

MINUTES
RICHLAND TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
APRIL 6, 2026

The Richland Township Board of Supervisors met in regular session on Monday, April 6, 2026 at the Richland Township Municipal Building, 322 Schoolhouse Road, Johnstown, PA 15904 at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT

Bob Heffelfinger, Chair

Keith W. Saylor

Brian H. Lehman

Jeffrey D. Wingard, via phone conference

W. Ray McCombie

Bryan J. Beppler, Executive Director

George Gvozdoch, Jr., Solicitor

Tiffany Shomo, Secretary

ABSENT

None

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Heffelfinger called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

MINUTES

March 23, 2026 Public Hearing (Re: Kingspath Senior Ministries, Inc., Richland Woods)

Mr. Wingard moved to approve the minutes of the March 23, 2026 Public Hearing as distributed, seconded by Mr. Saylor. All in favor. Motion carried.

March 23, 2026 Regular Meeting

Mr. Wingard moved to approve the minutes of March 23, 2026 as distributed, seconded by Mr. Saylor. All in favor. Motion carried.

APPROVE AGENDA - ANY CHANGES TO WRITTEN AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD ON AGENDA ITEMS - *The Public has the right and the opportunity to comment on any agenda item.*

No comments.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Payment of the Bills

Mr. Lehman moved to approve the general fund bills totaling \$57,703.69 and payroll in the amount of \$101,640.08. Seconded by Mr. Saylor. All in favor. Motion carried.

Richland Indoor Golf – Resolution Re: Inter-Municipal Transfer of Liquor License from Outside of Municipality

Mr. McCombie made a motion to approve the resolution. Seconded by Mr. Wingard. All in favor. Motion carried.

Approval of 2026 County Aid Application – Paving, Milling, Tar and Chip Various Streets

Mr. Lehman made a motion to approve the County Aid Application. Seconded by Mr. Saylor. All in favor. Motion carried.

Authorization to Pursue DCED Multimodal Grant – Theatre Drive Paving Project

Mr. Beppler explained that the project represents an excellent opportunity, noting that it allows for an application of up to \$3 million without requiring matching funds. He specified that the proposed work would involve paving Elton Road through to Scalp Avenue. He also emphasized that the application process is highly competitive and acknowledged that securing the funding would be challenging. Despite the difficulty of the request, he expressed hope that the funding could ultimately be obtained.

Mr. Wingard made a motion to pursue the grant. Seconded by Mr. McCombie. All in favor. Motion carried.

Authorization to Pursue T-Mobile Hometown Grant (Luray Avenue Park)

Mr. Beppler reported that Brandy Davis, who works with Stiffler McGraw out of Hollidaysburg, has been actively involved and is very passionate about Richland Township and the positive improvements already completed at Luray Avenue Park. He explained that additional initiatives are being proposed for the park, including the installation of new concrete slabs, the construction of four dugouts, and updated signage for both fields. Drawing from his own experience participating in the league for many years, Mr. Beppler noted that these upgrades are greatly needed and would serve as a meaningful enhancement to the facility.

He further shared that approximately \$4,000 in corporate sponsorship funding has already been secured, contingent upon receiving the grant, and expressed confidence that additional support would be generated if the grant is awarded. Mr. Heffelfinger added that he has met Ms. Davis and that she has offered her professional services to the fire department for future projects. He also remarked that he was particularly impressed, noting that this work is her profession.

Mr. Lehman made a motion to authorize proceeding with pursuing the grant. Seconded by Mr. Saylor. All in favor. Motion carried.

Intermunicipal Agreement (Mandated Bi-ennial MOU) Between Richland Township Police Department & Richland School District

Mr. Beppler discussed the Resource Officer Agreement, explaining that it is associated with the Enhanced Student Safety Act 47 of 2025 and includes additional language reflecting updated requirements. He noted that the agreement has been reviewed by the Chief of Police, as well as by himself and Mr. Gvozdich. It was further acknowledged that the Township has the capacity to fulfill the obligations outlined in the agreement, whether through the assignment of a School Resource Officer or by support from the police department as a whole.

Mr. Saylor made a motion to approve the Intermunicipal Agreement. Seconded by Mr. McCombie. All in favor. Motion carried.

Resignation – Brandon Rozich, (Public Works Operator I), effective 4/10/26

Mr. Wingard made a motion to accept the resignation. Seconded by Mr. Lehman. All in favor. Motion carried.

Promotion – Andrew Pasko (Public Works Department) from Operator 2 to Operator 1, effective 4/6/26

Mr. Lehman made a motion to approve the promotion. Seconded by Mr. Saylor. All in favor. Motion carried.

Public Comment

Mrs. Strushensky asked why a police officer is assigned to the high school. Mr. Heffelfinger explained that the Richland School District has had an officer for about ten years. When asked for further clarification, he noted that many surrounding districts, including Catholic schools, also have school resource officers. He added that Johnstown School District has a full police department, and Windber and Westmont schools have officers as well.

Mr. Heffelfinger stated that, to his knowledge, there have not been any major incidents prompting the assignment, but the School Resource Officer is involved with the school community and supports some family-related matters. He added that the position was established proactively, rather than in response to a specific event, whereas other schools may assign an officer after an incident occurs. Mrs. Strushensky noted that she was unaware of any particular concerns at Richland, and Mr. Heffelfinger emphasized that the approach is intended to be preventive.

Mr. Jim Brown asked whether the Luray Avenue Park being discussed is the one that includes the tennis and basketball courts, and it was confirmed that it is. Mr. Meyers noted that the dugouts at the park have not been replaced in approximately 25 years. Mrs. Lehman added that the park is heavily used, with residents from South Fork also visiting to use the playground facilities. Mr. Heffelfinger explained that the funding for the project has been influenced by its broader regional impact. He noted that it is unlikely the project would have received approximately one million dollars in grant support from Senator Langerholc if the improvements were expected to serve only the 15904 area, emphasizing that the regional benefit helped support the funding request.

Ms. D'Agostino inquired about Mr. Hayes' property on Oakridge Drive, noting that relatives in town have remarked that it resembles a junkyard. Mr. Beppler stated that he has had numerous discussions with Mr. Hayes regarding the situation and noted that if the property is not cleaned up, it will be referred to the magistrate.

Mr. Heffelfinger added that there are fine legal lines when dealing with private property. While some conditions may appear unacceptable to the public, such as pallets in the backyard or unusual items in the front yard, they may not necessarily be illegal. He emphasized the importance of respecting property rights and explained that municipal enforcement is sometimes limited by Commonwealth law. Mr. Beppler noted that much of what is present on Mr. Hayes' property is not legally considered garbage or rubbish. Mr. Heffelfinger added that previous issues have been addressed as much as possible within the law, and Mrs. Strushensky suggested changing the ordinance. Mr. Heffelfinger cautioned that any limits on private property must comply with legal restrictions, and what may appear unappealing is not always actionable. He further noted that the staff has enforced what they can according to the law, and Mr. Beppler explained that Magistrate Varner is very particular about what qualifies as garbage or rubbish, so enforcement must be precise.

Ms. D'Agostino also asked about vehicles without tires, and Mr. Beppler confirmed that there is an ordinance addressing this issue. Mr. Heffelfinger commented that property maintenance enforcement can be complex, recalling a case where a property owner served jail time but did not comply afterward.

He noted that addressing such issues can involve lengthy appeals and magistrate-granted extensions, making enforcement a lengthy process.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

T. Shomo

Tiffany Shomo
Secretary