

LOWER POTTS GROVE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
April 23, 2015

The Board of Commissioners of Lower Pottsgrove Township held its regularly scheduled work session meeting on Thursday, April 23, 2015 at the Lower Pottsgrove Township Municipal Building, 2199 Buchert Road, Pottstown, Pennsylvania. Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. The following attended:

Board of Commissioners: Bruce L. Foltz, President; Stephen M. Klotz, Vice President; Shawn Watson, James W. Vlahos and Earl E. Swavely, Jr.

Robert L. Brant, Solicitor; Edward C. Wagner, Manager; Michael A. Foltz, Chief of Police and Michele Cappelletti, Secretary.

Commissioner Foltz announced the meeting was being recorded.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Klotz made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of the April 6, 2015 Board of Commissioners meeting. Commissioner Watson seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Vote was 5-0 in favor.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Solicitor Brant announced that the Board had an executive session prior to tonight's meeting at 6:45 p.m. to discuss a litigation matter. No action was taken.

COMMENTS FROM VISITORS:

Tony Doyle, 1745 Kepler Road, referred to an article that was published in the Mercury entitled "Township Landfill Bounty Dwindling." Mr. Doyle felt the article showed that a particular Township's board should have been more prudent and raised taxes earlier.

Mr. Doyle said the Township featured in the article originally had \$24 million and they did not raise taxes because they didn't have too. In 2014, that Township used nearly \$1 million from that fund to balance the budget, when prior to 2014 the interest accrued on the fund was enough to carry the budget. In Mr. Doyle's opinion, that Township should have raised taxes so the interest would have continued to fund most of the budget. He feels Lower Pottsgrove is at a time when a decision should be made because he doesn't see any feasible way the Township is going to balance the 2016 budget without a tax increase.

Commissioner Klotz explained any funds taken out of the Reserves to balance the budget are replenished. He said the Reserves (emergency) fund is stable and if it remains so, we will not raise taxes. Mr. Wagner advised the Township finished in the black in 2014 so no money was taken from Reserves. Commissioner Klotz said the Board's goal, and it has been since Day 1, is to have no tax increase, He said the Reserves fund is at its highest, \$1.4 million, and we have had no problem keeping it at that level.

CORRESPONDENCE AND INFORMATION:

None.

OLD BUSINESS:

Act 209 Traffic Impact Fee Proposals—Mr. Wagner advised the traffic impact fee proposals were discussed last month. He said Commissioner Vlahos wanted more time to review because one of the proposals came in the night of the last meeting.

Commissioner Vlahos clarified, for the record that the last proposal came in the day of the meeting; however, the other two proposals were submitted in 2014 and were almost identical in price. The most recent proposal appeared to be the lowest of the three, but it was from a firm that was not familiar with Lower Pottsgrove Township. Commissioner Vlahos then made a motion to award Bursich Associates the contract to perform the Traffic Impact Fee study at a cost of \$43,852.50, which is \$3,000 lower than the proposal they submitted in 2014.

Commissioner Vlahos thought it made sense to have Bursich Associates do the work because of this firm's familiarity with Lower Pottsgrove Township. He said the other engineer was located over an hour away and was not familiar with the Township.

Commissioner Watson asked if Bursich Associates submitted the lowest proposal. Mr. Wagner advised two of the proposals were within \$25 and the last one was lower by a couple thousand dollars. Commissioner Klotz asked if the engineer who submitted the most recent bid saw the bids from 2014. Mr. Wagner said no, he is a one-man firm. He thought Commissioner Vlahos made a good point regarding the firm's location, which is Feasterville, and travel time. Mr. Wagner stated with Bursich being in our back yard, it makes more sense to appoint that firm.

After discussion, Commissioner Swavely seconded the motion made by Commissioner Vlahos to award Bursich Associates the contract to perform the Traffic Impact Fee study at a cost of \$43,852.50. Motion carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0 in favor.

SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

New Township Policies and Procedures—Mr. Wagner advised new Subdivision and Land Development and Zoning Hearing Board policies have been drafted and provided to the Board for review and comments. No action was required. Mr. Wagner was looking for direction regarding these policies. Commissioner Foltz commented he was happy with the Subdivision and Land Development policy and he liked the checklist. He said the Zoning Hearing Board policy was quite lengthy and he would like to see a checklist included in this policy as well. The Commissioners will review the draft policies and procedures and discuss them at their next meeting.

RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES:

Resolution No. 1064-15—Commissioner Klotz made a motion to approve Resolution No. 1064-15, the Promulgation declaring Adoption of an Emergency Operation Plan (EOP) for Lower Pottsgrove Township. Commissioner Watson seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Vote was 5-0 in favor.

Commissioner Foltz recognized Chief Foltz and EMC Lopez for doing a good job with the Emergency Plan for the Township.

Resolution No. 1065-15—Commissioner Vlahos made a motion to not adopt Resolution No. 1065-15, adopting the Non-Uniformed Employee Handbook, at this time.

Commissioner Vlahos was unable to complete his study of the handbook and he would like to finish reading it. He is putting together an outline based on his review. Based on his experience with employee handbooks, Commissioner Vlahos felt it is too stringent and hopes the Commissioners can all sit down together and come to a meeting of the minds on it.

Commissioner Foltz appreciated Commissioner Vlahos spearheading this. Commissioner Vlahos said he doesn't know how the handbook got to where it's at and asked if, in the interim, the old handbook still stands. Mr. Wagner confirmed it does still stand and it is 150 pages. He said in talking with the attorneys, less is better and that's why he shrunk it down to the 60's. Commissioner Vlahos said it's not that he wants to shrink it down, he wants the handbook to be more user friendly. Solicitor Brant said he didn't think Commissioner Vlahos' point was to shrink it, it's more the content of the handbook.

After discussion, Commissioner Klotz seconded Commissioner Vlahos' motion to table the adoption of Resolution No. 1065-15, adopting the Non-Uniformed Employee Handbook. Motion carried by a vote of 5-0 in favor.

Warrant #835— Commissioner Watson made a motion to approve Warrant #835 for the month of March 2015. Commissioner Klotz seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Vote was 5-0 in favor.

Acceptance of Treasurer's Report—Commissioner Klotz made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report for the month of March 2015, as submitted by Jennifer Marsteller. Commissioner Watson seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Vote was 5-0 in favor.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS:

Commissioner Vlahos, Commissioner Swavely and Commissioner Watson had no comments.

Commissioner Klotz said a police officer was injured and he wished him well in his recovery.

Commissioner Foltz commented about an informational article from Penn State about grass clippings and stormwater. The article explains that grass clippings blown in the street eventually enter the street storm drains and how this adversely affects the environment. The article was shared on the Township's Facebook page and will be included with the trash bills mailed to residents. Education is Commissioner Foltz's first step in resolving this problem and, if the problem persists, he would like to consider passing an ordinance to levy fines on those who continue to do this.

Commissioner Foltz announced the Fish Rodeo will be held on Saturday, April 25, 2015 at Sunnybrook. Registration is at 7:30 a.m. and the fish kick-off is at 8:00 a.m.

Commissioner Foltz reported Mr. Wagner wrote a letter to Senator Rafferty regarding Comcast's rates. Senator Rafferty responded that the state government was given no authority to regulate the industry, regarding either price or content, and he urged us to contact U. S. Senators Bob Casey and Pat Toomey. Mr. Wagner advised letters were sent to both Sen. Casey and Sen. Toomey. Sen. Toomey advised they are not on the right committee but will talk to other senators.

Commissioner Foltz advised he and Ed Wagner will be attending an informational seminar on LED lighting on May 5, 2015.

Tom Troutman announced that Regional Planning has a Multiregional Greenway and Stewardship Study meeting on April 30, 2015 at Perkiomen Valley Middle School and all were invited to attend.

There being no further business, the public meeting adjourned 7:19 p.m. Next meeting will be held on Monday, May 4, 2015.

Respectfully submitted,



Michele M. Cappelletti
Township Secretary