

**Towamencin Township
Board of Supervisors
Work Session
February 9, 2022
7:00 PM**

Present:

H. Charles Wilson III, Chairman
Richard Marino, Vice Chairman
Kristin Warner, Treasurer
Laura Smith, Secretary
Joyce F. Snyder, Asst. Treasurer/Asst. Secretary

Staff:

Donald D. Delamater, Township Manager
Jack Dooley, Esq., Township Solicitor
Mary Stover, Township Engineer
Niral Modi, IT Staff
Timothy Troxel, Chief of Police

Present Remotely:

Colleen Ehrle, Manager of Administration, Communication & Human Resources

Chairman Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM and led the assemblage in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Opening Comments

Chairman Wilson made the following announcements:

- The meeting is being held in person at the Township's Meeting Hall and also provided via Zoom for residents unable to attend in person. As accorded by law and notice, public comments submitted by 4:30 pm on the meeting day will be read at the start of the meeting. For those physically present, public comment is available at the start of the meeting.
- The Township and Police Department are no longer using the Kulpsville post office box for mail. Our physical address should be used when mailing correspondence, payments, forms and permits.
- The Board met in executive session prior to the meeting to discuss a personnel matter.

Public Comments

Chairman Wilson read the emailed submission, with a summary below.

Neil Landes, resident of 898 Carriage Way, having followed the discussion on the topic of the potential sale of the sewer system in The Reporter and online, the part I do not understand is, why are we even to this point? He posed similar questions when considering the sale of a home -

Do I really want to sell right now? What is my selling price? Mr. Landes then questioned the Board - why would you put something out for a bid, and even get to the point of considering one, if there is no intent to sell? Please don't sell Towamencin's control over the sewer system. It is an asset, not a liability.

In-Person Public Comment Summaries:

Resident Kofi Osei, of 105 Cambridge Way, noted a relationship between Limerick Township and Towamencin, with Towamencin serving as Limerick's emergency operation center in the event of a declared emergency in Limerick. Township Manager Dan Kerr was previously employed by Towamencin. He critiqued comments made by Mr. Kerr and Limerick's Board, that expressed their thoughts on the monetization of Limerick's sewer system. Mr. Osei emphasized Townships are not businesses.

Resident Martin Cohen, of 18 Westhampton Way, reiterated his opposition to a sale of the sewer system. He theorized what other assets could be privatized - libraries, parks, snow removal? He continued that privatization does not make an operation more efficient and there is no competition when privatized.

Resident Joseph Silverman, of 1325 Reiff Road, complimented the Township's new website, appreciating the new format, and its easy and improved navigation.

Approval of Minutes: January 26, 2022

On a motion by Supervisor Smith, seconded by Supervisor Warner, the Board approved the January 26, 2022 minutes.

- Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Richard Marino, Kristin Warner, Joyce F. Snyder
- Voting No: N/A
- Abstaining: N/A
- Absent: N/A

Zoning, Subdivision and Land Development

Conditional Use Hearing: Verus Partners Delp Drive

The applicant is proposing to construct a 267,648 square foot warehouse building on 8 parcels comprising 30.441 acres in the "LI - Limited Industrial" Zoning District. The construction of proposed roads, driveways and parking facilities are located within steep slope areas, which require the applicant to obtain a Conditional Use approval from the Township. A conditional use is a use that is appropriate for the zoning district in which it is permitted but, is subject to specific standards and more detailed and formal review.

Chairman Wilson introduced Township Solicitor Jack Dooley, Esq. who presented the associated hearing exhibits and introduced Gregory J. Davis, Esq., the applicant's representative. Engineer Bernard Telatovich assisted with the hearing. A court reporter was present to make a complete and formal record of the hearing. Solicitor Dooley closed the hearing.

Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan Initial Review: Verus Partners Delp Drive

This development consists of eight parcels, comprising 30.441 acres, located in the northern end of Delp Drive within the LI – Limited Industrial Zoning District. The applicant is proposing to construct a 267,648 square foot warehouse building, with improvements including parking, interior circulation, exterior roadway/intersection, landscaping, and stormwater management. Public water and sewer service is proposed. Due to the size and complexities of this application, it is anticipated that there will be more than one review before any decision is considered.

Representatives of Verus Partners reviewed the orientation and layout of the proposed development, vehicle circulation, various plans and renderings, consultant review letters, as well as, requested waivers for the plan.

The Board expressed the following concerns: truck noise (loading dock facing a residential community), a lack of rear exit, lack of emergency access, landscape buffering, the size and orientation of the proposed facility compared with the property’s limited acreage size and geography.

Edward Brubaker, CEO of Living Branches, complimented the Township’s website. He expressed his concern on behalf of the residents of the Villas at Dock Woods with respect to the orientation of the building and the sound barriers. He suggested the building be reoriented, noting a similar proposed Verus project in West Rockhill Township, where they plan to orient their facility’s loading docks opposite the neighboring residential side.

Dick Mumaugh, resident of the Dock Villas, appreciated the input that went into mitigating the noise level and asked if there’s been a comparison of current noise levels with projected noise levels. He raised concerns with the soil quality in the area, which contains clay, as well as, the timing of lighting at night.

Resident Joe Silverman asked for the dimensions of the building’s frontage. He noted the building orientation is irrational facing the residents with the anticipated volume of tractor trailer activity, adding the wind will carry the associated sound and diesel fumes.

The Board recommended the applicant work with Township staff on the issues presented.

Old Business

None

New Business

Authorization to Sign: PA Subdivision Intrastate Allocation Participation Form for Opioid Settlement

Pennsylvania has joined in the settlement of claims against the nation’s largest pharmaceutical distributors for their roles in the opioid crisis. Pursuant to the settlement, states and their local

governments will receive maximum payments if each state and its local governments join together in support of the agreement. The Commonwealth and Montgomery County request that municipalities demonstrate support of the settlement agreement by signing the participation forms.

On a motion by Supervisor Warner, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board authorized the Township Manger to sign the PA Subdivision Intrastate Allocation Participation Forms.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Richard Marino, Kristin Warner, Joyce F. Snyder
Voting No: N/A
Abstaining: N/A
Absent: N/A

Finance Committee Report

The Finance Committee monitors economic indicators and the pulse of the Township's revenues and expenditures, and addresses various requests and concerns. The Committee met on December 17, 2021 and January 21, 2022. The following topics were discussed.

December 17, 2021 Meeting

Tax Collector Agreement / Arrangement

All parties agreed that the Township would again be deputized in 2022 to collect both County and Township taxes. The Tax Collector Robert A. DiDomizio, Jr. will continue to collect North Penn School District taxes.

Apartment Repair Cost Update

The Township currently receives rental income from two units on the Township grounds, approximately \$2,165/month or \$25,980/year. The Township pays \$1,602 annually in monthly management fees and provides maintenance for the units as needed. One unit, which is currently vacant, requires unbudgeted repairs to lease it. Quotes were received totaling \$7,350 for carpeting, a storm door replacement and bathroom upgrades. The Committee recommended to proceed with the unbudgeted repairs so the unit can be rented again.

On a motion by Supervisor Marino, seconded by Supervisor Snyder, the Board authorized proceeding with the needed repairs.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Richard Marino, Kristin Warner, Joyce F. Snyder
Voting No: N/A
Abstaining: N/A
Absent: N/A

Approved/Budgeted Shade Sail Purchase Update

In September, the Committee recommended the purchase of shade sails for Fischer's Park tot playground and the bocce courts for \$40,000, per the Open Space and Parks Advisory Committee's request. The Board approved the recommendation. However, the two quotes for the shade sails came in significantly higher than the budgeted amounts. The Committee recommended moving

this expenditure below the line for 2022 and to proceed if unanticipated development fees are received to make up the shortfall.

On a motion by Supervisor Marino, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board approved holding off on the purchase unless unanticipated development funds are received to make up the difference.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Richard Marino, Kristin Warner, Joyce F. Snyder
Voting No: N/A
Abstaining: N/A
Absent: N/A

January 21, 2022 Meeting

Police Department Booking Center

Towamencin Township currently runs a booking center/criminal processing center for itself and surrounding municipalities. The municipalities are billed for their use of the facility. The booking center has recently lost several of its part-time employees. County administrative requirements have increased, while County revenue has been declining. Due to the personnel and processing requirements, continuing the processing at Towamencin presents challenges.

Chief Troxel recommended closing the booking center and transferring the assets and cash balance to Lansdale Borough to establish and run a booking center at their location. Additionally, Towamencin and several of the participating municipalities already contract with Lansdale to house their prisoners, which would make the booking process more efficient. All municipalities who currently utilize the booking center are in favor of this recommendation. If the Township's booking center closes, the Police Department would need to add one part-time employee and expenses would increase by approximately \$6,750. Lansdale may also require a financial contribution in the future from municipalities for the use. The Committee recommended closing the booking center and transferring the assets and cash reserve to Lansdale to establish a booking center.

On a motion by Supervisor Marino, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board approved closing the booking center and transferring the assets and cash to Lansdale Borough.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Richard Marino, Kristin Warner, Joyce F. Snyder
Voting No: N/A
Abstaining: N/A
Absent: N/A

Hatfield Quality Meats (CFG) Sewer Billings

In reviewing a construction change and plan for CFG's property discharge location for their sanitary sewer flow (no-process water), from their expanded facility, questions were raised relating to current sampling and water consumption reporting from CFG to Towamencin. It was determined that CFG currently and has always reported a combined consumption to the Township for process and non-processed water. According to their agreement, CFG is entitled to a clean water discount on process flow charges. However, this discount has been applied to total

consumption reported, rather than process flow only. Future bills sent to CFG should reflect the clean water discount to process flows only. CFG will be notified to provide separate consumption totals. Back-billed charges are estimated to be \$55,000.00 per year. Process and non-process consumption totals need to be produced by CFG to calculate exact amounts. It was the Committee's recommendation to back charge CFG to the execution date of the most recent agreement, dated October 27, 2015.

On a motion by Supervisor Warner, seconded by Supervisor Marino, the Board authorized back charging CFG, from the execution date of the most recent agreement, dated October 27, 2015.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Richard Marino, Kristin Warner, Joyce F. Snyder

Voting No: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

Absent: N/A

Auto Pay Options for Sewer Payments

The Township provides various methods of payment for sewer rental bills - in person, mail, a drop-box, or pay online. While several reminders are provided, a common resident concern is not receiving a bill, then being charged late fees as the payment deadline was missed. A proposed solution would be to have the Township offer auto-pay; automatic ACH payments would be drawn from account holders' bank accounts. The current financial system has this capability, with a one-time upfront cost of \$2,430. The direct pay option would add \$810 to the Township's annual support agreement for development and upgrades. The Committee recommended investigating the direct pay option further with the bank, if feasible, implement and offer auto pay to residents for sewer bill payments.

On a motion by Supervisor Marino, seconded by Supervisor Warner, the Board authorized investigating the direct pay option, if feasible, implement and offer auto pay for sewer payments.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Richard Marino, Kristin Warner, Joyce F. Snyder

Voting No: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

Absent: N/A

Supervisor Marino suggested incremental billing be discussed for future sewer bill payments.

Environmental Advisory Council Report

The Township's Environmental Advisory Council meets monthly and is responsible for undertaking tasks that promote and conserve the natural and historic resources of the Township and protect and improve the quality of the environment within the Township. The Committee met on January 11th, Supervisor Snyder provided the Council's report.

Reorganization for 2022

Rory Kelley was nominated to be Chairman, and Amy Mawby was nominated as Vice-chair.

On a motion by Supervisor Marino, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board approved the nominations of Mr. Kelley and Ms. Mawby as Chair and Vice Chair positions on the EAC.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Richard Marino, Kristin Warner, Joyce F. Snyder

Voting No: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

Absent: N/A

Weekly Environmental Tips

Environmental tips will continue to be included in Township E-news to inform residents.

Towamencin Day May 21st

Council agreed their theme for Towamencin Day will be the monarch butterfly. A monarch butterfly craft will be included at the EAC table, along with monarch butterfly educational materials and other informational handouts.

Downspout Planter Workshop May 12th

The EAC are working with the Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy to hold a downspout planter workshop at Fischer's Park on Thursday, May 12th at 6:30 pm.

On a motion by Supervisor Smith, seconded by Supervisor Warner, the Board approved the EAC to sponsor and run the requested workshop on May 12th.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Richard Marino, Kristin Warner, Joyce F. Snyder

Voting No: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

Absent: N/A

Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy Stream Clean Up – April 2, 2022

The EAC are working with the Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy to include Fischer's Park creek and other local streams in PWC's April 2nd stream clean-up event. EAC will promote this event via the Township newsletter, website, and other available mediums.

Authorize to Advertise: 2022 Road Paving Program Bid

This bid is for a contract associated with the Township's annual repaving program. Bids for the curb ramps upgrades, as part of the 2023 paving program, will be presented at a future meeting for Board authorization. There are 9 roads scheduled for milling and paving. Bids will be released to coordinate the road paving during the summer months, rather than the fall, to reduce conflicts with traffic and school bus routes. The curb ramps for these roads were upgraded in 2021. The amount budgeted for 2022 paving and ADA ramps is \$873,000 in Liquid Fuel Funds.

Roads for 2022 paving include: Ridgewood Way, Rittenhouse Road, Saratoga Lane, Linden Way, Farm Way, Hackney Way, Tanglewood Way, Tweed Way, and Clemens Road.

At the next Board meeting, the Public Works Committee plans to provide a more detailed review including a map of the roads scheduled to be paved this spring, which were carried over from 2021, as well as, the roads and ADA curb ramps scheduled for 2022.

On a motion by Supervisor Warner, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board authorized the advertising of the 2022 Road Paving Program Bid.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Richard Marino, Kristin Warner, Joyce F. Snyder
Voting No: N/A
Abstaining: N/A
Absent: N/A

Acceptance of Donation to Fischer's Park

The Township has received a request from Andrew Dolan who built two Screech Owl Boxes and would like to donate them to Fischer's Park. The Board must consider acceptance of this gift in accordance with the Township's "Donation Policy."

On a motion by Supervisor Snyder, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board approved the acceptance of the donation for Fischer's Park.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Richard Marino, Kristin Warner, Joyce F. Snyder
Voting No: N/A
Abstaining: N/A
Absent: N/A

Volunteer Committee Appointments

On a motion by Supervisor Snyder, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board reappointed Allen Brady to the Agricultural Security Area Advisory Committee for a 1-year term, expiring 12/31/22, and appointed David Mumford to the Strategic Planning Committee for a term expiring 12/31/22, and to the Technology and Innovation Committee for a term expiring 12/31/24.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Richard Marino, Kristin Warner, Joyce F. Snyder
Voting No: N/A
Abstaining: N/A
Absent: N/A

Update Status - Green-Light-Go Grant Additional Improvements

Township Traffic Engineer Chad Dixon reviewed his communication with PennDOT representatives, noting they have been flexible in finding alternative improvements for the Township to include for the remaining grant funding balance.

A supplemental list was sent to PennDOT on January 25th, including adding radar/video stop bar detection at an intersection, adding reflective back plates to all project intersections, adding emergency preemption at two intersections. All were approved, except the emergency preemption. PennDOT suggested other ideas such as adding reflective back plates at other intersections' signal heads (beyond the project's included intersections) and check signal controllers for upgrades. Mr. Dixon should have an updated list for staff in a week or so, and anticipates a quick turn around with PennDOT on their review.

There being no additional business, the meeting adjourned at 9:57 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Colleen Ehrle

Manager of Administration, Communication & Human Resources