

**Towamencin Township
Board of Supervisors
Monthly Meeting
May 26, 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
Colleen Ehrle, Assistant to Township Manager
Jack Dooley, Esq., Township Solicitor
Tom Zarko, Township Engineer
Niral Modi, IT Staff
Timothy Troxel, Chief of Police

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 by 4:30 pm, prior to the meeting.
- Last Thursday, Governor Wolf signed a fifth renewal of his Proclamation of Disaster Emergency for the COVID-19 pandemic. He also confirmed that all mitigation measures minus masking will be lifted on Memorial Day. This situation is dynamic, and official guidance from the State is frequently being adjusted. With that in mind, the Board of Supervisors is working with staff, legal counsel, and the Health Department to affect a transition back to public meetings. We may be able to return to in-person public meetings in June, but will also continue to provide a zoom and video streaming option for residents who may not yet be able to attend in person. We will provide updates through the Township's website and social media on the status of returning to in-person meetings.
- The Board met in Executive Session prior to this evening's meeting to discuss personnel matters.

Public Comments

None

Awards & Recognition

Recognition of Retirement: Township Manager Robert Ford

The Board recognized the retirement of Robert Ford, who will officially retire Tuesday, June 1st. Rob was hired in September 2004. During his tenure, Mr. Ford oversaw several major projects and initiatives, including the widening of Forty Foot Road, the realignment of the intersection of Troxel/Orvilla and Allentown Roads, several upgrades to Fischer's Park, and repairs and upgrades to the Township's Municipal Complex.

The Board of Supervisors approved and presented a commendation to Mr. Ford for exemplary service as Township Manager for almost 17 years. Each board member offered heartfelt words and well wishes to Rob as he starts this new chapter.

State Senator Bob Mensch also presented Mr. Ford with recognition honors from both the State Senate and PA House of Representatives.

Presentation by Towamencin Youth Association

The Towamencin Youth Association publicly acknowledged the organization's appreciation for the service of Township Manager Rob Ford and Tim Dickinson, who retired as the Township's Chief of Police in January.

Jeff Baer, President of TYA, thanked Mr. Ford for his dedication and support of TYA's youth programming over the last 16 plus years. Mr. Baer also thanked Mr. Dickinson for his support of the association as Police Chief for 15 years. Mr. Baer presented both men with recognition plaques and some TYA gifts.

Mr. Ford thanked the Board, Senator Mensch and Mr. Baer for the all kind words. He noted the success of the Township is a team effort and emphasized the importance of looking back from time to time to acknowledge the progress made.

Zoning, Subdivision and Land Development

Conditional Use Opinion and Order - Planet Fitness

The applicant sought conditional use approval pursuant to the Towamencin Township Zoning Code to modify requirements regarding signage. The applicant is proposing to install wall mounted signs that exceed the zoning code allowance of 65 and 50 square feet, respectively. The applicant is proposing a 65.46 square foot sign on the front facade and a 54.33 square foot sign on the side facade of the building facing Allentown Road. A public hearing was held on this application at the Board's May 12th meeting. Solicitor Dooley read a summary of the conditional use decision order.

The Board grants a Conditional Use pursuant to Article IV, Sections 153.419.g(6) and 153-419.H of the Zoning Ordinance to permit the erection of a 65.46 square foot sign on the front façade of the Property and a 54.33 square foot sign on the side façade of the Property.

The Conditional Use relief is granted provided that the signs which are the subject of the Application are installed and operated in accordance with the exhibits and testimony presented.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Bell, the Board approved the conditional use decision order for proposed signage at the noted Planet Fitness location.

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

Consider Granting Public Hearing: North Penn School District Proposed Zoning Map Amendment

The North Penn School District has filed a zoning map amendment application to rezone various parcels that include the high school property, the North Montco Technical Career Center, and the recently acquired radio station property from the R-175 Zoning District to IN – Institutional District.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board authorized a public hearing to consider adoption of the proposed map amendment.

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

Authorize a Public Hearing - Proposed Zoning Text Amendment – Residential Business and Professional Overlay District

Cornerstone Premier Homes has filed a zoning text amendment to allow for the following within the Residential Business and Professional Overlay District, along Welsh Road:

- 1) An increase in density from 3 dwelling units per acre to 4.5 units per acre.
- 2) An increase of minimum lot area or developable land to 120,000 square feet when a minimum a half acre of open space is created within the development.
- 3) A common shared driveway with a minimum of 400 feet continuous road frontage.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Bell, the Board authorized a public hearing for a proposed zoning text amendment for Residential Business and Professional Overlay District.

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

Multicultural Fair Fischer's Park Request - September 25th

Ms. Carmina Taylor attended the Board meeting on March 24th to propose the allowance of a countywide multi-cultural event at Fisher Park on Saturday September 25th. Anticipating a successful event drawing many people, possibly similar to the crowd sizes at Towamencin Day, logistics such as overflow parking, additional bathroom facilities, overtime cost of public works staff, and ambulance / first aid assistance will need to be included in the planning. The Board was receptive to the concept and recommended that it be discussed with the Township's Special Events Facilitator and brought back to the Board in May for an update.

Shreya Bhutani and Carmina Taylor, representatives from the Movement for Black and Brown Lives in Montgomery County, provided a planning update to the Board of Supervisors.

Since meeting with the Board in March, Ms. Bhutani met with Cortney Marengo, Special Events Facilitator, and did a walk through of Fischer's Park, solidifying an event layout and facilitation. An event preparation planning schedule for Friday and Saturday September 24th and 25th was devised, with key roles assigned. The team is beginning to develop a sponsor outreach and event marketing plan.

Representatives of the Movement for Black and Brown Lives in Montgomery County will partner with the Township's Special Events Advisory Committee and will work closely with Ms. Marengo to solidify needed resources. A list of project supplies/materials, a budget and volunteer estimate was established. The team will target high school students who need volunteer hours for different school club requirements. Guests of the event will be required to register in early August to help determine final parking and transportation needs.

Supervisor Marino asked for the targeted timeframe of the event. Ms. Bhutani noted 12 pm to 4 pm, unless pandemic concerns dictate a longer duration for implementing social distance. Supervisor Bell commended the group for their work to date, solidifying their plans with Ms. Marengo to make the event more actionable. Ms. Carmina Taylor replied that Ms. Marengo has already gone above and beyond.

On a motion by Supervisor Smith, seconded by Supervisor Littley, the Board authorized the proposed multicultural fair to move forward for Saturday, September 25th, at Fischer's Park.

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

Chairman Wilson wished Ms. Bhutani and Ms. Taylor luck in their planning. The representatives will return to the Board on July 28th for another update.

Warrant List

The May warrant list was presented for approval. On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Bell, the Board approved the warrant list in the amount of \$2,515,420.47.

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 May 25th. Supervisor Marino provided the Committee's report.

Kriebel Road Realignment Concept Plan - The Committee discussed the realignment concept plan and associated costs. The roadway reconfiguration and parking lot layout as depicted was acceptable, with next steps to obtain grant funding. The traffic engineer will research potential funding sources. The Committee agreed Public Works should proceed with a cul-de-sac installation at the current terminus of the Fischer's Park trail, along with associated signage.

Draft Kriebel Road Truck Restriction Study – Traffic Engineer Chad Dixon presented the results of the draft truck restriction study. Based upon traffic counts, this section of Kriebel Road is not extensively used by 3-axle trucks. However, a significant number of box trucks use the roadway. It was noted that 30' long single unit trucks would have problems maneuvering through intersections and curves along Kriebel Road between Old Forty Foot Road and Bustard Road. WB50 tractor trailers are expected to experience maneuvering difficulties at the aforementioned intersections. Based upon the study, McMahon will recommend that no trucks of 3 axles or greater be permitted to use the road, except for local deliveries. McMahon will recommend that advanced warning signs be installed at the Old Morris Road/Kulp Road and Old Morris Road /Springer Road intersections to alert trucks of the restrictions. The study will be presented to the Board at an upcoming meeting, with an ordinance adoption and associated signage installation to follow.

Advanced Warning Signs - The Committee discussed the need for advanced warning signs at each Wambold Road approach to Fretz Road alerting motorists of existing truck restrictions. Mr. Dixon noted that the feasibility of installing signs was discussed with PennDOT, who are amenable to the concept. PennDOT requires a formal study and plan submission in order for the signs to be

approved. Additionally, Lower Salford Township would have to approve the installation of the additional signage at the Wambold Road/Fretz Road intersection, as they are responsible for the signalization at this location.

1060 Valley Forge Road Drainage Concerns - Mr. Zarko noted his office provided a summary report of their investigation. It was determined that the drainage problems were primarily related to drainage conditions along Valley Forge Road, which would require PennDOT involvement to resolve. Township staff will continue to follow up with PennDOT on the Valley Forge Road drainage issues. The remaining issues on the property are private matters that would need to be resolved by the property owner.

2021 Road Paving & ADA Curb Replacements – The bids for the ADA Ramp Replacement Project were received and would be awarded this evening. The road paving bids were also received, but the award would be deferred to allow supplemental time for Public Works to complete pre-paving preparation work. Both projects came in under budget.

Sump Pump Curb Discharge Connections – Notices were sent to all affected residents by the Township, with about half received to date. Mr. Hillmantel asked if the agreements needed to be approved by the Board prior to the work proceeding. Mr. Ford would check with the Township solicitor.

Weikel Road Drainage – CKS was developing concept plans and cost estimates concerning potential options for drainage and pedestrian walkway improvements along Weikel Road, which will be used as the basis of future discussions with affected residents along Weikel Road at an upcoming informational meeting. Supervisor Marino requested that potential improvements along the frontage of the Morgan Log House also be evaluated in conjunction with the Weikel Road options that were being reviewed by CKS.

1540 Kriebel Road - The Committee discussed a complaint recently received from the property owners, concerning a deteriorated storm sewer piping that exists on the property. Based upon a prior investigation conducted by Township staff, the Township was not responsible for the section of sewer piping in question, but rather it was determined to be the property owner's responsibility to address. The Committee recommended that CKS and Public Works meet with the owners to review options to address the defective storm sewer piping.

Ticks - Finch Run Road - The Committee discussed the ongoing complaints received by the Township concerning the maintenance of the open space areas along Finch Run Road. The Committee agreed that a suitable area was available adjacent to the existing Green Lane Ballfield to implement a meadow conversion that would replace any MS4 credits that will be lost by routinely mowing the open space areas along Finch Run Road. To that end, Public Works will be directed to initiate the routine mowing of the Finch Run Road area open space to address the resident concerns.

Cemetery Maintenance – The Veterans Advisory Committee recently mowed the abandoned cemetery adjacent to the Holiday Inn. The Committee discussed potential long-term alternatives for the ownership and maintenance of the cemetery area.

Forty Foot Road/Newbury Signal - The Committee requested that Mr. Dixon contact PennDOT requesting the activation of the new signal at the Forty Foot Road/Newbury Way to at least a flashing status, to facilitate egress movements from Newbury Way due to the recent roadway improvements.

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 to populate the virtual data room with various documents requested from the bidders or uncovered as part of the Township's ongoing due diligence.
- Drafted and produced all the necessary documents for the pre-bid meetings and asset tours including the Township's presentation to the bidders and a summary of the various service agreements that the Township is a party to.
- On Tuesday May 4th, PFM presented the pre-bid meeting draft presentation to the Sewer Committee.
 - The Sewer Committee provided several comments, as well as, corrections to the presentation which were all included in the final presentation.
- On May 10th, the Township held a pre-bid meeting in the morning with one of the interested bidders followed by a tour of the various Township owned sewer assets.
- On May 14th, the Township held two pre-bid meetings, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, followed by a tour of the various Township owned sewer assets.
- On May 17th, the Township held two pre-bid meetings, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, followed by a tour of the various Township owned sewer assets.

Immediate next steps include:

- Begin fielding additional due diligence questions received from the bidders and continue populating the virtual data room accordingly.
- Begin drafting the various required bidding documents.

Chairman Wilson noted that documents are continually being added to the data room and the Township website for the public.

Open Space & Parks Advisory Committee Report

The Open Space and Parks Advisory Committee meets on a monthly basis to review and work on open space issues, and provide direction on park maintenance and development. The Committee met on May 10th. Supervisor Smith provided the Committee's report.

Supervisor Smith noted some overlap between some items also referenced in the Public Works Committee report.

- The Committee recommended the installation of a cul-de-sac on the trail between the pedestrian bridge in Fischer's Park and Kriebel Road. The cul-de-sac would symbolize the trail ending. Placing benches around the perimeter of the cul-de-sac would reinforce this notion, and was also recommended.
- The Committee is concerned about safety along Kriebel Road between Bustard Road and Springer Road. They recommended the coordination of a meeting of all stakeholders who may have input regarding the permanent closure of Kriebel Road, between Bustard Road and Springer Road. It should include the following: Committee members, Township

Engineer, Traffic Engineer, Township Fire Company officials, police representatives, residents along Kriebel Road and any others, who may be impacted by such a closure.

- If the road closure does not move forward, the Committee would like to proceed with further development of engineering plans to re-align Kriebel Road.
- The Committee would like to begin efforts to recruit volunteers as “Friends of Fischer’s Park,” who would help with projects in all of Towamencin parks. The Committee wants to get residents interested in improving Fischer’s park to participate in projects determined by Public Works. Volunteers would be targeted via the Township’s social media and website and encouraged to sign up.
- The Committee recommended the Board consider the request of the Towamencin Swim Team (TST) for financial assistance for 2021, as a result of Covid-19 restrictions and additional charges being imposed by StandGuard for 2021.
- The Committee responded favorably to having art exhibits in Fisher’s Park. It was thought that an art exhibit may work well in conjunction with scheduled concerts in the park.
- The Committee recommended the conversion of park water fountains to bottle filling stations, starting with Fischer’s Park.

Chairman Wilson recommended Township staff coordinate the water fountain/bottle filling conversion with Public Works, starting at Fischer’s Park.

Chairman Wilson also recommended that staff push back on StandGuard Aquatics, the pool operator, encouraging them to provide financial relief to the swim team noting the Township does not receive revenue from the pool operation, while StandGuard does.

The remaining Board members were receptive to Chairman Wilson’s recommendations.

Approval of Memorandum of Understanding – Emergency Operations Center (Back-up for Limerick Township)

Since 2009, Towamencin Township has served as the Backup Emergency Operation Center to Limerick Township. Should an event occur at the Limerick Nuclear Generating Station, owned by Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO), or some other disaster that would make Limerick’s facility uninhabitable, Towamencin Township would activate our EOC for the Emergency Management staff of Limerick Township. The two municipalities believe that this arrangement should be memorialized in a memorandum of understanding so that all parties, including future staff at both Townships, are aware of the arrangement.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board approved the Memorandum of Understanding: Emergency Operations Center as backup for Limerick Township.

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

Award of Bid - ADA Ramp Project

The Township sought bids for a contract to replace 24 handicap ramps to meet ADA compliance on streets scheduled for repaving in 2022. The work will include 460 linear feet of concrete curb replacements, 3,527 square feet of concrete sidewalk replacements, and 263 linear feet of concrete cheek wall. Six (6) bids were received with the lowest bid from Associated Paving Contractors, Inc. of Warminster, PA for \$144,647.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board awarded the ADA Ramp Project contract to Associated Paving Contractors, Inc.

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

Request to Farm Township Open Space

The Township has permitted Township farmers to cultivate Township owned open space for several years. This arrangement benefits the Township by not having to expend funds or man-hours to maintain the open space until a Master Plan is prepared. At the advice of legal counsel and our insurance provider, this arrangement is to be formalized in written agreements. Drew Bechtel, who owns a farm in the Township, has requested to be permitted to cultivate two township open spaces:

1. The field behind the recently demolished Hanks House, between Kriebel and Springer Roads.
2. The field near the PECO power lines off Kriebel Road, near Park View Drive.

Both of these areas were previously farmed by the Seipt family. However, they indicated they would discontinue doing so. Should the Board approve the request from Mr. Bechtel, he would need to sign the Township's standard farming licensure agreement.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board approved Mr. Bechtel request to farm Township open space at the two noted locations.

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 to Revise KRI Trail Plan for Renewal of NPDES Permit

At the request of Gilmore & Associates, the Township’s Project Manager for the KRI Trail construction, Bursich Associates has provided an estimated budget amount to revise the design and submission documents for the NPDES permitting for the trail project to accommodate the proposed alignment change at the terminus of the proposed trail near Valley View Way. While the \$846,000 TA-Set Aside grant received by the Township will fund the construction of the trail, the Township is responsible for all engineering and design costs. Bursich has estimated \$4,600 to \$5,500 for this work.

Joe Carlin of Gilmore & Associates provided a brief update on the project. Mr. Carlin noted the project is set to complete final design, with the bid release later this summer. Construction was expected to finish up next June or July. Mr. Carlin added the NPDES permit will expire in January and will need to go back for revision.

Chairman Wilson noted that this is the trail to run from Valley View Way to Trumbauer Road, connecting to an existing trail.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board accepted the Bursich Associates proposal with a condition not to exceed \$5,500.

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

Request for Set Fee for Field Rental – Senior Softball League

A group that has formed a senior softball league and has been renting a playing field at Bustard Park one morning a week for the past few years. They requested that the Township consider a flat rental rate of \$300 dollars. The group would like to use the field from 9:00 am to 12 pm, June through October.

<u>Rental Rate Per Fee</u>	<u>Hours Requested</u>	<u>Normal Fee</u>
Resident - \$20 per two hours	66	\$660
Non-Resident - \$30 per two hours	66	\$990

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Bell, the Board approved the senior softball league’s flat-fee request of \$300 for field use.

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

Appointment of Interim Township Manager

In accordance with §1301 of the Pennsylvania 2nd Class Township Code and §17-6 of the Towamencin Township Code, the Board of Supervisors shall appoint an Interim Township Manager to assure that the day to day business administration and provision of public services to the community continue unhampered until the permanent township management role is filled.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board appointed Assistant Township Manager/Finance Director Brooke Neve as Interim Township Manager.

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

Chairman Wilson expressed the Board's confidence with Brooke in the role of Interim Township Manager.

There being no additional business, the meeting adjourned at 8:39 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Colleen Ehrle

Assistant to Township Manager