

MINUTES
RICHLAND TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
JULY 27, 2026

The Richland Township Board of Supervisors met in regular session on Monday, July 27, 2026 at the Richland Township Municipal Building, 322 Schoolhouse Road, Johnstown, PA 15904 at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT

Bob Heffelfinger, Chair, via phone conference
Keith W. Saylor
Brian H. Lehman
Jeffrey D. Wingard
W. Ray McCombie

Bryan J. Beppler, Executive Director
George Gvozdoch, 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

Mr. Wingard moved to approve the minutes of July 13, 2026, as distributed. Seconded by Mr. McCombie. All in favor. Motion carried.

APPROVE AGENDA - ANY CHANGES TO WRITTEN AGENDA

None.

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

Alice Hummel spoke on behalf of the Cambria-Somerset Council of Governments (COG) about why remaining in the COG strengthens Richland Township's future. She said if Richland Township leaves now, it removes its voice, while staying keeps the Township at the decision-making table. She explained the new COG offers more than codes and zoning, expanding to include grant writing and administration, joint purchasing, cooperative bidding, public works equipment, stormwater, emergency management support, training and compliance assistance, and technology and educational support. She said remaining in the COG reduces costs, increases efficiency, and allows Richland Township to choose which services it wants to participate in. Membership keeps options open, while withdrawal closes them.

Ms. Hummel said Richland Township has been known for leadership and professionalism, noting that Mel Wingard was a founding member of the COG. She said the Township should be forward-thinking and recognize the regional benefits of remaining. She added that state agencies are more favorable to municipalities in a COG, grants become more competitive, and shared services reduce costs and workload. She explained the COG is restructuring because the municipalities demanded better and asked Richland Township to remain, not out of obligation, but opportunity, so it can help shape the future of the new COG. She noted the annual membership fee is \$400.

Ms. Hummel stated the COG currently rents another office suite for \$400 per month but will move after the next board meeting. She also said not enough representatives have been attending meetings and a third signature is needed on documents. Ms. Hummel stated that if Richland Township is not interested in cooperating, it should withdraw now rather than wait until the end of the year. Speaking for herself, although she said others feel the same, she said the Township's membership fee could be

refunded. Ms. Hummel added that if Richland Township stays without supporting the COG, it will be a thorn in their side.

Mr. Gary Paul stated that he lost many nights of sleep over this. He feels people should not be a part of COG if they don't want to. He added that Mel (Wingard) was very proud to be a part of COG.

Ms. Hummel added that as community leaders in Cambria County, the board should be ashamed to withdraw from something building up other municipalities.

CORRESPONDENCE

None.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

Payment of the Bills

Mr. Lehman moved to approve the general fund bills totaling \$91,181.83, payroll in the amount of \$95,369.85, an out of meeting check to Mark Rhine for \$2,400.00 (painting expenses to Municipal Building), and a check out of Liquid Fuels to Quaker Sales for \$430,000.00 (vast majority of 2026 paving). Seconded by Mr. Wingard. All in favor. Motion carried.

Resolution – Cambria-Somerset Council of Governments (COG) – Richland Township's Member Termination, Effective 12/31/2026

Mr. Heffelfinger read the following Resolution:

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF RICHLAND, CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, SETTING FORTH AND RESOLVING THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS DECISION TO WITHDRAW FROM AND TERMINATE ITS MEMBERSHIP IN THE CAMBRIA-SOMERSET COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 31, 2026

WHEREAS, Richland Township, Cambria County, Pennsylvania (the "Township") is a founding member of the Cambria-Somerset Council of Governments (the "COG"); and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of the Township have expressed a desire to discuss and determine if the Township should remain a member of the COG beyond December 31 of 2026; and

WHEREAS, this Resolution has been prepared to reflect a decision to withdraw from the COG and shall be placed on the agenda of the Board of Supervisors for their consideration at the regular meeting of the Board on July 27, 2026.

NOW, THEREFORE, AFTER DUE CONSIDERATION AND DISCUSSION BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF RICHLAND TOWNSHIP, CAMBRIA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, BE IT AND IT IS HEREBY:

RESOLVED, that the Township withdraw from membership in the COG effective December 31, 2026; and

RESOLVED, that this Resolution is intended to express the firm intentions of the Board of Supervisors of the Township relative to continued membership in the COG after December 31, 2026; and

RESOLVED, that the Executive Director of the Township is hereby directed to notify the COG in writing of the decision of the Board of Supervisors and provide a copy of this Resolution to the COG in furtherance thereof; and

RESOLVED, that the Township shall permit the COG to lease an office in the Township office building until December 31, 2026; provided, that the COG shall not be permitted to maintain an office in the Township office building after that date and shall remove all of its personal property and records from the Township office building on or before December 31, 2026.

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

Richland Community Days – Donation Request From East Hills Recreation Commission

Mr. Beppler stated that the Township received a request from East Hills Recreation (EHR) for \$15,000, which is an increase from the previous \$10,000 request. He noted that \$10,000 was included in the budget.

Mr. Wingard, who serves on the EHR Board, explained that sponsorships and other expected revenue have not come in as anticipated this year. Because of that, he asked EHR Director Jeff Berkey to request an additional \$5,000 from the Township. Mr. Wingard also clarified that EHR and Community Days are separate, but any shortfall from Community Days comes out of the EHR budget.

Mr. Heffelfinger added that Community Days was never intended to be an EHR fundraiser. While it started as a fundraiser about 17 years ago, it has since become a community event and generates very little money by the end of the year.

Mr. Lehman stated that because Community Days is a community event, Richland Township residents should be aware that Township funds are helping support it. He suggested that, if the additional funding is approved, signage or another form of recognition be displayed so residents know their tax dollars are contributing to the event.

Mr. Heffelfinger added that, from the Fire Department's perspective, Community Days is one of the department's keynote events, and he believes the additional funding is money well spent.

Mr. Saylor motioned to approve the \$15,000.00 donation to Richland Community Days. Seconded by Mr. Lehman. All in favor. Motion carried.

IRS Mileage Reimbursement Rate Change, from \$.725 to \$.76 per mile, Effective 7/1/26

Mr. Wingard motioned to approve the mileage reimbursement rate change. Seconded by Mr. Lehman. All in favor. Motion carried.

Bishop McCort Turn the Towns Teal Campaign Request

Mr. Heffelfinger explained that this is an annual request to place teal ribbons throughout the community in recognition of ovarian cancer awareness.

Mr. Saylor motioned to approve the Turn the Towns Teal Campaign request. Seconded by Mr. McCombie. All in favor. Motion carried.

Public Comment

Ms. Strushensky commented that if the technology is available, it should be used, referring to the television not displaying Mr. Heffelfinger's remote participation. Mr. Beppler explained that the laptop was also being used to prepare the Township meeting minutes and that he did not want those notes displayed on the television.

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

Respectfully submitted,

T. Shomo

Tiffany Shomo
Secretary