

**Towamencin Township
Board of Supervisors
Monthly Meeting
February 23, 2022
7:00 PM**

Present:

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

Staff:

Donald D. Delamater, Township Manager
Jack Dooley, Esq., Township Solicitor
Mary Stover, Township Engineer
Niral Modi, IT Staff
Timothy Troxel, Chief of Police

Present Remotely:

Colleen Ehrle, Manager of Administration, Communication & Human Resources

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 Board met in Executive Session prior to this evening's meeting to discuss legal and personnel matters.
- Mr. Wilson recommended residents sign-up for the Township's news notifications via the new website to keep up to date on Township news, events and land developments.

Public Comments

Chairman Wilson read the emailed submissions, with summaries below.

Resident Jae Yun, of 2047 Pleasant Valley Drive, commented she is opposed to a sale of the sewer system. I have lived in a couple of different townships that privatized the sewer system and have paid a lot more for sewer at every one of those townships than what we pay here at Towamencin for sewer. When I moved to Towamencin, I was very surprised to find out how little we pay for sewer compare to privatized sewer system. By selling our sewer system, the township may get some money upfront, but Towamencin residents will have to pay much higher sewer fees. The supervisors are elected officials; your duty is to carry out the wishes of the residents who elected you. I have not met a single resident who is for sale of the sewer system.

Resident Richard Schneider of 705 Abbey Lane, commented working in contract management. I'm very skeptical that selling our township assets will be in our best long-term solution.

Resident Rebecca Klinger of 308 Carpenter Lane, commented my husband, Justin, and I have three children ages 9, 7, and 5, who attend Walton Farm Elementary School. Last year, the majority of our neighborhood decided to start walking to and from school so as to reduce the risk for COVID exposure. On any given day there are about 6-8 families (15+ school children) crossing Allentown Road at the crosswalk. Over the past year, we have noticed an alarming number of vehicles that not only refuse to stop for us to cross, but fly through the school zone at 50+ mph. We truly appreciate the police presence whenever it's available, but we know that unfortunately it's not always enough. With the anticipated reopening of Towamencin Village Shopping Center and Grist Mill Park additions, I'm wondering if there are plans for the crosswalk? Are there plans to add flashing lights when pedestrians are crossing (similar to those on Whites Road)? If this isn't a part of the plan, how can I go about addressing this issue?

It was the consensus of the Board to forward the noted concerns to the Township's traffic engineer and police department.

In-Person Public Comment Summaries:

Resident Kofi Osei, of 105 Cambridge Way, noted reluctance by Chairman Wilson to respond to his questions related to sewer monetization. Mr. Osei would like to see an updated list of all PFM municipal engagement for the monetization of water and wastewater system, including billing amounts per engagement.

He critiqued Limerick Township staff's citing "corporate efficiency" for a basis to sell their sewer system, then referenced two main reasons why a utility company may run a system better than a municipal authority – 1) when a municipality is underfunded and 2) interconnectivity between systems is a driver of economies of scale. He then referenced the system make-up surrounding Limerick and the lack of interconnectivity. Mr. Osei then questioned the implications of disconnecting flows from Upper Gwynedd Township. He concluded by advocating for the charter of a new regional sewer authority, which he believes would solve efficiency concerns.

Chairman Wilson noted Mr. Osei's comments made regarding Upper Gwynedd's redirected flows were oversimplified, stating the work associated with the redirect, filling a manhole, was considered a worthy safeguard to protect Towamencin residents from potential sewer overflows.

Resident Martin Cohen, of 18 Westhampton Way, commented privatization creates a monopoly, with no competition. Mr. Cohen questioned how many residents have come forward in favor of the sewer sale.

Chairman Wilson replied that no one has come forward in favor, but that generally speaking most come forward only to voice their opposition to an issue.

Sewer customer Michele Jackson Greenwalt, of Worcester Township, noted she received a letter of the potential sale/lease of the system from Worcester Township's Manager. She continued she would like more information, noting it is important that all customers of the sewer system are provided with updates relating to a potential sale/lease of the system.

Chairman Wilson responded that all customers of the system will be included in a future mailing for an upcoming Town Hall meeting. He clarified a previous meeting comment, noting all customers of the sewer system are welcome to comment at the public Board meetings.

Approval of Minutes: February 9, 2022

On a motion by Supervisor Smith, seconded by Supervisor Warner, the Board approved the February 9, 2022 minutes.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Richard Marino, Kristin Warner, Joyce F. Snyder

Voting No: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

Absent: N/A

Zoning, Subdivision and Land Development

None

Old Business

None

New Business

Sewer System Monetization Review of Bids Received

As part of the Township's ongoing exploration of a possible sale or lease of its sewer system, bids for the purchase or lease of the system were received on February 11. Chairman Wilson noted the Board will not be having any discussions regarding the sale or lease of the system and will not make any decisions this evening. A complete analysis must still be performed based on the bid results. The Board's timeframe to hold a Town Hall meeting at a larger venue continues to be in late March or early April to review the detailed analyses with the public. He added there may be two Town Hall meetings – 1) to present and provide analyses, 2) an open discussion of the presented information.

PFM Representatives Scott Shearer and Garrett Moore provided a review of the exploration process to date and a summary of the preliminary bid results. *The presentation slide deck and bid submissions are available on the Township's website for review.*

Supervisor Snyder noted an error made on Franconia Township's slide with rate projections. She also had concerns with the timeframes of employee retention for future agreements, and how capital improvement funding were accounted for in the rate projections. Mr. Shearer responded.

Chairman Wilson asked for clarification on slide 12, footnote 4 of Aqua's bid results. Mr. Shearer provided an explanation.

Warrant List

The February warrant list was presented for approval. On a motion by Supervisor Smith, seconded by Supervisor Marino, the Board approved the warrant list in the amount of \$1,305,799.68.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Richard Marino, Kristin Warner, Joyce F. Snyder

Voting No: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

Absent: N/A

Public Works Committee Report

The Public Works Committee meets on a monthly basis to review projects and identify deficiencies related to Township infrastructure, properties, and equipment. The Committee met on February 17th. Supervisor Marino provided the Committee's report with the following topics reviewed:

- 1540/1556 Kriebel Road storm sewer replacement project update
- Weikel Road Drainage /Pedestrian Walkway status update
- 1060 Valley Forge Road drainage concern – PennDOT work delays
- 2010 Trumbauer Road drainage concern – work update
- Central Drive Storm Sewer System Repair Project – work and bid release update
- Orchard Lane Storm Sewer Pipe Relocation Project status update
- Kibler Meadows Parking Lot update
- Morgan Way playground installation project
- Nash Elementary School Future Soccer Field update
- 2022 Paving and ADA Ramp Replacement Project update
- 2021 Road Paving Project Status
- Greenspace/landscape/signage improvements at PA Turnpike right-of-way areas update
- Storm sewer system - long-term maintenance plan update
- Paving matrix spreadsheet discussion
- Allentown Road culvert replacement & coordination with 309 Connector Project
- Traffic calming handbook draft proposal
- Municipal Complex Driveway lighting evaluation update
- Inglewood preliminary traffic evaluation update

- Bocci Court drainage improvement discussion
- 1162 Wayne Ave drainage concern discussion
- Towamencin Ave – ongoing street-light issues

Appointment of Deputy Tax Collector

Act 48 of 2015 established a form to be executed for the appointment of a Deputy Tax Collector. The Township’s newly re-elected tax collector is appointing Robert A. DiDomizio III as Deputy Tax Collector. Per the Act, the Township must approve this appointment. It should be noted that Robert A. DiDomizio III has been the Deputy Tax Collector during the prior term as well.

On a motion by Supervisor Warner, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board appointed Robert A. DiDomizio III as Deputy Tax Collector.

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

Resolution 22-08 – Montco 2040 Grant Application

The Township currently has a Montco 2040 grant in the amount of \$190,000 to construct a section of the Kriebel Road 2 trail which would run along Kriebel Road connecting the current trail just beyond Trumbauer Road to Fischer’s Park. The current grant will fund the trail extension to the Green Lane Park property. The Township staff is recommending the submission of another Montco 2040 grant application in the amount of \$196,392 to fund the completion of this trail connection. The Township match for this grant would be \$49,098. Montco 2040 grant applications must be submitted with a resolution by the governing body supporting the grant application.

On a motion by Supervisor Snyder, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board approved Resolution 22-08, Montco 2040 Grant Application.

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

Volunteer Committee Appointment

We have received a request from resident Joseph Gibbons who wishes to serve on our Township Planning Commission and other volunteer committees ranked in order of interest. The Board may consider this volunteer committee appointment request.

On a motion by Supervisor Smith, seconded by Supervisor Snyder, the Board appointed Joseph Gibbons to the Planning Commission with a term ending December 31, 2023.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Richard Marino, Kristin Warner, Joyce F. Snyder

Voting No: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

Absent: N/A

There being no additional business, the meeting adjourned at 8:21 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Colleen Ehrle

Manager of Administration, Communication & Human Resources