

LOWER POTTS GROVE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**February 1, 2021**

The Board of Commissioners of Lower Pottsgrove Township held their regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, February 1, 2021 through live video feed. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. The following were in attendance:

Board of Commissioners: Bruce L. Foltz, Earl E. Swavely, Raymond W. Lopez, Robert Mohollen and Michael McGroarty were all present through live video feed.

Edward C. Wagner; Manager, William James; Acting Chief of Police, Charles Garner; Solicitor and Kathryn Vlahos; Secretary were also present through live video feed.

Commissioner Foltz stated the meeting will be recorded and viewed through live video feed through Zoom due to Covid-19 pandemic, he asked any speakers to give their name and address for public comments. The township is following social distancing guidelines recommended by the Center for Disease and Control to limit exposure.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Lopez made the motion to approve the minutes of the January 21, 2021 Board of Commissioners meeting. Commissioner Swavely seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Vote was 5-0 in favor.

COMMENTS BY VISITORS: Sharon Holloway 1485 Briarwood Lane— Mrs. Holloway stated that on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Pottstown Library she would like to express her sincere gratitude for Lower Pottsgrove Township's financial support. 2020 was an unusual year, despite being closed for almost six (6) months, 83 Lower Pottsgrove residents (58 adults and 25 children) became patrons. Over 9,500 items were circulated by Lower Pottsgrove residents. Books are perfectly safe to check out, they are quarantined for 3 days and sanitized when returned. There is an updated website that gives hours for scheduled browsing, curbside pickup and computer use. Passport applications can also be scheduled. Curbside pickup began in June and continues to be well received by the public. Mrs. Holloway read a note that was left for the Library from a grateful library patron that read "Many thanks to the hard-working employees of the Pottstown Regional Public Library. They were swamped with customers when I went to pick up my books the other day. The staff was moving non-stop delivering books with a smile. I especially loved the project bags they are offering to kids. I have always valued my public library, and after its recent closure I was reminded of what a great community service they provide. On Facebook there is a link for a little library for preschoolers can be found, there are books and songs around a specific topic which changes weekly. There is a new virtual cookbook club for adults. Mrs. Holloway stated that the Library Staff has worked hard to creatively provide services for all ages, and we could not do this without the townships support and she thanked the township.

Mrs. Holloway also stated that she really appreciates the timely snow plowing .

REPORTS:

Police

Acting Chief James presented the Police Report for the month of January 2021.

CALLS FOR SERVICE	1,311
ASSISTS:	
Given by Lower Pottsgrove PD	2
Received by Lower Pottsgrove PD	0
TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT:	
Violations Indicated	4
DUI Arrests	0
CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS:	
Violations Indicated	83
Adults Arrested	20
Juveniles Handled	0

- Acting Chief James stated that highlights off the report were that he had a meeting with Rob Jackson who is the upfitter and he stated that starting February 6, 2021 we are going to start upfitting the body camera docking stations as well as the modems for the new radios that county has put out. This will all be done over the next four Saturdays; he will work on two cars till it is finished.
- Detective Kienle was working with multi-jurisdictions including Montgomery County PD regarding our US Gas Station robbery. There is a suspect that was arrested and is pending charges on the robbery in the township.
- Detective Campbell was also working on a multi-jurisdiction case regarding retail theft from the Home Depot which was around \$10,000 over a number of stores. There is a subject that is in custody and awaiting charges as well.
- There was a SWAT callout this week and a subject was taken into custody over felony warrants that refused to come out of the house. It was resolved without any issues after a good hour to hour and half of talking with the subject before he decided to come out of the house and be taken into custody.
- There were human remains found in the wooded area off of Armand Hammer Boulevard. There is an identification of the subject and the case is pending the determination of the coroner.

Emergency Management

- Commissioner Lopez reported that there was one EOC activation during the month of January on January 31st for a major winter storm and one Declaration of Snow Emergency.
- Month of January they continuously monitor the number of Covid-19 cases in the state, county and township and track the number of cases.
- January 20th Commissioner Lopez attended EMC monthly training "Mass Casualty Response Training" presented by the center for domestic preparedness, though the Montgomery County Department of Public Safety.
- The Watch Desk was opened for three Public Safety Incident and two weather events in January.
- Commissioner Lopes has been working on the Incident Management Plan for Construction Project on Route 422. The plan will be completed this week.

- Commissioner Lopez reported that he has been working with Montgomery County Department of Public Safety to accept a variable message sign which the County has offered to Lower Pottsgrove Township.
- Commissioner Lopez also announced that he will be starting a new project which was mentioned during our budget review "The Information Technology System Contingency Planning". This is a disaster recovery plan for our servers, computers and electronic data that is stored on them. This project falls in line with Emergency Preparedness and will begin during the first quarter of this year. He will report of the progress of this project in his Emergency Management Report.

Fire Marshal

Mr. Wagner read the following statistics from the January 2021 Fire Marshal report:

Station	Total Calls	Total Hrs. of Service	Total Personnel Hrs.	Total Personnel Training Hrs.	Total Fundraising Hrs.
Sanatoga (Station 58)	30	31 hrs. 0min	67 hrs. 25min	257 hrs. 0 min	
Ringling Hill (Station 59)	31	28 hrs. 46min	69 hrs. 05 min	21 hrs. 0min	

(Hours are approximate)

Highway Public Works Department

Commissioner Foltz presented the January report.

C.O.G

Commissioner Foltz stated that there was nothing to report.

Engineering

Chad Camburn of Bursich Associates was not present at the meeting but provided a written Engineer Report in the boards packet that updated them on various projects and activities going on in the Township.

Solicitor

Solicitor Garner provided a written report with a synopsis of all projects his office worked on during the month of January and there was nothing to comment on at this time.

Park and Recreation

Mr. Wagner informed the board that they received comments back from Montgomery County Conservation District that were inconsistent with the process and the requirements that were talked about with them before. There is going to be a conference call later in the week to hopefully get it resolved. The township is anticipating going out to bid in the next 30 to 50 days for Phase II and III. The township did ask for an extension for the CDBG Grant and waiting to hear if it has been extended.

Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Planning Commission

Mr. Wagner stated that Thomas Troutman attended the meeting on January 27, 2021 where there were several ordinances for review. The Pottstown Keim Street Overlay District Ordinance that the committee reviewed. There were two various other issues with New Hanover which was a B2 Performance Standard Development as well as New Hanover's Draft Comprehension Plan. At this time Mr. Wagner has not heard any feedback from those ordinances.

Lower Pottsgrove Township Authority

Lower Pottsgrove Township Authority Meeting will take place on Monday February 8, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. and the topic of discussion will be to review the bids that were received on January 28, 2021 for Phase II of Woodland Drive. They received a total of ten bids the lowest bidder was Eagle Construction Inc. \$265,825.94, the highest bidder was Nyce Construction Services for \$475,000.00. This is for sewer main replacement for Blue Spruce Ct, Woodland Ct and the remainder of Woodland Dr between Woodland Drive and Mervine St.

Mr. Wagner also stated that there will be a preconstruction meeting on Wednesday February 3, 2021 to review the upgrades to the Sanatoga Lake Pump Station. The upgrades are part of the developer of Sanatoga Greene, they have to increase the pump capacity at Sanatoga Lake.

CORRESPONSE AND INFORMATION:

Proposed Traffic Sound Barrier along Route 422, Section M1B Project— Mr. Wagner stated that they are trying to get ahold of several homeowner associations, which the barrier will be installed along the Maple Glen, Maple Ridge, Hill Top Estates, Sanatoga Commons and Terraced Hill Development. It will not be the entire stretch on Route 422 from Sanatoga exit to Armand Hammer exit, but it will be bits and pieces when it gets close to residential properties.

OLD BUSINESS:

Payout for Officer Kenny for unused leave for 2020— Commissioner Lopez made a motion to payout Officer Kenny remainder Holiday, Personal & Vacation Time for 2020 in the amount of \$2,604.56. Commissioner Swavely seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. Vote was 5-0 in favor.

SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Advertise Oil & Chip— Commissioner Mohollen made a motion to advertise Oil & Chip Bids for consideration at the March 1, 2021 Board of Commissioners meeting. Commissioner McGroarty seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. Vote was 5-0 in favor.

Officer Weidenhammer reimbursement— Commissioner Swavely made a motion to approve Sgt. Weidenhammer request for reimbursement for tuition and books from St. Joseph University for \$5,797.32. Commissioner Lopez seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. Vote was 5-0 in favor.

RESOLUTION AND ORDINANCE:

Resolution #1236-21— Commissioner Lopez made a motion to appoint Kerry Whitehead as an alternate member of the Civil Service Commission. Commissioner Swavely seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. Vote was 5-0 in favor.

Ordinance 352— Solicitor Garner reminded the board that his office, actuaries, the manager, and the pension committee was tasked with amending the township pension ordinance. The new pension plan will eliminate the defined benefit plan that we currently have and institute a new defined contribution pension plan for all newly hired non uniform employees. This would not impact any existing township employees, just for future hires. This ordinance has been properly advertised and the board should have the ordinance and the complete plan in their packet for review. This will allow the township to better budget and provide financial responsibility for retirement plans. This would require the township contribution of 6% with the employee contributing 2%. Presently with the defined benefit plan the township seems to have long term exposure on liability on the back end of the plan and that would be eliminated with this new pension ordinance amendment.

Commissioner McGroarty made a motion to approve Ordinance 352 for the establishment of a Defined Contribution Retirement Plan for Non-Uniform Employees. Commissioner Mohollen seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. Vote was 5-0 in favor.

Warrant #904- Warrant No. 905 for January 2021 will be distributed via email for the Commissioners' review.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS:

Commissioner McGroarty – Commissioner McGroarty thanked Kerry Whitehead for stepping up and helping the township with the Civil Service Commission and it is much appreciated.

In the light of the storm, Commissioner McGroarty thanked Commissioner Lopez for keeping everyone informed. He also thanked the Police Department, Fire Department, Emergency Management, and the Road Crew that are keeping the residents safe.

Commissioner Mohollen – Commissioner Mohollen echoed all of Commissioner McGroarty's comments.

Commissioner Lopez— Commissioner Lopez stated that he appreciates all of the well wishes that he has received over the past month and a half.

Commissioner Lopez thanked all of the staff members who coordinate with him who provide reports and updates.

Commissioner Lopez also thanked Kerry Whitehead for joining the Civil Service Commission.

Commissioner Swavely – Commissioner Swavely echoed all of the other Commissioners comments and also thanked the staff and working so hard during the storm.

Commissioner Swavely also commended the Police Department on their successful SWAT call out that was on Keim Street. He would like to recognize the department for that.

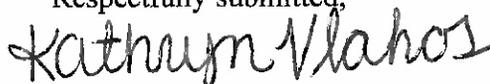
Commissioner Foltz— Commissioner Foltz thanked Kerry Whitehead for joining the Civil Service Commission.

Mr. Wagner— Mr. Wagner announced that he just received word that JP Mascaro will be closed tomorrow, and trash collection will resume on Wednesday. This will be posted on the Township's Facebook page and Website.

Solicitor Garner – had no comments.

There being no further business, the public meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m. The next meeting will be on Thursday, February 18, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,



Kathryn Vlahos
Township Secretary