

The regular meeting of the Upper Pottsgrove Township Board of Commissioners was held on Tuesday, February 18, 2020, at the Upper Pottsgrove Administrative Office, 1409 Farmington Avenue, with Commissioners Trace Slinkerd, Renee Spaide, Martin Schreiber, Cathy Paretti and Dave Waldt present. Also present were Township Manager Michelle Reddick, Solicitor Charles D. Garner, Jr., Police Chief James Fisher, Public Works Director Justin Bean and Township Secretary Jeannie DiSante.

MOMENT OF SILENCE – The Commissioners requested a moment of silence in honor of the men and women who have served and are currently serving our country in the armed forces.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE - Those assembled pledged allegiance to the flag.

T. Slinkerd announced the swearing in of Michael L. Tolson as a volunteer with the Upper Pottsgrove Fire Police.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Motion by R. Spaide, second by C. Paretti and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of January 21, 2020. Motion by R. Spaide, second D. Waldt and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of February 3, 2020.

PAYMENT OF BILLS – Motion by C. Paretti, second by R. Spaide to approve the payment of bills in the amount of \$152,469.19. M. Schreiber asked if there are legal fees charged for the proposed sale of the sewer system. The Solicitor replied yes, some of them. Votes on the motion: ayes: T. Slinkerd, D. Waldt, C. Paretti, R. Spaide. Nays: M. Schreiber. Motion carried 4-1.

REPORTS

TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATION/FINANCE – M. Reddick advised her report was included in the Commissioner's packets. She highlighted the plans for the Kummerer tract have been submitted to address the conditions of preliminary/final plan approval. They are being reviewed by the Township engineer. There were plans submitted for a minor subdivision for the Kummerer Parcel two-lot subdivision which are also being reviewed.

M. Reddick noted the majority of the Board are not in favor of the age-restricted/commercial project located at West Moyer Road and Route 100 that was presented by Mr. Mingey at the January 21, 2020 meeting. She will provide this feedback to Mr. Mingey.

T. Slinkerd noted the sale of the sewer system update submission from PFM is included in their packets. He highlighted the tentative dates of upcoming public meetings.

M. Reddick noted the final December 31, 2019 financial report is submitted that includes pension adjustment entries and the January 31, 2020 financial reports.

CHIEF OF POLICE – Chief J. Fisher submitted his report to the Board noting one officer out with a non-work related injury and should be returning next week. M. Schreiber asked if Chief Fisher had looked into an issue of work trucks parking in developments. Chief Fisher explained from the Township ordinance that there is a 13,000 lb. weight limit and the weight class for that registration is up to 14,000 lbs. He suggests the Township look at revising the ordinance weight limit. The Board would then have to decide if they want to exempt emergency vehicles.

After some discussion M. Schreiber made a motion to prepare and advertise a revised ordinance that increases the weight limit to 14,000 lbs., seconded by R. Spaide and unanimously carried. M. Reddick said in the conversation with Chief Fisher and J. Bean concerning this issue, J. Bean recommended that the Board NOT exempt emergency vehicles because of their weight and the wear on the Township Roads.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR – J. Bean submitted his report and there were no questions.

TOWNSHIP SOLICITOR – C. Garner reported, as a result of the Board potentially awarding the bid for Regal Oaks IIA sewer project later in the meeting, there is a need to enter into an agreement with the Borough Authority to purchase additional capacity. That agreement will be coming to the Board in the near future. There is also the Ming/Moyer sewer project which may have additional EDU requirements therefore, potentially 50-60 EDUs are needed at \$5.55 per gallon per treatment capacity.

There are two vacant lots on Willow Street that are subdivided and the developer will be submitting a sketch plan of a proposed residential development of four to eight units. The zoning is currently RO, Retail/Office however, there are many residences in that area and mixed uses so there may be some challenges.

TOWNSHIP ENGINEERING AND BUILDING & ZONING – M. Reddick stated she had nothing to highlight to the report in the packets.

COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORTS

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION – D. Elliott submitted a report from GreenAllies highlighting a thank you to the road crew for chipping the Christmas trees. There will be an electronic and appliance recycling day March 7th behind Upland Square Target store. He noted ‘Comcast Cares Day’ will be May 2nd starting a 9:00 AM until noon and they need volunteer supervisors at each site. Township employees have volunteered. Prout Farm is looking into creating a multifaceted agriculture learning space and sustainable farm by partnering with area organizations and individuals. They asked the Open Space (OS) Board to delay leasing of land at Prout Farm Park to any 3rd party until 2021 to allow their team to develop a viable plan and formal proposal for the Board. The OS Board will take a wait and see stance because they have not put out an RFP to see what they can gain per acre for farming.

There was discussion on the Sunset Park new proposed trail. D. Elliott and S. Wagner walked the trail and discovered issues with springs along the trail making it slippery and muddy. There was talk of raising the elevation, how to deal with the steep slopes, ADA compliance with awarded grants and the costs.

D. Elliott noted donations are now coming in from the residents for the Veterans Memorial and a press release will be prepared in the future.

SEWER AND WATER – J. Bealer submitted his report highlighting the national ongoing issue with flushable wipes as they continue to destroy equipment and incur additional costs to treatment plants. The attorneys for the manufacturing companies contend the wipes are flushable however they do not make it known the wipes are not biodegradable. The most municipalities can do is

educate the public. The Borough has installed temporary flow meters in various location to identify and develop strategies to combat inflow and infiltration issues. The Authority is considering performing a comprehensive hydraulic Flow Study of the system the cost of which will be shared between the three Townships and Borough and will be determined prior to authorization to proceed. An updated projection of a 5-year Capital Improvements Plan is expected later this year prior to budgeting required for 2021.

T. Slinkerd ask about the Ming/Moyer project bids and was informed that all grinder pump agreements must be signed before bids can go out. He noted the timeline for the current projects are FY 2021 for Regal Oaks Phase IIB, FY 2022 for Horseshoe Drive, Bruce Drive, Autumnview Lane and FY 2023 for Continental Drive and Orchard Drive.

FIRE AND AMBULANCE – D. Raudenbush submitted his report including the call numbers and statistics. He noted a power outage call the previous Sunday effecting many homes including the station and main doors. The fire company has no generator and a door was damaged when manually opening it to get the vehicles out. He will be looking into procuring a generator and pull-chains to get the doors open.

Initial building repairs are completed however, additional mold was discovered and it is being addressed. D. Waldt asked, when the remediation is finished does the cost included testing for reoccurrence of mold. D. Raudenbush did not know but would find out. Four candidates are in the Firefighter 1 training program. The new fire police member was sworn in tonight and 3 probationary firefighters were voted to regular membership.

OLD BUSINESS

CONSIDER AWARDING BID FOR REGAL OAKS PHASE IIA SEWER PROJECT – After discussion there was a motion by C. Paretti, seconded by R. Spaide and unanimously carried to award the bid to Doli Construction Corporation for \$537,440.

NEW BUSINESS

DISCUSS RESOLUTION OPPOSING HB 349 REQUIRING MUNICIPALITIES TO RETAIN TWO THIRD PARTY AGENCIES TO ENFORCE THE PA UNIFORM CONSTRUCTION CODE – Solicitor Garner explained there has been a version of this House Bill for a number of years and the builder's lobby wants the law to be amended so that the municipality doesn't have the ability to only designate one building code official but rather two, in this case, which allows a builder to pick from two firms for inspection work or plan review under the Uniform Construction Code. In the past, municipalities have strongly opposed this bill which takes autonomy away from the municipalities. M. Reddick found the resolution that was circulated and it will let your Representatives know your opposition to the Bill. Though listed on the agenda as a discussion item the Board, if agreed, can vote on it tonight. After discussing the Bill there was a motion by R. Spaide, seconded by C. Paretti and unanimously carried to approve a resolution opposing HB 349.

CONSIDER AUTHORIZING RFP FOR REPAIRS TO SUNSET PARK & FOX HILL TRAILS – M. Reddick corrected the wording that it is to authorize going out for bids, not an RFP. The Township has a grant for both trails, one from PMRPC for Fox Hill and Pottstown Area Health and Wellness for Sunset Park. The Township match has been included in the budget, line item ‘Park Maintenance 454.247’ for both projects. Motion by R. Spade, seconded by C. Paretti and unanimously carried to approve going out for bids from construction and landscaping firms for repairs to Sunset Park and Fox Hill trails.

OTHER PUBLIC COMMENT

- J. Bealer, 1521 Farmington Avenue - commented that it has been an honor to serve on various boards and committees in public service in Upper Pottsgrove Township. He thanked the current board members for their time devoted to public service. He spoke on our country’s sacrifices for our freedoms and liberties and referenced a citizen not allowed to ask a question concerning the actions of the public officials in a previous Board meeting. He voiced his disappointment to witness the resident’s request seeking additional information being so easily dismissed and he felt it made everyone sitting in the audience appear foolish. His hope going forward is that his local elected officials would agree to have open and engaging public meetings; it will be their best policy.

- Keith Kehl, 1941 Gilbertsville Road - has a concern about the water run off on Moyer Road at Sprogels Run and at Ming Drive where the water puddles. Randy Road is also being washed out.

- Rich Kummerer, 1303 Farmington Avenue – purchased Strogus’ 6.83 acre property and a neighbor has concerns. He wants to let the Commissioner know that he and his wife intend to clean up the trash and tires and fallen trees on what was an abandoned property for many years. He posted it for no hunting and the police have been out several times because his adjoining neighbor uses it for target practice and complained saying that he was allowed to do so. Chief Fisher said as long as they meet the requirements of the ordinance and game commission it is allowed. Mr. Kummerer wanted the Board to understand it is their intent to bring the area back to its natural state.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

- T. Slinkerd – the pension advisor was selected at the last meeting and M. Reddick met with them about the transfer of funds. He is working on the debt structure and M. Reddick is working on the 2021 budget with the department heads and working toward a 4-year plan. There are development plans coming for the Board to review. In the upcoming working sessions the fee schedules will be discussed, roadwork plans, MS4 plan coming in April and the Open Space plan to be reviewed for approval by the Commissioners.

ADJOURNMENT – The meeting was adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Jeannie DiSante, Township Secretary