

**LOWER POTTS GROVE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING**  
**Monday March 6, 2023**

The Board of Commissioners of Lower Pottsgrove Township held their regularly scheduled meeting on Monday March 6, 2023, at the Lower Pottsgrove Township Building, located at 2199 Buchert Road, Pottstown, Pennsylvania.

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

Edward C. Wagner: Manager, William James: Lieutenant, Lew Babel: Fire Marshal, Craig Bonenberger: Township Engineer, 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.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Commissioner McGroarty made the motion to approve the minutes of the February 23, 2023 Board of Commissioners meeting. Commissioner Keohane seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

**PRESENTATION:**

Julie Von Spreckelsen of Eastburn & Gray spoke regarding a request for a Text Amendment to the Gateway Mixed-Use (GMU) Zoning District on behalf of LFT Realty Group. She gave a brief re-cap of the project stating that it began in 2021 as a sketch plan for the redevelopment of the property at Evergreen Road and Castle Road that included a Wawa convenient store with fuel facilities, restaurants, a hotel and apartment buildings. The text amendment requests to expand the uses permitted in the district. Currently apartments are permitted with the first floor being comprised of either commercial or business offices. They are seeking a text amendment to remove that first-floor usage requirement for reasons including the declining demand for brick and mortar stores secondary to e-commerce and COVID as well as a declining demand for offices due to the increasing number of businesses allowing remote work. In addition, this parcel has a large slope making the first floor barely visible from the road which would not positively impact or support retail or business offices. Commissioner Swavelly asked how many additional apartment units would be added if this was approved. Ms. Von Spreckelsen advised that there are plans for approximately 200 apartments spread throughout three or four 4-story buildings. Commissioner Mohollen commented that because of the slopes, when looking at the proposed buildings from Evergreen Road, the first two floors will be barely visible if at all. He agreed that it is not conducive for retail use. Mr. Ottaviano advised that if the Commissioners are in support of the request, the next step would be to authorize Mr. Ottaviano by way of motion to advertise this draft ordinance for an upcoming hearing, likely in April, to allow the Planning Commission appropriate time for review. Commissioner Lopez asked for any questions or comments from the public. There were none.

Commissioner Mohollen made a motion to advertise the Text amendment to the Gateway Mixed-Use (GMU) Zoning District. Commissioner Keohane seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

**REPORT FROM THE TOWNSHIP MANAGER:**

Mr. Wagner reported that John Fogel reached out to Telco for an update regarding the left arrow at the intersection of Pleasantview Road and High Street. Once the materials are in, the project will move forward. Additional guiderail was installed last week on Snell Road and Pruss Hill Road around the bridges to close some openings. The doors for Moove-In Storage should arrive this week. The front façade will take approximately 2 weeks to complete pending weather.

**COMMENTS BY VISITORS: None**

**REPORTS OF OFFICIALS AND COMMISSIONS:**

**Police:**

Lieutenant James presented the Police report for the month of February 2023.

<b>CALLS FOR SERVICE</b>	<b>949</b>
<b>Directed Patrols / Extra Patrols</b>	<b>792</b>
<b>ASSISTS:</b>	
<b>Given by Lower Pottsgrove PD</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Received by Lower Pottsgrove PD</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT:</b>	
<b>Violations Indicated</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>Traffic Citations Issued</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>DUI Arrests</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Accident Investigations</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS:</b>	
<b>Violations Indicate</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Adults Arrested</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Juveniles Handled</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Youth Aid Panel/Reprimand Release</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Juvenile Court</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Adult Court/Citations (Juvenile)</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>MH/Involuntary Commitment</b>	<b>4</b>

During the month of February, two Full-Time Officers were sent to the FBI-LEEDA Training Institute for education. The department participated in the roving DUI patrol for the month. Car 4 has been decommissioned and is back on the Lower Pottsgrove Township property, stripped of all the equipment. Within the next few days, all decals will be removed, and it will be ready to be put on Municibid to be sold.

**Emergency Management:**

Commissioner Lopez reported there were no Emergency Operations Center activations for the month of February 2023. On February 15, 2023 he and Assistant Emergency Management Coordinator Amy Henderson attended an in-person meeting presented by Montgomery County which included a tour of the Emergency Management Equipment and the Radio Room to provide a comprehensive understanding of the resources available to municipalities for critical incidents. On February 22, 2023, County Representatives were on site at the Lower Pottsgrove Township Building to review and approve our Emergency Operations Plans. There will be some local level upgrades made to our Emergency Management software to better meet our needs. Planning is in

progress for the September 26, 2023, Limerick Exercise. Lower Pottsgrove staff members have been assigned to Emergency Operations Center positions and training specific to the exercise is being prepared. This year’s exercise will include a Hostile Action based scenario.

**Fire Marshal:**

Fire Marshal Lew Babel presented the February 2023 report.

<b>Station</b>	<b>Total Calls</b>	<b>Total Hrs. of Service</b>	<b>Total Personnel Hrs.</b>	<b>Total Personnel Training Hrs.</b>	<b>Total Fundraising Hrs.</b>
<b>Sanatoga (Station 58)</b>	28	32 hrs. 4 mins	190 hrs. 49 mins	138 hrs. 0 mins	none
<b>Ringling Hill (Station 59)</b>	29	33 hrs. 28 mins	168 hrs. 21 mins	117 hrs. 0 mins	none

Mr. Babel reported that a house at 217 Evergreen Road, scheduled to be demolished for improvement was acquired and utilized over the past two weeks for training among the fire departments. He thanked H&K for allowing the Township to use the building.

**Highway Public Works Department:**

Mr. Wagner presented the February report which includes completing the Snell Road pipe project, tree work at Ringling Rocks and Sanatoga Parks, cutting down trees along Snell Road, replacing street signs in the Woodgate Development, replacing school zone signs on Buchert and Pleasantview Roads, work on the Snell Road and Pruss Hill Bridges to address items on the inspection report, patching potholes, cleaning storm drains, road repairs and shoulder cutting on North Adams, replacement of two manhole castings on High Street to get ready for the High Street paving project which is scheduled be let out March 16, and began work on line painting projects for this year.

**Engineer:**

Craig Bonenberger of McCarthy Engineering Associates provided a written Engineer’s Report for the month of February 2023 updating the Board on various ongoing projects in the Township. Mr. Bonenberger informed the Commissioners that they are waiting for the contractor to complete the punch list for the Pruss Hill Bridge project. The grant close out items have been submitted to PennDOT. They received three quotes for the Sanatoga pump station streambank stabilization. Sanatoga Greene and 1753 Karen Drive are undergoing construction and inspections. Royal Farms submitted a revision that is under review, Sanatoga Greene grading plans are being reviewed and approved as they come in. Sanatoga Marketplace submitted a revision of the cost estimate and Wawa resubmissions are under review.

**Solicitor:**

Solicitor Ottaviano provided a written report with a synopsis of all projects his office worked on for the month of February. Due to the confidential and privileged information he will answer any questions during the Executive Session if necessary.

**Parks and Recreation:**

Mr. Wagner announced that the Annual Easter Egg Hunt is scheduled for April 1<sup>st</sup>. Amy Henderson will distribute the flyers to the schools this Friday. The newest practice field at Gerald Richards Park needs to be reseeded so the contractor will provide 100 pounds of rye and John Fogel will slit seed it next week to finish the punch list. The field should be ready for use in the fall.

**Planning Commission:**

Mr. Wagner reported Royal Farms, Wawa and the discussion for the proposed Ordinance for the Gateway Mixed-Use Text Amendment are on the agenda for the March 20 meeting.

**Lower Pottsgrove Township Authority:**

Mr. Wagner reiterated what Mr. Bonenberger said in that we have received three (3) maintenance quotes for the Sanatoga Streambank Project ranging from \$88,000 to \$114,000 that will be reviewed. In addition, the Township must purchase two (2) Telog meters, one as replacement for the Porter Road pump station and a new one for the Sanatoga Greene project.

**CORRESPONDENCE AND INFORMATION:**

Mr. Wagner reported that the PennDOT Bridge Safety Inspection letter was received February 28 and John Fogel has already addressed some of the items. The bridge inspections due are Sunnybrook Road Bridge on July 26, North Adams Street Bridge on April 18, Snell Road Bridge on November 9, and the older Pruss Hill Bridge on January 26, 2024.

**OLD BUSINESS: NONE**

**SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT: NONE**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Motion to award the Oil & Chip Bid to Martin Paving Lititz, PA for \$74,214.00**

Commissioner Mohollen made the motion to award the Oil & Chip Bid to Martin Paving Lititz, PA for \$74,214. Commissioner McGroarty seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

Mr. Zlomek asked for a list of roads and Mr. Wagner reported it will be Brookside Farms Development in its entirety.

**Motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding with Adventure Grove Inclusive Playground**

Mr. Ottaviano explained that the Memorandum of Understanding was prepared by Adventure Grove to identify the parties and the property for the proposed playground. All other details will have to be discussed and memorialized in a separate document.

Commissioner Keohane made the motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding with Adventure Grove Inclusive Playground. Commissioner McGroarty seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

**RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES:**

**Resolution #1310-23 Lower Pottsgrove Township Emergency Operations Plan**

Commissioner Mohollen made the motion to approve Resolution #1310-23 Lower Pottsgrove Township Emergency Operations Plan. Commissioner Swavely seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

**Resolution # 1311-23 Authorize the auction via Municibid of the 2018 Ford Explorer**

Commissioner Mohollen asked for the minimum reserve price which Mr. Wagner clarified as \$8,500.

Commissioner Swavely made the motion to approve Resolution #1311-23 to authorize the auction via Municibid of the 2018 Ford Explorer. Commissioner Lopez seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

**REVIEW OF WARRANT #930 FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY 2023**

Mr. Wagner announced it will be sent via email once completed.

**COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS:**

Commissioner McGroarty had no comments.

Commissioner Keohane acknowledged the performance of the Police Officers who responded to a call at Buchert Ridge on March 5. He received an email stating the officers were professional, kind and caring during a difficult situation.

Commissioner Mohollen thanked Commissioner Lopez for his hard work regarding the compilation of the Emergency Management Plan.

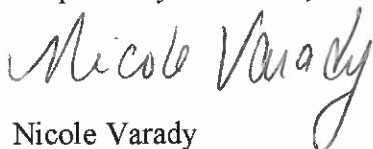
Commissioner Swavely echoed Commissioner Mohollen and inquired about what will happen when the County comes. Commissioner Lopez explained they will first approve the plan. Later, there will be a tabletop drill for staff and members of the Emergency Operations Center Roster. The hope is to have the software updated by that point.

Mr. Wagner thanked the staff for their assistance and patience during the recent renovations. It is complete and everyone is pleased with the results.

Mr. Ottaviano had no comments.

Commissioner Mohollen made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner McGroarty seconded the motion. The vote was 5-0 in favor. There being no further business, the public meeting was adjourned at 7:06 P.M. The next meeting will be on Thursday, March 23, 2023, at 6:30 P.M. at the Lower Pottsgrove Township Building.

Respectfully submitted,



Nicole Varady  
Township Secretary