

*Typed: 02/27/2024*

*A Special Meeting was held by the Board of Supervisors of Cass Township on Friday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024 at 2pm at the Municipal Building located in Duncott.*

*Present at the meeting: See attached sign-in sheet.*

*Chairperson Helt called the meeting to order.*

*All recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.*

**Roll Call of Officers:**

*Michael Sorokach III – present.*

*Elvin E. Brennan Jr. – present.*

*Brenda M. Helt – present.*

**Other attendance/attendees:**

*Mark Semanchik, Solicitor – present.*

*Evelyn J. Bergan, Secretary – present.*

*Helt turned the meeting over to Solicitor Mark Semanchik:*

*Solicitor Semanchik states that typically during our normal meetings, this time is for public participation; however, since there are no action items on the agenda at this point, there will be no public participation. If later on in this meeting, any action that is made by the BOS by motion and seconded, his instruction to the Chairperson would be to open up public participation at that time before any vote could be taken.*

*The Solicitor explains that the regular monthly meeting for January was held last Thursday evening (01/25/24). At that meeting, two things that were included in the minutes of that meeting are in regard to executive sessions held by the Board of Supervisors – one that occurred immediately before our regular meeting – and another that was entered into the minutes which was held the week prior to the regular meeting on January 18<sup>th</sup>.*

*At the first executive session on 01/18, he and the Board discussed receipt of correspondence that the Township received with regard to paperwork that was submitted to a department of the State by a police officer who, based on Township records, had resigned approximately a year prior. During that meeting, the paperwork was reviewed; and the Board of Supervisors concluded that executive session authorizing him to begin to question how it could be that someone, who according to our records is a former police officer, is filing paperwork with a department of the State presenting himself as a member of our police department.*



*This leads into the second executive session on January 25<sup>th</sup> prior to the monthly meeting when our now former Police Chief entered the Township office and handed in his resignation. Following that and during the regular monthly meeting, the Board of Supervisors accepted the Chief's letter of resignation. With regard to those actions, the Board asked the Solicitor to continue to review and question what is going on with the situation just described. As a follow-up, another executive session was held on Monday night of this week (01/29/24). This executive session not only included police matters, but also a meeting with our emergency services providers; it began at 6:30pm and ended at 8pm.*

*During the 01/29 executive session, the Board questioned when would be the first time that a Special Meeting could be called to consider taking some type of action due to what had been uncovered with regard to this situation. Solicitor Semanchik asks the audience to please keep in mind that when a municipality tries to schedule meetings, it has to be advertised in the newspaper – and it has to be in the paper at least 24 hours prior to the time of the Special Meeting – so when trying to calculate out on Monday evening when the first available time was to have a Special Meeting, it was either going to be held on Thursday night (02/01/24) or Friday (02/02/2024).*

*The meeting had been scheduled today at 2pm because based on whatever the Board decides to do, we have commitments that we need to get back to the Pennsylvania State Police, the Municipal Police Association in Harrisburg, and we also need to hold another meeting directly following this meeting with representatives from the District Attorney's Office. All of those contacts must be made by the close of business today. This meeting has been scheduled – not because there was an attempt not to say anything - it was scheduled as such to do what is necessary to be done to address this situation. With all that explained, that is why the meeting was held – and that is what we have been dealing with – and it's ongoing – there's still more questions than there are answers. We are moving forward, but in the absence of a clear path, we are trying to see where we must go with this police department.*

*Solicitor Semanchik states that his recommendation to the Board of Supervisors at this time is that they temporarily suspend any activity with regard to this police department. He also explains that Township records show that there were officers scheduled through Wednesday (January 31<sup>st</sup>) of this week – but there is no schedule showing any officers scheduled to work after that date. No schedule was prepared for February.*

*Solicitor Semanchik states that since there are so many unanswered questions, it is his recommendation to the Board that they take action to temporarily suspend the operations of our police department until a review can be completed and so we can reach out to PSP to request increased patrols from the Frackville barracks so that we can move forward in an organized way with those officers that we think might be on the roll as part-time officers. There are some officers, we are being told, that may not want to work here anymore – but at this point, we don't know – it's one of the things we must address. There may be an officer*



*from another department that would be willing to come in as Officer in Charge and straighten things out, but we just don't know at this point.*

*Chairperson Helt calls for a motion to suspend all activity of the Cass Township Police Department until further notice. Sorokach makes the motion. Brennan seconded. Motion passed. At this time, Solicitor Semanchik calls for public participation. Hearing no questions or comments from the audience, Helt calls for a Roll Call: Sorokach – aye. Brennan – aye. Helt – aye.*

*Based on that action, Solicitor Semanchik asks for authorization to do the following:*

- *Notify the Pennsylvania State Police – Frackville Barracks – and formally request increased coverage in our Township. Solicitor Semanchik states that he has shared with the State Police that on average our police department has been providing about 200 hours of police coverage per month so we are requesting 40-50 hours per week. Helt calls for a motion to authorize the Solicitor to formally request these hours of coverage from PSP. Sorokach makes the motion. Brennan seconded. Motion passed. Roll Call: Sorokach – aye. Brennan – aye. Helt – aye.*
- *Notify the Pennsylvania Municipal Police Officer Commission to place a freeze on the Township's accounts and remove any officers presently listed for MPOETC purposes. Helt calls for a motion authorizing the Solicitor to provide notification to the PA Municipal Police Officer Commission. Brennan makes the motion. Sorokach seconded. Motion passed. Roll Call: Sorokach – aye. Brennan – aye. Helt – aye.*
- *Contact District Attorney Micheal O'Pake to inform him of the action that was taken by the Board today so that the law enforcement officials that he is in charge of understand that for the moment, there will be no arrests or activity by CTPD until further notice. Helt calls for a motion to authorize Solicitor Semanchik to contact DA O'Pake. Brennan makes the motion. Sorokach seconded. Motion passed. Roll Call: Sorokach – aye. Brennan – aye. Helt – aye.*
- *Review the list of officers who have been committing time to working shifts and to reach out to each one and determine what type of interest they might have in working here so we can determine whether or not the Department can be reinstated at a later time. Helt calls for a motion to authorize Mark Semanchik to review the list of officers and make contact with each officer individually. Sorokach makes the motion. Brennan seconded. Motion passed. Roll Call: Sorokach – aye. Brennan – aye. Helt – aye.*

*With no further business, Chairperson Helt makes a motion to adjourn. Brennan seconded. Motion carried. Roll Call: Sorokach – aye. Brennan – aye. Helt – aye.*

*Solicitor Semanchik asks for the minutes to reflect that he and the Board of Supervisors will now move into executive session with representatives from the District Attorney's Office – no further action will be taken at that executive session.*



**Cass Township Board of Supervisors**

1209 Valley Road, Pottsville, PA 17901

Telephone: 570.544.5370

Fax: 570.544.3158

[www.casstownship.org](http://www.casstownship.org)

E-mail: [supervisors@casstownship.org](mailto:supervisors@casstownship.org)

*Meeting adjourned: 2:17pm.*

*ATTEST: Brenda M. Helt, Chairperson*

*ATTEST: Michael Sorokach, Vice Chairperson*

*ATTEST: Elvin E. Brennan Jr., Supervisor*

*SEAL:*

Chairperson/Asst. Treasurer  
**BRENDA M. HELT**

Vice Chairperson/Road Master  
**MICHAEL SOROKACH III**

Asst Secretary/Asst Road Master  
**ELVIN E. BRENNAN JR.**

Manager/Secretary-Treasurer  
**EVELYN J. BERGAN**

02/02/2024  
Special  
Meeting

PLEASE PRINT:

FRANK ANGELO

John KADZAK

DONALD KALOSAK

Dennis Evangelista

Michael Kupczak

Ann Marie Studlack

John O'Leary

Bob Helt

Gerald Sternick Sr.

CAROL STERNICK

Joshua Sephy

Meredith Bingle

~~Dr. XBR~~

Ron Hume

Thomas Kovach

Michael Staller

Ed Yakobosky

Gene Maley

Pete Pyles

J. Korman

James Croley

Chris Terpowchek

Doc Skultz

Ken Kosick

Mark Machute

Jeremy Slatko