

**LOWER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, JULY 25, 2023**

SUPERVISORS:

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

STAFF:

Mimi Gleason, Township Manager
Jamie Worman, Assistant Township Manager
Michelle Farzetta, Administrative Assistant
Neil Stein, Esq., Solicitor
Fred Zollers, Director Public Works
Paul Kenny, Police Chief
Ed Brown, Township Engineer, Gilmore Associates
Chad Dixson, Traffic Engineer, McMahan a Bowman Company
Melinda Haldeman - Finance Director

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

The Chair called the hybrid meeting to order at 7:07pm 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 prior to tonight's meeting to discuss matters of real estate and litigation.

Ms. Duckett announced the CRU would be hosting a Backpack Giveaway for local students on Sunday, July 30th at the Wireless Zone from 1:00pm-4:00pm.

Recognition of Sohan, Keshav and Suri Shah by Lower Gwynedd Township and the North Penn Volunteer Fire Company

Ms. Duckett introduced Matthew Traynor from the North Penn Volunteer Fire Company. Mr. Traynor spoke of the incident that occurred on Saturday, May 6, 2023, on Penn Oak Road at 6:48pm. He spoke about how the Shah's used a fire extinguisher to contain the fire, called 911 and then evacuated the home. He commended the three teenagers for their courage and determination in a difficult and hazardous situation. The Shah children came up to be recognized and received plaques in recognition of their bravery.

Swearing in of Ryan Sell as an officer in the Lower Gwynedd Police Department

Chief Kenny spoke of the hiring process and the many steps that a candidate must go through for hiring. Judge Patty Zaffarano swore in Ryan Sell with his parents by his side.

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Prior to the swearing in Chief Kenny thanked Judge Zaffarano for her 36 years of service. Judge Zaffarano will be retiring at the end of the year. Chief Kenny also spoke of Officer Richard Lawn, who was injured on this day 20 years ago while on duty and unfortunately passed away three days later. During the hiring process civilian residents assist with the hiring process and Officer Lawn's brother is one of them.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There was no public comment.

BUILDING AND ZONING

Resolution 2023-18 Revised calculation of the tapping fee for the sanitary sewer system

A tapping fee is a one-time fee that the township charges a property owner to connect to the sanitary sewer system. This fee was last updated in 2015, by the now disbanded Lower Gwynedd Township Municipal Authority. Currently the tapping fee is \$5,556/EDU (equivalent dwelling unit). David Busch from Keystone Alliance Consulting gave an overview of how the new proposed tapping fee was calculated. He is proposing a tapping fee of \$8,118/EDU. Mr. Busch stated that the tapping fees are typically used for capital projects within the township and for maintenance and repairs at the treatment plants. The BOS asked if we are at the max EDU allowed and how frequently the tapping fee should be re-evaluated. Mr. Busch stated we are not at the max and that the data should be looked at every five years to get the most benefit. Mr. Twersky made a motion to approve the new tapping fee of \$8,118/EDU, seconded by Ms. McNeely. Motion passed 4-0.

Resolution #2023-19 Waiver of land development for Gwynedd Mercy University's courtyard improvements

Annie Neamand, from HRMM&L attended on behalf of Christen Pionzio. Gwynedd Mercy University (GMU) is requesting the BOS waive formal land development for a courtyard improvement. The portion of the campus contains an existing 40,000 square foot dormitory and a parking lot. A portion of the existing parking lot will be removed to accommodate the courtyard improvements. New parking will be added, as well as landscaping improvements and an underground stormwater basin will be designed that will also accommodate the future health innovation project. Ms. McNeely made a motion to approve Resolution #2023-19 granting a waiver of land development, seconded by Mr. Twersky. Motion passed 4-0.

Public hearing for a conditional use application for a lot size reduction at 400 Houston Road

Solicitor Neil Stein opened the hearing and submitted his exhibits for the record verifying that notification requirements were met. The property is currently a lawful non-conforming lot and requires conditional use approval to permit the reduction in lot size to accommodate a future subdivision of this parcel.

The information provided was transcribed by a court reporter and will be available upon request. The Board will take a vote on this item at a future meeting of the BOS.

Public hearing to consider an ordinance establishing a property maintenance code

Solicitor Neil Stein opened the hearing and submitted his exhibits for the record verifying that

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notification requirements were met. The proposed ordinance will provide more opportunities to resolve a multitude of issues related to property maintenance in neighborhoods and protecting property values.

The information provided was transcribed by a court reporter and will be available upon request. Ms. Martin made a motion to approve the proposed ordinance seconded by Mr. Twersky. Motion passed 4-0.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Discussion about next steps for the proposed cell towers

On July 11, 2023, Rise Up towers presented information to the BOS and the public about proposed cell towers at the Municipal Complex and the maintenance area by the baseball field at Penllyn Woods Park. Ms. Duckett thanked all those who attended the meeting and those that have reached out with concerns. Mr. Twersky stated that Rise Up is represented by other lawyers at his law firm. Consequently, he is recusing himself from considering, negotiating, or voting on any agreement between Lower Gwynedd Township and Rise Up. The BOS is asking staff to look for other acceptable areas not necessarily on Township property. Ms. Duckett made a motion to have Mr. Stein work on developing a lease for the towers, seconded by Ms. Martin. Motion passed 3-0 (Mr. Twersky abstained)

Mid-year review of 2023 budget - presentation by the Finance Director

Ms. Haldeman reviewed the 2023 budget through the month of June with the BOS. The fees for professional consultants are trending over budget, but this is due to consultants being brought in to assist with the finance department. Ms. Haldeman does not see these services continuing to trend high, as she has now adjusted to the position. Ms. McNeely asked what the open space account was used for. Ms. Haldeman replied that it is used for capital projects, however currently we do not have any capital projects pertaining to open space. Ms. Gleason mentioned that with the budget season approaching, she would like to possibly re-evaluate the funds for 2024. Ms. Martin said the various colors in the reports make understanding the reports more helpful.

Authorize issuance of RFP for architectural services for new Public Works Facility

In the fall of 2022, the township was awarded a \$1.325 million RACP grant for the new Public Works facility. To move forward the township needs a more detailed analysis including site selection. This RFP will seek proposals from licensed architects to complete a feasibility study. The RFP will be issued in early August. All proposals will be reviewed by staff with a plan to present the top candidates to the BOS at the September 26th BOS meeting. Ms. Gleason thanked Al Comly as he has been very helpful with identifying the information needed in the RFP. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Twersky, to approve the RFP. Motion passed 4-0.

Authorization to advertise bid for paving of Pen-Ambler parking lot

Gilmore and Associates is requesting authorization to advertise the bid for the Pen-Ambler Park Improvements. The work will consist of reconstruction of the existing parking lot, regrading, asphalt trail repairs and new parking lot line striping. The bids will go out in early August with the bid opening in early September. Consideration to award the bid will occur at the September 12 BOS meeting. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. Martin, to approve the advertisement. Motion passed 4-0.

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Review of Township Engineer's Report - any questions for the Township Engineer?

Mr. Brown provided the engineers' report for the month of July. There were no questions from the BOS. Mr. Brown mentioned that the road program paving is complete. There needs to be some adjustments to manholes that will be completed next week.

Review of Traffic Engineer's Report - any questions for the Traffic Engineer?

Mr. Dixon provided a report for the month of July. Mr. Twersky asked for the timing of the removal of the concrete refuge island in front of the YMCA on McKean Road. Mr. Dixon replied that he has spoken with Beacon and they have received authorization to proceed. A concrete contractor will be scheduled to come and remove the island. Once removed it will be replaced with blacktop and markings.

Ms. Duckett asked about the Dager Road work. Mr. Dixon stated the work is scheduled to be done in the month of August and should be completed by the end of the month. She also asked for an update regarding the safety improvements on Gypsy Hill Road. Mr. Dixon said this work will occur in the fall.

Approval of invoices

The BOS received the Invoice history for June of 2023 in the amount of \$253,733.47. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. McNeely, to approve the invoice history. Motion passed 4-0.

Approval of minutes - June 27, 2023 (J. Martin abstains)

The BOS received the minutes for the meeting held June 27, 2023. There were no questions or comments. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. McNeely, to approve the minutes. Motion passed 3-0. (Ms. Martin abstained, as she was not present for the meeting)

Approval of minutes - July 11, 2023

The BOS received the minutes for the special meeting held July 11, 2023. 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 were provided with highlights for both the Planning Commission and the Park and Recreation Board meetings. There were no questions.

Ms. Martin mentioned that Gilmore will be presenting the plan for the parks at the first BOS meeting in September.

STAFF UPDATES

Wissahickon Creek Watershed TMDL

Ms. Worman stated that the Wissahickon Watershed is looking to change the structure of the group when they enter the implementation phase of the Water Quality Improvement Plan. They would like to create an entity that would allow them to receive grants from municipalities. Mr. Stein has been working with the Wissahickon Watershed on this and is currently reviewing three options which he will review and discuss to see what the majority would like to do. Solicitors from all involved municipalities have been invited to a meeting to review possible structures. Mr. Stein said he has a list of pros and cons with each option. We are not able to proceed as is, because they are not able to get grant funding. They

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have been awarded \$1.5 million in ARPA funding, which is what brought this issue to light. They are looking for feedback in three weeks.

2023 Paving Program

Mr. Zollers stated that the updates were given by Mr. Brown when he spoke regarding the Engineer's report.

Ms. Gleason stated that the last concert of the summer is tomorrow, July 26th, at Oxford Park.

SUPERVISORS COMMENTS

Ms. McNeely welcomed Officer Sell and thanked Chief Kenny for his work in hiring him.

Ms. Martin echoed Ms. McNeely and congratulated the Shah family for their recognition.

Mr. Twersky echoed Ms. Martin's comments.

Ms. Duckett commended the Shah kids for their recognition. She congratulated Officer Sell. She reminded everyone of Fall Fest on September 23rd and the Backpack Giveaway on Sunday at the Wireless Zone.

Adjournment Time:

Ms. Duckett made a motion to adjourn at 9:00pm, seconded by Mr. Twersky. Motion passed 4-0.

Michelle Farzetta