

**UPPER TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD  
ANNUAL REORGANIZATION MEETING MINUTES  
JANUARY 18, 2024**

The meeting of the Upper Township Planning Board was held at Township Hall at 2100 Tuckahoe Road, Petersburg. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

**SUNSHINE ANNOUNCEMENT**

**SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

**ROLL CALL**

Member	Attendance
Matthew Davidson, Class IV	Absent
Gary DeMarzo, Class II	Present
Brooke Handley Alt	Present
Joseph Harney, Class IV	Present
Kimberly Hayes, Class III	Present
Ted Kingston, Class IV	Absent

Member	Attendance
Chris McGuire, Class IV	Absent
Colby Meloy Alt	Present
Jay Newman, Class I	Absent
Gary Riordan, Vice Chair	Present
Sean Whelan, Chair	Present

Also, in attendance were Jeffrey Barnes, Board Solicitor, Ryan MacNeill, Substitute Board Engineer and Liz Oaks, Board Secretary and Zoning Officer.

Mr. Riordan, Vice Chair turned the meeting over to the board secretary, Ms. Oaks, to ask for nominations for Chairperson.

**REORGANIZATION**

The board secretary asked for nominations for Chair.

A motion to nominate Sean Whelan as Chairman was made by Ms. Hayes and seconded by Mr. DeMarzo. The nominations were closed.

In favor: DeMarzo, Handley, Harney, Hayes, Meloy, Riordan

**SEAN WHELAN BOARD CHAIRMAN FOR 2024**

Mr. Riordan asked for nominations for Vice Chair.

A motion to nominate Gary Riordan as Vice Chairman was made by Mr. Harney, seconded by Ms. Hayes. The nominations were closed.

In favor: DeMarzo, Handley, Harney, Hayes, Meloy, Whelan

**GARY RIORDAN VICE CHAIRMAN FOR 2024**

Mr. Riordan asked for nominations for Board Secretary

A motion to nominate Liz Oaks as Board Secretary was made by Mr. Harney and seconded by Mr. Riordan. The nominations were closed.

In favor: DeMarzo, Handley, Harney, Hayes, Meloy, Riordan, Whelan

**LIZ OAKS BOARD SECRETARY FOR 2024**

Mr. Riordan asked for nominations for Board Solicitor.

A motion to nominate Jeffrey Barnes as Board Solicitor was made by Mr. Harney and seconded by Mr. Riordan. The nominations were closed.

In favor: DeMarzo, Handley, Harney, Hayes, Meloy, Riordan, Whelan

**JEFFREY P. BARNES BOARD SOLICITOR FOR 2024**

Mr. Riordan asked for nominations for Interim Board Engineer.

A motion to nominate CME as Board Engineer was made by Mr. Whelan and seconded by Mr. Harney. The nominations were closed.

In favor: DeMarzo, Handley, Harney, Hayes, Meloy, Riordan, Whelan  
**CME INTERIM BOARD ENGINEER FOR 2024**

### **OFFICIAL NEWSPAPERS 2024**

A motion was made by Ms. Hayes and seconded by Mr. Meloy, to utilize The Sentinel Ledger as the primary and The Press of Atlantic as secondary official newspapers.

In favor: DeMarzo, Handley, Harney, Hayes, Meloy, Riordan, Whelan

Mr. Riordan stepped down to allow Mr. Whelan to proceed with the reorganization as Chairman.

### **OATH OF OFFICE**

Brooke Handley and Colby Meloy take the Oath of Office.

### **APPROVAL OF THE December 7, MEETING MINUTES**

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Harney and seconded by Mr. Riordan.

In favor: DeMarzo, Harney, Hayes, Riordan, Whelan

Abstain: Handley, Meloy

### **NEW BUSINESS / DISCUSSION**

Application for the vacation of a street.

Mr. MacNeill, board engineer, explained the items he thought should be addressed:

1. Consent from all impacted homeowners
  - a. I believe it is one additional homeowner in this application that needs to consent to acquiring the additional ROW area.
2. Boundary and Location Survey of portion of ROW to be vacated.
  - a. Boundary Survey is needed in order for a licensed surveyor to prepare the necessary legal descriptions. The Township will ultimately have to dedicate each portion of the ROW to the respective homeowners.
  - b. Location Survey is needed to verify there is no existing utility infrastructure within the ROW.
3. Lot consolidation to consolidate all lots under common ownership.
  - a. Lot consolidation is needed to ensure that there are no landlocked lots created through the ROW vacation.
  - b. Need to verify that one (1) principal structure is located on each proposed lot after consolidation.

There was a discussion about the standard practice of street vacation requests. And how to proceed with this application and future applications.

A motion to request Mr. Barnes and CME work together to develop a list of requirements for street vacation was made by Ms. Hayes and seconded by Mr. Whelan.

In favor: DeMarzo, Handley, Harney, Hayes, Meloy, Riordan, Whelan

Mr. MacNeill left the meeting at this time to allow the board to discuss the next item.

### **Board Engineer Position**

Mr. Whelan explained that Deputy Mayor Hayes, Mr. DeMarzo, Mr. Kingston, Ms. Oaks, and himself were in attendance to conduct the interviews. There were two applicants that were interviewed, CME and Remington Vernick. Originally there had been a third applicant, Kates Schneider, that had to withdraw due to the change of the board meeting dates. Robert Smyth and Stefanie Thonsen were in attendance to represent the firm of Remington Vernick and Mr. Valesi

attended virtually for his interview representing CME.

Ms. Hayes stated that she, and the others in attendance, were pleased with Mr. Smyth and Ms. Thonsen. There was discussion about availability for office hours. They would offer Ms. Thonsen, a resident of the Township, to be in our offices on a regular basis. Starting with 8 hours a week and adjust as needed. Two reasons this is appealing, the first would be Ms. Thonsen is a tech and not fully licensed, therefore charging a more reasonable rate. Second is that she is a longtime local resident making her very familiar with the Township. They will provide the reports within a timely manner. They will not be billing the township; they will be billing the applicant.

Mr. DeMarzo – The township is looking for someone that is consumer friendly and hands on type of entity. We have seen what CME provided. It has become standard practice for these companies to use satellite offices to do their work. Our goal is to find someone that can be onsite and be available to the Township. They are very amenable to working with CME as the Township Engineer if they would need to share office space. He believes the planning board requires a bigger firm for the bigger projects coming to town. They have on staff a Flood Plain Manager for our use. They gave a great presentation.

Ms. Hayes – Mr. Kingston is not at the meeting tonight, but she wanted to share a comment. Mr. Kingston really had wanted to go with Kates Schneider put given they had to withdraw expressed he was impressed with Remington Vernick.

Mr. Harney – Commented that he liked that Remington Vernick was a full-service firm but wanted to know if the planning board would rely on Remington Vernick for planning services.

Ms. Hayes – The township has been happy with Ms. Morrissey and would like to continue using her for specific items.

It is the recommendation of the sub-committee to choose Remington Vernick as the Planning Board Engineer.

A motion to choose Remington Vernick Engineers as the Planning Board Engineer was made by Mr. Whelan and seconded by Ms. Hayes.

In favor: DeMarzo, Handley, Harney, Hayes, Meloy, Riordan, Whelan

## **PUBLIC PORTION**

The meeting was open to the public.

Hearing no one and seeing no one, this portion was closed.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

Professional Services Agreement with King-Barnes Law Firm.

A motion was made to approve the Professional Services Agreement with King-Barnes Law Firm was made by Ms. Hayes, seconded by Mr. Whelan.

In favor: DeMarzo, Handley, Harney, Hayes, Meloy, Riordan, Whelan

Freedom Properties, LLC SD 07-2023

A motion to approve the resolution was made by Mr. Harney, seconded by Mr. Whelan

In favor: DeMarzo, Handley, Harney, Hayes, Meloy, Riordan, Whelan

Swenk/Myers SD 08-2023

A motion to approve the resolution was made by Mr. Harney, seconded by Mr. Whelan

In favor: DeMarzo, Handley, Harney, Hayes, Meloy, Riordan, Whelan

**BILLS**

A motion was made by Mr. Harney seconded by Mr. Riordan to pay the bills, with all Board members present voting in the affirmative.

In favor: DeMarzo, Handley, Harney, Hayes, Meloy, Riordan, Whelan

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Ms. Hayes and seconded by Mr. Meloy to adjourn the meeting, with all Board members present voting in the affirmative. The meeting was adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

Submitted by,

Liz Oaks