

**LOWER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, JUNE 24, 2025**

SUPERVISORS PRESENT:

Danielle A. Duckett, Chairman
Michael Twersky, Vice Chair
Janine Martin – absent
Tessie McNeely
Jimmy Chong

STAFF:

Mimi Gleason, Township Manager
Jamie Worman, Assistant Township Manager
Michelle Farzetta, Office Manager
Neil Stein, Esq., Solicitor
Paul Kenny, Police Chief
Fred Zollers, Director Public Works
Melinda Haldeman, Finance Director
John Farrell, Project Manager/Emergency Management Coordinator
Chad Dixon, Bowman, Traffic Engineer
Jim Hersh, Gilmore & Associates, Township Engineer
Clint Snyder, Facilities Manager

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

The Chair called the hybrid meeting to order at 7:06pm at the Lower Gwynedd Township Building and virtually on Zoom and led those in attendance in the pledge of allegiance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS

The Board of Supervisors (BOS) met in executive session on June 10, 2025, and prior to tonight's meeting to discuss matters of real estate related to the public works facility and potential litigation related to pensions, zoning, code enforcement, and emergency services.

The next concert at Pen-Ambler Park is Wednesday, June 25th, featuring Kate Mills. The Taqueria Dos Hermanos food truck opens at 6:30 pm.

Presentation and Public Discussion about the Township's draft Sidewalks and Trails Plan

During the May 27, 2025, BOS meeting, a draft of the sidewalk and trail plan was presented to the BOS and public. The draft plan was also posted on the website allowing the public to provide feedback. Mr. Farrell reviewed the feedback and addressed comments and questions that were asked. He explained that this plan primarily is guidance to help with future land development. It is not a fully engineered study. As grant opportunities come in, funds could be used towards implementing portions of the sidewalk and trail plan deemed to be a priority at that time. Several residents spoke about their safety concerns on certain trails and intersections, as well as neighborhoods with no existing sidewalks. Mr.

Hersh mentioned that the trail from Pen Ambler Park received grant funds and next year we will reconfigure the intersection as part of the project and a blinking beacon will be installed.

Mr. Hersh stated that Gilmore will revise the sidewalk and trail plan based on tonight's discussion. The final plan will then be brought to the BOS one more time for approval.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Suzanne Bush, 1624 School House Lane, stated that the township website does not indicate the history of Penllyn Woods purchase. Recently there has been a lot of discussion about Penllyn Woods and she would like to see the website updated with the story of how Penllyn Woods was purchased.

Residents of the Montgomery Road neighborhood spoke regarding their continued frustration with the chiller noise at the Wissahickon Middle School. Eric Rudolph, 537 Montgomery Road, Jim Jacquette, 413 Cedar Lane, Michael Pickel, 600 Montgomery Road, Francis Militello, 613 Montgomery Road, Richard Gilly, 525 Montgomery Road, and Irene Lewis 513 Montgomery Road, all expressed their concerns. The worries are the decibel levels, public safety, the length of time during the day that the chiller runs, and the inability to sit outside in their yards. Wissahickon School District (WSD) has made attempts to mitigate the noise with a sound blanket, but it has not been as effective as they thought. WSD will now be installing a 14' buffer screen fencing with sound dampening materials to help with the noise. The residents wanted to know if this fencing does not work will penalties be enforced per the township ordinance. The BOS listened to their concerns, but no comments were made as Mr. Stein stated that as one of the neighbors has repeatedly threatened litigation, there could no longer be any back and forth conversation on the matter.

BUILDING AND ZONING

Public hearing for Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School's conditional use application seeking approval to allow a pedestrian improvement to encroach into a riparian buffer

Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School is seeking conditional use approval to install a paved trail and pedestrian bridge for direct access to the athletic fields at the back of the campus. The public hearing was transcribed by a court reporter and will be available upon request. The BOS will render a decision at the July 22, 2025, BOS meeting.

Public hearing for Foulkeways' conditional use application seeking approval for a storm pipe to encroach into a wetland buffer

Foulkeways at Gwynedd is preparing for the construction of a new fitness center. Conditional use approval is needed to install roughly 140 feet of storm pipe within an existing drainage channel. The public hearing was transcribed by a court reporter and will be available upon request. The BOS will make a decision at the July 22, 2025, BOS meeting.

GENERAL BUSINESS

School Resource Officer – Wissahickon School Board decision

Ms. Duckett stated that there were previous conversations regarding the continuation of the School Resource Officer (SRO) at the high school. The Wissahickon School District has decided to seek other options for security due to budgetary constraints. Ms. Duckett and the rest of the Supervisors thanked Officer Shannon Gallagher for her time as the SRO. She has left a lasting impact on those she worked with.

Public hearing and possible decision to consider an amendment of a Penllyn Woods Park conservation easement to add a notification requirement for Wissahickon Trails

The public hearing was transcribed by a court reporter and will be available upon request. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. McNeely, to approve the second amendment to the Penllyn Woods conservation easement. Motion passed 4-0.

Consider revised proposal to update locks at Penllyn Woods Community Building

Public Works has received a revised quote of \$21,562.42 plus \$76 per month for software for an access control system at the Penllyn Woods Park Community Building. The system being proposed is similar to the one recently installed in the administration building. The system will be installed on four doors and allow for remote access. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. McNeely, to approve the proposal from Minuteman Security and Life Safety for the access control system at the park building. Motion passed 4-0.

Consider awarding bid for residential trash and recycling collection

The trash and recycling collection bid opening was held on June 15, 2025. Four haulers submitted bid proposals: Republic Services, Waster Management, Whitetail Disposal, and JP Mascaro & Sons. The bid specs asked for costs for twice per week pick up continuing our current service, and a second alternative option of once per week pick up. Republic Services included a low volume option and a senior citizen discount. Whitetail offered a senior citizen discount, but no low volume. Republic Services was the lowest bidder for the twice-a-week pick-up with a price of \$3,911, 856 for three years. Whitetail was the lowest bidder for the once per week pickup at \$3,150,117.73 for three years. After some discussion amongst the BOS, they decided that a twice a week pickup would be the best service for the community. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Twersky, to award Republic Services the Trash and Recycling Hauler Contract. Motion passed 4-0.

EAC single-use plastic update

The EAC has been evaluating the pros and cons of a ban on single-use plastics used by businesses within the township. They conducted extensive research and held an open house to obtain public feedback. Currently the EAC has decided not to recommend an ordinance banning single-use plastics and the complications that could come with enforcing this. The EAC has decided to speak with the biggest remaining dispensers of plastic shopping bags: Giant, Wawa and CVS to see if they would consider eliminating the use of the bags voluntarily as Whole Foods has already done. They will also work with staff on a public education campaign. Ms. Duckett asked if there was a time frame for this. Ms. Gleason stated that at this time no, but it will be discussed at the July EAC meeting.

Consider acceptance of proposal from Navitend for Computer/IT Services

Staff went out for RFP in April for IT services. After conducting interviews with potential consultants, staff is recommending Navitend take over our IT services. Navitend's cost is slightly less than our current consultant, All Covered, and the rate will be locked in for three years. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. McNeely, to approve the proposal from Navitend for a three-year term. Motion passed 4-0.

Resolution #2025-11 Supporting Funding for SEPTA

The BOS is encouraging both regional and state officials to work together to address SEPTA's current funding crisis. They are asking that the officials establish permanent, dedicated and sustainable funding so that SEPTA can provide consistent, safe and reliable transportation for all riders. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. McNeely, to approve resolution #2025-11 supporting funding for SEPTA. Motion passed 4-0.

Consider authorization to submit ARLE grant application in the amount of \$291,345 for traffic signal upgrades at Bethlehem Pike and Tennis Avenue

Bowman is recommending the township apply for an ARLE grant. The funding will be used for upgrades to replace the mast arms, existing loop detection system, pedestrian push button with APS, new traffic signal heads with retroreflective back plates and flashing yellow arrow signal heads at the intersection of Bethlehem Pike and Tennis Avenue. The preliminary estimate for the upgrades is \$364,182. Bowman is recommending a grant request of \$291,345 with a local match of \$72,837. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. McNeely, to submit the ARLE grant application for traffic signal upgrades at Bethlehem Pike and Tennis Avenue. Motion passed 4-0.

Consider acceptance of the work order proposal from Bowman Consulting Group to prepare construction and bid documents for the replacement of the traffic signal pole at Bethlehem Pike and Penllyn Pike

Bowman has provided a work order for the replacement of two mast arms at the Penllyn Pike, and the driveway approach at the intersection with Bethlehem Pike, including the associated signal wiring. Bowman will prepare the construction and bid packet for advertising. They will also represent the township throughout the course of the construction. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Twersky, to approve the work order proposal from Bowman Consulting Group for the traffic signal pole replacement at Bethlehem Pike and Penllyn Pike. Motion passed 4-0.

Consider approval of quote from Gorski Engineering, Inc., with costs through TIPS-USA, for design and construction of Ingersoll Park improvements to baseball fields and new concession stand, press box, restroom, and associated site work at Ingersoll Park for \$991,624

At the May 27, 2025 BOS meeting, a presentation was given regarding the proposed improvements to Ingersoll Park and the BOS felt that an additional bathroom should be installed in lieu of the storage area in the concession stand building. As part of the quote under consideration tonight, Mr. Hersh stated that plumbing was added for installation in the storage area for future use as a restroom. Once a storage area opens elsewhere, a bathroom can be installed in that space. Gorski has provided a quote for the proposed improvements. The proposal includes improvements to the ball fields, a new concession stand, restrooms and sitework. The total cost for the improvements is \$991,624. Public

Works will assist with some of the demo work. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Twersky, to approve the quote from Gorski for \$991,624.00 for the improvements to the Ingersoll Ball Park. Motion passed 4-0.

Consider a donation request from the Wissahickon Valley Historical Society (WVHS)

The WVHS is celebrating their 50th Anniversary this year. In celebration of this milestone, they have asked for a \$1,000 donation allowing them to continue preserving the history of Ambler Borough, Lower Gwynedd Township and Whitpain Township. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. McNeely, to approve the donation of \$1,000 for WVHS. Motion passed 4-0.

Consider authorization to issue bond counsel RFP

Staff prepared a Request for Proposal (RFP) soliciting proposals from law firms to serve as bond counsel. A new Public Works Facility is being planned, and help will be needed to issue tax-exempt municipal bonds to finance this project. The RFP will be posted in the Montgomery County Law Reporter and the Township website. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. McNeely, to authorize the bond counsel RFP. Motion passed 4-0.

Consider approval of repayment terms from the Pierson pension

Motion to approve the repayment terms in the letter agreement, subject to the parties signing a formal agreement satisfactory to the Township Manager, Finance Director and Solicitor. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. Mc Neely. Motion passed 4-0.

Finance Report – May 2025

The BOS received the Financial Report for May of 2025. Mr. Twersky asked if we were on track. Ms. Haldeman said yes and that she would be providing a 6-month financial review at the July meeting.

Township Engineer Report – June 2025

Prior to the meeting, Mr. Hersh provided the Gilmore Engineers report for June of 2025. There were no questions or comments.

Traffic Engineer Report – June 2025

Prior to the meeting, Mr. Dixon provided Bowmans Project Status Report for June of 2025. There were no questions or comments

Approval of invoice report – June 24, 2025

The BOS received the invoice report for checks dated June 24, 2025, totaling \$461,861.57. There were no questions or comments. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Twersky, to approve the invoices dated June 24, 2025. Motion passed 4-0.

Approval of minutes – May 27, 2025

The BOS received the meeting minutes from the May 27, 2025, BOS meeting. There were no questions or comments. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. McNeely, to approve the minutes. Motion passed 4-0.

SUPERVISOR LIAISON REPORTS

The BOS received the Liaison reports for the EAC and the Park and Recreation Board. There were no questions or comments.

STAFF UPDATES

Mr. Zollers said they started putting the stone down on the swale discussed at the Penllyn community meeting, which will help with the drainage issues. He also stated that the contractor has started work on the Old Bethlehem Pike bridge project.

SUPERVISORS COMMENTS

All the BOS thanked staff and officers for their hard work and all they do for the township. Ms. Duckett thanked Public Works for the storm clean up and tree removal. She also reminded everyone about the concert on Wednesday evening.

Adjournment

Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Chong, to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 pm. Motion passed 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Farzetta
Office Manager