

LOWER POTTS GROVE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

January 3, 2017

The Board of Commissioners of Lower Pottsgrove Township held its regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, January 3, 2017 at the Lower Pottsgrove Township Municipal Building, 2199 Buchert Road, Pottstown, Pennsylvania. Meeting was called to order at 6:57 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. The following attended:

Board of Commissioners: Bruce L. Foltz, President; Earl E. Swavely, Jr., Raymond W. Lopez and Robert W. Mohollen. Stephen M. Klotz, Vice President was not in attendance.

Matt Hovey, Solicitor, Edward C. Wagner, Manager; Police Chief Michael Foltz; Lew Babel, Fire Marshal; Jennifer Marsteller, Tax Collector; Scott Exley, Township Engineer and Sharon Colletti, Secretary.

President Foltz stated that the meeting will be recorded.

COMMENTS FROM VISITORS:

Derek Dry, Assistant Chief and the officers from Sanatoga Fire Department, came to ask the Board for their approval to install a new digital sign at their facility. Mr. Dry explained that it would be situated at the flag pole and the “roll out sign” would go away. He stated that they have a proposal from Scepter Sign Company and it would take approximately six weeks for the work to be done. They are hopeful it will be in place for the advertisement of their first fundraiser of the year which would be the Easter flower sale in April.

The Board was in favor of this improvement and asked that the specifications for the sign be sent to their attention for review. Mr. Wagner asked if the sign would be made available to promote Township events and Mr. Dry stated that it would.

Tony Doyle, 1745 Kepler Road, brought up the concern posed by Mr. Tom Troutman at a previous meeting in regards to the potential health issues associated with the blue light emitted from LED fixtures. President Foltz stated that he researched it and did not feel there should be any concerns. Mr. Doyle asked Chief Foltz if the police contract had been finalized and how does it affect, or is it affected by, the approved budget. Chief Foltz redirected the question to the Board and Mr. Wagner explained that we were very close to signing an agreement and that the contract offer had already been included in the budget for the year. Mr. Doyle asked if another officer would be added to the fleet during the course of the new contract which runs through 2020. Chief Foltz responded by stating that if a second-in-command is implemented we would replace that person. He feels that in the next four years he would address the Board to ask for that to happen, but as far as additional officers he did not see it happening at this time. Finally, Mr. Doyle read an article from the Pottstown Mercury in regards to certain permit fees in Limerick and wondered why there was such a discrepancy between Lower Pottsgrove fees and other local municipalities.

REPORTS OF OFFICIALS AND COMMISSIONS

Police Report: Chief Foltz, presented the Police Report for December.

Statistics:

CALLS FOR SERVICE	1,064
ASSISTS:	
Given by Lower Pottsgrove PD	11
Received by Lower Pottsgrove PD	8
TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT:	
Violations Indicated	77
DUI Arrests	6
CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS:	
Violations Indicated (high number due to numerous counts charged against subjects in a drug case)	353
Adults Arrested	22
Juveniles Handled	9

All statistics and information are included in the Chief's report.

Departmental Activity:

- LPPD received a generous donation of \$5,000 from a private contractor and his family residing in the Township who wished to remain anonymous. The funds will be used to purchase police equipment. The family advised they contribute annually to a charitable foundation and this year decided the contribution should go to their local police department in appreciation of what law enforcement does for their community.
- On December 7, 2016 Chief sent a letter to Coventry Christian School expressing concerns about the parent-pick up line traffic backing up onto N. Pleasantview Road and creating a hazard. Mark Niehls, head of the school promptly replied and advised he was actively seeking measures to remedy the situation. The school was very cooperative and the problem seems to have been alleviated. According to Mr. Niehls, parents were arriving too early for their children, thus creating a backup of traffic as they awaited the dismissal of their children.
- On Friday December 9th, 2016 patrol officers took a report of alleged drug activity/sales taking place in the 3000 block of Walnut Ridge Estates. The following day, patrol officers assigned to the Drug Task Force, during their regular patrol shift, proactively set up surveillance on the property which was alleged to be involved in the illicit activity. During the surveillance these patrol officers witnessed a hand-to-hand drug transaction take place and subsequently made an arrest of one of the subjects which led to a search warrant for the home and a vehicle in the possession of the tenant. The investigation resulted in the seizure of \$3,300, three (3) guns, body armor, methamphetamine, acid, heroin, and marijuana. The investigation resulted in a number of the monthly drug offenses and weapons offenses.
- Sgt. William James will depart for the FBI National Academy on January 9th. He will be in training until March 17th. During this time Det. Sgt. Campbell will be reassigned to Patrol Sergeant to cover Sgt. James' squad.

Chief Foltz shared some highlights from 2016

- 12,344 calls for service
- 286 adult arrests
- 88 juveniles handled either by petitions to court, citations, or Youth Aid Panel
- 897 Traffic citations were issued for the year
- 1,471 hours of officer overtime logged for a cost of approximately \$68,860 of which approximately 22% were reimbursed through various state funding, County Drug Task Force funds or private contracted details.
- Just over 18,280 gallons of fuel used for a cost of about \$28,850; \$16,150 under budget
- \$21,561 expended in vehicle maintenance costs; \$3,400 under budget

Emergency Management: Eric Linsenbigler, Assistant Emergency Management Coordinator gave the Emergency Management report and stated there were no Emergency Operations Center Activations during the month of December and presented the 2016 summary.

The Township Received Act 147 Grant funding of \$974.19

EOC Activations

- ❖ January 2016 – An EOC activation occurred during the month of January due to a severe winter storm event prompting the issuance of a Declaration of Snow Emergency to be placed in effect from 1800 hours on Friday, January 22, 2016 until 1000 hours on Monday, January 25, 2016.
- ❖ Saturday June 4th thru Sunday June 5th; the Emergency Management staff was activated for a planned activation for the purposes of monitoring a large gathering of people for the Relay for Life Event being held on the grounds of the Pottsgrove High School.
- ❖ Saturday June 11th - The Emergency Management Team was requested to assist the Lower Pottsgrove Police Department with a search for a missing person in the area of the Aldi Food Store located on Armand Hammer Blvd.
- ❖ Sunday Sept 4- Monday Sept 5 – The Emergency Management Team was requested around midnight to assist the Lower Pottsgrove Police Department with a search for a missing person on Buchert Road in the area of the Lower Pottsgrove Elementary School. The missing person was successfully found shortly after arrival.
- ❖ The completion and activation of the electronic ID/access system was completed for the Township staff in the fall.

Preparation to Activate EOC

- ❖ Friday October 23rd Standby - the Emergency Management Team was available and standing by to respond for any needs arising from the Pottsgrove High School PAC 10 Championship football game.

Fire Marshal: Fire Marshal Babel noted the following statistics for the month of December:

Station	Total Calls	Total Hrs. of Service	Total Personnel Hrs.	Total Personnel Training Hrs.	Total Fundraising Hrs.
Sanatoga (Station 58)	28	34 Hours 45 Minutes	84 Hours 45 Minutes	242 Hours 0 Minutes	237 Hours 30 Minutes
Ringling Hill (Station 59) No Report this month					

(All hours are approximate)

The Fire Marshal announced that all of the fire hydrants in the Township now have hydrant markers installed and thanked both the Sanatoga and Ringling Hill teams for their efforts in getting this done. He also thanked those who donated the funds used to purchase these markers with no out of pocket costs to the Township.

President Foltz announced that a bill was passed that would allow fire fighters to get a reduction on their taxes. He asked Solicitor Hovey to look into it to see what we need to do in order to make this happen as he knows how difficult it is to get volunteers into the service and feels it would be an incentive to gain and retain members.

Highway – Public Works Department: President Foltz read the Public Works Report for the month of December 2016. The Report will be posted in the lobby.

C.O.G.: President Foltz had no report as there was no meeting in December. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, January 10th.

Engineer: Scott Exley, P.E. of Bursich Engineering, presented the written Engineers' report updating the Board on various projects and activities going on in the Township. He highlighted the following projects:

- **Rupert Road Bridge** – The General Permit 11 has been issued by the PaDEP. The foundation report has been approved by the County. The final bidding plans, specifications and estimates were issued to the County for final review and approval. Proposed easement and right-of-way exhibits were issued to the County. The County will meet with the affected property owners to discuss agreements for required right-of-way and temporary and permanent easements. The intent is for construction to begin at the end of the school year. Mr. Exley commended Chad Camburn for his exceptional work in expediting this project.
- **Sanatoga Green** – The latest review letters were issued on November 17, 2016. A meeting was held with the applicant's design team and our office on December 12 to discuss progress made in their design and planning. Another meeting with the applicant's

team is scheduled for January 9. An NPDES pre-application meeting was held with the Montgomery County Conservation District, applicant's team, Township Manager and our office on December 21.

- **Spring Valley Farms** – The Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of additional waivers and conditional Final Approval of the project at their November 21, 2016 meeting. Revised plans and reports were received in December and review letters will be issued the week of January 2. The NPDES permit has been issued by the PaDEP. Permits/approvals from the PaDEP for stream crossing, PennDOT for highway occupancy, LPTA for sewage connection and conveyance and Pottstown Borough Authority for water supply are pending.
- **Coventry Christian Building Expansion** – Applicant is proposing a 12,000 sf building addition to their gymnasium. The Planning Commission voted to recommend waivers and conditional Preliminary/Final plan approval at their December 19, 2016 meeting.

Mr. Exley commended John Fogel and the Public Works Department for their outstanding job in the Township.

Treasurer: Jen Marsteller reported that she settles with the County on Wednesday, January 04, 2017 and to date she has collected 98.33% of the total 2016 collectible taxes.

Solicitor: Mr. Hovey asked the Commissioners if there were any questions in regards to the Solicitor's written report. The Commissioners had nothing for Mr. Hovey.

Mr. Wagner presented the following reports:

Parks and Recreation: There was no meeting in December and the next meeting will be Monday, January 23, 2017.

Pottstown Metropolitan Planning Commission: announced their meetings will be held on the 4th Wednesday of the month except for December when it will be held the first Wednesday, December 6th.

Lower Pottsgrove Township Authority: The next meeting is Monday, January 9, 2017 at their new time of 6:30 p.m. They will approve the 2017 sewer quarterly rate which will remain at \$136.00 and reflects no increase for 2017.

SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

The Township received a Community Development Block Grant in the amount of \$82,450.00. This Grant will provide for the removal of 1,200 LF of pedestrian walking trail and bring it up to ADA standards. Two ADA parking spaces will be added to the dirt parking lot in addition to a 5'0" access route to the existing playground area. Four culverts will be installed along the trail to assist with the drainage at the park. Commissioner Mohollen feels that these are much needed

improvements and the residents should be appreciative. He made the motion for President Foltz to sign the CDBG Agreement for the Gerald Richard Park Grant Project. Commissioner Lopez seconded the motion; all in favor (4-0).

REVIEW OF WARRANT #856 FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER 2016

Township Manager stated it would be ready by the end of the week for review.

RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES

Commissioner Lopez made the motion to approve Resolution #453-O, Amending and Establishing Certain Fees, Deposits and Escrows Payable to the Township. Commissioner Swavely seconded the motion; all in favor (4-0). Most fees stayed the same, and a section was added to address the Right-to-Know process and the associated fees.

Commissioner Lopez made the motion to approve Resolution 1122-17 reappointing Mark Loshnowsky to the Lower Pottsgrove Sewer Authority. Commissioner Swavely seconded the motion; all in favor (4-0)

Commissioner Lopez made the motion to approve Resolution 1123-17 reappointing William Wolfgang to the Lower Pottsgrove Planning Commission. Commissioner Swavely seconded the motion; all in favor (4-0)

Commissioner Lopez made the motion to approve Resolution 1124-17 reappointing Michael Boccella as a Full Member to the Zoning Hearing Board. Commissioner Swavely seconded the motion; all in favor (4-0)

Commissioner Lopez made the motion to approve Resolution 1125-17 reappointing Richard Coleman as an Alternate Member to the Zoning Hearing Board. Commissioner Swavely seconded the motion; all in favor (4-0)

Commissioner Lopez made the motion to approve Resolution 1126-17 reappointing Joseph Chrisman to the Lower Pottsgrove Building Code Appeals Board. Commissioner Swavely seconded the motion; all in favor (4-0)

Commissioner Swavely made the motion to adopt Ordinance 331 regarding the Emergency Response Team Name Change. Commissioner Lopez seconded the motion; all in favor (4-0) The CMERT restructure and name change requires an ordinance to approve intergovernmental interaction. All municipalities who participate will have to adopt an ordinance. The purpose of the ordinance under the law is to approve the new intergovernmental cooperative agreement involving the SWAT team for Western Montgomery County.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS:

Commissioner Mohollen feels that we have an outstanding fire organization, road crew and police department. We are a very lucky Township to have such dedicated and hard-working people to help protect and develop our community and extends his thanks to all.

Commissioner Lopez is proud of the public safety entities in the Township. They work well as independent units and also work well when called together as a team. He sends his thanks to those present tonight and to those who work “behind the scenes” for the good of the Township.

Commissioner Swavely also thanked the fire service personnel for their service along with John Fogel and the road crew as well as to the Police Chief and his team for everything they do.


Commissioner Foltz in light of how many police and fire personnel were killed in the line of duty in 2016, hopes that 2017 is a better year for the fire and police services overall. He thanked the public service staff for putting themselves on the line every day to protect and serve our community.

Ed Wagner passed along the gratitude to the public works department from a resident located on North Valley Road who had a water line break around 3:00 on Christmas Day. The line and the road were repaired by the time they returned home from their Christmas festivities around 11:00 p.m. and they were very grateful to the guys who sacrificed their Christmas Day to fix the break.

Solicitor Hovey wished everyone a Happy New Year and looks forward to working with the Township this year.

There being no further business, the public meeting was adjourned at 7:41 p.m. Next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on Thursday, January 19, 2017 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Sharon Colletti
Township Secretary