

**UPPER POTTS GROVE TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
November 21, 2022**

The regular meeting of the Upper Pottsgrove Township Board of Commissioners was held on Monday November 21, 2022 at the Upper Pottsgrove Administrative Office, 1409 Farmington Avenue, with Commissioners Trace Slinkerd, Cathy Paretti, Dave Waldt, Hank Llewellyn and Don Read present. Also present were Township Manager Michelle Reddick, Police Chief James Fisher, Public Works Director Chad Davis, Solicitor Eric Frey, and Township Secretary Jeannie DiSante.

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

T. Slinkerd announced a presentation by Chief Fisher of a new police officer. Chief Fisher welcomed all to the meeting saying it was his pleasure to introduce the newest member of the Police Department. Officer Chad Grzesnikowski grew up in Harvey Lake, Pennsylvania. He holds a bachelor's degree in criminology from Penn State University and is also a 2020 graduate of the Temple University-Ambler Police Academy. Chief Fisher welcomed Chad to the Department telling him that he looked forward to his having a long career with the Township. T. Slinkerd presented Officer Grzesnikowski with badge number 30. Officer Grzesnikowski thanked the Commissioners for the opportunity, is honored to be aboard and he too, is looking forward to a long career and getting to know everyone.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – The October 17, 2022 minutes were presented for approval. Motion by C. Paretti, second by H. Llewellyn and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of October 17, 2022 as presented.

PAYMENT OF BILLS – The November 21, 2022 bill list was presented for approval. Motion by D. Reed, second by D. Waldt and unanimously carried to approve the payment of bills list of \$252,171.00.

REPORTS TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATION/FINANCE – Manager M. Reddick advised her reports are included in the Commissioners' packets. She informed the Board, as discussed, an offer of employment was accepted by an applicant to join the Public Works team. His anticipated start date will be December 5th. The Manager submitted the budget for review and approval to advertise. The auditors were at the Township office for two days of pre-audit collection of data and early review of necessary journal entry corrections prior to the full audit in early February.

The Township received \$26,598.59 in FEMA relief monies for tropical storm IDA and the auditors helped in transferring the funds from general fund to sewer fund as the expenses were paid from the sewer fund. The Manager noted there is much activity in Planning and Zoning for the Commissioner's review. The Mervine Street project is complete other than the Pottstown Borough working to complete the line painting.

The Board authorized Beyond the Leaf to remove trees on Snyder Road at a cost of \$6,479.00. While in the field, it was determined another tree had to be removed which was an immediate threat and safety hazard for the trail at the Althouse Arboretum. I authorized the additional tree to be removed at a cost of \$700.00 per approval by the Solicitor and that it would be an additional cost if the contractor had to go back out to remove the tree at a later date.

The was discussion concerning a request from Crown Castle to add Version to the cell tower located at 134 W. Moyer Road. D. Reed asked if they are offering the 5G network because there are some court cases concerning this issue. The Solicitor said they will provide a lease to the Township and it may be referenced in that document.

CHIEF OF POLICE – Chief J. Fisher submitted his report to the Board and brought to their attention that the Department recently advertised for a part-time officer and had several responses. He is starting background checks. The department is budgeted for ten positions and is currently at eight; he is hopeful that he can fill one position with a part-time officer.

PUBLIC WORKS – Director C. Davis advised his report was submitted to the Board and would answer any questions. There were no questions as this time.

TOWNSHIP SOLICITOR – Solicitor Frey had no formal report at this time, however he will speak to issues as they come up on the agenda. There were no questions for the Solicitor at this time.

TOWNSHIP ENGINEERING AND BUILDING & ZONING – T. Slinkerd noted that LTL Consultants submitted their reports with the standard updates within the Township.

TAX COLLECTOR - T. Slinkerd noted the report in their packets explaining some details on the tax collections.

COMMITTEE CHAIR REPORTS

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION – G. Churach submitted his report from their November 1st meeting and there were no questions at this time.

FIRE AND AMBULANCE – D. Raudenbush submitted his reports and pointed out they had elections on November 9, the new Fire Chief is Mathew Galamba, and he remains Fire Police Captain as no one ran against him for the position. M. Reddick thanked the fire police for their help recently with traffic control for the road crew while paving on Farmington Avenue.

OLD BUSINESS

DISCUSS & CONSIDER APPROVAL OF POTTS GROVE HUNT ESCROW RELEASE NO. 15 – Motion by D. Waldt, second by H. Llewellyn and unanimously carried to approve Pottsgrove Hunt Escrow Release No. 15 for \$211,977.80.

DISCUSS & CONSIDER ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE NO. 520 APPROVING THE ADDITION OF WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP TO PARRC (POTTSTOWN AREA REGIONAL RECREATION COMMITTEE) – Motion by C. Paretti, second by H. Llewellyn and unanimously carried to approve Adoption of Ordinance No. 520 approving the addition of Washington Township to PARRC (Pottstown Area Regional Recreation Committee). D. Reed questioned adopting this by ordinance vs. resolution. The Solicitor explained the original enactment of this was done by ordinance therefore it is proper to amend the ordinance by an ordinance. C. Paretti said they now have eight Townships included in PARRC and hopes to have it capped at this number which will be discussed at their next meeting.

DISCUSS & CONSIDER APPROVAL OF FINAL PAY APP TO DOLI CONSTRUCTION FOR THE MING DR./MOYER RD. SEWER PROJECT – M. Reddick explained this is the last payout for Doli Construction on this project however, they did not submit their official request for the payout. She requests this be tabled until the official payout request is received. All Commissioners concurred to table the request.

NEW BUSINESS

DISCUSS & CONSIDER AUTHORIZATION TO ADVERTISE THE 2023 BUDGET – T. Slinkerd spoke on the proposed budget addressing personnel costs, operational expenses and revenues, the proposed capital expenditures and available reserves. C. Davis submitted purchase costs for two major items for public works and Chief Fisher submitted future vehicle costs. T. Slinkerd noted paying off the police car leases saves approximately \$8,000 in interest payments over the life of the leases. Going forward the Township can purchase outright a new police car and every 4th year a new car can be purchased outright to retire the oldest in the fleet. The lease payoffs are the last of the Township debt. The Board reviewed year-end estimated expenses vs. the 2022 budget and specific 2023 budgeted line items. Motion by D. Waldt, second by C. Paretti and unanimously carried to authorize advertising the 2023 budget with revenues of \$3,386,518.00 and expenses of \$3,748,969.00 and with \$292,368.00 going against reserves to pay off police vehicle leases and purchase both a new backhoe and a new mower for public works .

DISCUSS & CONSIDER AUTHORIZATION TO ADVERTISE THE TAX MILLAGE ORDINANCE – Motion by C. Paretti, second by D. Waldt and unanimously carried to authorize advertising the Real Property Tax Millage Ordinance for 2023 with total millage of 4.0 mills consisting of (general purpose) real property millage rate of 3.4 mills and special purpose (fire protection) millage rate of 0.6 mills.

DISCUSS & CONSIDER AUTHORIZATION TO PURCHASE SOFTWARE FOR THE FIRE COMPANY RADIOS – D. Raudenbush explained the current radio software they use does not work when on calls in Berks County because that County is on a different radio frequency than Montgomery County. There is very poor communication on those calls. In the past the department would purchase three Berks County radios at a cost of approximately \$5,000 each. It was discovered other fire departments had their radios flash upgraded with all Berks County stations. The dispatch center can flash upgrade all 43 of the fire department radios at a cost of \$11,780 and it is in their budget. He asked authorization to use budgeted funds for the upgrade. It will put the radio budget line in the negative however the major equipment line is over budget so it will be a wash. Motion by D. Waldt, second by C. Paretti and unanimously carried to authorize the fire company to purchase software for the Fire Company radios at the cost of \$11,780. D. Reed asked if this is a one-time purchase and will there be additional licensing fees. D. Raudenbush said it is a one-time cost and no additional fees are required.

DISCUSS & CONSIDER ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION NO. 753 IMPLEMENTING ACT 57 OF 2022 PROPERTY TAX PENALTY WAIVER PROVISIONS – E. Frey explained, in September the Governor pass a law to require that a tax collector not collect penalties in certain situations such as if someone purchases a property, they do not receive a tax bill so they are not aware of it and therefore should not pay a penalty for a bill they are not aware of. All municipalities are required to pass this resolution by January 9, 2023. Motion by H. Llewellyn, second by D. Reed and unanimously carried to adopt Resolution No. 753 Implementing Act 57 of 2022 Property Tax Penalty Waiver Provisions.

DISCUSS & CONSIDER APPROVAL OF CONTRACT WITH SACKS AND SONS, INC. FOR A BACKUP FOR SNOW PLOWING – C. Davis explained this will be utilized on an as-needed basis. If an employee is sick or otherwise indisposed and cannot make it in during a storm, he can call this company for a driver and truck. This is item #2 on the proposal dated October 24, 2022. Motion by H. Llewellyn, second by D. Reed and unanimously carried to approve the Contract with Sacks And Sons, Inc. for backup for snow plowing at a cost of \$180/hr. as needed.

DISCUSS & CONSIDER APPROVAL FOR THE STORMWATER PROJECT ON VALE CIRCLE – C. Davis provided a satellite view map and drawing indicating where the stormwater runoff has been entering the driveway on a property on Vale Circle in Turnberry Farms and has caused an extensive amount of damage to the property. He explained this has been an ongoing issue for ~20 years and would like to get it resolved, reviewing the details of how to make repairs. M. Reddick said the costs will come out of the 2022 stormwater maintenance budget which has approximately \$35,000 and the Board is asked to approve the project not to exceed \$20,000. Public Works will work with a contractor and C. Davis has already spoken to two contractors about the project. The road crew will be with the contractor, on the job, doing as much of the work as they can, will purchase and haul materials, store them at the Public Works yard, move them to the project when needed, haul stone, backfilling, doing concrete work in the storm boxes, paving when the project is finished, repairing the driveway and yard. A contractor is needed especially since there are a lot of utilizes in the area. Motion by C. Paretti, second by H. Llewellyn and unanimously carried to approve the stormwater project on Vale Circle not to exceed \$20,000.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE PAY APPLICATION TO H & K GROUP FOR THE MERVINE STREET JOINT PAVING PROJECT – M. Reddick said this is the last payment on the project and since it is a joint project the Borough of Pottstown has already paid part of the cost, \$96,125 to the Township. The balance paid by the Township is partially paid out of General Fund and part out of Liquid Fuels Fund. The Township had more costs because ADA ramps and stormwater boxes were needed on the Township side of the street. Motion by D. Waldt, second by C. Paretti and unanimously carried to approve the pay application of \$270,150.00 to H & K Group for the Mervine Street Joint Paving Project.

PUBLIC COMMENTS - there were no comments this evening.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

- T. Slinkerd encouraged the Board to look over the proposed budget and contact the Manager with any questions so this can be passed at the December meeting. Also review the Sewer Fund and the balance will be added to the investments.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – The Board convened in Execution Session at 7:45 PM to discuss matters of litigation, personal, union contracts and real estate with no action to follow. Executive Session concluded at 9:00 PM.

ADJOURNMENT –The meeting was adjourned at 9:01 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Jeannie DiSante, Township Secretary