

## MINUTES

### FEBRUARY 5, 2014 WORKSHOP MEETING

#### LOWER SWATARA TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

The February 5, 2014 Workshop Meeting of the Lower Swatara Township Board of Commissioners was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by President Thomas L. Mehaffie III. President Mehaffie asked that everyone keep their thoughts and prayers with the family and friends of Brett Shope, who passed away last week. He then called for the pledge of allegiance followed by a moment of silence.

Roll call was taken with the following officials in attendance:

- Thomas L. Mehaffie III, President
- Jon G. Wilt, Vice President
- Laddie J. Springer, Secretary
- Michael J. Davies, Commissioner
- Dominic D. DiFrancesco II, Commissioner
- Peter R. Henninger, Solicitor
- Erin Letavic, HRG, Township Engineer
- 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 Mehaffie welcomed the visitors to the meeting and opened the floor for public comment.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

#### PRESENTATION OF PLANS FOR THE NEW MIDDLETOWN HIGH SCHOOL:

President Mehaffie acknowledged representatives from the Middletown Area School District who were in attendance to discuss building plans for the proposed new Middletown High School. Bill Meiser, Director of Operations for the Middletown Area School District, presented a PowerPoint overview of the proposed new High School. The present entrance on North Union

Street and Route 441 will remain unchanged; the other entrance is the Reid entrance on Oberlin Road. An overview of the bus areas, tennis courts, track, field configurations, and parking lots was provided. It was noted that the Reid overflow lot, which is now grass and used very heavily, will be paved. There will also be an additional non-paved overflow lot up on the hill. The building exterior and overall interior floor plan was reviewed. Building signage was also discussed. Plans are to have a Middletown Area High school sign, with a multi-color message display, which will sit between the current entrance and proposed soccer field. Also proposed is a new school campus sign, which will list the names of all three buildings. The Reid sign will be relocated in front of the school, and will also have a digital monochrome display in it, which will be funded by the PTO. There will also be signs/logos attached to the building wall itself. Mr. Meiser noted that all issues and comments on the Land Development Plan were submitted to Ms. Letavic this evening. The Township's Solicitor and the School District's Solicitor are working together closely on the Developer's Agreements. The School District hopes to get a conditional approval on this Land Development Plan at the Board's legislative meeting in two weeks. Mr. Meiser explained that he has military deployment at the end of the month, so attempts are being made to get answers and resolution to all issues as soon as possible. He asked the Commissioners if they had any questions or comments.

President Mehaffie stated his understanding that the School District will be before the Township Zoning Hearing Board on February 28 regarding its signage plans. He asked him to explain this request. Mr. Meiser explained that there are actually two different issues. One is the fact that Township ordinance allows only two signs per frontage. Since there are three signs proposed for each frontage, a variance is being requested. The other request is to allow the size of signage to be larger than what is permitted by ordinance. The "Middletown Area High School" sign on the curtain wall is proposed to be larger than what is permitted in order that it may be seen clearly from the roadway.

President Mehaffie also questioned the number of parking spaces in the two lots at the current high school. Mr. Meiser explained that there are 209 spaces in the main student lot and 102 in the staff lot, for a total of 311. President Mehaffie questioned what is proposed for the new parking, without including the Reid parking. Mr. Meiser explained that there will be 141 in the staff lot, 174 in the student lot, and an additional 10 at the end of the building down in the athletic area. There are also 41 spots in the overflow area, and the School District was asked to

make the PE lot into a special events parking area which has 82 spots to be utilized for both the High School and Reid building. In response to a question from President Mehaffie, Mr. Meiser confirmed that these are non-paved, weather conditioned lots.

Commissioner Davies expressed concern that there are no plans to extend the curbing on the Route 441 frontage. He stated that this seems unusual for a property this large, especially since there is already so much existing curbing in the area. It seems unusual not to follow through with the existing curb on a state highway that, to a certain extent, has drainage problems. He added that it is most likely not that all expensive. He asked if this is being done to save money. Mr. Meiser agreed that cost is a concern. He stated his recollection is that the cost for the curbing would be about \$35,000. He added that the Planning Commission is recommending a waiver of the curbing. Fire Chief DeHart was concerned about cars coming across North Union Street, hitting the curb, and flipping. Another concern is that curbing would require the School District to enter into a HOP (highway occupancy permit) with PennDOT, which could result in another three months' delay. Commissioner Davies questioned the cost of the large sign proposed for the east side of the property that includes a digital display, and stated the amount of signage appears to be out of the ordinary for school buildings, and probably a significant expenditure. On the other hand, some development basics, such as curbing, has been let go. Commissioner Davies stated that he realizes it seems late in the planning process to make significant changes, but this seems like a small change.

President Mehaffie noted that during the recent Planning Commission meeting he had attended, Mr. Meiser had remarked that he feels like Charlie Brown and the Township is Lucy. He stated that this is simply not true. The Township is doing the bidding of the residents and looking out for the health and safety of those who visit the Township. The School District needs to realize that expense wise, this is probably the largest project ever done in Lower Swatara Township. It takes a long time to get through such a project. The Board feels it is important for everyone to work together to get the best product possible for the students, residents, and visitors. When the School District comes before the Board with a plan like this, the School District is a developer, not just the School District. In response to a question from President Mehaffie regarding a contingency plan for future growth, Mr. Meiser confirmed that the new High School will have the capability to add about ten classrooms.

Mr. Meiser stated that he would like to thank Lower Swatara Township for continuing to work with the School District.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Public Works Department – in the absence of Mr. Anderson, President Mehaffie noted that the Department has obviously been extremely busy with the recent snow and ice events. He thanked the Public Works Department for its time and effort.

Police Department – Chief Brandt – referenced the monthly report, and noted that it was a good month. There were 185 traffic citations written in January, which is outstanding. There was again concentration focused on the North Union Street area. Chief Brandt noted that he would like to publicly thank Steve Anderson, Public Works Director, for helping the department out today. It was a good team effort with the messy weather. Commissioner Davies referenced the snow emergency, and asked what happens if people do not move their vehicles. Chief Brandt stated that the first step is to attempt to contact the homeowner and ask that the vehicle be moved. If the snow emergency is called with sufficient notice, such as this past one, there is also the option of towing vehicles that are in the way or ticketing ones that are not moved but not necessarily in the way. Today there were several vehicles towed. If the declaration of a snow emergency is called without a lot of notice, offenders are rarely ticketed or towed.

Commissioner Springer asked if the officers had noticed any changes with the installation of the new traffic signal at North Union Street and Route 283. Chief Brandt stated that not yet, but the signals should be a big help overall. President Mehaffie noted that it is a little over six months since the five new police officers were hired; the personnel committee will be meeting with them individually to see how things are going. President Mehaffie also reported that he had been contacted by officials at Swatara Township regarding issues with truck traffic on 80<sup>th</sup> Street in Swatara Township. President Mehaffie agreed that there is sufficient signage. However, instead of trying to stop them at Fiddler's Elbow Road, maybe signs can be placed at the traffic signal at Fulling Mill Road to stop truck before they go too far. He explained that once these trucks commit down that road, it is extremely difficult to wheel a big rig around.

Solicitor Henninger addressed the new signal at North Union Street and Route 283, and stated that the Board must include this signal in Township ordinance in order to make it enforceable. He and Chief Brandt are not aware of anything else that needs to be included in this ordinance amendment. He asked for Board authorization to prepare and advertise this ordinance. He will also research whether the truck signage just discussed should be included in the ordinance. A motion was made by Commissioner Davies, seconded by Commissioner Springer, to approve authorization to prepare and advertise an ordinance amendment which would add the new traffic signals at North Union Street and Route 283 and also, if need be, add language for truck limitation signage on North Union Street.

Planning and Zoning Report/Engineer's Report – Ms. Letavic – reported that the Zoning Hearing Board met on January 22 and granted the Plouse Precision variance request. The Middletown High School signage variance hearing is scheduled for February 26. The Planning Commission met January 23 and tabled the Campus Heights Village-Wood Street Access and the Middletown Home Access Driveways/Parking Revisions. The Middletown High School Land Development Plan was recommended for approval with four waivers (preliminary plan, non-standard stormwater inlets in the courtyard, curbs along entire frontage, and sidewalks with a condition that the existing path be placed within an easement). Also discussed was the stormwater ordinance change. The Planning Commission is recommending that Option 3 be utilized to revise the stormwater ordinance (exemptions related to square footage and a separation distance). This is actually more lenient than what currently exists under ordinance. Lower Swatara Township Municipal Authority also recommended Option 3 be pursued. The ordinance language for a potential stormwater ordinance revision – Act 167 -- will need to be revised by the Engineer and Solicitor. Solicitor Henninger stated that since it is an ordinance, the Board of Commissioners will need to authorize moving ahead with the drafting. Ms. Letavic added that the draft will first be presented to the Planning Commission for its subsequent recommendation to the Board of Commissioners. A motion was made by Vice President Wilt, seconded by Commissioner DiFrancesco, to authorize the drafting of ordinance language for the stormwater ordinance revision. The motion was unanimously approved.

Ms. Letavic also updated the Board on the Greenfield Well situation. The original scope of work contemplated only completing an 8-hour step test. A 24-hour yield test is recommended to be completed as a continuation of the 8-hour step test in order to check the well's sustainable yield (gallons per minute) and recovery time.

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| Original test fee      | \$ 4,090 (HRG)   |
| Original driller fee   | <u>\$ 6,100</u> (Meyers Well Drilling)                         |
|                        | \$10,190   |
| Additional fee         | \$ 1,000 (HRG)   |
| Additional driller fee | <u>\$ 2,300</u> (Meyers Well Drilling)                         |
|                        | \$ 3,300 additional fee for extended test = \$13,490 total fee |

A motion was made by Commissioner Davies, seconded by Commissioner DiFrancesco, to approve authorization to proceed with the 24-hour yield test for the Greenfield Well at an additional cost of \$3,300. The motion was unanimously approved.

MANAGER'S REPORT:

President Mehaffie stated that there is an ordinance which requires Board action tonight. A motion was made by Commissioner Davies, seconded by Vice President Wilt, to approve Ordinance No. 550. This authorizes Lower Swatara Township to join with other political subdivisions as a member of the Susquehanna Municipal Trust, to enter into an intergovernmental agreement for the purpose of joining the Trust, and to participate as a member of the Trust. A roll call vote was taken with the following ballot tabulation: Commissioner Davies – aye, Commissioner DiFrancesco – aye, Commissioner Springer – aye, Vice President Wilt – aye, President Mehaffie – aye. Ordinance No. 550 was approved by a 5 – 0 margin.

President Mehaffie stated that he would like to publicly thank Alan Knoche, EMA Coordinator, and Tammy Blymire, Township Accountant, for their endless hours of work pursuing reimbursement for the flood damage to the Jamesway pump station as a result of Hurricane Lee. After three years, the Township finally received reimbursement in the amount of \$142,104.21.

President Mehaffie also referenced previous discussion about the Turnpike accessing the Township right of way near the Swatara Creek. The Turnpike has indicated that it will not need to use this access, so the recommendation from staff is to put up a cable and “No Trespassing” signs at this opening. He asked if the Board had any objection to this. There were no objections expressed.

President Mehaffie thanked the Board members for participating in interviews for the vacant Manager’s position. The candidate selected is Sam Monticello. A motion was made by Vice President Wilt, seconded by Commissioner DiFrancesco, to approve the appointment of Samuel Monticello as Township Manager effective February 17, 2014, in accordance with the terms of the offer letter dated January 31, 2014 with the additional condition that he promptly relocate to Lower Swatara Township, and subject to entering into a formal employment agreement. A roll call vote was taken with the following ballot tabulation: Commissioner Davies – aye, Commissioner DiFrancesco – aye, Commissioner Springer – aye, Vice President Wilt – aye, President Mehaffie – aye. The motion was approved by a 5 – 0 margin.

#### SOLICITOR’S REPORT:

Solicitor Henninger noted that he has been working diligently with the School District to help move the new High School project along. He also requested an executive session with the Board this evening in order to discuss some intermunicipal matters.

#### FINAL COMMENTS:

Commissioner DiFrancesco expressed concern with residents placing their trash and recycling cans in the street which is against ordinance and is particularly challenging this time of year during the snow plowing. He suggested this concern be placed on the website and in the next Township newsletter. Commissioner DiFrancesco also referenced the Township’s current employee assistance program, and stated that he personally has some concerns with it. Employees may need assistance, but not even realize it. Commissioner DiFrancesco explained that he has made contact with another very reputable firm that he is familiar with; copies are in front of the Board this evening. He suggested this be reviewed by the Board should it desire to change providers in the future.

Vice President Wilt remarked that the funeral services for Brett Shope were very moving. A good young man was lost.

Commissioner Davies agreed that the service for Brett was one of the most meaningful he ever attended. It was moving to see the amount of people that came out.

Solicitor Henninger congratulated the Board on its choice of Mr. Monticello as the next Township Manager. He stated that he is looking forward to working with him.

Commissioner DiFrancesco referenced the paperwork from Penn Waste about the increased tipping fees. He stated that he would very much like to be briefed on this in terms of the Township's obligations. Having sat through so many tipping fees increases in the Township when he was at the County, he recalls getting blamed for every one of them at a time when the Township' contract clearly did not allow for these increases to take place. The increases were approved voluntarily by the Board. One of those tipping fee increases came about a month after the Township's new trash/recycling contract was signed, and the hauler was very aware that the increase was coming. Solicitor Henninger agreed to brief him on the specifics of these increases. It was noted that Ed Ward will also be at the next meeting to discuss this request.

Linda Mehaffie, 921 Ebenezer Road, referenced the plans for the new High School. She stated that she has talked to a lot of people about the new school, and while they agree that there is the need for one, there is also concern about its impact on taxes. They are being told there will be no tax increase, and everyone needs to stay on top of that. There were also concerns expressed that parents cannot even get their kids out of the school parking lot when they pick them up at the Middle School. It would be good to go down there and observe what happens when school lets out and busses arrive. She also expressed concern with the "one way in, one way out" design of the proposed new High School and stated that it seems there could be better planning. Ms. Mehaffie stated that focus appears to be on a great sports arena rather than academics/classrooms.

President Mehaffie noted that he also has an item for discussion during the executive session this evening.

President Mehaffie reminded the Board that the 89<sup>th</sup> annual conference of the PSATC (Pennsylvania State Association of Township Commissioners) will be held June 12, 13, 14, and 15 at the Doubletree in Lancaster, PA. He asked any Board member wishing to attend to notify him as soon as possible.

ADJOURN AND CONVENE INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION:

With no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Vice President Wilt, seconded by Commissioner DiFrancesco, to adjourn the meeting and convene into executive session. The motion was unanimously approved, and the meeting adjourned at 8:12 P.M.

ATTEST:

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Jean R. Arroyo  
Recording Secretary

# PLEASE **PRINT** NAME CLEARLY

Board of Commissioners Workshop Meeting – February 5, 2014

| NAME              | ORGANIZATION (IF APPLICABLE) OR ADDRESS |
|-------------------|---|
| DAVID FRANKLIN    | MIDDLETOWN AREA SD                      |
| LORI SUSKI        | MIDDLETOWN AREA SD                      |
| BILL MEISER       | " " "                                   |
| NOELLE BARRETT    | PRESS AND JOURNAL                       |
| MICHAEL CARNES    | MIDDLETOWN AREA SD                      |
| Linda Mehaffie    | Resident                                |
| David John        | Resident                                |
| Neva Davis        | Resident                                |
| Phyllis Zimmerman | Patriot-News/PennLive                   |
| Kirk [signature]  | Resident                                |
| MOT Sessa         | Resident                                |
| Lynda Lupp        | Resident                                |
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