

NORTH EAST TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS
PUBLIC HEARING/MEETING
MONDAY MAY 4, 2026
7:30 PM

Chairman LaFuria opened the meeting with the conditional use hearing for the Evandale Farms Agritourism Application. Solicitor Andy Schmidt explained the procedures for the hearing, including the presentation process, public comment procedures, and the distinction between objectors and interested residents. No formal objectors identified themselves for the record.

Attorney Edward Betza, representing Evandale Farms, presented the conditional use application. Also present on behalf of the applicant were:

- Jack Gartner- Representative for Evandale Farms
- John Zack- Verdantis Engineer
- Justin Creed- Verdantis Representative
- Craig Zona- Attorney with Quinn Elder Law Firm

The applicant stated the property consists of approximately 425 acres, with Approximately 160 acres included in the application area. The property is zoned R-1 and is currently utilized for agricultural purposes including a cattle operation.

The applicant proposed a seasonal agritourism attraction to operate during the month of October utilizing approximately 26 acres. Proposed activities include:

- Haunted hayrides
- Halloween-themed walk-through attractions
- Farm-related educational and season activities
- Food vendors and souvenir sales associated with the event

Mr Betza stated:

- Operating hours would be approximately 5:00 PM to 10:00 PM.
- All patrons would exit the property by approximately 10:30 PM.
- Ticket sales would be conducted online with scheduled arrival times to minimize traffic congestion.
- Parking for approximately 350 vehicles would be provided on-site.
- No off-road vehicle racing, carnival rides, childcare operations, or overnight farm stay are proposed.
- Temporary signage would be removed after the event season.
- Trash removal and sanitation services would be contracted privately
- Gravel access road and parking areas would be utilized to reduce dust and improve emergency access.

Jack Gartner testified regarding the current agricultural use of the property, proposed operations, anticipated job creation, and event management plans. Mr Gartner estimated approximately 200 seasonal jobs could be created.

John Zack testified regarding engineering consideration, including setback compliance, lighting control measure, parking layout, emergency vehicle access, coordination with EMS and fire services, traffic flow, and site stabilization.

Supervisors discussed compliance with township lighting ordinances, signage requirements, and emergency management review procedures.

Township resident Ken Spaeder asked the question of nothing had been mentioned about there being music at the venue. Jack responded, stating at this time there was no intention of having bands. Mr Spaeder went on to say he understood, but they keep mentioning at this time.

Solicitor Andy Schmidt stated that could be put into the conditional use permit stating if they at a later date decide to incorporate music they must come back to the Supervisors.

Michele Seth of Cole Road stated her concern with there being an abundance of extra traffic on Cole Road as she feels is already in bad shape. Supervisor August Neff stated that improvements to Cole Road were already planned independent of the application.

Following public comments, the hearing was closed.

The Supervisors announced the application would be taken under advisement, with a decision expected at the June 1st meeting following preparation of findings of fact and conclusions of law by the Township Solicitor.

The conditional use hearing adjourned, and the regular township meeting commenced.

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

Chairman LaFuria asked for public comments or concerns, Township resident Andy Fynan asked the Supervisors to look at the stop sign located at Moorheadville Road and Sidehill Road, on the south side. The sign he stated keeps twisting and he is worried it's going to cause an accident. Supervisor August Neff stated he would contact PennDot to get it repaired. A motion from Fredrick Shunk and the second from August Neff approved the minutes of the April 6th, 2026, meeting as presented and passed by unanimous vote. Secretary Erica Carlstrom presented the Treasurer's report for the month of April 2026 and by a motion from August Neff and the second from Fredrick Shunk was accepted as presented and passed by unanimous vote. Bills were presented for April 1st – April 30th, 2026, for approval and payment as follows:

General Fund Checks	#4657-4741	\$ 267,771.98
General Fund Debits	Ach's	\$ 2,344.50
Water Fund Checks	#3430-3459	\$ 153,971.95
Sewer Fund Checks	#3153-3177	\$ 74,488.61

Total approved by a motion from Fredrick Shunk and the second from August Neff was \$498,577.04 and passed by unanimous vote.

Correspondence:

A request was received from the American Legion Post 105 to hold their 4th annual Honor Ride on Saturday June 20th. The ride will start in Girard traveling on Route 20 to their final destination of the American Legion on South Mill Street. Fredrick Shunk made a motion to approve writing a letter of acknowledgement for PennDot. The second motion was received by Russ LaFuria. All in favor.

Pedal for Mercy is requesting the use of various township roads on Saturday September 12th to hold their 6th annual Cycle for a Cause. The event benefits Mercy Center for Women. The routes for the ride would be the same as in previous years. A motion from Fredrick Shunk to approve the event was received. Supervisor Russ LaFuria made the second motion. All in favor.

Old Business:

Resolution #2026-012; Promulgation for Emergency Action Plan. The resolution was tabled from the April 6th meeting to allow Supervisors to read the revisions put together by Jack Diorazio, Township EMC. Fredrick Shunk made a motion to approve and sign the promulgation. Supervisor Russ LaFuria made the second motion. Passed by unanimous vote.

New Business:

Resolution #2026-10 approve the Erie Area Council of Governments (COG) annual road & street material bids for 2026. August Neff made a motion to approve and sign. The second motion was received from Fredrick Shunk. All in favor.

Resolution #2026-011 approving Erie Area Council of Governments gas/diesel bids. The bid for this is a 3-year period. Melzer's Fuel Service won the bid. A motion was made by August Neff to approve the resolution, and Russ LaFuria made the second motion. Passed by unanimous vote.

Supervisors discussed the proposed seal coat project for East Cole, Ox Bow, and Malick Roads. Due to limited Liquid Fuels funding and the increased cost associated with the Cole Road paving project, concerns were raised regarding sufficient funding for both projects. Supervisor August Neff stated there would be funds left after paving Cole Road that he would like to look into doing a portion of the seal coating. Solicitor Andy Schmidt advised additional review was needed regarding awarding only a portion of the seal coat. A motion from Fredrick Shunk to table the discussion until the May 18th meeting to allow Supervisor Neff to look into only doing a portion of the seal coat project. Supervisor Russ LaFuria made the second motion to table. All in favor.

Supervisors opened sealed bids on Friday May 1st, 2026 for the 2026 Superpave project. Three bidders participated and bids were read by August Neff as follows:

Item #1A: 3750 tons, 2 ¼" Depth, 19 MM Superpave Leveling Course on Cole Road
Cross Paving: \$93.34/ton, Total Bid \$350,025.00
Glenn O. Hawbaker: \$92.48/ton, Total Bid \$346,800.00
Lindy Paving: \$89.75/ton, Total Bid \$336,562.50

Item #2B: 3300 Tons, 2" Depth, 19 MM Superpave Leveling Course on Cole Road
Cross Paving: \$95.73/ton, Total Bid \$315,909.00
Glenn O. Hawbaker: \$92.60/ton, Total Bid \$305,580.00
Lindy Paving: \$90.75/ton, Total Bid \$299,475.00

A motion to award Item #1A to Lindy Paving \$89.75/ton was made by Fredrick Shunk and the second from Russ LaFuria and passed by unanimous vote.

Steven Maille and Sue Fisher of Cole Road are seeking final approval on a parcel re-plot. This would adjust the property line so an existing barn would be located on the correct parcel. The Planning Board has given their approval. A motion to approve the property replot was made by Fredrick Shunk and the second received from August Neff. All in favor.

Road Supervisor August Neff had a resident ask if it would be possible to put an autistic child sign up on their road to make people aware. The Supervisors did not feel this would be an issue, however the resident would be responsible for the purchase of the sign. The sign must comply with right-of-way and breakaway post requirements. The township will install the sign.

Fredrick Shunk, Water/Sewer Supervisor stated they were finishing up with hydrant flushing.

Supervisor Russ LaFuria stated that Freeport Beach restrooms will be opening for the season starting May 15th.

Supervisors discussed the need for a Township ordinance regulating data centers, including zoning, setbacks, noise, water usage, and electrical demand concerns. Solicitor Andy Schmidt advised there are model ordinances available and he recommended proactive action before any applications are received. Supervisors authorized the Planning Board to begin drafting a proposed ordinance tailored to North East Township.

After announcements and with all business concluded, a motion to adjourn at 8:30 PM was received from Fredrick Shunk. Meeting Adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Erica Carlstrom, Secretary