

**Towamencin Township
Board of Supervisors
Monthly Meeting
June 24, 2020
7:30 PM**

Present:

H. Charles Wilson III, Chairman
Laura Smith, Vice Chairman
Richard Marino, Secretary
Daniel Bell, Asst. Treasurer/Asst. Secretary

Staff:

Brooke Neve, Finance Director/Assistant Township Manager
Jack Dooley, Esq., Township Solicitor
Tom Zarko, Township Engineer
Clayton Reed, IT Director
Paul T. Dickinson, Chief of Police

Present Remotely:

Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Treasurer
Colleen Ehrle, Assistant to Township Manager

Absent:

Robert A. Ford, Township Manager

Chairman Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:31 PM and led the assemblage in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Opening Comments

Chairman Wilson made the following announcements:

- Due to the COVID-19 Emergency, the meeting is being held via Zoom video communications. The public was invited to participate remotely and e-mail questions to info@towamencin.org prior to the meeting.
- StandGuard Aquatics is opening the Towamencin Pool this Saturday June 27th. StandGuard has confirmed that they will comply with State and Federal guidance that allows pools to open with physical distancing measures in place and adherence to CDC sanitation requirements.
- On Friday, June 26, Montgomery County is moving into the green phase. This change in phasing will affect some of the use restrictions in place for Township parks. Changes to these facilities will be posted via an e-news blast and the Township website on Thursday, June 25th.

The Board planned to meet in executive session immediately following the meeting this evening to discuss a matter of potential litigation.

Public Comments

None

Approval of Minutes: May 20, 2020

On a motion by Supervisor Smith, seconded by Supervisor Littley, the Board approved the May 20, 2020 minutes.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Richard Marino, Daniel Bell
Voting No: N/A
Abstaining: N/A
Absent: N/A

Approval of Minutes: June 10, 2020

On a motion by Supervisor Bell, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board approved the June 10, 2020 minutes.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Richard Marino, Daniel Bell
Voting No: N/A
Abstaining: N/A
Absent: N/A

Zoning, Subdivision and Land Development

Waiver Request from Stormwater Management Ordinance: Emerald Equipment

The Board of Supervisors granted a waiver of a formal land development process in December 2018 to Emerald Equipment Systems, Inc. prior to the company moving in to an existing building on Detwiler Road within the Limited Industrial Zoning District. The company proposed to add additional paving and gravel surfaces to reconfigure and increase the parking and loading areas, and to lease out a portion of the existing building to a tenant. In June 2019, the company also received conditional use approval for a reduction in required parking. These approvals and waivers were granted with conditions, including the requirement to obtain a grading permit and to meet other requirements of the Township ordinance. Through the design process for the storm basin, the applicant has identified certain features that would need waivers from the Township's Stormwater Management Ordinance.

Township Engineer Tom Zarko reviewed the applicant's waiver requests, which included: the requirement to provide a minimum of 6 inches between the top of the outlet structure and the 100-year water surface elevation, the requirement to provide a minimum top of basin berm width of

10 feet, and the requirement to provide a minimum freeboard through the emergency spillway of 1 foot.

Mr. Zarko explained that due to the small basin size and that the required drainage rate controls would be within range of the Stormwater Management Ordinance, he had no objections to the waiver requests.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board approved the waiver requests and authorized staff to prepare a resolution for consideration at future Board meeting.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Richard Marino, Daniel Bell

Voting No: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

Absent: N/A

New Business

Warrant Lists

The June warrant list was presented for approval. On a motion by Supervisor Bell, seconded by Supervisor Littley, the Board approved the warrant list in the amount of \$1,712,819.32.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Richard Marino, Daniel Bell

Voting No: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

Absent: N/A

Finance Committee Report

The Township Finance Committee meets on a routine basis throughout the year to monitor economic indicators and the pulse of the Township's revenues and expenses. The Committee met on June 4th. Supervisor Littley reviewed the report. Discussion items included the following:

YTD 2020 Financial Impact of COVID 19 on Revenues (EIT, LST, RTT) - To date, no major concerns were expressed with the Township's overall financial standing. Conscious efforts to spend on essential operating expenditures will continue until the full effect of the pandemic is realized.

Life Insurance for Non-Uniform Employees - After the Committee's recommendation and the Board's approval, staff is proceeding to increase the life insurance plan, which will provide three times the annual non-uniform employee salary, maxing out at a \$200,000 benefit. The annual cost increase will be approximately \$6,300.

Unbudgeted Caselle Tax Module Purchase and Implementation Costs - Township staff feels it is necessary to integrate the residential sewer and tax billings into the primary finance software system, rather than use two separate accounting systems. This migration would allow staff to utilize an integrated system, streamlining processes and procedures. It was also noted that the

Towamencin Municipal Authority's is considering utilizing the Township's Finance Department to perform their accounting functions in the future. Should that arrangement materialize, this module would allow this work to be absorbed more easily. The Committee recommended proceeding with the software system add-on and implementation purchase.

On a motion by Supervisor Bell, seconded by Supervisor Littley, the Board approved proceeding with the finance operation system add-on and implementation purchase.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Richard Marino, Daniel Bell

Voting No: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

Absent: N/A

Unbudgeted Capital Purchase Request: Phone Server Upgrades - The phone server's operating system support expired in January. The support upgrade never occurred, thereby requiring new hardware. Staff feels an upgrade is necessary to reduce vulnerabilities. The total cost to upgrade all three buildings is \$8,838. Installation will be covered by the existing service agreement. The Committee recommended proceeding with the phone server upgrade purchase.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board approved staff to proceed with the phone server upgrade purchase.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Richard Marino, Daniel Bell

Voting No: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

Absent: N/A

Public Works Vacancy - When COVID struck, the Committee recommended holding off filling a vacant position until the revenue effects of the pandemic became clearer. This position was budgeted for the entire year of 2020. At the June 3rd Public Works Committee meeting, the PW Committee recommended filling the position if finances allowed. To date, the effects of COVID have been negligible on Towamencin's larger revenue sources. The Committee recommended proceeding with filling this vacancy as of July 1st.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board approved staff to proceed with filling the Public Works vacancy as of July 1st.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Richard Marino, Daniel Bell

Voting No: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

Absent: N/A

Sewer Loans - The committee discussed an analysis of all sewer capital loans to the general fund. This will be completed in the near future.

Construction Site EIT/LST Registration Update - Community Development staff will notify Finance staff when contractors perform projects within the Township that span 90 days or more. Finance staff will ensure Berkheimer receives these updates so they can contact the contractors notifying them of their potential tax withholding requirements.

Finance Department Happenings - The Committee was updated on the following: automating of fixed assets, commercial sewer billings and escrows, setting up of a direct pay process, a payroll migration and the monthly financial statement process. It was suggested that balance sheets be added to the financials and graphs be added to the monthly finance committee report. These additions would be effective with the July financial statements and report.

2021 Road Improvement Program – Curb and Driveway Apron Replacement

Earlier this year, the Public Works Committee recommended to the Board a notification process to property owners related to curb replacements in advance of upcoming road paving program projects. It was agreed that a one-year notice be provided to property owners in advance of the scheduled paving to allow property owners sufficient time to budget and schedule repairs. The Township Engineer and Public Works Department inspected the curbs, in the areas to be paved in 2021, and provided an itemized address list to the Codes Department, to prepare the notification letters. Should property owners fail to replace their failing curbs by May 31, 2021, the Township will complete the work as part of the paving program, billing property owners for the associated costs with a payment due date of December 31, 2021. Any unpaid bills will be forwarded to the County to file a lien against the property in 2022. The estimated total cost to replace all the failed curbing is \$300,000. Notification letters will be mailed to residents within the next two weeks.

Chairman Wilson noted the sample letter to residents was included in the Board meeting packets for their review, and asked if any Supervisor had any changes or concerns. Supervisor Marino added that defective sidewalks would also be referenced in the notification letters, but completing this work would be optional.

Summer/July Events Update

Due to the COVID Emergency and related restrictions, June special events were cancelled. With the anticipation of this region moving to the Green Phase soon, the Recreation and Special Events Advisory Committee and Township staff have been reviewing Governor Wolf's guidance and directives, as well as, conferring with other municipalities to see if they are holding large outdoor events. During the month of July, there are four concerts scheduled to be held at Fischer's Park. The Recreation and Special Events Advisory Committee met on June 23rd to discuss the status of the summer concert series. Chairman Wilson read the Committee's recommendations which included:

- Move the start date of concerts to July 16th, rescheduling the July 2nd/9th concerts to late July/early August.
- Purchase signage – providing guidance for hand washing, social distancing, not attending if you have a fever, CDC guidelines etc. We would like to use the electronic road sign at the entrance of the park and place picket signs on the sides of the amphitheater.
- Committee would make special announcement before the show and during intermission for everyone to follow CDC guidelines.
- While unclear on bathroom cleaning procedures, we are willing to abide by them.
- Band members, Township staff, and food vendors would wear masks when speaking with attendees.
- Mark spots to wait in line for the food truck, so that no more than 25 people are in line at once and they are spaced out appropriately. Make sure seating starts 6 feet from the stage.

- The Committee does not want to be liable or feel it is feasible to enforce any sort of ticketing, waiver, temperature taking, or marked seating section system for the concert series attendees.
- The Committee does not want to be liable or feel it is feasible to enforce attendance under 250 participants if the crowd size exceeds that amount.

In addition to the concerts, the Committee recommended rescheduling the cancelled June movie in the park to September, and recommended only holding Towamencin Day, scheduled for September 19th, if the County is completely phased out.

Chairman Wilson opened the floor for discussion. Supervisor Smith stated Fischer’s Park is a much larger facility than most to hold such events, adding this is what our community needs right now and it is a fabulous step in the right direction.

Supervisor Marino asked for clarification if the Committee wished to postpone or cancel the first two concerts. Chairman Wilson responded the July 2nd and July 9th concerts would be rescheduled till late July/August.

Supervisor Bell was in favor of the Committee’s recommendations, but stressed the need to forecast the additional expenses when planning these events.

Supervisor Littley noted he was in favor, provided the Township follows all guidelines, avoiding any liability.

On a motion by Supervisor Smith, seconded by Supervisor Littley, the Board authorized staff to execute the Recreation and Special Events Advisory Committee’s recommendations related to summer concerts and events.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Richard Marino, Daniel Bell
 Voting No: N/A
 Abstaining: N/A
 Absent: N/A

Extension of Police Contract

The Police and Township are presently parties to a labor agreement effective from January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2019. The constraints and demands of the COVID emergency have made it difficult for meaningful negotiations. Pursuant to Act 111, the parties have agreed to extend the current agreement through December 31, 2020. The extension includes the three percent salary increase provided in the 2020 approved budget.

On a motion by Supervisor Bell, seconded by Supervisor Littley, the Board approved the police contract extension through December 31, 2020.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Richard Marino, Daniel Bell
 Voting No: N/A

Abstaining: N/A
Absent: N/A

Acceptance of Donations to Police Department

The Police Department recently received a donation from Pemma Inc. (T/A Dunkin' Donuts) in the amount of \$250. The Board must consider acceptance of this gift in accordance with the Township's donation policy.

On a motion by Supervisor Smith, seconded by Supervisor Littley, the Board approved the acceptance of this gift to the Police Department.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Richard Marino, Daniel Bell
Voting No: N/A
Abstaining: N/A
Absent: N/A

Award of Bid: Fischer's Park Pedestrian Bridge Project

The 2010 Fischer's Park Master Plan update recommended the installation of a pedestrian bridge over Towamencin Creek just below the existing dam. The bridge would provide an interconnection of the 23 acres across the creek to the more active section of the park, and eventually allow a trail connection to Evansburg State Park. The project cost is included in the 2020 Parks Capital Budget and will be funded through the Arneth Fund, which is restricted for Fischer's Park. Thirteen (13) bids were received. Based on a review of the bids and the contractors' qualifications, Township staff has recommended that the contract be awarded to Barwis Construction, LLC, of Birdsboro, PA, at the bid price of \$264,644.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board awarded the Fischer's Park Pedestrian Bridge Project contract to Barwis Construction, LLC for \$264,644.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Richard Marino, Daniel Bell
Voting No: N/A
Abstaining: N/A
Absent: N/A

There being no additional business, the meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Colleen Ehrle
Assistant to Township Manager