

**LOWER POTTS GROVE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING**  
**Thursday January 19, 2023**

The Board of Commissioners of Lower Pottsgrove Township held their regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday January 19, 2023, at the Sunnybrook Ballroom Charleston Room, located at 50 N. Sunnybrook Road, Pottstown, Pennsylvania.

Board of Commissioners: Raymond W. Lopez, Earl E. Swavely, Robert Mohollen, Michael McGroarty, and William Keohane were present.

Edward C. Wagner: Manager, Jamie Ottaviano: Solicitor, and Nicole Varady: Secretary, were also present.

The regularly scheduled meeting was called to order by President Raymond W. Lopez at 6:30 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Commissioner Lopez stated that the meeting will be recorded, and he asked any speakers to give their names and address for public comments.

Commissioner Lopez asked Mr. Wagner to explain the reason for the change in venue. Mr. Wagner explained that the painters are finishing the painting in the meeting room and moving onto the foyer. While they are moving quickly, the area is in disarray and dusty from sanding the drywall. Commissioner Lopez commented that moving the meeting was a good decision.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Commissioner Keohane made the motion to approve the minutes of the January 3, 2023, Board of Commissioners meeting. Commissioner McGroarty seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

**REPORT FROM THE TOWNSHIP MANAGER:**

Mr. Wagner gave an update on the incident on Route 422 from 1/17. He reported a great team effort between Sanatoga Fire Company and Ringing Hill Fire Company as well as from Hawk Towing. PennDOT had concerns regarding the bridge integrity and the placement of the crane, but a plan was developed, and everyone worked well together to get the truck out safely.

**COMMENTS BY VISITORS: None**

**CORRESPONDENCE AND INFORMATION:**

**PennDOT Paving of High Street from Pleasant View Road to Berks County Line in West Pottsgrove Twp.**

Mr. Wagner gave an update that the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase will begin at Sanatoga Fire Company. This had been delayed since last year due to the installation of the Sanatoga Fire Department water line project which has been completed as well as gas connections to the Moove-In Self Storage site. Letting will begin on March 16th. Mr. Wagner has fielded some questions from residents including concerns regarding the extensive paving that has already taken place on High Street in Pottstown Borough. He was assured by the Pottstown Borough Manager that those sections would be skipped. He reported there are five (5) castings that need to be replaced and the township currently has two (2) on hand. The lead time is approximately 14 weeks, so they are difficult to get but the township is hoping to get a few more. John Fogel and his crew will be working on replacing them to save on cost.

### **Moody's Investors' Services Rating of Aa3 to Lower Pottsgrove Township**

Mr. Wagner explained that we are rated based on the capital improvement bond issue that the Township did in 2021. Lower Pottsgrove Township remains Aa3 which reflects the townships healthy finances, manageability leverage and strong residential income. The township's fixed cost ratio is exceptionally low at under 5% most years with very sound, conservative finances. They spoke very highly of us, and we are very pleased. Mr. Wagner has reviewed this with Commissioners Mohollen and McGroarty who are members of the Finance Committee.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

#### **Update on the Infrastructure Committee**

Commissioner Lopez began his update by reviewing the process for new members of the committee and the residents. The process formally began in 2014 when the township went over feasibility items such as increasing the building size at 2199 Buchert Road, looking into other buildings and looking into other lots. The Committee came up with the site at the intersection of High St. and Pleasant View Rd. The township received two bids to build there. The second was higher than the first and the first had to be thrown out because the contractor was unable to secure a bond. Current research shows that the project went from the projected \$8,000,000 to about \$11,000,000 which the commissioners have decided is too high. The Infrastructure Committee is going to regroup this month with its new member Commissioner McGroarty. He has replaced Former Commissioner Bruce Foltz who retired in August. Commissioner Lopez, Commissioner McGroarty, Mr. Wagner, Joe Groff and Chief Richard Bell will gather information to explore options and aggressively work to get the project moving again. Commissioner Lopez hopes to have an updated report the beginning of February.

### **SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT: NONE**

### **NEW BUSINESS: NONE**

### **RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES:**

#### **Resolution #1307-23 reappointing Michael Boccella as a Full Member to the Zoning Hearing Board**

Commissioner McGroarty made the motion to approve Resolution #1307-23 reappointing Michael Boccella as a Full Member to the Zoning Hearing Board. Commissioner Keohane seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

#### **Resolution # 1308-23 reappointing Todd Daniels as an Alternate Member to the Zoning Hearing Board**

Commissioner Swavely made the motion to approve Resolution #1308-23 reappointing Todd Daniels as an Alternate Member to the Zoning Hearing Board. Commissioner Keohane seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

#### **Resolution # 1309-23 reappointing Garry Schmoltze to the Vacancy Board**

Commissioner Keohane made the motion to approve Resolution #1309-23 reappointing Garry Schmoltze to the Vacancy Board. Commissioner Swavely seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

### **APPROVAL OF WARRANT #928 FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER 2022**

Commissioner Mohollen made the motion to approve Warrant #928 for the Month of December 2022. Commissioner McGroarty seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

### **ACCEPT THE TREASURER'S REPORT FOR DECEMBER 2022**

Commissioner Mohollen made the motion to approve the Treasurer's Report for the Month of December 2022. Commissioner McGroarty seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

### **COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS:**

Commissioner McGroarty thanked both Lower Pottsgrove Fire Companies as well as the others who responded and helped along the Route 422 corridor during the incident on Tuesday. He also extended thanks to the Fire Companies for handling the barn fire for all their time and skills. Commissioner McGroarty commended Commissioner Lopez and Mr. Wagner for keeping the board informed during both situations.

Commissioner Keohane echoed Commissioner McGroarty's sentiments.

Commissioner Lopez thanked Sunnybrook for letting the Board use the Charleston room for the meeting tonight. He pointed out that this is the first time since the new owner took over and Joel Richardson was very cordial and easy to work with.

Commissioner Swavelly recognized Mr. Wagner and his staff for their perseverance in dealing with the current working conditions in the Township Building during the renovations due to a broken fire sprinkler head back on December 26<sup>th</sup>.

Commissioner Mohollen announced the Fire Committee meeting was held last night so he would like to share the updates. Regarding the barn fire, the cause was found to be a faulty extension cord. The Fire Departments were on scene incredibly quickly and water trucks from about 10 other departments came to assist. John Fogel and his crew were also on scene salting the roads and assisting. The fire sparked up again 11 hours later when John Fogel was removing debris from the hay. Many of the volunteers were there for over 12 hours which is commendable, and he would like to extend thanks from the Commissioners for their efforts.

In regard to the incident on Route 422, although the road was closed longer than many would have liked, safety was the number one priority, and the Commissioners were pleased with the outcome.

Commissioner Mohollen informed the Commissioners that Sanatoga Fire Company is scheduled to refurbish Quint 58 so it will be out of service sometime over the next year. The cost is projected to be about \$500,000. The Fire Committee will work with neighboring fire companies to secure back up while the truck is out of service.

The Fire Committee also discussed installing Opticom at the traffic light at Buchert Rd. and Keim St. as it is the only light in the township that doesn't have it. Commissioner Lopez explained that the system changes the traffic lights for fire and ambulance traffic. Mr. Wagner will get a finalized quote ready for the February 6th Board of Commissioners meeting to consider.

Commissioner Mohollen reported that Lieutenant James also attended the meeting, and it has been reported that communication between the fire departments and the police has never been better. The fire police are requesting that if there is a long-term road closure, they have access to the storage facility for the police department, so they don't have to leave their equipment. The township equipment would be used in those cases. It will be up to the fire police and the police department to work out the details, but Commissioner Mohollen agreed that it makes sense.

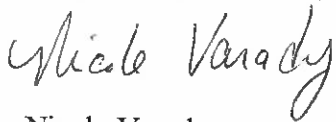
Joe Zlomek inquired about an update regarding the Fire Companies billing insurance companies since it's been about six (6) months since the resolution was passed. Commissioner Mohollen reported that Ringing Hill is collecting a little over half and Sanatoga has collected a little over \$7,000. Commissioner Mohollen reports it is working and is helpful.

Mr. Wagner reports that the township assessment continues to climb, we are over \$629,000,000 which is the highest it's been in a long time.

Mr. Ottaviano had no comments.

Commissioner Mohollen made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Keohane seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 in favor. There being no further business, the public meeting was adjourned at 6:51 P.M. The next meeting will be on Monday, February 6, 2023, at 6:30 P.M. at the Lower Pottsgrove Township Building.

Respectfully submitted,



Nicole Varady  
Township Secretary