

**Towamencin Township  
Board of Supervisors  
Monthly Meeting  
April 28, 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  
Tom Zarko, Township Engineer  
Niral Modi, IT Staff  
Timothy Troxel, Chief of Police

**Present Remotely:**

Colleen Ehrle, Assistant to 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](mailto:info@towamencin.org) by 4:30 pm, prior to the meeting.
- The Board met in executive session prior to this evening's meeting to discuss legal matters.

**Public Comments**

Resident Allen Leiby, of 1820 Old Morris Road, submitted the following comment:

Speeding along Old Morris Road is getting pretty bad especially during the morning (6am - 9am) and the afternoon (3pm - 6pm). I'd estimate some vehicles to be traveling 50-60 mph. As a police sergeant in another municipality, I understand the police can't be

everywhere at once and sometimes can not do speed enforcement. When given a chance to do speed enforcement, please keep Old Morris Road in mind.

Chairman Wilson thanked Mr. Leiby for his comment, noting Police Chief Troxel was in the audience and would take his comment under advisement.

**Approval of Minutes: March 24, 2021**

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board approved the March 24, 2021 minutes.

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 Minutes: April 14, 2021**

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board approved the April 14, 2021 minutes.

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

**Zoning, Subdivision and Land Development**

**Resolution 21-16: Approval of Starbucks Sign**

The applicant presented a proposed sign package at the Board's April 14th meeting that included a wall-mounted logo signs, as well as, menu boards and directional signs. The Board may at its discretion waive or modify requirements contained within the Towamencin Village Land Use and Design Manual upon determination that strict compliance would not further the purpose and intent of the chapter. The Board found the proposed signs acceptable and directed the preparation of a resolution.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board approved Resolution 21 -16, Approval of Starbucks Sign.

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

## **Amazon TCO / 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 was needed to be obtained, the Township granted a Temporary Certificate of Occupancy (“TCO”) in 2019 to allow Amazon to commence operations while addressing the Roadway improvements. At its March 10, 2021 meeting, the Board authorized an extension of the TCO until April 28<sup>th</sup>, noting Amazon would need to provide an update at this evening’s meeting.

Meredith Ferleger Esq., representing Amazon, reviewed the status of the outstanding land acquisitions and temporary construction easements that have delayed the roadway improvements. Ms. Ferleger updated the Board that she had all of agreements fully executed from the affected property owners. She reviewed the anticipated timeline, that included 90 days for closings and another 12 weeks for construction, subject to PECO utility pole work. She suggested a 5-month extension and update. Chairman Wilson proposed a 90-day extension, requesting that Ms. Ferleger provide a progress update to the Board at their second meeting in July. Ms. Ferleger was agreeable to July progress update.

Supervisor Marino asked if PECO was notified about the utility lines in question that will need to be moved for the anticipated rights-of-way construction, noting PECO’s timeline for such work can be 12 to 16 weeks out. Ms. Ferleger replied she would follow-up with the project engineer.

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

## **Old Business**

### **309 Connector - Section HT2 - Cowpath Road Detour Plans**

This issue was initially discussed at the Board’s March 24th meeting, which prompted directing the Traffic Engineer to obtain additional information from PennDOT. Southbound Cowpath Road in Hatfield Township will be closed for approximately three months for construction related to the new intersection that will be created with the 309 Connector Road. During the closure, PennDOT plans to have separate designated detour routes for trucks and passenger vehicles. The truck detour would be designated along Broad Street and County Line Road. The proposed route for passenger vehicles would utilize Allentown and Derstine Roads. PennDOT needs the Township’s approval to post a detour route on Derstine Road since it is owned by the Township.

Traffic Engineer Chad Dixon reviewed the proposed detours depicting the north and southbound circulations, and the Township's request to incorporate a left turn advance on Derstine Road, when turning left on to Allentown Road.

Mr. Dixon noted he has been in discussions with PennDOT representatives and that they are still reviewing the Township's request to add a permanent left turn signal modification on Derstine Road, and anticipates their decision in a few days.

### Resident Comments

Jackie Swanson, of 118 Kimberly Way, recommended that Hatfield Township install a light at Clemens and Derstine Roads.

Ms. Swanson noted residents in this area are not happy with efficacy of the Derstine Road truck ban. She was concerned about the signage differentiation between the truck vs car detour routes. Chad Dixon replied PennDOT will provide different series of signs that indicates each clearly. They will provide signage plans to the Township.

Should the community anticipate traffic related truck related to the actual construction while under way? Mr. Dixon noted that conditions can be worked out within the contract document.

Lisa Picozzi, of 116 Catherine Way, stressed the regular ignoring of the truck ban as though it is not in place. She said the proposed detours sound good, but in practice, drivers will likely not follow them. She asked that the Board give a lot of thought to the existing conditions before agreeing to proposed detours which will make the situation much worse.

Sheryl Ciotti, of 115 Sterling Way, noted there are problems with residents exited their cul-de-sacs at rush hour periods, she asked how the detour may help with this. Mr. Dixon noted the advance left turn signal requested from Allentown Road on to Derstine Road should provide improved opportunities for residents to navigate in this vicinity.

Ms. Ciotti also noted her concerns with the timing of the project, which may possibly coincide with school in session. She explained the unsafe conditions with some children having to walk along Derstine Road to get to their bus stop.

Supervisor Marino noted that detour may not occur when the construction actually starts. He recommended the Township request a condition for liquidated damages, which assess a per day fee for delays to the established project schedule. Mr. Marino stressed the increase in traffic will be coming from the other direction from Allentown Road. He added the Board has done all they can with the two-way truck ban in place; it is now a matter of enforcing the ban with our police department.

### New Business

#### Warrant List

The April warrant list was presented for approval. On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board approved the warrant list in the amount of \$1,154,633.98.

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

### **Public Works Committee Report**

The Public Works Committee meets on a monthly basis to scope projects and identify deficiencies related to Township infrastructure, properties, and equipment. The Committee met on April 27th. Supervisor Marino provided the Committee's report.

Kriebel Road Realignment Concept Plan - The Committee discussed the realignment concept plan and preliminary cost estimate. The preliminary estimated project cost seemed high. Robert Ford will request that McMahon Associates provide a breakdown of the costs for further evaluation by the Committee. Additional potential options to address the current termination of the Fischer's Park Trail at Kriebel Road were discussed, which could include; installing a cul-de-sac with benches at the current terminus of the trail or creating a "loop" at the current terminus of the trail with benches, both could potentially be installed by Public Works.

Gehman Road Paving Request - The Committee discussed the resident paving request. It was noted that the overall roadway was classified as being in "good" condition under the RoadBotics Roadway Assessment Program with some areas of minor paving defects noted at the Gehman Road/Detwiler Road intersection. David Hillmantel concurred with the aforementioned condition assessment. The resident will be advised that minor repairs will be considered in the upcoming year, but repaving will not be scheduled until warranted.

Ticks - Finch Run Road - The Committee discussed the recent complaint received by the Township concerning the maintenance of the open space areas along Finch Run Road. The complaint indicated that the Township's treatment of the area as a "meadow condition" was promoting the presence of ticks, a concern for residents/children in the neighborhood. It was noted that the open space areas were maintained as meadow to obtain credits under the MS4 Program and that the Committee agreed that the meadow condition would not promote an abundance of ticks.

1060 Valley Forge Road Drainage Concerns - The Committee discussed the status of the previous drainage complaint by the property owner. Mr. Zarko indicated that his office was monitoring the situation but was still waiting for a significant rainfall event to evaluate Dr. Horvath's concerns. Mr. Zarko will follow up with PennDOT to obtain a status update concerning their efforts in regard to responding to Dr. Horvath's complaint.

2021 Road Paving & ADA Curb Replacements – The bids for the Road Paving Program are due May 20<sup>th</sup> and the ADA Ramp Replacement Project are due May 19<sup>th</sup>. It is expected that a Recommendation for Award for both of these projects will be presented to the Board of Supervisors for their consideration at the May 26th meeting.

Sump Pump Curb Discharge Connections – Notices were sent to all affected residents by the Township. Mr. Hillmantel noted that the Township would be installing any required underdrains

and making the associated connections. The Public Works Department will be initiating the piping and making the connections within the upcoming few weeks.

Weikel Road Drainage - It was agreed that an informational meeting should be held with the affected residents to discuss potential options for the drainage and/or pedestrian walkway improvements. The options could include; widening the road to implement a bike lane, installation of curbing and storm sewer improvements along with sidewalks, or no sidewalk with roadside drainage swales and driveway pipes. The Committee requested that CKS put together conceptual plans and cost estimates for the various options that could be used for discussions with the affected residents at an upcoming meeting.

Storm Sewer Work – Public Works will be replacing defective storm sewer piping in the Pheasant Hill/Rampart Lane area in advance of the upcoming 2021 Road Paving Program.

Welcome to Towamencin Township Signs - The Committee discussed the replacement of signs in various locations around the Township. It was suggested that the “wording” of the replacement signs, as well as locations, be discussed with the Board of Supervisors before undertaking any replacement work.

Bustard Park Sign – Supervisor Marino requested that the existing park sign at the park access be replaced to assist residents with locating the entrance to the park. Mr. Hillmantel noted that he had discussed the potential replacement of the sign with the current property owner at the property at 1955 Bustard Road, who was amenable to the installation, subject to the Township providing a suitable maintenance agreement.

Tennis-Lukens Park Maintenance – Supervisor Marino requested that vegetation maintenance be performed along the roadway frontage of Tennis-Lukens Park in advance of the upcoming Memorial Day Event, as well as, periodic lawn maintenance by Public Works to the abandoned cemetery area, adjacent to at the Holiday Inn property site, provided there are no legal issues associated with this.

### **Sewer System Monetization Status Report**

As part of the Township’s ongoing exploration of a possible sale of its sewer system, the Board has asked PFM Financial Advisors to provide regular updates on how the process has been proceeding. Chairman Wilson read the report. Recent events included:

- Continuing populating the virtual data room
- Began drafting the pre-bid meeting presentation
- Confirmed the date, location, and rough number of attendees for all of the pre-bid meetings
  - Note - one of the prequalified bidders had decided to voluntarily remove themselves from the bidding process
- Creation of an index of all documents in the Township’s data room

Next steps include:

- Continuing populating the virtual data room,
- Begin gathering all the necessary information for the Township’s pre-bid meetings,
- Continue drafting the pre-bid meeting documents.

Supervisor Marino added the Board has not made any decisions with respect to selling the sewer system.

**Ordinance 21-06: Weight Restrictions / Keeler Road Bridge**

Following recent inspections by the Township Engineer and structural engineering consultants, it has been determined that the existing bridge on Keeler Road between Quarry Road and Michael Way is deteriorating resulting in a reduction in its structural capacity. While the engineers' analysis concludes that continuing deterioration will be gradual and provide evidence of potential failure over a period of time, they have recommended the condition of the bridge be formally monitored so that it can continue to be used until it is reinforced. Additionally, they have recommended that the bridge be posted with a weight limit of 8 Tons in order to decelerate further deterioration. This Ordinance would amend Chapter 147 ("VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC") of the Towamencin Township Code to ordain a weight limit on the bridge.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Bell, the Board Ordinance 21-06, Weight Restrictions / Keeler Road Bridge.

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

Township Manager Robert Ford noted it would take a few weeks to order and install the required signage. Therefore, enforcement would be delayed until the signs were placed. Township Engineer Tom Zarko added that the bridge monitoring had started and that the bid preparation documents were being completed for the approved temporary bridge support work, with anticipated bids to be received in June.

Supervisor Littley asked if municipal vehicles would be exempt from the weight restriction. Mr. Zarko confirmed municipal vehicles would be exempt from the restriction.

**Authorization to Advertise Police Building Roof Replacement Project Bids**

In late 2020, an active roof leak was discovered in the Police Building. Further investigation revealed the insulation rafter baffle vents stopped mid-roof rather than going up to the ridge vent, creating areas of mold and wood rot. Recognizing the need for immediacy in making repairs, \$100,000 was designated in the 2021 Budget to replace the roof. Bid specifications had been prepared by the Facility Maintenance Coordinator and Township Engineer.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board authorized advertising roof replacement bids for the Police Building.

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

### **Use of Arneth Entertainment Center – Montgomery County Concert Band**

The Montgomery County Concert Band has requested to be allowed to use the Arneth Entertainment Center pavilion at Fischer's Park for practice one evening a week. The plan is to begin rehearsing with just sectionals from the band, i.e. just the clarinets, trumpets, trombones, etc. so that there would never be more than 15 musicians at a time. Rehearsals would be on Tuesday nights only, starting May 4<sup>th</sup>, from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm. The park regulations specify the parks are only open from 8:00 am to dusk, the Board would need to approve their request to practice beyond dusk. The Board was receptive to the idea and thought it would provide enjoyment to park patrons.

On a motion by Supervisor Smith, seconded by Supervisor Littley, the Board approved the Montgomery County Concert Band's use of the Arneth Entertainment Center for Tuesdays in May.

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

Voting No: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

### **Supplemental Accounting Services Proposal**

Due to extra responsibilities taking on the financial administrative, audit and payroll services for the Towamencin Municipal Authority, the Township's Finance Committee recommended obtaining temporary professional accounting services to augment the Township's Finance Department. A proposal from the accounting firm Bee Bergvall and Company to provide such supplemental accounting services has been received. The firm could begin the week of May 17<sup>th</sup> and continue as needed. The hourly rates would range from \$180 to \$260 an hour, with the majority of the work anticipated at the lower rate.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Bell, the Board approved the Bee Bergvall and Company proposal for supplemental accounting services.

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

Voting No: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

### **Mutual Aid Request for COVID Vaccination Clinic Staffing**

Montgomery County has elected to utilize the old Sears store in the Montgomeryville Mall as one of the County's mass COVID vaccination sites. They intend on operating the site Monday through Friday for 6.5 hours each day, and are currently estimating that the clinic may be operational for up to three months. The vaccination site is scheduled to begin operations on Monday, May 3, 2021. Due to the volume of people expected to be visiting the site, the operational planning includes staffing the vaccination site with two municipal police officers during all operational hours.



Each police department outside of Montgomery Township who elects to provide officers to the vaccination clinic detail will receive a mutual aid request from the Montgomery Township Police Department, which will authorize officers from neighboring police jurisdictions to operate with full police powers while on the vaccination clinic detail in Montgomery Township. If we elect to assist with the staffing the vaccination clinic, we would bill Montgomery Township directly for our officer's hours, and Montgomery Township will then get reimbursement through the County. Chief Troxel recommends Towamencin Township's Police Department should participate in this mutual aid request.

Supervisor Bell asked if the officers would opt-in for the available shifts. Chief Troxel confirmed these extra shifts would be optional.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board approved Montgomery Township Police Department's mutual aid request for staffing the COVID vaccination clinic in Montgomery Township.

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

Voting No: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

#### **Zoning Consideration for Chicken Pen**

Supervisor Smith proposed amending the Township Code to reduce the current property size requirements required for owners to keep chicken pens. She noted there has been increased community interest, compounded with the pandemic. Chairman Wilson suggested this was something the Planning Commission should consider.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board authorized directing the Planning Commission to review the topic for a possible text amendment.

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

Voting No: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

There being no additional business, the meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Colleen Ehrle

Assistant to Township Manager

