

**Minutes – Board of Commissioners
Upper Pottsgrove Township**

June 15, 2020

The regular meeting of the Upper Pottsgrove Township Board of Commissioners was held on Monday, June 15, 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 Road Foreman 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.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Motion by R. Spaide, second by D. Waldt and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of May 18, 2020. M. Schreiber asked for confirmation of what equipment will cost \$700,000-\$800,000 as stated in the sewer report. The Township Secretary stated it was for the capturing the trash, a great increase in solid contaminants. She will get confirmation for the next meeting.

PAYMENT OF BILLS – Motion by C. Paretti, second by R. Spaide and unanimously carried to approve the payment of bills in the amount of \$245,823.78.

REPORTS

TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATION/FINANCE – M. Reddick advised her report was included in the Commissioners' packets. She noted there will be a peak hydraulic evaluation conducted on the Pottstown Wastewater Treatment Plant, and the Township's share of the cost will be \$1,455.36. The evaluation is scheduled to be conducted in August 2020.

The Township filed an insurance claim for the tree clean-up and fence damage at the Pineford Road pump station. The claim was approved and a check will be forthcoming. There has been substantial storm damage (mainly trees) within open space areas and along our trails, most of which will likely not be covered by insurance. The public works crew cleaned up some of the fallen trees and debris.

The final audit report and financial statement for 2019 should be received by the end of June now that the final management representation letter will be submitted tomorrow.

Township staff and consultants are working to finalize the bids for the trail repairs at Sunset Park and Fox Hill Trails. The projects are expected to be completed in either late summer or early fall however, surveys will be required before moving forward. Public Works can possibly do some of the repairs as the costs are anticipated to be more than expected. Board Members questioned if surveys are in the Township files from the dates of purchase of open space. M. Reddick explained she researched all files and there are no surveys for the corners that bound other properties. Since the trails are so close, it was recommend that surveys be done so as not to encroach other properties.

There was discussion on the costs of surveys and three quotes received and submitted to the Open Space Committee however, they were not ready to make a recommendation. C. Garner confirmed that at the time of acquisition of a property, obtaining a survey is not required. Parties to the purchase may, at their own expense, contract to have a survey done.

In light of the Governor's mandate that Montgomery County is now in the 'green' phase of reopening since the start of Covid-19, there was discussion as to when the Township offices would open to the public. The Manager is checking to see what surrounding Municipalities are doing and no date is yet decided.

FINANCIAL REPORT – M. Reddick submitted the financial report noted the earned income taxes appear to be in line as to where they should be for the month of May. The insurance dividends came in at \$37,000. This is over what was budgeted at \$30,000. T. Slinkerd pointed out the line items from where the Township gets revenues.

CHIEF OF POLICE – Chief J. Fisher submitted his report to the Board and was available for any questions. R. Spade asked if 4-wheelers are being ridden on the trails. Chief Fisher said there is no evidence reported on that. M. Schreiber asked if the vehicle mileage could be added to the monthly report. Chief Fisher said he would and reported at this time the approximate mileage on his vehicle is 124,000, one of the SUVs has 97,000, the white SUV has 87,000, the Charger has 110,000, the white Charger has 120,000 and the Durango has 5,000.

PUBLIC WORKS FOREMAN – J. Bean submitted his report noting they finished measuring all the manholes, approximately 275, and he needs to hand those numbers in to be made which will take 2-3 months. R. Spade asked if J. Bean would get together with Open Space and work out not mowing all the open space, leaving more as natural meadow. There was a discussion and he asked for a list of which areas should be left uncut and he would speak to the committee.

TOWNSHIP SOLICITOR – C. Garner had no specific report and would address agenda items under New Business.

TOWNSHIP ENGINEERING AND BUILDING & ZONING – T. Slinkerd noted the submission of the engineering report and there were no questions from the Board.

COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORTS

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION – The Committee did not submit a report. G. Churach informed the Board that the Committee took no action on the survey quotes for the open space projects since D. Elliott was planning to meet with the Township Manager to discuss the need for new surveys. Committee members discussed mowing and not mowing open space and the pros and cons of each side. They also discussed the need for dog bag dispensers at the trails as there are many complains from folks using the trails. The Committee recommended to the Board of Commissioners purchasing four units that come with a dispenser, bags, a sign and trash can for \$230.00 each. M. Reddick noted this was not on tonight's agenda because their meeting is after the agenda is prepared.

SEWER AND WATER – T. Slinkerd noted J. Bealer submitted his reports for June. M. Reddick noted one report is from the Sewer Committee meeting and the other is from the joint Borough and Pottsgroves meeting

FIRE AND AMBULANCE – D. Raudenbush submitted his reports for May and June and explained the Fire Marshall submitted his new monthly report of the calls he attended and that will differ from the Chief's report. As of two weeks ago they have started live training again and one live meeting after three months. There were four new members brought in to the department. The department with help from the Police Chief provided small parades for birthdays and graduations.

NEW BUSINESS

DISCUSS AMENDMENTS TO SEWER ORDINANCE – C. Garner explained there at approximately fifty pages of regulations in the sanitary sewer ordinance. This is the sections that the Board would be changing. In talks about the sale of the sewer system there were a number of items that needed to be considered for changing based upon the request of PA American Water. C. Garner explained the effected four sections of the ordinance. Special Council recommended language in Section 2. The effective date of this ordinance would be January 1, 2021. After the Board discussion the Commissioners were in agreement on the ordinance with the exception of Section #4 and asked C. Garner relay this it to Special Council for PA American Water.

DISCUSS AUTHORIZING SOLICITOR TO PREPARE & ADVERTISE TRASH ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS – Chief Fisher explained there is a conflict between the noise ordinance that states there cannot be noise before 7:00 AM and the trash ordinance allowing trucks to collect trash from 6:00 AM forward. If the trash ordinance is changed to 7:00 AM it helps with prosecution if there are violations. There was an officer doing enforcement and this issue came up. The Commissioners discussed the options and conflicts with trash/recycling haulers and school buses. All concurred to table this until the next Board meeting.

DISCUSS BORTZ SUBDIVISION #02-2020 – M. Reddick introduced Engineer John Aston and applicant Jonathan Bortz. Mr. Aston provided aerial photos of the proposed subdivision to the Board, noting the plan has been reviewed by the Township engineer and the County. He explained there are three lots to the 15.377 acre subdivision located at Gross Road and Farmington Avenue; one has the existing house, the owner will build on the larger lot and one lot will remain vacant.

DISCUSS SITKO SUBDIVISION #03-2020 – Engineer John Aston presented the proposed subdivision of a 21.638 acre property located at the intersection of Mock Road and Needhammer Road into two lots. He noted there are no plans for this subdivision other than to split the property. Mr. Aston asked since the Township has no planning commission he can work with the Township Engineer however, at some point can there be a staff meeting to run through details before coming to the Board of Commissioners for approval? T, Slinkerd said yes, a staff meeting with the Township Engineer, Solicitor and Manager. If there are waivers they would go to the staff meeting. The owners would like any grading, drainage, soil erosion and sediment control requirements be put on whoever will be developing the lot and going for building permits. Therefore, Mr. Aston would like to not address these things on the plan and the owners would like to ask for waivers of this type items.

M. Reddick explained that both plans will expire before the Board's next meeting and both applicants are willing to give an extension of time for review. She told Mr. Aston that he should have both extension letters submitted to the Township prior to each plan expiration date. Asked if the Board needs to approve the letters, Mr. Aston was told no and the Solicitor stated for the record that the Board is accepting a verbal extension of time for review prior to the expiration of the plan from both the Bortz and Sitko applicants and that both will submit signed documents requesting an extension of time for review prior to their expiration date. Mr. Aston confirmed.

DISCUSS USE OF KULP FIELDS FOR SPORTS & CONSIDER APPROVAL OF USE AGREEMENTS FOR PBO & PGLL

– M. Reddick explained prior to Covid the Open Space Committee reviewed the two agreements for Pottsgrove Baseball Organization and Pottsgrove Little League that have used these recreation fields in the past. The Committee recommended approval of the agreements, with some indicated changes, subject to review by the Solicitor. Since the Covid shutdowns the fields were not being used. The school organizations are now starting up again and they want to use the fields. She informed them they cannot use the fields until the Commissioners approve the agreements. West Pottsgrove is not allowing sports at this time, Lower Pottsgrove will allow use of the fields gradually once the State is in the “green phase”, no decision has yet been made in New Hanover Township and in Limerick Township they have posted their fields that no one is allowed to use them. M. Reddick read some of the Governor's guidelines and said it is up to the Board to decide if they want to allow sports on the fields and when. Pottsgrove Baseball Organization has already been using the fields for practices and were advised in writing that they did not have an agreement with the Township nor permission to do so. Solicitor Garner is reviewing the agreement and additional liability language needed if the fields are opened. After the Commissioners discussed the details of the agreements there was a motion by M. Schreiber, second by C. Paretti and unanimously carried to approve the agreements in a form that is agreeable to the Solicitor and Township Manager.

CONSIDER AUTHORIZING BIDS FOR MING DRIVE/MOYER ROAD SEWER PROJECT

– T. Slinkerd explained this is the second part of the Township completing all its projects before the sale of the sewer system is completed. Motion by R. Spaide, second by D. Waldt to authorize LTL Consultants to put the bids out for the Ming Drive/Moyer Road Sewer Project. M. Schreiber asked if the bids go out does that null and void the grant. C. Garner said no, it will only be going out for bid and when they come back the Board can look at where things are at that time with the grant. However, the Township has committed to finish this project by the end of the year with or without a grant. Motion unanimously carried.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

- C. Paretti thanked the police department for all the work they have done for the community during the Covid pandemic. R. Spaide concurred.

- T. Slinkerd commented on the Board's priority list that includes the sewer sale with the engineers working on the property assessments for PA American Water, Public Works corrective action plan, selection of the UVE (Utility Value Expert) who will come in after the property assessment is finished, the 537 Plan projects of Regal Oaks II and Ming/Moyer. The 4-year budget plan of which 2021 is completed, considering Heather Place cell tower buyout, review of the current HR policy.


Other items on the priority list include consider evaluating the S curve on Moyer Road at the Crossroads development and its impact on drivers; the Board asked the engineers to take a look at it and provide some numbers to straighten it out and the initial draft cost was \$350,000 - \$400,000 and the budget is at \$200,000. The other road issue is half of Poplar Road which can be handled by the Public Work road crew.

Once the State is in the “green phase” the Township will purchase a smart TV for the boardroom and the audience. The Township staff now has updated computers and 2020 software. The DB (defined benefit) to the DC (defined contribution) Pension transfer is complete, assets have been transferred and retirees are paid on time. Discussions with the engineer on the MS4 permit has been taking place and will continue to work on this. Upgrades to the Township maps is being planned to better point out areas being worked on in the Township. M. Schreiber asked for a copy of the 2021 budget. T, Slinkerd said the Manager is still working on projecting those numbers four years out on one sheet for the Board to review.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - the Board convened in Execution Session at 7:58 pm to discuss possible litigation with no action taken. They reconvened at 8:19 pm

ADJOURNMENT – The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Jeannie DiSante, Township Secretary