.48
General Reserve Fund	\$ 366,661.91
Fire Fund Checking	\$ 684.44
Debt Service Fund Checking	\$ 91,800.17
State Highway Aid Fund Checking	\$ 26,286.25
Escrow Fund Checking	\$ 332,710.00
Capital Projects Fund	\$ 141,390.13

Motion was made by Supervisor Snyder, seconded by Supervisor Bender, and carried unanimously to approve the Treasurer's Report dated December 31, 2000, subject to audit. There was no public comment.

Approval of Treasurer's Report as of January 31, 2001: Chairperson Bennington presented the Treasurer's Report with the following balances as of January 31, 2001:

General Fund Checking	\$ 23,206.68
Payroll Fund Checking	\$ 1,124.34
General Reserve Fund	\$ 218,708.19
Fire Fund Checking	\$ 1,763.41
Debt Service Fund Checking	\$ 94,356.58
State Highway Aid Fund Checking	\$ 17,706.85
Escrow Fund Checking	\$ 324,480.84
Capital Projects Fund	\$ 142,148.24

Motion was made by Supervisor Snyder, seconded by Supervisor Bender, and carried unanimously to approve the Treasurer's Report as of January 31, 2001, subject to audit. There was no public comment.

E. PUBLIC WORKS REPORT – Mr. Thomas A. Buzby, Director of Public Works – Mr. Buzby read the Public Works Report for the months of December 2000 and January 2001, copies of which are on file at the Township office.

Supervisor Bender thanked Mr. Buzby for the fine snow removal job they did during last week's storm. Mr. Buzby commented that the storm last week was the toughest to handle because of the amount and the heaviness of the snow. Further, Mr. Buzby noted that the Public Works employees did a great job.

F. POLICE REPORT – Chief Trauger was not present. Copies of the Police Reports for the months of December 2000 and January 2001 are on file at the Township office.

G. BUILDING REPORT – Mr. David W. Taylor, Code Enforcement Officer - Mr. Taylor presented the Building Reports for the months of December 2000 and January 2001, copies of which are on file at the Township office.

With regard to the State Building Code, Mr. Taylor advised that Labor and Industry intends to begin certification of building inspectors by December 2001, in anticipation of the adoption of the Code. Discussion took place concerning the delay in the adoption of the State Code.

Complaints have been received from homeowners in the Longleaf I Subdivision concerning sprinkler leaks in the dwellings. It is Mr. Taylor's understanding that this is a customer service issue. Mr. Taylor explained that the developer, Heritage Building Group, conducts pressure tests at the time of framing inspection with a gauge to read 80 psi. When Mr. Taylor conducts the final inspection for the dwelling, the system is again energized and pressurized for testing. There is a permanent gauge installed, which is assumably holding pressure at that time. Mr. Taylor was led to believe that there were no shut-off valves on the system, however he inspected the model home and one of the newer dwellings, and found that there were double shut-off valves on both systems. The valves can be found in the basement of each dwelling, near the water meter. Discussion took place. Chairperson Bennington believes Mr. Taylor should be testing the sprinkler heads after the drywall has been installed to insure that there has been no damage done to the heads. Mr. Taylor replied that the sprinkler heads are under full test at that time. Chairperson Bennington is very concerned about the number of complaints he has received about this issue in homes being constructed by Heritage Building Group, especially with the number of dwellings being proposed by this developer. The Board of Supervisors directed Mr. Taylor to begin random inspection of dwellings in the Longleaf I development to insure that the sprinkler systems are not leaking. Further, Mr. Taylor will meet with the new sprinkler company recently contracted by Heritage Building Group to discuss the matter further.

Mr. Taylor is seeking direction regarding the pursuit of a zoning enforcement action against the owner of TMP #15-22-187. There is a family living in the new dwelling, without benefit of a Certificate of Occupancy issued by the Township. The original violation notice was issued on December 6, 2001, with a follow-up letter on January 24<sup>th</sup>

of this year, seeking a response from the property owner prior to this meeting. This morning, the property owner sent a fax to Mr. Taylor, responding to these notifications. The Township is asking for an as-built to verify the placement of the new dwelling. The applicant intends to have a survey done to verify the dwelling placement. Supervisor Bender does not believe that the Township can take action at this time, since the property owner has responded to the initial violation notice. Chairperson Bennington and Supervisor Snyder agreed. Mr. Taylor will give the property owner until March 12, 2001 to address all of the violations in the original notice.

H. HILLTOWN AUTHORITY REPORT – Mr. James C. Groff, Authority Manager  
– Mr. Groff read the Authority Report for the month of January 2001; a copy of which is on file at the Township office.

Renovations to the new Authority building are on schedule, and the staff will be moving into the new building during the week of April 15, 2001.

Several months ago, the question was raised concerning wellhead protection of the Hilltown Authority wells. It is Mr. Groff's understanding that the regional water study will include wellhead protection as part of the study. Mr. Groff formally offered the Hilltown Authority's well pump totals, well locations, distribution maps, etc. and any other information and input necessary to complete the study. The Supervisors gratefully accepted this offer.

I. HILLTOWN FIRE COMPANY REPORT – No one was present at this time.

J. SILVERDALE FIRE COMPANY REPORT – Mr. John Gillespie, Deputy Chief  
– Mr. Gillespie presented the Silverdale Fire Company Report for the month of January 2001; a copy of which is on file at the Township office.

K. PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT – Mr. John Kachline, Chairperson -- Mr. Kachline presented the Planning Commission Report for the month of January 2001.

The Planning Commission would like to be included in the walk-through of the Berry Brow property. Mr. Kachline advised that the developer of Berry Brow presented a sketch plan of the golf course open space option along with the housing arrangement, however they did not present a sketch plan of the housing arrangement with the recreational open space option. The Supervisors agreed that it was important for the Township to review both options that are being proposed.

The Planning Commission is investigating revisions to the Zoning Ordinance, particularly with regard to the permitted density for age-restricted communities and performance subdivisions.

The Planning Commission worksession meeting originally scheduled for Monday, February 5, 2001 was cancelled due to the snowstorm, and has been rescheduled for Thursday, February 15, 2001. At that time, discussion will take place concerning the Bucks County Planning Commission review of the proposed Agricultural Zoning District. Mr. Wynn will attend that worksession meeting.

L. PARK AND RECREATION REPORT – No one was present at this time.

M. OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE REPORT – Mr. Chuck Kulesza, Chairperson – Mr. Kulesza read the Open Space Committee Report for the month of January 2001.

The Hilltown Open Space Committee met with the New Britain Township Land Preservation Advisory Board on January 9, 2001 to discuss the open space application process, prioritization and coordination of greenways and trail linkages along the common boundary, and agricultural areas in both municipalities. Also at that meeting, Mr. Richard McBride, who represents the Cutler Group and the property owner, Mr. Frank Nicholas, presented a sketch plan of the Berry Brow Farm Subdivision. Under current Zoning, Mr. McBride believes the property could be subdivided into 185 building lots on approximately 145 acres, with the balance of the property (approximately 175 acres) to be preserved as open space. Mr. McBride further indicated that one of the Township's options for the use of open space could be the development of a park, however a sketch plan for the park option was not available. The applicant provided a sketch plan of an alternate approach for a golf course, which is not permitted under current Zoning requirements. In short, this sketch plan proposes the same number of building lots, but of smaller sizes, and the balance of the property is proposed to be developed into an 18-hole golf course, privately owned but open to the public. The Committee has requested permission to visit the site prior to providing their evaluation and recommendations for both options to the Board of Supervisors.

N. CONFIRMED APPOINTMENTS: None.

O. MANAGER'S REPORT – Mr. Gregory J. Lippincott, Township Manager --

1. Included in the Board's packets is an Agreement between Telford Borough, Perkashie Borough, Pennridge Regional Police, Richland Township, Tincum Township Springfield Township, and Hilltown Township to create a joint law enforcement unit trained in handling high-risk emergency situations, to be called Upper Bucks Emergency Situation Team (UBEST). This Agreement will be executed by the Board of Supervisors following this meeting.

2. The Zoning Report for the year 2000, and for the month of January 2001 was presented to the Board for review; copies of which are on file at the Township office.

3. At their last meeting, the Comprehensive Plan Task Force recommended holding a second meeting per month, in addition to their regularly scheduled meetings on the first Wednesday of every month. Mr. Lippincott advised that only \$50,000.00 was budgeted for review of the Comprehensive Plan for 2001, but with the additional meeting every month, it will effectively double the expenditures. Mr. Lippincott is seeking the Board's direction. Chairperson Bennington suggested that the Comprehensive Plan Task Force second meeting of the month be held without Mr. Guttenplan, the Township's professional planner, in attendance to see if it is productive. Supervisors Bender and Snyder agreed.

4. There are eight Escrow Releases for the Board's consideration, six of which are cash held by the Township:

Ahold (Giant Foods)	Voucher #13	\$ 150.89
Bricks Villa Phase I&II (Combined)	Voucher #15A	\$ 88.67
County Line Plaza (Blockbuster Video)	Voucher #17	\$ 90.19
County Line Plaza (Blockbuster Video)	Voucher #18	\$ 3,680.10
Eckert Land Development	Voucher #01	\$ 139.48
Grasse Elementary School	Voucher #07	\$ 162.68
Hilltown Plaza Outparcel	Voucher #04	\$ 150.95
Longleaf Estates Phase II Subdivision	Voucher #11	\$ 1,014.13

Motion was made by Supervisor Snyder, seconded by Supervisor Bender, and carried unanimously to approve the release of the eight escrows as noted above. There was no public comment.

P. CORRESPONDENCE – Mr. Gregory J. Lippincott, Township Manager –

1. The Sellersville Fire Department has submitted a request for funding to reduce the debt owed on their fire station.

2. The Dublin Volunteer Fire Company has submitted a request for funding to benefit the Dublin Ambulance Services, which is in danger of closing due to lack of funds.

While Chairperson Bennington understands the request for funding to keep the Dublin Ambulance Service in operation, he is concerned that the Supervisors will be setting a precedence and be expected to provide funding for other area ambulance services. Mr. Lippincott and Chief Trauger attended a meeting at the Dublin Fire Company in December, along with representatives of Dublin, and Bedminster and the Bucks County Emergency Services, where the ambulance service was told to come up with a plan to show the neighboring municipalities their initiatives to remain in operation. A second

meeting was held last week, however the Dublin Fire Company and Ambulance Service have made no progress with that plan. The representative from Bucks County Emergency Services also suggested that the Dublin Ambulance Service make a request for longer response times in order to keep the ambulance company in operation. There were many options suggested by those in attendance at both meetings. Discussion took place concerning the possibility of raising the millage in neighboring communities to provide funding for the ambulance service. If the Dublin Ambulance Service does go out of business, Chairperson Bennington asked what ambulance company will service that area of Hilltown Township, Bedminster Township, and Dublin Borough. Mr. Lippincott believes the area in question would be divided between Grandview, Central Bucks, and Plumstead ambulance services.

3. The Telford Fire Company has submitted a request for funding toward the purchase of a Thermal Imaging Camera.

4. Correspondence has been received from the Joint Cable/Telecommunications Advisory Board of Bucks County, inviting the Supervisors to attend their 2001 Cable Odyssey to be held from 8:00AM to 2:00PM on Saturday, March 31, 2001 at the Bucks County Community College.

Discussion took place concerning the recent rate increase notification by Comcast. Chairperson Bennington reminded the Board that the Township's Cable Television Franchise is up for renegotiation within the next few years.

5. Solicitor Grabowski has prepared a draft lease agreement for Representative Kathy Watson's office space in the Township Building for the Board's review. The Supervisors directed Mr. Lippincott to forward the lease agreement to Representative Watson for execution.

6. Correspondence was received from the Perkasio Fire Company inviting a representative of Hilltown Township and one guest to attend their annual banquet on March 3, 2001. Supervisor Snyder will be attending the banquet.

7. Correspondence has been received from Mr. McBride, agreeing to schedule a date for Township boards and commissions to tour the Berry Brow Farm property. The Supervisors agreed on the date of Saturday, March 3, 2001 at 8:00AM to tour the Berry Brow Farm property, with an alternate date of Saturday, March 17th. Mr. Lippincott will invite the Park and Recreation Board, the Planning Commission, the Open Space Committee, and a representative of the Hilltown Fire Company.

Q. MYLARS FOR SIGNATURE: CVS land Development

R. PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. Ms. Donna DiMella, a member of the Hilltown Open Space Committee, understands that one of the options for the Berry Brow Farm proposal is to design a subdivision around 55% pure and simple open space. Ms. DiMella asked the Supervisors to consider requesting a few trails, benches, a small park and gazebo, and possibly a wildlife refuge on this open space. Ms. DiMella believes that a golf course is not something that would be enjoyed by every resident of Hilltown Township and feels that a golf course would be a very restrictive use of this gorgeous property. Instead of close-cropped greens, golf carts, and artificial sand traps, Ms. DiMella would prefer to see 170 acres of nature on this site. The recent Hilltown Comprehensive Plan Task Force survey determined that residents of this community want to save natural green space and farms. The members of the Hilltown Township Open Space Committee, as well as their counterparts in New Britain Township, share those feelings. Further, Ms. DiMella believes that open space left natural would require less maintenance and this property would be a huge opportunity to provide a key piece of a trail system through the Township. During the tour of the Berry Brow property, Ms. DiMella suspects that common sense may tell that this property is not even perfect for a golf course, simply because the required bulldozer work will be phenomenal; while on the other hand, the slopes, woods and fields are perfect for a nature preserve.

S. SUPERVISOR'S COMMENTS:

1. Chairperson Bennington and Supervisor Bender welcomed Supervisor Snyder to the Board.

2. Supervisor Bender noted that there have been several newspaper articles written recently concerning the proposed joint water study in the Upper Bucks area, and those who have been instrumental in seeing this proposal move forward. When Supervisor Bender was appointed to the Board of Supervisors approximately two years ago, he attended his first Pennridge Area Coordinating Committee meeting with Chairperson Bennington, who was the driving force behind the joint water study project. Supervisor Bender credited Chairperson Bennington for continuing to encourage and facilitate the completion of this water study.

T. PRESS CONFERENCE: A conference was held to answer questions of those reporters present.



U. ADJOURNMENT: Upon motion by Supervisor Snyder, seconded by Supervisor Bender, and carried unanimously, the February 12, 2001 Supervisor's Worksession meeting was adjourned at 8:50PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Lynda Seimes

Township Secretary

(\*These minutes were transcribed from notes and tape recordings taken by Mrs. Lorraine Leslie, Township Treasurer).