

**Towamencin Township  
Board of Supervisors  
Work Session  
March 10, 2021  
7:30 PM**

**Present:**

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

**Staff:**

Robert A. Ford, Township Manager  
Brooke Neve, Finance Director/Assistant Township Manager  
Jack Dooley, Esq., Township Solicitor  
Mary Stover, Township Engineer  
Clayton Reed, IT Director  
Timothy Troxel, Chief of Police

**Present Remotely:**

Colleen Ehrle, Assistant to Township Manager

**Absent:**

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](mailto:info@towamencin.org) by 4:30 pm, prior to the meeting.
- The Board will meet in executive session after this evening's meeting to discuss a personnel matter.

**Public Comments**

None

## **Zoning, Subdivision and Land Development**

### **TCO Extension – 2001 Gehman Rd. (Amazon) / ROW Status Update**

As a condition of the land development process, Amazon was required to make certain improvements to portions of Gehman Road and Detwiler Road in order to accommodate increased truck traffic generated by its new facility. As right-of-way acquisitions were required by Amazon, the Township granted a Temporary Certificate of Occupancy (“TCO”) in 2019 allowing Amazon to commence operations while addressing the roadway improvements. At its February 10, 2021 meeting, the Board authorized a 30-day extension of the TCO indicating Amazon representatives would need to provide an update at this evening’s meeting.

Meredith Ferleger Esq., representing Amazon, reviewed the status of outstanding land acquisitions and temporary construction easements that have delayed the roadway improvements. Ms. Ferleger noted that there were now two fully executed agreements received from the affected property owners. The remaining property owner had requested a full boundary survey to be performed by Amazon. While Amazon agreed to the survey, the fieldwork was delayed due to the prolonged snow cover of the area, but was completed last week. Ms. Ferleger was optimistic that an agreement with this property owner would be finalized in the next two weeks, but requested an additional extension to allow for any delays that could arise before receiving the executed agreement.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Bell, the Board approved an extension to Amazon’s Temporary Certificate of Occupancy until April 28, 2021.

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

Voting No: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

Absent: N/A

### **ZHB 2021-01: 1150 Welsh Road, Lidl – Sign Variance**

Lidl is seeking to replace their existing 24.5 square foot monument sign with a larger 82.35 square foot sign. The maximum area for a freestanding sign in the Shopping Center District is 35 square feet. Corner properties are permitted one sign per street frontage. However, Lidl is proposing a single sign at the corner.

Chairman Wilson expressed his concern, noting a potential issue when a second tenant is added to the property, and how will their sign be accounted for. Township Manager noted the larger sign could be permitted conditionally, noting the applicant would need to accommodate the second tenant’s sign if the larger sign variance is granted. The Board was in agreement that the Township Solicitor should clarify this potential issue with the applicant.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Bell, the Board authorized the Township Solicitor to appear before the Zoning Hearing Board for this application, unless the issue can be resolved prior to the meeting.

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

### **Old Business**

#### **TYA Request to Use GP Field at Butch Clemens Park**

Towamencin Youth Association is requesting to use the Butch Clemens general purpose field for their soccer program this year and that the associated rental fee be waived. In 2019 and 2020, the Board approved the use of the Butch Clemens field by TYA on a one-year basis, from June through November, for a \$1,500 flat fee. The Township Fee Schedule outlines the field rental cost for resident groups at \$20, per two-hour increments. Based on TYA's proposed total hour estimate of 404 hours, the cost would be \$4,040.

Township Manager Robert Ford noted that Grist Mill fields 1 and 2 were reseeded and sat last season. In addition, last year the Board of Supervisors agreed to reduce TYA's annual use fee due to TYA's impacted revenues resulting from the pandemic. Supervisor Marino stated that it was TYA's intention to continue resting the Grist Mill fields this year.

Chairman Wilson noted that Township typically did not charge for field substitutions, then reviewed TYA previous approved schedule with weekend limitations – keeping the field open to the public after 1 pm on Saturdays, and all-day Sunday.

Supervisor Littley recommended that the general purpose field rest next year. Supervisor Marino was open to the idea, but thought an evaluation later in the season would make better sense before making that determination. Mr. Marino added field flexibility should improve next year (post-pandemic) with more school district fields incorporated back in to the mix.

On a motion by Supervisor Bell, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board approved TYA's request to use the Butch Clemens Park general purpose field, allowing Grist Mill fields 1 and 2 to rest through year-end.

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

### **New Business**

#### **Resolution 21-10: Establishment of ICMA Account for DROP Plan**

One of the Township's police officers has elected to enter the Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP"), effective April 1<sup>st</sup>. While the DROP was directed by a 2012 Arbitration award, this is the first police officer to enter the program, which requires an age of 53 years old, 25 years of

employment and is limited to a one-year period. This resolution authorizes the establishment of a DROP account with ICMA Corporation and that funds in such plan be invested in the "Vantage Trust;" a trust established by public employers for the collective investment of funds held under their retirement and deferred compensation plans.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board approved Resolution 21-10, Establishment of ICMA Account for DROP Plan.

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

Voting No: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

Absent: N/A

### **Proposal for Preliminary Engineering Plan - Kriebel Road Realignment**

Per the Township's request, the Township Traffic Engineer provided a proposal for design engineering services for the Kriebel Road realignment near Fischer's Park. The purpose of this proposal is to provide services for the preliminary engineering, including horizontal line and vertical grade development, for a portion of Kriebel Road. This proposal includes developing a preliminary alignment and vertical profile with enough detail to develop a conceptual plan and cost estimate. The Township Engineer will also be engaged in this project. The total cost for these combined engineering services is \$34,800.

Supervisor Smith noted that the Open Space and Parks Advisory Committee expressed concern with the safety of this area and felt strongly that additional evaluation and discussion was warranted before moving forward with this expenditure and possibly explore other options, such as closing the road.

Chairman Wilson suggested a temporary solution where the road could be closed off for Township events at Fischer's Park. Supervisor Smith advocated for more time so staff and Committee members can review additional options for the realignment plan and the safety concerns presented in this area.

Township Manager Robert Ford shared the sentiment of Township staff and the Committee, explaining now that the pedestrian bridge is complete, there may be an implicit invitation to use the future parking lot area, which could coincide with increased pedestrian foot traffic across the roadway. This poses a potential safety concern with the blind S-curve and its sight-distance issues. Mr. Ford added a resolution needs to be determined addressing the immediate safety concern before moving forward with the future parking plans at this section of the park.

Chairman Wilson added a full evaluation of traffic flow in the area should be included in future discussions. Supervisor Marino recommended that in the interim, temporary signage should be considered to alert drivers of pedestrians crossing ahead. Traffic Engineer Chad Dixon noted he would recommend a full sight distance evaluation to determine if a crossing would even be safe, prior to installing any signs referencing a pedestrian crossing.

The Board of Supervisors tabled the issue to solicit additional evaluation data and discussion feedback from Township engineers, staff and the Open Space and Parks Advisory Committee.

**Keeler Road Bridge Structural Evaluation**

The Public Works Committee provided the Township’s Stormwater Management Plan status update at the Board’s February 24<sup>th</sup> meeting. It was noted that the evaluation of the Keeler Road bridge, located between Quarry Road and Michael Way, was the final item that remained outstanding. Based upon preliminary work performed to date, it is anticipated that the bridge will need to be replaced and that a load restriction will need to be implemented until a replacement can be completed. The Township Traffic Engineer has recommended the use of delineators to keep traffic off the expansion section of the bridge that is weaker, and restrict traffic to one vehicle passing at a time across the original section of bridge. The bridge would also require the posting of “one lane bridge ahead” signs approaching from each direction.

Mary Stover, Township Engineer, provided a presentation on the Keeler Bridge condition and recommendations. Ms. Stover reviewed the bridge structure and expansion components, illustrating the areas of concern with pictures. The recommendations included:

- A bridge replacement will be recommended in the Strategic Stormwater Management Plan Update.
- Temporary Restrictions - limit to one-lane traffic over the westbound lane (original bridge structure) only and include a 16-ton weigh limit.
- Temporary Repairs - Temporary support could be designed and implemented, while full bridge replacement is designed, permitted and constructed.

Chairman Wilson asked how long would a replacement project take. Ms. Stover replied it would be sometime next year. Township Manager Robert Ford asked how long the temporary work would take to complete. Ms. Stover noted she would have to confirm, but it would be less time since permitting would not be a factor.

Supervisor Marino recommended a proposal from the Township Engineer with specifications to move forward with the temporary bridge repairs, so construction proposals could be sought. Mr. Ford recommended that regular bridge inspections be coordinated in the interim before repair work begins.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board directed staff to prepare a proposal for temporary repairs for the Board to review at their next meeting.

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

**Approval of Police Labor Agreement**

An agreement has been reached between the Township and the Towamencin Police Bargaining Unit for a new labor contract. The four (4) year contract provides for annual salary increases of 3 percent each year, an increase in health care cost-sharing by officers that reduces the cost of insurance premiums to the Township, and the specification of Family Medical Leave Act designation, along with some minor non-financial changes that were incorporated into the agreement.

Chairman Wilson commented that he felt a good agreement was reached, that balanced the officers' needs with those of Township taxpayers. Mr. Wilson thanked the Police Department's bargaining team for their time and patience through the process.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Bell, the Board approved the Police Labor Agreement.

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

There being no additional business, the meeting adjourned at 8:19 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Colleen Ehrle  
Assistant to Township Manager