

Union Township Board of Supervisors
Regular Board Meeting
September 12, 2016

The Board of Supervisors Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Larry Spahr at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was held at the Union Township Municipal Building, 3904 Finleyville-Elrama Road, Finleyville, PA. The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Board Members in Attendance by roll call were Larry Spahr, Charles Trax, Paul Chasko, Heather Daerr, and Deborah Sargent.

Also in attendance, Gary Sweat—Solicitor, Bryan Rowe (Harshman CE Group)—Township Engineer, Judy Taylor—Treasurer, Debra Nigon—Secretary, Harold Ivery—Building Code Official, and Peter Grieb—Code Enforcement Officer.

Public Comment

Norma Thomas addressed the Board in relationship to problems experienced by her mother and sister who reside by a vacant home on Route 88. Also attending, were Judy Patton, 6070 Route 88 and Betty Kapista, 6071 Route 88. The owner of the home has passed away and no one has taken responsibility for the property which has been repeatedly vandalized. They are also concerned about health issues due to the water in the swimming pool and fish pond becoming stagnant and black. The solicitor informed the residents that the Township cannot enter onto private property without following due process. The zoning officer can cite the current owner which has to be identified. The zoning officer was instructed to post the property. Mr. Sweat's office will perform a search on the owner of the property. The current violations are the stagnant water in the pond, pool and the high grass. Also, it was noted that Southwest Regional Police have been to the home multiple times and there was an arrest of a step son of the deceased owner. The officer will provide the contact information so that the zoning officer can cite this individual as well. Once the issue goes to the magistrate, it is possible the Township can get a court order to abey the nuisance.

Chris Clayton, 228 Evergreen Road, Pittsburgh, requested a meeting with the Board regarding a proposal relating to the vacant Elrama power plant owned by NRG which would involve the Township securing the property by eminent domain. His stated intentions are to convert the plant to a prototype waste-to-energy plant using proprietary technology which would remediate the land and lead to energy savings for Union Township. Mr. Clayton and his Associate were asked by the Chairman to submit a proposal or prospectus to the Board.

Gerald Faycheck, 141 Viarregio Way, cautioned the Board regarding the proposal.

Pete Guido, 125 Viareggio Way, commented on the fact that the roads are being paved in Tuscany Estates. He inquired as to whether the Township would be taking the roads over.

Mr. Spahr commented that the Board was not notified as to the time schedule of paving which is taking place at Tuscany Estates. Residents said that they were unaware until Thursday that

the road was being paved on Friday. Tuscany Estates Drive is to be done by tomorrow. Bryan Rowe of Harshman CE Group stated that they inspected the roads. Engineering costs will be paid out of the escrow account for Tuscany Estates. Mr. Mellor reported that he received notice last week by email but that he initially thought it was only for repairs. In the future, it was discussed that Harshman CE Group will copy the secretary as opposed to Mr. Mellor only and the secretary will forward the message on to the full Board. In regard to the paving, Mr. Rowe took issue with one or two inlets which has been communicated to the developer. Otherwise, the developer is putting down 1 7/8" which the road superintendent confirmed as looking to be as much as 2", when standard is 1.5". Mr. Mellor will contact the state inspector to look at the roads in terms of whether they meet PennDot specifications.

Mr. Guido also asked about the electrical box at the community house as to whether final approval was received since there are no electrical stickers on the panel. Mr. Ivery confirmed that final approval had been received on the electric. Mr. Guido also asked about the capacity of the pool. Mr. Guido requested a copy of the CFO. He was directed to complete the necessary right-to-know request.

Departmental Reports

Scott Kercher delivered the police report for the prior month which included 62 shifts in Union Township.

Mr. Mellor directed the Board to his written report and noted that other items were on the agenda.

Motion to approve payment of General Fund Bills as presented by the Treasurer, as of September 12, 2016, in the sum of \$69,109.12.

Motion by Heather Daerr, Second by Deborah Sargent

Roll call vote: Spahr-yes, Trax-yes, Chasko-yes, Sargent-yes, Daerr-yes. Motion carried.

The solicitor reported that the Intermunicipal Agreement is ready for signatures. The secretary will present the four copies for signature following the meeting.

Mr. Sweat also noted that he prepared an Ordinance to incorporate by reference the West Elizabeth Sanitary Authority Ordinance which will need to be advertised for adoption.

Motion to adopt an Intermunicipal Sewage Service Agreement between Bethel Park Municipal Authority and the Municipality of Bethel Park and the Township of South Park and the Township of Union.

Motion by Deborah Sargent, Second by Paul Chasko

Roll call vote: Spahr-yes, Trax-yes, Chasko-yes, Sargent-yes, Daerr-yes. Motion carried.

The matter with use by Walsh Construction of Patterson Road was held in abeyance as it is still in negotiations.

Mr. Sweat also reported that the indemnification agreement he modified on behalf of Finleyville Airport can be provided to Mr. Reimer. Mr. Reimer is out of town. The secretary will mail the agreement to Finleyville Airport.

In regard to Mingo Circle sewerage complaints, Washington County Sewage Council will be handling the violations.

In regard to the issue of a complaint on the dual lights at the intersection at Chevy Chase, it was determined that the secretary will direct residents to complain to PennDot who has already reviewed the area and did not see a need for changes. Ms. Schwalm, the complainant, also mentioned a blue trailer which was identified by Ms. Speer as being on Route 88 by Dream Homes.

Ms. Daerr commented that, in meeting with the grant writer, it was noted that an up-to-date comprehensive plan or multi-municipal plan can be a significant component in obtaining grant funding. The Township currently has a multi-municipal plan with Carroll Township which needs to be updated. The solicitor informed the Board that the Township can do its own comprehensive plan or enter into cooperation with other municipalities. Generally there is no funding available for a comprehensive plan for a single municipality; whereas grant funds are generally available through the Redevelopment Authority to enter into cooperation with another municipality. Mr. Sweat informed the Board that a joint comprehensive plan allows for joint zoning ordinances which can also be developed. Mr. Spahr will invite Ms. Susan Morgan of the Redevelopment Authority to an upcoming meeting. Since our current multi-municipal plan is with Carroll Township, Ms. Taylor will email their board to see if they also would like to attend.

Mr. Ivery will send the Property Maintenance and Blight Ordinance as well as the Amendment to Zoning Ordinance as it pertains to transit/cell towers to the Planning Commission.

For reasons of transparency, Ms. Sargent reported to the rest of the board that she and, at times, Ms. Daerr have had meetings or discussions with various representatives in county and local government to include: a meeting with Ms. Sargent only with County Commissioner, Diana Irey-Vaughan, a telephone call with Claudia Williams on August 19; and a meeting with State Representative Rick Saccone at a Town Hall Meeting on September 10.

Ms. Daerr and Ms. Sargent together also met with Senior Vice President of the Washington Chamber of Commerce, Mary Stollar, on August 23, Chartier's Township Manager, Jodi Noble, on August 31, and Washington County Director of Finance, Roger Metcalfe, on September 1 and 7.

Ms. Daerr also reported a meeting with the Secretary/Treasurer of Carroll Township which she described as an impromptu meeting where they compared the budget of both municipalities which are comparable in size and revenue.

Ms. Daerr said that she believes there is money in the budget for a Township Manager to guide the Township forward. She proposed that the Board consider hiring a consultant, such as Mark Sylvestri, with whom she recently spoke with at the Venetia Bridge ceremony. He had

informed her that he will be providing consulting services in the fall of this year should the board be interested.

It was discussed that, in 2016, \$30,000 was cut from the impact fee funds the Township receives annually from the County for oil and gas activity. Currently there is a balance on hand of \$184,000 in that account. Since the Board budgeted \$220,000 from impact fee funds for police services, the account would be \$36,000 short in reimbursing the general fund for 2016 police services. The local share gaming fund has been used in the past to supplement police protection. The donations to the fire department in the sum of \$10,000 also are reimbursed from the local share into the general fund. Mr. Spahr noted that currently, there is an operating balance of \$163,000 dollars in the local share fund, and that \$105,000 of that amount is committed to the Local Share Union Valley Flooding project to rebuild the culverts. The \$58,000 remainder minus the \$10,000 for the fire department donation, could be used to make up the deficit in the impact fee fund. However, that would not leave anything in the Local Share fund for matching funds for new grant applications.

Mr. Spahr also directed the Board's attention to the expected 2016 and 2017 engineering costs, some of which are paid and some remaining to be paid, which are approximated to sum \$164,000. The possible reimbursement that the Township could get back is \$59,000 for Act 537 costs which have to be paid upfront before any reimbursement takes place. Mr. Spahr suggested scheduling budget workshops to review these areas and for preliminary budget work. He later also added that 15-20% of the budget should be kept in reserve.

He also cautioned that a Township Manager, salary only, for Pennsylvania runs at about \$60,000 to \$110,000. Ms. Daerr and Ms. Sargent commented that in their meetings with Roger Metcalfe, during which time they reviewed the finances, he was of the opinion that a Township Manager would pay for itself and that the Township could afford one.

Motion to seek the cost of hiring a consultant to evaluate Township operations and financials for recommendations on budgetary items and the possibility of hiring a Township manager and a proposed rate of pay for consultation.

Motion by Deborah Sargent, Second by Heather Daerr

Roll call vote: Spahr-yes, Trax-yes, Chasko-yes, Sargent-yes, Daerr-yes. Motion carried.

In regard to the cleaning contract for the Township building, Ms. Daerr and Ms. Sargent requested that the office staff get quotes by telephone and by advertising on Craigslist.

Motion to obtain quotes for the office cleaning contract.

Motion by Charles Trax, Second by Deborah Sargent

Roll call vote: Spahr-yes, Trax-yes, Chasko-yes, Sargent-yes, Daerr-yes. Motion carried.

Motion to approve the quote of Streamline Collision for repair of the truck door in the sum of \$546.96.

Motion by Paul Chasko, Second by Charles Trax

Roll call vote: Spahr-yes, Trax-yes, Chasko-yes, Sargent-yes, Daerr-yes. Motion carried.

Motion to put the old Kubota tractor on Municibid.

Motion by Charles Trax, Second by Paul Chasko

Roll call vote: Spahr-yes, Trax-yes, Chasko-yes, Sargent-yes, Daerr-yes. Motion carried.

Mr. Mellor advised the Board that either PCSA or Jefferson Hills will assist the Township to camera some pipes which need to be repaired. One pipe by the nursery on McChain needs re-lined. He will be obtaining a quote. There is a pipe collapsing on Gilmore Drive which will need replaced. Also, the road will need dug up for a collapsed pipe on Gayle Drive.

Ms. Daerr mentioned that a standalone generator could be used at the building. The price is estimated to be approximately \$2500 to \$3000. The purchase could be evaluated for the budget at the next budget workshop.

A time was selected for the dedication of Union Township Community and Veterans Memorial Park where a new sign has been posted and a flagpole erected. The dedication will be on September 24th at 10:00 a.m. An alternate date of October the 1st was scheduled should September 24th not work for the other guests.

Mr. Mellor was told not to exceed \$500 for landscape plants. However, it is expected that landscape plants will be donated.

Based on their meeting with the grant writer, Ms. Sargent and Ms. Daerr proposed that Union Township submit two LSA grant applications. One application for \$60,000 with a \$5,000 match would be for the Act 537 planning costs associated with Finleyville-Elrama Road and Mingo Circle. Another grant application would be to replace the Ridge Avenue culvert in the sum of \$200,000 with a \$20,000 match. The solicitor prepared and presented two resolutions for approval for the Local Share grants. The Ridge Avenue culvert resolution will need a correction and will be supplied at a later time by the solicitor for signature.

Motion to commit the matching funds of \$5,000 for an LSA Grant of \$55,000 to fund Act 537 Planning Costs for Mingo Circle and Finleyville-Elrama Road projects.

Motion by Heather Daerr, Second by Charles Trax

Roll call vote: Spahr-yes, Trax-yes, Chasko-yes, Sargent-yes, Daerr-yes. Motion carried.

Motion to commit the matching funds of \$20,000 for an LSA Grant of \$180,000 for a Ridge Avenue culvert replacement project.

Motion by Paul Chasko, Second by Heather Daerr

Roll call vote: Spahr-yes, Trax-yes, Chasko-yes, Sargent-yes, Daerr-yes. Motion carried.

Motion to authorize Harshman Engineers to begin the Act 537 study for the Overlook Project for an approximate cost of \$30,000.

Motion by Charles Trax, Second by Deborah Sargent

Roll call vote: Spahr-yes, Trax-yes, Chasko-yes, Sargent-yes, Daerr-yes. Motion carried.

Ms. Daerr reported that Rich Cleveland did not believe that Union Township was prepared at this point to apply for a small sewer grant since the projects are not shovel ready. Although, we could apply, he was doubtful it would be approved.

Motion to schedule and advertise a budget workshop for Tuesday, September 27, 2016 at 6:00 p.m., and Tuesday, October 4, 2016 at 6:00 p.m.

Motion by Heather Daerr, Second by Paul Chasko

Roll call vote: Spahr-yes, Trax-yes, Chasko-yes, Sargent-yes, Daerr-yes. Motion carried.

Mr. Sweat is working with Ms. Sargent and Mr. Mellor on a lease agreement for use of the park.

The board made mention that, retroactively, they were in agreement that the Cub Scouts could use the field at Veterans Memorial Park pro gratis as was approved by the board for their event.

It was noted that PennDot had reviewed Finleyville-Elrama Road for possible School Bus Ahead signs near the bus stop mentioned at a former meeting by Mr. Powell.

Motion to approve erection of School Bus Ahead signs on Finleyville-Elrama Road.

Motion by Heather Daerr, Second by Paul Chasko

Roll call vote: Spahr-yes, Trax-yes, Chasko-yes, Sargent-yes, Daerr-yes. Motion carried.

It was noted that one of Union Township's appointees to the PCSA Board, Joe Benedetti, had retired. The Board will try to identify willing and capable parties to serve as a replacement to the PCSA Board.

Mr. Castor, a local veteran who spearheaded the renaming of the park in support of honoring the veterans had also asked for Board support in renaming or naming a bridge in honor of John Emerick who went through the Bataan Death March. Mr. Mellor will talk to Walsh Construction regarding naming the Route 88 Bridge for John Emerick since Mr. Castor would need to get approval from Penn Dot regarding renaming Venetia Bridge.

The Foreign Fire Tax distribution was discussed. Ms. Sargent would like to evaluate the 25/75 split between Finleyville Volunteer Fire Company and Elrama VFD as Finleyville VFD has made a good case to her as to why they would like the split to be changed to 50/50. They currently respond on Route 43 and have to have special equipment for that reason. Mr. Chasko suggested that we request the financial reports from both fire departments which Ms. Taylor indicated are requested but not supplied. Mr. Sweat will review the law to see if the Township is required to receive a copy. Mr. Spahr noted that, at one time, Finleyville Fire Company was receiving the Lion's Share of funding. Elrama VFD is domiciled in Union Township.

Also discussed was a possible lease contract with Jefferson Hills Ambulance Service. Ms. Daerr noted that there is currently no file on record containing the board members for Jefferson Hills Ambulance. Ms. Daerr also requested information on utilities and insurance from Ms.

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Taylor. Mr. Sweat advised that a contract and a lease be written which he will prepare for a future meeting.

Motion to authorize the solicitor to prepare a lease and municipal services contract for the Jefferson Hills Ambulance.

Motion by Deborah Sargent, Second by Heather Daerr

Roll call vote: Spahr-yes, Trax-yes, Chasko-yes, Sargent-yes, Daerr-yes. Motion carried.

Motion to go to Executive Session at 10:55 p.m.

Motion by Paul Chasko, Second by Heather Daerr

Roll call vote: Spahr-yes, Trax-yes, Chasko-yes, Sargent-yes, Daerr-yes. Motion carried.

The Board returned at 11:05 p.m. It was announced that the Board discussed personnel issues and labor negotiations.

Heather Daerr asked that Sunoco be put on the Agenda for next meeting.

Motion to authorize the solicitor to draft an agreement with Sunoco in assist to resurfacing Patterson Road in the sum of \$119,000.

Motion by Heather Daerr, Second by Charles Trax

Roll call vote: Spahr-yes, Trax-yes, Chasko-yes, Sargent-yes, Daerr-yes. Motion carried.

Motion to adjourn at 11:10 p.m.

Motion by Paul Chasko, Second by Heather Daerr

Roll call vote: Spahr-yes, Trax-yes, Chasko-yes, Sargent-yes, Daerr-yes. Motion carried.


Debra A. Nigon, Secretary