

MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 4, 2013 WORKSHOP MEETING

LOWER SWATARA TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

The September 4, 2013 Workshop Meeting of the Lower Swatara Township Board of Commissioners was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by President Frank Linn, Sr. President Linn called for the pledge of allegiance followed by a moment of silence.

Roll call was then taken with the following officials in attendance:

- Frank Linn, Sr., President
- William L. Leonard, Jr., Vice President
- Thomas L. Mehaffie III, Commissioner
- Michael J. Davies, Secretary
- Jon G. Wilt, Commissioner
- Peter R. Henninger, Solicitor
- Ed Baker, HRG, Township Engineer
- Brenda K. Wick, Planning and Zoning Director
- Richard D. Brandt, Police Chief
- Steven W. Anderson, Public Works Director
- Jean R. Arroyo, Recording Secretary

Residents and visitors in attendance:

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED SIGN-IN SHEET

President Linn welcomed the visitors to the meeting and opened the floor for public comment.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

ROUTE 230 UPDATE:

Commissioner Mehaffie reported that Matt Genesio is unable to attend the Board's next two meetings due to prior commitments. Mr. Genesio did, however, provide the Board and staff with an email of timelines for certain project items: asphalt paving of Route 230 on October 7, topsoil on October 16, final inlets on October 21, and project completion on November 8.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Fire Department Report – Chief DeHart –reported that the Fire Department has been working with the U.S. Forestry, which has been sending out and receiving crews this past month to fight the fires out west. The Casino grant has been submitted, and a copy has been provided for the Township files. Calls for August totaled 43, for a year-to-date total of 307. Upcoming fundraisers include the Sunday Breakfast on Sept 22 (7 A.M. to 11:00 A.M.) and the Sunday Dinner on Sept 15 (11:00 A.M. until sold out). Chief DeHart informed the Board and public that HIA's full scale emergency drill will be held this Saturday. The Fire Department has been training at the Farr Apartment Building, and will continue to do so until it is demolished. The Department is replacing its two old sheds with one larger shed. Commissioner Mehaffie explained to the Board that this will require a permit. Although the Fire Department will still need to obtain the permit, he asked for Board authorization to exempt it from the permit fee. It will, however, be responsible for payment of the \$4.00 state fee. A motion was made by Commissioner Mehaffie, seconded by Commissioner Wilt, to exempt the Fire Department from the permit fee for its new shed. The motion was unanimously approved.

Police Department – Chief Brandt – distributed the monthly report, and stated that there were 915 total calls for service last month, which is extremely high. He attributed this to the newly hired police officers, who have been very active. Crimes are also down significantly. There were 232 traffic citations issued in August, which again is very high and mostly likely due to the new officers who are very visible and active. All in all, it was an excellent month. Chief Brandt reported that he recently met with the police chief of the Borough of Middletown and the police chief of Penn State Harrisburg to discuss and plan for the increased students in the area with the onset of the fall semester. Patrol has been increased, and there have been no major issues thus far. Chief Brandt reported on the Township officer that was injured while assisting the Borough of Highspire with a domestic dispute. The officer was off eight days, but is back to work with no issues. Training continues for the new officers. Chief Brandt will be having a staff meeting with the sergeants tomorrow to discuss the progress of these officers, and it is very likely that several will be permitted to go out on their own. A document pertinent to the BASLE grant project (for information sharing between police departments) through the District Attorney's office was forwarded to Solicitor Henninger for review. The project must be completed by the end of this month. The document is a maintenance agreement for \$8,000, which will cover the equipment

over the next year. The Board's signature is needed to make it official. Solicitor Henninger noted that there is no expense to the Township. It is being asked to sign as lead agency for this grant project. A motion was made by Vice President Leonard, seconded by Commissioner Mehaffie, to approve the Annual Support and Maintenance Service Agreement in the amount of \$8,000, and to authorize the President of the Board to sign the Agreement on behalf of the Board. The motion was unanimously approved.

Public Works Department – Mr. Anderson – reported that it was a busy month. The freight liner is 100% operational. The backhoe was repaired, but due to its age, some parts are not available and the hydraulic issues were only partly resolved. The new pressure washer has been ordered and should be delivered in the next two to three weeks. All Township rain gutters have been cleaned and some tree work on the birch trees in front of the municipal building was completed. Ongoing maintenance in the park also continues (mowing, trimming, repairs). ORSA's opening day was successful, and the Township received compliments on the condition of the soccer complex. The soccer field is scheduled to be aerated and seeded the week of September 2. Road work is also ongoing. Handwerk (Blooming Glenn Construction) has finished the paving in Twelve Oaks (Scarlett, Melanie and O'Hara) but is scheduled to come back on September 9 to complete Nissley Drive. Crack sealing operations are complete for the year with the majority of the work taking place in Old Reliance Farms. The Department is scheduled to begin road repair preparation the week of September 9 and paving of the repairs the week of September 16. The line painting of Township crosswalks, stop bars, parking spaces, (including handicapped and the new fire station) is near completion. The fire lane in front of the municipal building was painted red and a fire lane sign installed (correcting an insurance safety discrepancy). A-1 Concrete has received the signed bid proposal to repair the concrete on the side of the municipal building and is expected to begin work in five to ten days. Mr. Anderson noted that he would like to discuss future paving projects with the two Public Works Commissioner-liaisons or the entire Board in order to prioritize things. On a sad note, employee Troy White tendered his resignation; his last day of work was August 30. Mr. Anderson requested an executive session upon conclusion of this evening's meeting in order to discuss a personnel issue, specifically hiring to fill this vacancy. Commissioner Davies asked if the soccer fields are presently being utilized for games, and suggested the possibility of performing the aeration and seeding when they are not being played on. Mr. Anderson confirmed that they are being used now, and are actually being utilized

both spring and fall. Attempts are being made to accommodate these playing schedules while taking care of the necessary maintenance. Mr. Anderson added that the road crew is down to six employees at present time. Commissioner Davies commented that Riverview Drive needs to be crack sealed as soon as possible. Mr. Anderson explained that Riverview Drive is not a candidate for crack sealing because of its poor condition. Plans are to “scratch” it with the paver; it will not look particularly nice, but it will provide a smoother, more level driving and plowing surface. Plans are also to do this same scratch treatment on Woodridge Drive. President Linn agreed that Riverview Drive is in bad shape, and suggested it needs to be dug up to see what is causing the sinking.

Planning and Zoning Report – Ms. Wick – referenced the Codes, Planning, & Zoning Report for the month. A new plan which was before the Planning Commission is the New Middletown High School plan. This plan was tabled by the Planning Commission. Ms. Wick referenced prior discussion about an ordinance change for corner lots, and stated that the ordinance was drafted and sent to the Dauphin County Planning Commission for review on September 9. Authorization to advertise and set a public hearing date for the draft ordinance will appear on the agenda of the Board’s September 18 legislative meeting. The proposed ordinance will be before the Township Planning Commission on September 26, and should be ready for formal adoption by the Board at its October legislative meeting. Commissioner Davies inquired about the Revised Land Development Plan for Campus Heights Village-Wood Street Access. Ms. Wick stated that this is the plan that would remove the “emergency only” signs on the Wood Street entrance to their existing facility. The plan remains tabled by the Planning Commission due to a request to update the signal permit for the Wood Street signal; it will most likely remain tabled for some time.

MANAGER’S REPORT:

Commissioner Mehaffie stated that he is also requesting an executive session for personnel reasons. He referenced previous discussions with the Board about removal of three trees surrounding the Township building. He noted that after being trimmed, the birch in front of the building can probably remain in place. The other two pine trees, however, should be removed. President Linn asked why this is necessary. Commissioner Mehaffie explained that the pine tree to the back side of the building is messy and large, and is starting to push up the

concrete sidewalks. It is near the generator, and could cause problems if it falls down. The other pine tree near the front corner of the building should also be removed, since the branches inside are collapsing. The tree also creates a blind spot for drivers in the parking lot. Commissioner Mehaffie noted that if the Lions Club wants to replace this pine tree, since it presented the existing one, it is welcome to do so. The Board expressed no objections to the removal of the two pine trees, and President Linn directed the Public Works Department to make arrangements for their removal.

Commissioner Mehaffie reported the next item he would like to address with the Board is a potential change of the Municipal Authority to the Municipal and Stormwater Authority. At the Municipal Authority's last meeting, there was discussion about the possibility of the Authority also taking care of the stormwater. Commissioner Mehaffie asked Solicitor Henninger to expand upon this item. Solicitor Henninger explained that a bill signed by the Governor goes into effect on September 9 specifically authorizing municipal authorities to handle stormwater as part of their potential obligations. The determination would have to come from the Board of Commissioners, since it is the Board that created the Municipal Authority. It would not require an ordinance change, but rather an amendment to the Authority's articles of incorporation which would give it the power to handle stormwater management. Solicitor Henninger added that the Authority did approve, at its August 26 meeting, moving forward with a proposal from HRG, subject to his review, to do the GIS system on the sewer system. HRG also presented an additional proposal to do the stormwater, and will discount the pricing if both are done at the same time. It makes sense to do both at one time, rather than do one now and come back later and do the other. Solicitor Henninger added that the Municipal Authority has the financial ability to undertake this project due to significant savings on some of its other projects and resolution of issues with the Borough of Middletown pertinent to sewer rents. He did speak to Ms. Wick about how this would change operations within the office, since stormwater is presently under the guise of the Board of Commissioners for formal approval. The reality is not much will change, since HRG does the stormwater reviews now, and the Municipal Authority also utilizes HRG as its engineer. The only possible issue may be a four to eleven day delay in the final approval of a plan, since the Board of Commissioners meets the third Wednesday of the month, and the Municipal Authority meets the fourth Monday. The cost to amend the articles of incorporation will be approximately \$1,500; the Authority will absorb this cost. Solicitor

Henninger stated that this move could be very beneficial in the future for potential financing options, as there will be significantly more burden placed on municipalities regarding stormwater systems. He recommended the Board authorize amendment of the articles of incorporation of the Municipal Authority to include stormwater management. President Linn stated that the Township has an excellent Authority, and he would give his blessing to it adding stormwater management to its responsibilities. Commissioner Mehaffie agreed, and added that he would like to thank Jeff Sipe and Tracey Bechtel for all their hard work on the GIS project and their efforts to save the Township and Authority a lot of money. He anticipated that incorporating the Municipal Authority and Stormwater Authority will have some bumps along the way, but will be beneficial in the long run. A motion was made by Commissioner Mehaffie, seconded by Commissioner Wilt, to authorize the amendment of the articles of incorporation of the Municipal Authority to include stormwater management. The motion was unanimously approved.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

Solicitor Henninger reported that a very good meeting was held with the Borough of Middletown relative to the sewer authority. Tammy Blymire, the Township's accountant, is currently working on finalizing the 2011 numbers, since the initial billings are based on estimates from the prior year. He also explained that there has been ongoing litigation over the Borough's sewer plant, and the Township has not received any invoices from the Borough Authority since January. The good news is that according to a scheduling order, the case will finally go to trial no later than next June. Solicitor Henninger reported that based on his review of the bills, the Township's 20% portion equates to \$2,264.66. He suggested the Board formally approve this tonight. A motion was made by Commissioner Mehaffie, seconded by Commissioner Davies, to approve payment of \$2,264.66 to the Middletown Borough Authority in order to get the Township up-to-date with its share of litigation expenses. The motion was unanimously approved.

ENGINEER'S REPORT:

Ms. Wick noted that Ed Baker from HRG had been requested to attend this evening's meeting to discuss funding options for the Richardson Road Bridge project. Mr. Baker explained that one option would be to use money from the General Fund, if it is available. This would still

require obtaining permits from DEP, but there would be no review involvement from PennDOT. A second option would be to use Liquid Fuels Funds, although this would require approval from PennDOT including a structural adequacy review once the plans are complete. A third option would be to utilize the Dauphin County Infrastructure Bank to obtain a 10-year loan at a low interest rate of 0.5%. Mr. Baker explained, however, that the first round for this loan is now over, since applications were due to the Dauphin County Infrastructure Bank Board by August 1. Prior to the applications being submitted on August 1, a pre-application meeting must be held to discuss the merits of the project. Around October or November, the project would be formally presented. March of the following year, the Bank would authorize the loan. The Board may want to consider going through the loan process next spring, which would result in a decision in 2015. In response to a question from Commissioner Davies, Mr. Baker anticipated that the amount the Township will need to request for the project should not be a problem. Commissioner Davies thanked Mr. Baker for the information and stated that it sounds like something worth investigating.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Wilt reported that he had represented the Board at Opening Day of soccer. He stated that it was a very nice event, and was well attended.

Solicitor Henninger reported that he will update the Board on a potential litigation matter during this evening's executive session.

ADJOURN AND CONVENE INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION:

With no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Commissioner Wilt, seconded by Commissioner Mehaffie, to adjourn the meeting and convene into executive session. The motion was unanimously approved, and the meeting adjourned at 7:47 P.M.

ATTEST:

Jean R. Arroyo, Recording Secretary