

NORTH EAST TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS
PUBLIC HEARING/MEETING
MONDAY AUGUST 7, 2023
7:30 PM

Chairman Fredrick Shunk called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance. Also, in attendance were Supervisors August Neff and Russ LaFuria, Attorney Robert Jeffery, and Secretary Erica Carlstrom.

Chairman Shunk opened the Public Hearing portion of the meeting.

Grif Jones presented on behalf of CleanChoice Energy, a company based out of Washington D.C., a proposed solar project for North East resident Hazel Kirschner. The solar farm would be located near Crawford Road. The location is a 90-acre parcel in which 25 acres would be utilized for the project.

Daniel Long, a Civil Engineer for ARM Group LLC, explained that the solar farm will be 20 feet from property lines and at least 300 feet from any non-participating structure. The solar panels will be fenced in and will be under the max height of 15 feet. They have done a glint/glare study with no anticipated glare throughout the year. Also performed was a noise management study and the only noise projected from the project will be the construction of putting the panels in with that only lasting a few months. Mr. Long assured the Supervisors that all electrical codes will be met, and electrical lines will be buried when at all possible. CleanChoice Energy would be willing to apply for any additional permits needed to proceed with the solar project. Dan finished his presentation and asked if the residents had any questions.

Barbara Clark, asked the question of who will benefit from this. Grif Jones, who is the senior project manager explained it would be the landowner, CleanChoice Energy, and the County, School District, and Township as the land will no longer be agricultural and will be taxed at a higher rate creating more tax revenue.

Karen Minns, a homeowner on Crawford Road was questioning the use of pesticides to control the weeds and bugs, would there be something planted around the fence so that's not all they see is the solar panels and if trees are planted will they sit back far enough that there will not be an obstruction of view at the intersection of Crawford Road and Route 89. Grif answered the questions that Karen posed. He assured the residents that there will be no pesticides used, but rather any maintenance needing done will be done by mowing and weed eating, as for the visual of the neighbors to the solar farm CleanChoice had in their plans to plant trees around the fence line and lastly, he said there should not be any obstruction of view from the trees at the intersection she mentioned. Supervisor August Neff mentioned that years back they had to have trees removed from that area because of the view obstruction, he said he would want to go up there and make sure the trees that would be planted would be set back far enough.

Carol Wakley, of Crawford Road wanted to know who would oversee cleaning the panels from dust and would they need to use well water in order to clean them. Mr Jones stated that the rainwater would be enough to clean them off and there would be no need to use anything from the well. There were a couple questions posed about the safety of the solar panels at which point Daniel assured the residents there will be safety shut offs and safety training will be provided to the workers.

Carol Strine, of Crawford Road expressed her opposition to CleanChoice Energy's plan for the solar farm. Some of her concerns being that the solar panels would contain harmful contaminants such as PFAS that could potentially leech into the ground water supply, when it comes time to decommission the solar farm who is going to take care of removing the panels, and respiratory issues from the dust that would form on the panels. Daniel assured her the panels that would be installed would not contain any PFAS. As for the decommissioning of the panels,

CleanChoice would have a bond in place with the Township and will have a decommissioning plan on file. As for the dust, again they assured this will not be an issue as the rain will clean the panels.

The public comment period was closed, and the regular meeting continued.

Chairman Shunk asked for public comments or concerns, none were received. A motion from Russ LaFuria and the second from August Neff approved the minutes of the July 17th, 2023 meeting as presented and passed by unanimous vote. Secretary Erica Carlstrom presented the Treasurer's report for the month of July 2023 and by a motion from Russ LaFuria and the second from August Neff was accepted as presented and passed by unanimous vote. Bills were presented for July 17th – July 31st, 2023 for approval and payment as follows:

General Fund Checks	# 2545-2568	\$ 81,728.26
General ACH's		\$ 1,262.52
Water Fund Checks	# 2411-2435	\$ 290,575.45
Sewer Fund Checks	# 2374-2390	\$ 55,556.42

Total approved by a motion from Russ LaFuria and the second from August Neff was \$429,122.65 and passed by unanimous vote.

Correspondence:

ECATO will be hosting their annual picnic. The picnic will take place on August 24th at Picnicana Park. Those interested are to RSVP to Erica by August 11th.

A request was received from the National Grape Co-Op for the use of the meeting room on either Tuesday August 15th or Wednesday August 16th for their meeting. The meeting will start at 6:30 PM. A motion from August Neff approving the use of the room was received. A second motion was received from Russ LaFuria. All in favor.

Old Business: None

New Business:

North East resident Karen Krause requested to be added to the agenda to discuss an easement at her property on Freeport Road. Karen was not in attendance; Jay will try to reach out to her to see if she would like added to the mid-month meeting.

Resolution #2023-023; Public Safety Commission. The resolution would be authorizing the establishment of a joint commission. The commission would be known as the North East Public Safety Advisory Commission. It will be comprised of 5 members. A designee of North East Township Board of Supervisors, A designee of North East Borough Council, The Borough Mayor, President of Fuller Hose Co., and President of Crescent Hose Co. An approval to pass Resolution #2023-023 was made by Russ LaFuria and the second from August Neff. All in favor.

A motion was made by Fredrick Shunk appointing Supervisor Russ LaFuria as the designee for the North East Public Safety Commission. A second motion received from August Neff. All in favor.

Resolution #2023-024; Plan revision for new land development; Edgewater Beach for holding tanks. The holding tanks would be temporary until such time public sewer is installed. A motion from Fredrick Shunk approving the resolution with the second motion from Russ LaFuria. All in favor.

Jim Welka was to present to Supervisors a final plan for Edgewater Beach Subdivision; a 20-lot single family residential development located at East Lake Road and Gay Road. A motion received from Russ LaFuria to table the final approval with the second from August Neff. Passed by unanimous vote.

A motion to approve the conditional use permit for the Kirschner Solar Project located on Crawford Road, contingent upon sight distance being evaluated at the intersection of Crawford Road and Route 89 was received from Russ LaFuria and the second motion from Gus Neff. All in favor. Supervisor Russ LaFuria thanked the Planning Board for all of their hard work on this.

Administrative Supervisor Russ LaFuria reported that we are working to set dates for budget session meetings. The proposed dates will be October 16th, 19th, & 24th. The Township will publicly advertise the dates in the Erie Times News.

Water and Sewer Supervisor Fredrick Shunk reported that the water department has finished installing the new 15 HP pump at the Route 89 pump station.

After announcements and with all business concluded, a motion to adjourn at 9:00 PM was received from Fredrick Shunk. Meeting Adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Erica Carlstrom, Secretary