

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

**Present:**

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

**Staff:**

Colleen Ehrle, Manager of Administration, Communication & Human Resources  
Jack Dooley, Esq., Township Solicitor  
Mary Stover, Township Engineer  
Niral Modi, IT Staff  
Timothy Troxel, Chief of Police

**Present Remotely:**

Donald D. Delamater, Township Manager

**Absent:**

Laura Smith, Secretary

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 town hall meetings to present and review the bid results and related analysis and projections regarding the potential sewer system sale or lease will be held on Wednesday, April 6<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday, April 20<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm. Both meetings will be held at the Dock Mennonite Academy Auditorium. A letter is being mailed to all residential sewer customers advising of these meetings.

**Public Comments**

Chairman Wilson read the emailed submissions, with summaries below.

Resident Tina Gallagher, of 117 Misty Meadow Lane, expressed concerns about the format for the town hall meetings, specifically restricting residents from asking questions at the first meeting. Information presented should be concise, allowing for a short question period. Meeting materials could be attached to the website prior to the town hall.

Resident Donald Lepp, of 1843 Rampart Lane, a 48 year Towamencin resident, stated he has witnessed incredible change over this time, not all for the better. Decisions made by previous elected officials put the Township into a ridiculous debt situation without concern for the long-term impact on residents. Mr. Lepp expressed his opposition to a sale of the sewer system and recommend the Board listen to residents who elected them.

Resident Patricia Romano, of 1500 Ide Drive, expressed her opposition to the sale or lease of the sewer system. The system belongs to Towamencin citizens and should remain so. Once it is in the hands of a corporation, our best interests are no longer relevant – bills will sky rocket and service will be abysmal as seen by our neighboring townships and boroughs. As a registered voter who does vote I am watching this issue and hoping that the Board acts responsibly.

Resident Jenn Foster, of 105 Concord Place, questioned when the two April town halls will be publicized? What is the difference between each meeting, and when is the planned vote on the sale? The town halls should be broadly advertised with mailers, provide ample time for public comment and questions.

Resident Joan Skoczen, of 2020 Parkview Dr, a resident and neighbor to the sewer facility, noted she does not see how a sale will benefit rate payers, in either the near future or in the long term. The only options that make any kind of financial sense is to retain the system or to possibly merge as a partner with the Franconia system, anything else is betraying the trust of the rate payers and the citizens, who elected the members of the board.

Resident Brian Hadka , of 470 Painter Way, expressed he is opposed to a sale of the sewer system, stressing basic infrastructure needs to be kept within management of the township and it's residents. Once sold, taxpayers will have little say in the operation and services received.

He then noted a concern related to the proposed Belfair Square community along Welsh Road. There is a small stream that runs parallel, between Painter Way and Millwrighter Way. The back corner of this property butts up against the stream. During significant rainfall events, this stream swells several feet and floods into my property. The culvert is not able to process the volume from these heavy rain events, not to mention the additional flows diverted into this stream from future construction instead of being naturally dissipated into the vegetation.

Resident Paula Dreher, of 317 Central Drive, requested an update on the Central Drive Storm Water Issue, asking if the project would be a band aid or a true fix? It is my belief that it is a band aid. The capacity of the underground system needs to be expanded and the choke point going under Allentown Road needs to be eliminated. Last year, the water overflowed the easement so badly that it caused my gravity system to fail twice as the water being piped out of my house encountered flood water that did not permit the egress of the piped water. She advocated that increased capacity remedies be discussed before money is wasted on a band-aid.

Resident Rory Kelley, of 325 Central Drive, thanked the Board for responding quickly to traffic concerns raised, developing traffic calming policies and procedures, and for funding the Central Drive Stormwater project. I hope the project includes major repairs and limits band-aid fixes. Mr. Kelley listed suggestions for the future town halls.

- 1) Hold the town hall live, include a remote option to ensure max participation from ratepayers.
- 2) Force bidders to provide 30-year projections, use true rate projections, not projected rates with footnotes.
- 3) Provide ratepayers with specifics regarding the qualitative and quantitative metrics being used to evaluate the bids,
- 4) Include specifics regarding the potential Citizens Fund, PFM included it in other municipality presentations.
- 5) Provide ratepayers an opportunity to send questions to the township ahead of time to ensure the township and PFM understands what information would be helpful.
- 6) Provide a detailed agenda in advance.

#### In-Person Public Comment Summaries:

Resident Kofi Osei, of 105 Cambridge Way, criticized the PFM bidding presentation and information at the February 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting, noting the lack of any 20-year projections, and observed similarities between PFM slide-decks for similar municipal sale explorations. Mr. Osei finds the exploration an unserious solution in search of a problem and questioned why residents were not consulted beforehand. He suggested a town hall format with no presentation, unlimited public comment period, followed by a vote to reject all bids, closing with an apology to Township residents for exploring this process.

Resident Martin Cohen, of 18 Westhampton Way, he commented the operation of the sewer system is inherently a governmental function and should continue to be, with public and private interests diametrically opposed. He questioned the effectiveness of future regulation by the Public Utility Commission and noted PFM is reimbursed by any sale proceeds.

Resident Joe Silverman, of 1325 Reiff Road, questioned why the Town Hall notices were not included as part of the recent sewer bill mailing, which would have been more cost effective. He then theorized the Township could sell the Police and Public Works Departments. He referenced the Constitution's opening "We the people..." representing our democracy and suggested the Board look out for resident interests, suggesting a simple vote be taken. He questioned the high bid offers.

Resident Toto Kuffuor of Towamencin Condominiums, noted it was his first meeting and requested the basis behind the 20 percent increase to the 2022 sewer bill, and asked if there were procedures in place to inform the residents of such increases.

Resident Mark Gerlach, of 102 Candlewood Way, emphasized the justifications listed in the Township's FAQ as rationale for considering a sale or lease would happen regardless of ownership. Whatever needs come up, he rather pay for it in the sewer rates, without the skew of profit motives. He added selling an asset is never a good idea. The Township should focus on getting the right staff in place.

Chairman Wilson responded that the sewer rate increase had been discussed by the Board over the last few years, specifically the last two budget cycles where it was noted an increase of \$425 – 450 was anticipated. The rate increase coincides with former sewer authority partner Upper Gwynedd

Township redirecting their sewer flows from Towamencin’s sewer system to their own system. Upper Gwynedd had been building up their sewer infrastructure to accommodate the flow diversion to their sewer treatment plant, completing their project this past fall. The effects of this redirect translated to an approximate \$1 million loss in revenue, making it necessary for the Township to increase the sewer rates for 2022.

**Approval of Minutes: February 23, 2022**

On a motion by Supervisor Snyder, seconded by Supervisor Warner, the Board approved the February 23, 2022 minutes.

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

**Zoning, Subdivision and Land Development**

**Conditional Use Decision: Verus Partners Delp Drive**

A conditional use public hearing was held at the Board’s February 9<sup>th</sup> meeting. The applicant is requesting conditional use approval for the construction of roads, driveways and parking facilities that are proposed in conjunction with this project, located within steep slope areas. This proposed use and modifications are permitted by conditional use approval. Based on the discussions held during the noted hearing, Solicitor Dooley prepared a decision for the Board’s consideration. Mr. Dooley read the opinion order, noting the conditional use relief is granted, referencing the subject conditions.

On a motion by Supervisor Marino, seconded by Supervisor Warner, the Board approved the Conditional Use Decision for Verus Partners Delp Drive.

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

**Old Business**

None

**New Business**

**Finance Committee Report**

The Township Finance Committee meets monthly throughout the year and more often when needed. The Committee monitors economic indicators and the pulse of the Township’s revenues

and expenditures. They also address various requests and concerns that may arise. The Committee met on February 18<sup>th</sup>, February 24<sup>th</sup> and March 5<sup>th</sup>. Chairman Wilson provided the Committee report with discussion items that included: earned income tax for contractors working within Towamencin, sewer billing payment options, potential spending of sewer sale proceeds, tax duplicates process for mortgage companies, and additional police personnel needs with the transference of the booking center.

Additional Police Personnel with the Transference of the Booking Center

With the closing and the transferring of the booking center, the police department needs to add one part-time employee to continue the clerical work that booking center employees did for the department in their down time. The Committee recommended authorizing the police department to add one part time person for 24 hours per week.

On a motion by Supervisor Marino, seconded by Supervisor Snyder, the Board authorized the additional part-time position for the police department.

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

Green Light Go Grant Project Change Order #1

The 2017 Green-Light-Go Grant in the amount of \$341,000 was previously rescinded by PennDOT, and then restored with PennDOT's 2021 budget. This project will perform improvements to various traffic signals throughout the Township. The Township performed the bidding process and awarded the contract to Armour & Sons Electric at the Board's January 26<sup>th</sup> meeting. As a result of the favorable bid results, there were additional grant funds remaining for this project. Therefore, McMahan is recommending this change order to provide additional traffic signal improvements utilizing the available grant funds.

Chad Dixson from McMahan noted the notice to proceed was issued on March 1<sup>st</sup>. Armour & Sons has 100 days from this date to complete the associated improvements. Mr. Dixson then reviewed the additional traffic signal improvements included in the change order.

- 126 retroreflective backplates on existing signals
- 1 replacing detection system radar stop bar detection, 4 approaches (Sumneytown Pike & Forty Foot Road)
- 10 controller timer replacements

On a motion by Supervisor Marino, seconded by Supervisor Snyder, the Board approved Change Order #1 in the amount of \$107,337.00.

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

Absent: Laura Smith

### **Traffic Calming Policy/Procedures Proposal**

Based on the recommendations from the Public Works Committee, McMahon Associates has submitted a proposal for \$4,500 to develop a traffic calming policy, which provides a process in determining if traffic calming measures should be considered for certain criteria. The scope of services will focus on drafting a policy document and forms for the Township to utilize reviewing traffic calming requests from residents and the procedures for evaluation and implementation.

Chad Dixon summarized the purpose of the traffic calming policy, which would be used as a policy document when resident requests are made. Mr. Dixon added other municipal clients have found the policy document helpful when considering traffic calming modifications.

On a motion by Supervisor Warner, seconded by Supervisor Marino, the Board approved McMahon Associate's proposal for \$4,500 to develop a traffic calming policy.

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

### **Inglewood Area Traffic Data Report**

This was a preliminary review that was scheduled to be completed in March 2020, but delayed due to COVID. Now that the schools were back open and traffic has been returning to normal, McMahon has now performed traffic data collection on Boyd Avenue and Woodlawn Drive in the Inglewood neighborhood and has evaluated that data.

Mr. Dixon reviewed the base line data/criteria and results of the data collection. The target concerns were speeding, traffic volume, and cut-through traffic. He noted the traffic volume and speeding thresholds were met, warranting further evaluation for incorporating calming measures. However, the cut-through traffic minimum criteria along Boyd Ave and Woodlawn Drive, between Allentown and Valley Forge Roads, was not met. Mr. Dixon recommended that once the traffic calming measure policy/procedure guide is in place, it could be utilized to see which calming measures seem most appropriate to address the traffic volume and speeding concerns.

Supervisor Snyder asked how the cut-through traffic is measured. Mr. Dixon noted that video detection is used to observe the turning movement volumes at the various intersections. Supervisor Marino asked if Woodlawn Drive traffic was observed on the other side of Allentown Road (Inglewood Elementary School side). Mr. Dixon replied they did not extend beyond Allentown Road. Supervisor Marino noted there have been similar resident concerns on the other side that should be reviewed.

Chairman Wilson suggested adding a speed sign to the area, as some drivers do not realize how fast they are going. Chief Troxel agreed the visual of speed sign is helpful.

Resident Mark Gerlach suggested possible lane and signal modifications to the intersection of Allentown and Valley Forge Roads to improve traffic flows. Supervisor Marino noted Valley Forge and Allentown Roads are both state roads, maintained by PennDOT. He added the cut-through traffic tends to coincide with the opening and dismissal times at North Penn High School.

**Authorization to Advertise: 2022 ADA Ramp Replacements**

This bid is for a contract associated with the Township’s annual curb ramps upgrades. The scheduled ADA curb ramps replacements were presented at the February 23<sup>rd</sup> Board meeting. The bid specifications are through a standard PennDOT form and per PennDOT and Federal regulations, whenever projects such as resurfacing are undertaken, the municipality must upgrade existing pedestrian curb ramps to the latest ADA standards. The curb ramps scheduled for this year will be for roads scheduled to be paved in 2023.

On a motion by Supervisor Snyder, seconded by Supervisor Marino, the Board authorized advertising the 2022 ADA Ramp Replacement Project.

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

**Authorization to Advertise: Central Drive Storm Sewer Repair and Rehabilitation**

This has been an ongoing update provided in the monthly Public Works Committee reports and this project was approved as part of the 2022 budget. The Township Engineer, CKS, has prepared plans to repair and rehabilitate the Township storm sewer system consisting of Corrugated Metal Piping that runs behind a number of properties along Central Drive. Prior to the contracted repairs, the Township’s Public Works Department will replace inlets and boxes along Central Drive. This project is now ready to advertise for bid.

Supervisor Marino asked Township Engineer Mary Stover if the project plans would address the capacity issues referenced in the meeting’s public comments. Ms. Stover responded the project is to rehabilitate the existing system by replacing and repairing various storm sewer lines, nothing in addition to address increasing capacity. Supervisor Marino asked if he could review the plans with the Public Works Committee with respect to the comments made.

On a motion by Supervisor Marino, seconded by Supervisor Snyder, the Board agreed to table the project’s advertising.

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

**TYA Request – General Purpose Field Use at Butch Clemens Park**

We have received a request from TYA for dedicated use of the Butch Clemens multi-purpose field on select days of the week, from April through November for the soccer program, Towamencin Soccer Club. In addition, TYA is requesting that this field use be included in the existing field usage contract in place with Towamencin Township with no change to existing fees. TYA representative Doug Kile reviewed the proposed field use schedule for 2022.

Chairman Wilson noted the field was intended for public use and that TYA’s regular use may create the appearance to the public that the field is not available. The Board discussed this request along with TYA representatives. Mr. Kile and David Vaitis explained that they have worked with Township employee Colleen Ehrle to coordinate and accommodate other group use in the past and will defer to other group requests that the Township receives. A posted sign at the field was suggested, making the public aware that the field is available to the public and to contact the Township to reserve.

On a motion by Supervisor Warner, seconded by Supervisor Snyder, the Board approved TYA’s field use request and recommended adding the referenced signage.

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

**Request for Flat Fee for Field Rental (Bustard Park remote field) – Senior Softball League**

A senior softball league has rented a field at Bustard Park in previous years two mornings a week. This group is again asking to rent the field for two mornings a week from May 1<sup>st</sup> through November 30<sup>th</sup>. In addition, they are requesting to rent the field on one Friday morning each month. They have requested to keep the same fee paid in 2021, which is a flat rental rate of \$400. TYA officials have confirmed there are no programming conflicts with this request.

On a motion by Supervisor Warner, seconded by Supervisor Snyder, the Board approved the flat fee for field rental request for the senior softball league.

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

**Interim Finance Director Proposal**

With the resignation of the Township’s Finance Director, we have received a proposal from Bee Bergvall & Company, dated February 23, 2022, to perform interim Finance Director duties while the Township conducts a search for the permanent replacement.

On a motion by Supervisor Marino, seconded by Supervisor Snyder, the Board approved the Interim Finance Director Proposal.



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

**Finance Director Search Proposal**

With the resignation of the Township's Finance Director, a proposal was received from Wiesner Consulting, dated March 4, 2022, to conduct the candidate search for the permanent replacement. Steve Wiesner and Larry Comunale will serve as consultants for the Township.

On a motion by Supervisor Marino, seconded by Supervisor Snyder, the Board approved the Finance Director Search Proposal.

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

There being no additional business, the meeting adjourned at 8:24 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Colleen Ehrle

Manager of Administration, Communication & Human Resources