

**WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
MINUTES
FEBRUARY 25, 2021**

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson David Moyer called the regularly scheduled meeting of the Washington Township Board of Supervisors to order at 7:03 p.m., at the Washington Township Municipal Building. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

The following members were present: Supervisors, David Moyer, Thomas Powanda, James Roma, Solicitor, Joan London, Esquire; John Weber representing LTL Consultants (via zoom), Tom Unger, Systems Design Engineering., Township Manager, Richard Sichler, Township Secretary, Susan Brown, twelve (12) residents in attendance and approximately eight (8) residents via Zoom.

Absent: None

TAPING OF MEETING

The meeting was recorded as an aid in the preparation of the minutes. It was noted no one other than the Township Secretary was taping the meeting this evening.

SPECIAL REQUEST

Linda McCoy, 36 Christi Drive, requesting lot line waiver for Clover Hill lot #7. Ms. McCoy explained she is representing her brother this evening who would like to build a ranch home in the Clover Hill subdivision on lot #7. Unfortunately, a ranch home will not meet the set backs due to the utility easement at the rear of the property. There is utility easement of 35 feet and a SALDO 50 foot set back from a petroleum pipeline right of way. It was suggested Ms. McCoy submit a written waiver request to the Board of Supervisors with a drawing/plan to show the dimensions for the house and possible future deck so the total project may be considered.

Ryan Hottenstein, Financial Solutions, bond refinancing. The 2012 bond issue has an outstanding principal balance right now of \$7.99 million and mature annually until 2032. The rate on the bonds is 2.25% through 3.25% and are currently callable. To refinance the bonds would be very simple high – lower funding, no penalty and no term extension. There are two ways to refinance, one way is through a publicly traded bond issue which is what the township currently has outstanding and the second way is through a bank note. Interest rates are very low but there has been a slight increase in bond rates over the last three weeks. The projected savings to the township is about \$700,000 with a bond issue and \$724,000 with a bank loan however this will fluctuate until you price bonds or sign a term sheet with a bank. Typically, the closing timeline for a bank loan is 45 days, a bond issue is about 90 days for the completion of the process. A motion was made by James Roma, seconded by Thomas Powanda authorizing Ryan Hottenstein, Financial

S&lutions, to run a dual process bank and bond refinancing of the 2012 bond issue. **No comments received.**

All ayes

Jim D'Angelo, Prestige Partners, was present this evening along with Jason Bailey from All County & Assoc. to discuss Edison Walk Subdivision. Mr. Bailey stated they are currently working on the LTL Consultants and SDE review letters and have now reached the stage where they need to address the availability of sewer EDU's. Mr. Unger stated he believes the next process would be to do an engineering study on the expansion of the Treatment Plant and come up with the most logical way to expand the plant and a cost analysis for that expansion. There would need to be a sewer service agreement with developers who are looking for capacity and a discussion regarding funding. The process would take approximately four months.

A motion was made by David Moyer and seconded by Thomas Powanda authorizing an Engineering Study and any possible contacts with outside agencies. **No comments received.**

All ayes

Public Comment

Doug Stetler, asked who is responsible for the costs associated with the engineering study? It was explained the money collected from edu sales has been put in a fund since 2012 for hard and soft costs associated with the plant expansion process.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Peg Stuart, 109 Nuthatch Dr., asked what things will look like for the sewer rate payers when the savings are realized from the refinancing of the bond issue? Mr. Sichler explained at the recommendation of Paul Janssen there were four separate funds established for capital improvements, expansion, debt service and operation costs. The operations costs are the fund that is evaluated during the budget process to see if the rates can be adjusted.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 28, 2021

A motion was made by James Roma and seconded by Thomas Powanda to approve the minutes of January 28, 2021 as prepared.

No comments received.

All ayes

TOWNSHIP REPORTS

A motion was made by David Moyer and seconded by Thomas Powanda to approve the payment of all bills for the General Fund, Highway Aid Fund, Recreation Fund, Street Light Fund, Traffic Impact Fund, Sewer Fund and Building Escrow Funds up to and inclusive of February 25, 2021, and to file the treasurer's report for audit. **No comments received.**

All ayes

TAX COLLECTOR

Tax Collectors Report for the month of January 2021:

Interim Tax	\$ 433.02
Per Capita Tax	<u>\$ 99.00</u>
Total	\$ 532.02

FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT

A copy of the Eastern Berks Fire Department Report is in the binders. Chairman Moyer read the report and noted 50% of the EBFD members received their COVID shots. Also fund drive letters were mailed, please consider helping the fire department. Supervisor Powanda stated the Medicine Shoppe vaccinated the first responders.

ZONING/SEO REPORT

Reports are in the binders

SEWER ENGINEER'S REPORT

A copy of the Engineer's Monthly Report is enclosed.
A copy of the EEMA O & M Report is enclosed

Engineer Unger announced the 2020 Contributory Report to Bally Borough has been completed and submitted to Bally Borough. The Treatment Plant Chapter 94 Report has been completed and submitted to PADEP. Mr. Unger is projecting an additional 38 sewer connections will put the treatment plant at permitted capacity of 250,000 gpd. An allocation of the 38 connections needs to be worked out and are currently working on a policy for those connections. Of the 38 connections, 34 have already been sold leaving 4 available, however, 27 of the 34 sold are not projected to be connected this year. With proposed development and/or approved plans there are 292 additional connections being requested.

Public Comment

Doug Stetler, asked if there is a monthly maintenance fee being paid for the 27 edu's that belong to Edison Walk. Chairman Moyer stated there is not a fee at this time.

Eric Williams, asked how many gallons per day are being used per edu. Mr. Unger stated 256 gpd. Mr. Williams asked if it differentiates by uses or one edu is 256 gpd. Mr. Unger stated that is residential use. Mr. Williams asked if the township has tried to get DEP to use different flow rates for different uses. Mr. Unger stated part of what has been authorized includes having discussions with DEP about interim availability to get some paper rerating on the plant.

John Backenstose, asked if there is capacity at the Bally Plant. Mr. Unger stated yes there is capacity but did not know the amount off the top of his head but to use that capacity would require a pump station and a long length of line. Mr. Backenstose asked if that would be an option since that will never get used. Mr. Unger stated there are developments north of the borough that are contemplating using that capacity. Mr. Williams asked if it would be better to take advantage of that capacity now, put in a pump

station and take the flow to Bally while the plant expansion takes place. Mr. Unger stated you would have the cost of the pump station and the line to get to Bally, as well as the engineering and permitting costs.

Nuvoda has not been in communication and Mr. Unger does not see much progress. They will be removing their equipment by the end of March.

A motion was made by David Moyer and seconded by James Roma authorizing the Township Manager to sign the Annual Chapter 94 Report. **No comments received.**
All ayes

TOWNSHIP ENGINEER

A copy of the Township Engineer's Report is enclosed.

The Edison Walk Review Letter has been issued and the developer is working on those issues.

2021 road project draft bid package has been completed and has been submitted to PADOT for their review. Advertising will be next week for bid opening and consideration at the March meeting.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

The Kelly Group/Shadeland Development Conditional Use Appeal is scheduled for Monday, March 1st.

Chairman Moyer announced an Executive Session was held this evening to discuss land use.

SUPERVISORS

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- **PADOT Ehst Road/Route 100 stormwater issue**-the Solicitor is working on an agreement.
- **Gehringer Road open space tract** – Rich reported they did not yet walk the property due to the weather.
- **Barto Road straightening** – *ongoing*
- **Personnel Policy review** – Supervisors will provide input to Rich.
- **Public Works building** – Tom Unger is looking at energy efficiency requirements and will have the information for the March meeting.
- **Ehst Road conversion to one-way, draft ordinance** – *There is a draft ordinance in the agenda packet. It was decided to table this until the stormwater project is finished.*
- **Barto Park fencing and signage layout** – The fencing has been advertised and bids are due March 23rd. Rich has not received a price back from Miller on the park rules signage. The new Washington Park sign has been delivered damage free and we will need to look at the best way to fasten the sign to posts.

- **Wastewater Treatment Plant operator**– Rich will be scheduling one more interview next week.
- **Zoom meeting equipment update** – Rich explained he had someone from Berkshire Systems Group take a look at our current equipment and make recommendations. The heart of the system upgrade is a digital signal processor which all the microphones would feed into and automatically adjust to eliminate feedback etc. The price quoted to upgrade our current system is \$6,750. Rich will obtain two additional price quotes.
- **Pennsylvania Municipal Retirement System, retirement plan changes to comply with IRS requirements and other optional benefit changes** – There were two possible additions which are In-service distribution and Purchasing Permissive Service Credits. Both options are outlined in the agenda packets for the Boards consideration. A motion was made by David Moyer and seconded by James Roma authorizing to reinstate the update with the two additions as outlined and to forward to the Commonwealth. **No comments received.**

All ayes

NEW BUSINESS

- **Revised Resolution 2021-14.** – A motion was made by Thomas Powanda, seconded by James Roma adopting revised Resolution No. 2021-14 revised new construction pricing from \$.40 per square foot to \$.42 per square foot. **No comments received.**

All ayes

- **Payment Plan request for accts 122 & 100493** – A motion was made by Thomas Powanda and seconded by James Roma adopting a payment plan of \$100 per month and quarterly user fee for sewer account #122. Supervisor Powanda asked if this is a lot of extra paperwork for a payment plan and it was stated it is not.

All ayes

A motion was made by David Moyer and seconded by Thomas Powanda adopting a payment plan for account #100493 for \$1,000 per month in addition to the quarterly user fee. **No comments received.**

All ayes

- **Credit card payments** – Rich explained after consulting with Jim Arms from Dallas Data the two best options for credit card payments are charging a fee to be absorbed by the township of \$2.16. The other option is a government rate which a portion can be passed on to the resident however not all of it can be passed on and the typical charge per transaction is \$6.44. Mr. Arms feels you make out better by charging and absorbing the smaller fee which generates more payments and less in collections. The credit card payments could also be used for permits, room rentals, etc. The Supervisors would like more information and charges involved.

Public Comment

Doug Stetler, asked how many delinquents there are per quarter. Sue stated on average there are about 100 delinquent accounts.

- **Road Opening Permit & fee schedule update** – a sample permit and fees were presented to the supervisors for their consideration. Rich will work on fine tuning a permit for the township and will work with John Weber on the possibility of an escrow fee and will have a sample ready for the March meeting.
- **SALDO application update** – Sue presented some ideas to the Board with respect to changes of the review timeline and the application itself. Supervisor Moyer asked the Engineer if the township did away with teardrop cul-de-sacs to which John stated no. The Supervisors were fine with the SALDO application changes as presented.
- **New Hanover Twp. Intergovernmental Agreement** – Rich and the Solicitor reviewed the agreement and after some discussion with respect to insurance coverage, etc. it was decided no action would be taken.
- **Code Book update** – The Code Book has not been updated for a few years. Rich is waiting on a proposal from General Code. This will be addressed at the March meeting.
- **New truck purchase** – Rich stated he budgeted for an F-350 stake body for \$56,000 however the proposal is above the budgeted amount. Supervisor Powanda suggested getting a price quote from Perkiomen Performance and increase to a F-450. Rich will get some additional pricing.
- **Washington Twp. Historical Society Decennial Report** – Rich explained every ten years if you have a non-profit entity and want to keep it you have to let the PA Dept. of Incorporation know that you want to keep it. Rich will send in the response card.
- **2021-2022 COSTARS Road Salt Contract** – Rich reported the township has purchased almost 400 tons of salt so far this year. The Supervisors directed Rich to take the allotment for this year and take 600 tons for the 2021-2022 season.
- **WTMA loan request** – At the January meeting of WTMA Rich was authorized to request \$15,000 to assist with the final expenses of the water system. A motion was made by James Roma authorizing the transfer of \$15,000 to the WTMA. **No comments received.**

All ayes

- **Per Capita Tax Exonerations** – A motion was made by David Moyer, seconded by Thomas Powanda authorizing the exoneration of 112 people as outlined. **No comments received.**

David Moyer – aye

Thomas Powanda – aye

James Roma - abstained

- **Lobby to reopen** – Rich reported the staff would be comfortable with reopening the lobby. It was decided the lobby will reopen Monday, March 1st.
- **Township Building** – The current layout of the township building limits the amount of usable space due to wide hallways and small unused office spaces. Chairman Moyer asked Rich to get some price quotes to build a wall across the foyer and reinstall the current service window and make the office area larger by combining the current office area with the office area on the other side of the

foyer. Also eliminate some of the wide hallways to make room for additional file space. Rich will work with John Weber on a floor plan.

Public Comment

Peg Stuart, asked if a written agreement was ever done with Grandview Speedway. Mr. Moyer stated no there is no written agreement. Ms. Stuart asked the Solicitor if there should be a written agreement with a business that provides money to the township as far as a start and ending time. Ms. London explained those items are generally not under agreement unless there is a zoning decision that sets those items and the race track predates zoning.

Ms. Stuart also asked about cars parked along Ehst Road and who owns the cars. Chairman Moyer stated he does not know who owns the cars but the garage works on the cars.

SUBDIVISION/PLANNING

Edison Walk Commercial Minor Plan – A motion was made by Thomas Powanda and seconded by James Roma granting approval of the Edison Walk Commercial Minor Plan.

No comments received.

All ayes

Public Comment

Connie Cordova, asked if the commercial project will be connecting to the sewer and if so how many edu's will they require. It was stated yes, they would be connected however at this time it is unknown how many edu's will be needed. It will depend on what type of businesses occupy the space.

SUBDIVISION EXTENSION

A motion was made by David Moyer and seconded by James Roma granting the following Subdivision Extension:

Edison Walk (Residential Plan) 03/03/2021 to 06/01/2021

No comments received.

All ayes

COMMUNICATIONS

Copy of the ARB Delinquent Account Report is enclosed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next board of Supervisors meeting will be held on Thursday, March 25, 2021 at 7:00 pm.

The Perkiomen Chapter of Trout Unlimited and the PA Game Commission on March 30th will be doing a clean up of the rocks at Forgedale Road and they have asked if the township could receive and handle any of the recyclables they collect. It was suggested

to offer disposal service. A motion was made by James Roma and seconded by David Moyer allowing recycling and/or disposal of items collected. **No comments received.**
All ayes

Chairman Moyer thanked the Roadcrew for their hard work during the snowstorm. Mr. Moyer stated the crew is dedicated to getting the roads opened and to make sure residents can travel safely.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by James Roma and seconded by Thomas Powanda to adjourn the meeting at approximately 9:12 p.m. **No public comment received.**
All ayes

Respectfully submitted,

Susan J. Brown
Township Secretary