

**LOWER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, APRIL 11, 2023**

SUPERVISORS:

Danielle A. Duckett, Chairman
Michael Twersky, Vice Chair
Janine Martin
Kathleen Hunsicker
Tessie McNeely

STAFF:

Mimi Gleason, Interim Township Manager
Jamie Worman, Assistant Township Manager
Michelle Farzetta, Administrative Assistant
Neil Stein, Esq., Solicitor
Fred Zollers, Director Public Works
Mike Gargan, Police Lieutenant
Melinda Haldeman, Finance Director
Jim Hersh, Township Engineer, Gilmore Associates
Chad Dixson, Traffic Engineer, McMahon a Bowman Company

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

The Chair called the hybrid meeting to order at 7:00pm 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 met in executive session prior to tonight's meeting to discuss matters of personnel and litigation.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There was no public comment made.

BUILDING AND ZONING

Presentation of Gwynedd Mercy Academy High School Land Development (#22-07LD)

Christen Pionzio from HRMM&L spoke on behalf of Gwynedd Mercy High School. The proposed project is to construct a 20,000 square foot addition and associated improvements. The space would be used for programs, a cafeteria, counseling space and storage. Ms. Pionzio went over the review letters from the Fire Marshal, Gilmore and McMahon. The Fire Marshal asked for a sprinkler system in the proposed addition and to retrofit sprinklers into the existing building. He also asked for

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sidewalk connections around the building in case of an evacuation. Last he asked for a remote hook up for water. McMahon has asked for stop bars and paint markings at the entrance of Evans Road. No traffic impact study was needed, as enrollment is not increasing.

There was an extensive conversation regarding the existing trail system and sidewalks.

Gwynedd Mercy is asking for a waiver for sidewalks and trails along Sunneytown Pike and Evans Road. Gwynedd Mercy would like to continue to use the existing trail connections on both the high school and university property. The purpose of this is to keep unwanted visitors off the campus. Several supervisors are concerned about this waiver request as it could cause a problem in the future with walkability plans for the township. Mr. Stein suggested offering an easement for future trail installation. Ms. Pionzio said she would need to speak with her clients and the Sisters of Mercy, as part of the fields used by the high school where sidewalks and/or trails could be installed is owned by them. Mr. Twersky suggested going back to her clients and working on a possible easement. There was then a discussion regarding the street trees along Evans Road. Ms. Pionzio stated that the numbers match what is required, however they are asking for a partial waiver, as the trees are not in the proper formation. When asked if more trees could be added representatives stated that it might be possible to add 5-8 trees off the entrance drive. Ms. Pionzio is going to speak with the Board of Directors for Gwynedd Mercy High School and will return at the next BOS meeting.

Resolution 2022-29: Wissahickon School District Turf Field (#22-04LD) Extension

The Wissahickon School District received preliminary/final approval of land development application #22-04, a plan to remove existing baseball and softball fields and replace them with synthetic turf fields in December 2022. All applicable fees and escrows must be paid within 90 days of the resolution date. The school district is requesting a sixty-day extension so they can finalize financing for the project. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. McNeely to approve the extension. Motion passed 5-0.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Discussion About Tax Credits for Volunteer Firefighters

Ms. Gleason explained that in an effort to gain more participation within the volunteer fire companies we are looking to provide an earned income tax credit to up to \$1000 to those eligible for Lower Gwynedd tax credits. To qualify for the credit volunteers must be "active" within the Wissahickon and North Penn Fire companies. There are neighboring municipalities who currently offer this tax credit. After some discussion among the BOS, they felt that this would be a good starting point to gain volunteers and show appreciation for the volunteer firefighters. Ms. Duckett made a motion authorizing Mr. Stein to draft an ordinance for the EIT tax credit for volunteer fire fighters, seconded by Mr. Twersky. Motion passed 5-0. Ms. Gleason stated that she will work with the fire companies on the criteria that needs to be met in order to be eligible for this credit via a resolution. Mr. Stein stated that he has also started working on necessary criteria.

Proclamation to Celebrate Arbor Day on April 28, 2023 as Part of the Arbor Day Foundation's Tree City USA Program

Ms. Duckett stated that as a Tree City we will celebrate Arbor Day again on April 28th of this year. Ms. Hunsicker made a motion, seconded by Ms. Duckett to approve the celebration. Motion passed 5-0. Ms. McNeely thanked Ms. Worman for helping with the Tree City process.

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Authorize Opioid Settlement Fund Agreement

Ms. Gleason explained that in 2022 the township executed agreements for participation in the opioid settlement. There is another round of funding available that the county is again asking municipalities to participate in the settlement. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. Martin to sign the participation agreements. Motion passed 5-0.

Authorize Contract with Sewer Specialty Services in the amount of \$51,764 for Cleaning, Televising and Repair of Sanitary Sewer Lines

Gilmore Associates has solicited a quote from Sewer Specialty Services for cleaning, inspection and repairs of the sanitary sewer collection and conveyance system for infiltration and inflow. Mr. Hersh stated that they will be working on a portion of Brookside Avenue and Francis Avenue. They will then move to the Village of Penllyn, Wissahickon, Trewellyn and Gwynedd Avenue. The total cost for this service will not exceed \$51,674.00. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Twersky to approve this contract with Sewer Specialty Services. Motion passed 5-0.

Authorize Purchase of Audio/Visual Equipment from Delco Solutions LLC in the amount of \$7,400 for the Caucus Meeting Room

Ms. Worman explained that recently more committees have been using the Caucus room for meetings. This room does not have the proper equipment to facilitate the virtual component of these meetings. This is becoming an issue as staff has a difficult time preparing minutes and residents have problems participating in the meetings virtually. Delco Solutions installed the current system we have in both meeting areas. They have provided us with a proposal for \$7,400 to install an HD conference room system, camera, and microphones, which are necessary to equip the Caucus room with video conferencing amenities. This project was not in the budget, but there are funds available that can be allocated to this project. Ms. Martin mentioned that having the public attend meetings in the Caucus room can be difficult as they are not necessarily comfortable sitting around the table. She asked if it would be possible to get some information on having a set up for smaller groups in the main room. Possibly a table up front with microphones for committee members and then the public could sit in the audience. Mr. Twersky asked staff if they felt equipment would be needed in the Fishbowl, which is a separate staff meeting room. Staff did not feel that would be necessary. There was also concern about the quality of the screens on each side of the main boardroom. They would like to have these also looked at when Delco comes out. Ms. Worman said she would follow up with Delco Solutions and see what options are available for the monitors. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms., Hunsicker to approve the proposal for the audio/visual upgrades to the Caucus room. Motion passed 5-0.

Approval of minutes - March 22, 2023

The BOS received the minutes from the March 22, 2023 meeting. There were no questions or comments. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. McNeely to approve the minutes. Motion passed 4-0. (Ms. Hunsicker abstained due to her absence at that meeting.)

COMMITTEE REPORTS

No committees had met since the last BOS meeting.

Ms. McNeely congratulated the EAC on their successful battery collection event. She also called out Maureen Nunn and Rich Valiga for all their help with both the EAC and the Planning Commission.

Ms. Duckett asked about any upcoming events for Earth Day. Ms. Gleason stated that there will be a few trail clean ups this month. Check the website for dates.

STAFF UPDATES

Pen-Ambler Park Remediation Update

Mr. Zollers stated that they will begin working on drainage improvements at Pen-Ambler Park in May. During this time the parking lot will be closed. The project should take about a week, weather permitting. Mr. Hersh said the parking lot will then be paved in the fall.

Website Format Changes

Ms. Worman showed the changes that were made to the website homepage. A couple of the new features include color coded tabs at the bottom of the scrolling billboard making it easier for residents to locate information, and a more visually appealing layout.

Ms. Worman also stated that the County approved both grant extensions.

Ms. Gleason welcomed Melinda Haldeman the new Finance Director to the township.

SUPERVISORS COMMENTS

There were no comments for Ms. McNeely, Ms. Hunsicker or Ms. Martin.

Mr. Twersky reminded everyone that Little League Opening Day is this upcoming Saturday April 15th. He thanked public works for all their help getting the fields prepped. The Little League is very happy.

Ms. Duckett echoed Mr. Twersky's comments about opening day and invited everyone to come out.

Adjournment Time

Ms. Duckett made a motion at 8:15 to Adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. McNeely. Motion passed 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Farzetta

Michelle Farzetta
Administrative Assistant