

**LOWER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING  
MONDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2021**

**SUPERVISORS PRESENT:**

Mark Grey, Chairman  
Danielle A. Duckett, Vice-Chair  
Tessie McNeely

**ABSENT:**

Edward J. Brandt  
Kathleen Hunsicker

**STAFF:**

Craig T. McAnally, Township Manager  
Jamie Worman, Assistant Township Manager  
Paul Kenny, Police Chief  
Fred Zollers, Public Works Director  
Mary Trocino, Assistant Finance Director  
Chuck Wilson, Finance Director  
Mitch Kulp, Parks Superintendent (Virtual)

**Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**

The Chairman called the hybrid meeting to order at 6:12 p.m. at the Lower Gwynedd Township Building and virtually on Zoom and led those in attendance in the pledge of allegiance.

**BUSINESS AND FINANCE**

**Receipt of Year-to-Date Budget Report and Balance Sheet**

The Year-to-Date Budget Report and Balance Sheet was presented by Chuck Wilson, Finance Director. He noted that expenditures exceeded revenues as of July 30, 2021, compared to revenues exceeding expenditures in July of 2020. This is mainly due to the MMO payment occurring early in 2021. Everything is in line according to the budget other than the snow removal line item that is over budget due to the snow storms last winter. Ms. Duckett questioned the delay in receiving this report. Mr. Wilson stated it was due to work load and having other pressing tasks to complete. Ms. Duckett made a motion to approve the YTD Budget Report and Balance Sheet for July 2021. Ms. McNeely seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

**BUILDING AND ZONING**

**Authorization of Amendment No. 2 of the Sanitary Sewer Conveyance Agreement Between Lower Gwynedd Township and Whitpain Township**

Mr. McAnally explained that the Township has a sanitary sewer conveyance agreement with Whitpain Township that provides for the connection of homes from Whitpain into our conveyance system. There

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is a property in Whitpain who currently has a septic system and they are requesting to tie into public sewer. They are not a parcel listed in the existing agreement, therefore, Whitpain is requesting that the agreement be amended to include this parcel and approve their connection into the Lower Gwynedd Township system. Ms. Duckett wanted to clarify that the treatment is provided by the Ambler Wastewater Treatment Plant. Mr. McAnally confirmed. Ms. McNeely questioned whether this set a precedent requiring the Township to permit any parcel to connect. Mr. McAnally stated it would not and that we have more than enough capacity at the treatment plant. Ms. Duckett made a motion to authorize the amendment to the sanitary sewer conveyance agreement. Ms. McNeely seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

## OTHER BUSINESS

### Discussion and Presentation of Preliminary 2022 Capital Projects

Mr. McAnally presented the Capital Projects slideshow to the attendees. He reviewed the projects that were completed and will be completed in 2021. He then went over the projects that are proposed for the 2022 budget year.

**\*The meeting was recorded from this point forward. The record button was inadvertently not pressed prior.**

These projects include things such as continuing with the document management program where paper files are converted to electronic files, computer purchases, and a comprehensive plan revision. Improvements to the building such as remodeling the bathrooms and police squad room and replacing the gutters and roof at the Ingersoll and McCormick properties are also proposed for 2022. Mr. McAnally reviewed proposed projects to the parks and open space areas including, paving the Pen-Ambler Park parking lot, installing an electronic sign at Veteran's Park, and replacing trash can lids, picnic tables, and water fountains in various parks. Equipment purchases, vehicle purchases, and sign purchases were also discussed. Mr. McAnally reviewed the proposed road program, design services for a potential new public works facility, further planning and design for a fire and ambulance substation, and a bridge replacement on Old Bethlehem Pike for 2022. A series of traffic studies are also proposed, including McKean Road and Act 209. A traffic signal upgrade at Trewellyn Avenue and Penllyn Pike is proposed if grant funding is secured. Mr. McAnally reviewed sewer capital projects including upgrades to the Ambler Wastewater Treatment Plant and continued infiltration and inflow monitoring. He also reviewed the current grant funding allocations for various projects.

Ms. McNeely questioned whether residents can access the electronic property files. Mr. McAnally replied that the electronic files can be viewed by residents. He explained that we have a workstation set up in the Township building where someone can come in and request to view a record. Ms. McNeely asked if the files can be accessed and viewed remotely. Mr. McAnally replied that they cannot. Ms. Duckett asked about the water fountains in the park. She questioned if they were turned off because they were not functioning. Mr. McAnally replied that they were shut off because of COVID restrictions. Ms. McNeely questioned the basin mowing equipment proposed. Mr. Zollers explained that the Ventrac mower would be used to trim the overhanging trees along the trail and the strip of grass adjacent to the trail. This type of mower actually prunes the vegetation unlike the flail

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axe, which goes in and cuts everything back like you see along the roadways. Ms. McNeely expressed her concern about damage to native plants and the need to have knowledge about the local flora and use better rationale when maintaining the vegetation along the trails. Ms. Duckett questioned who the stakeholders were that would participate in the McKean Road Study. Mr. McAnally replied that it would be the three main landowners along the roadway, Janssen, the YMCA and Spring House Innovation Park. She then questioned the proposed traffic signal replacement project and asked what was wrong with the existing signal. Mr. Zollers explained that there are no preemption devices on the signal, no battery backup, and it operates with older technology. Ms. McNeely questioned the Ingersoll and McCormick properties and asked whether a property maintenance plan had been developed. Mr. McAnally replied that we do not have a maintenance plan yet. She questioned what the ultimate goal was for the Ingersoll property. Mr. McAnally explained that it currently houses the public works equipment. The idea would be to build a new public works facility and then the equipment could be removed from the property. At that point the BOS could determine how to proceed. In the meantime, though, the property needs to be maintained. Ms. McNeely and Ms. Duckett agreed that a historic committee could address the future use of the property. Ms. Duckett questioned the last time the Comprehensive Plan was updated. Mr. McAnally explained that the last full update was in 2000 but that they had started work on a revision that focused on three large parcels within the Township in 2014. However, during that process the three properties were sold. Ms. Duckett commented that she was pleased to see the comprehensive plan listed as it really is a guide to assist in planning these projects. She also suggested that the staff try to move projects to "shovel" ready status in order to seek grant funding with the assistance of elected officials such as Senator Collett. She used the bridge replacement project as an example, suggesting that it be actively pursued to the point of public bidding and then seek funding. She noted that funds are out there but the project has to be ready to go before it can be brought before the appropriations committee. She added that park projects such as replacing the playground equipment are also something to consider. Mr. McAnally replied that the planning and design is ready for the bridge but that bid specifications have not been prepared at this point. He continued that the playground equipment replacement is on the Parks & Recreation Department's radar and that they were looking at that with a multi-year approach. Ms. McNeely mentioned that roundabouts should be considered as an alternative to stop signs or signals at intersections. She wondered if such was considered for the Spring House Intersection Improvement Project. Mr. McAnally said it was not, but it was considered on McKean Road. Ms. Worman then summarized the comments from the virtual attendees. The questions were whether the traffic mitigation items suggested by the elected auditors were part of capital projects or the general budget, and whether there were more studies that address traffic mitigation township-wide. Ms. Duckett asked if the police department is still suggesting two speed signs be purchased. Chief Kenny replied that two signs are what he is still proposing. Ms. Duckett asked if there were any additional suggestions for traffic calming throughout the township aside from just speed bumps/humps. Chief Kenny replied that it really comes down to the individual streets and what is best in that particular location. He continued that speed bumps/humps are the most common but there are people who want them and people who don't. Ms. Duckett also noted that there is grant funding available again for additional electric vehicle charging stations. She asked that the Township look into this. Mr. Grey concluded that all of the items in the presentation look familiar. He added that he has concerns about the windows at Ingersoll in addition to the roof and gutters. He also noted that he has a small concern about the amount of funding that will be needed for future stormwater management projects that come out of the Water Quality Improvement Plan that the Clean

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Watershed Partnership is close to having approved. He also noted his concerns about fire services and making sure they are fully funded. He added that future financing may be in order to help pay for these larger items. The BOS agreed that long-range planning is needed for things such as the Ingersoll House and funding possibilities. Mr. Grey noted that everyone had been doing a good job managing funds and planning for things. Ms. Duckett questioned the business privilege tax and how that is administered. Mr. Wilson will look into that for her. A discussion about future funding ensued.

Mr. McAnally reviewed the budget approval schedule noting that operating budgets will be distributed to the BOS on October 29<sup>th</sup>. He noted that the operating budget is trending much the same as 2020 and that there aren't any significant changes other than the potential addition of two new police officers. Chief Kenny explained that he is looking to bring on two new officers in 2022 as part of a community services unit. He continued that there are a number of officers eligible or who will become eligible for retirement over the next three years. Mr. Grey suggested that the police study that was conducted back in 2014 be reviewed to see if the assumptions made came to fruition or not. Ms. Duckett agreed with the request as her research supported what Chief Kenny was explaining. She questioned if he would be looking at a sergeant and officer arrangement. Chief Kenny confirmed he would seek an arrangement of that type. She also commended him on the community policing initiative. Chief Kenny explained that fraud is the number one crime they deal with so having officers out in the community to educate the residents may help combat this issue. Ms. McNeely asked if this would be more like a task force. Chief Kenny replied that it would be more so focused on education out in the community with assistance from the state. Chief Kenny also discussed modifying their hiring practices as it relates to Act 120. Act 120 requires potential candidates to complete the Police Academy before they're allowed to submit an application or resume for a job within the department. He'd like to move into a hybrid model that would allow for more options in the selection process. Mr. Grey questioned what it costs to hire an officer. He requested that number be gathered and reported back. He added he is in agreement with the request but he thinks the number is important. Mr. McAnally concluded that the budget will be on the November 9<sup>th</sup> agenda to authorize advertisement and public review period with an anticipated adoption on December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021. He instructed that the BOS reach out to him with any questions as they go through the budget. He thanked all of the staff for their work on the presentation. The BOS commended everyone on the presentation.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Ms. Debra Schaffer commented virtually that that information on the cost of an officer is important for transparency to the public. The other comments were read earlier in the meeting.

There being no further questions or comments, the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m. until the next Regular Meeting scheduled for October 26, 2021 at the Lower Gwynedd Township Building and virtually.

Respectfully submitted,

Board of Supervisors Minutes  
October 18, 2021  
Jamie Worman  
Assistant Township Manager