

LOWER POTTS GROVE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**May 3, 2021**

The Board of Commissioners of Lower Pottsgrove Township held their regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, April 5, 2021 at The Sunnybrook Ballroom, 50 Sunnybrook Road, Pottstown Pennsylvania. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. The following were in attendance:

Board of Commissioners: Bruce L. Foltz, Raymond W. Lopez, Robert Mohollen and Michael McGroarty.

Edward C. Wagner; Manager, William James; Acting Chief of Police, Charles Garner; Solicitor Christopher Falencki; Township Engineer and Kathryn Vlahos; Secretary.

Commissioner Foltz stated the meeting will be recorded, 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.

PRESENTATION:

Randy Galiotto of Alloy 5 Bethlehem, PA on Municipal Campus Building-- Mr. Galiotto stated that he was there to present the Municipal Campus bidding results. Mr. Galiotto started his presentation by running through the budget, the yellow highlighted items are included in the bids that are being presented. General, Mechanical, Plumbing, and Electrical are all bids that have to be bid in multiple prime categories. The budget that was presented along the way was \$8,418,605.00. There were 25 total bidders for the project in each of these prime categories which means the bids were very competitive. The lowest responsible bidder was Rebcor Construction of Colleagueville for General Construction at \$5,451,006.00 the budget was \$5,523,420. HVAC there were a total of five bids and the lowest bidder was Spotts Brothers at \$714,000, the budget was \$705,230. Electrical lowest bidder was Shannon A. Smith at \$1,194,300, the budget was \$598,395. The lowest bidder for Plumbing was LGB Mechanical at \$504,025, the budget was \$331,040. The potential savings is \$249,400 which is some of the alternates that were bid on. There were ten separate alternatives to deleting overhead doors to a lesser quality carpet. Mr. Galiotto asked if anyone had any questions for him.

Commissioner Foltz stated that the Infrastructure Committee has reviewed these numbers thoroughly.

Commissioner Lopez asked Mr. Galiotto to give clarification on some of the numbers that were presented to the board and what was provided on the slides tonight.

Commissioner Foltz asked Solicitor Garner what the board's next steps are regarding the new municipal campus. Solicitor Garner stated that under the contract the board has 90 days from the date of opening to consider any kind of award. Solicitor Garner stated that he spoke with Mr. Galiotto today and he had some questions for him and he was not able to look at the bids in any detail yet. He has looked at the bid tabs and the total numbers, but he thinks it is in the township's best interest is to thoroughly review all the bids that were received and make sure that from an

architectural perspective, legal perspective the bids match the numbers that you saw. Solicitor Garner does not recommend the board to take any action tonight, he would like them to take it under advisement to allow Mr. Galiotto and Solicitor Garner to go over some of the items that they feel that they need to discuss. This will allow them to come back to the board with a firm recommendation with who is the lowest responsive bidder. The board knows what the gross numbers are they want to make sure that the bidders are qualified, presented the right information to the board per the bid documents. The next step is just to keep looking through the bids and the bidder qualifications and come back at a future meeting with the information in hand and say from a legal perspective, Mr. Galiotto's feels everything is in order now it is up to the board to decide if they want to move ahead with the project or not.

Commissioner McGroarty asked Mr. Galiotto when he is looking between the electrical and the plumbing, he is seeing \$700,000 more than was budgeted, then the end game was \$8.6 million. There is about a \$200,000 difference, is that the savings that got to the final number? Mr. Galiotto replied that some of the soft costs were in the bids as well.

The board thanked Mr. Galiotto for his time and his presentation.

Tom Troutman asked Mr. Galiotto what the cost was per a square foot. Mr. Galiotto replied that it is somewhere around \$280-\$290 square foot.

Tony Doyle expressed concerned on how the township is going to pay for the new building.

COMMENTS BY VISITORS:

Katherine Coppa 630 Stern Drive— Ms. Coppa reminded the board that two weeks ago herself and other parents, grandparents, teachers and staff of Pottsgrove School District appeared before the board to express their concern for the township to end the School Resource Officer (SRO) program. Since that meeting Ms. Coppa has spoken to some member of the Pottsgrove School Board and it became apparent to her that the school board has not wavered in their interest and intent to keep the SRO program alive in the schools. She would like the board to renew the SRO contract with the school. Ms. Coppa stated that the SRO program provides an opportunity for a positive role model in our schools and the opportunity for our children to build a relationship with local law enforcement. It also provides safety and security for our children, teachers and staff in our schools. She understands the boards concerns, but she feels there are other ways to cut costs without taking away from the kids.

Commissioner Foltz stated from the last meeting it was discussed that if the school wanted the SRO program, they need to provide a proposal to the board so that they can review it.

Robert Sutton 1985 Summit Way—Mr. Sutton stated the decision to remove the SRO is a decision that can affect the youth for years to come. Mr. Sutton reviewed with the board if a call was to come from the school a patrol officer would have to respond to the call which could be time consuming. The call will take an officer off of the street and it will directly affect the manpower that the board is concerned about. If there is an SRO, they would make it so that there is no direct affect to the manpower.

Commissioner Foltz stated that they have spent a lot of time discussing the SRO position and if they get a contract from the school, he will personally take a seriously consideration into it. He can not answer for the other board members, but he will consider anything that is brought before the board.

Commissioner McGroarty commented that all of the emotional concerns he understands. He still feels that their needs to be security in the school, which can be outsourced to a private company. The school district could create their own police department and hire someone with a police background to do this. He also commented about the email where a school board member who said the incremental cost of \$45,000 being .06% of the townships budget of almost 6 million dollars. Commissioner McGroarty's question to the school board if they are ok with .06% from the township why not look into their own budget, if they took .06% of the school boards 70-million-dollar budget that would be \$420,000 plus or minus. The school board would have more options with that amount of money in their budget. As the Commissioner of the township, they need to look at all of the needs of the residents of Lower Pottsgrove Township which includes all ages. His personal opinion is that there are other options that are out there that the school board could look at. He does not appreciate the board being called dishonest and stated that he appreciated Ms. Coppa's second email last week where she was a little more toned down. Commissioner McGroarty stated that pulling that officer from SRO will allow for the township to fully staff their police department.

Stephanie Rowe 1290 Whitespire Circle— Ms. Rowe asked for clarification stating she is hearing if the district would bring a proposal to the board, they will look at it, but then she also hearing that the board is not interested in continuing the program. Commissioner McGroarty stated that his personal opinion has not changed but others may have changed.

Jane Sutera 911 N Washington Street – Ms. Sutera wanted to convey that when you have an outside source it is not the same as someone that is affiliated with the police department, because the school and the police department build a wonderful bridge.

Gary Vandewegne 1963 Deer Ridge—Mr. Vandewegne stated that the board seems to be handling this is a diplomatic format and wanted to state that he is in favor of the SRO officer. He would also like the board to consider building the new municipal campus right at the highest construction costs at all time right now with the possibility of coming up short on materials. He would like the board to reconsider the timing of this project.

Thomas Neeson 1993 Deer Ridge Drive-- Mr. Neeson asked what the school is funding for the SRO program outside of salary. Mr. Wagner stated that they are not picking up the pension, or time off. He said that they cover some of the uniform and they pay a per diem rate. Mr. Neeson said it seems like the township and the school board are caught between each other and he would like to see the school board come to a township meeting to discuss this further.

Commissioner Mohollen commented that he sees this as a negotiation like another other thing that the board does. The negotiation starts when the board gets a contract proposed to them. He feels that the township needs the school to cover some additional costs.

Tony Doyle 1745 Kepler Road—Mr. Doyle expressed his concern for the amount of police vehicles the township has and how much they depreciate sitting in the parking lot.

Greg Delp 1765 Adams Street—Mr. Delp stated that they were there tonight because they saw some comments back and forth between commissioners at the March 25th Board of Commissioners meeting that hit a nerve with them. They had a long statement prepared but they decided that the best interest of everyone to formally sit down and have a meeting with all of the commissioners. This meeting will be so that they can discuss the issues that were brought up at that meeting. Mr. Wagner said that he will set that meeting up.

Chris Wilcox 741 White Pine Lane—Mr. Wilcox said that one of the things that is a concern is the public comments that the fire companies were involved in some communication back and forth and not receiving things the township was asking for is untrue. There has not been a meeting with the fire departments and the township for some time. There needs to be better communication and they need to know what is going on.

Commissioner Mohollen commented that in March 2020 was the last fire committee meeting with the fire departments. The quarterly meetings were set up, then Covid-19 happened, the committee would like to get back to those meetings. He hopes in the next month or so to get those meetings started again, he found them to be great.

Mr. Wagner asked how many representatives would be coming from the fire companies so that he can get a large enough venue. Keith Winmore Sanatoga Fire Company replied that it would be 3 people from each company, a total of 6 people.

REPORTS:

Police

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

CALLS FOR SERVICE	827
ASSISTS:	
Given by Lower Pottsgrove PD	5
Received by Lower Pottsgrove PD	2
TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT:	
Violations Indicated	41
DUI Arrests	2
CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS:	
Violations Indicated	55
Adults Arrested	11
Juveniles Handled	0

Acting Chief James stated that some highlights off of his report were the following.

- Officer Matthew Kemp worked with Ridge Support to get everything ready for the body worn cameras. As of now the body worn cameras are being worn by every officer in the police department as well as the administration when they go out on the street.

- Started the exam process, there were 29 candidates that submitted an application, 27 arrived for the test and 27 moved forward the physical fitness test which 18 applicants showed up and 15 passed that test.

Emergency Management

- Commissioner Lopez stated that there were no EOC activations during the month of April however they did have one Critical Incident on April 7th involving a trench rescue on Evergreen Road.
- The major focus remains on updating all of the emergency plans including the emergency operations plan, emergency contact list and radiological response plan. They are also preparing for the table top exercise that is scheduled for November 16, 2021. There will be a hospital action-based exercise.

Joseph Zlomek from the Sanatoga Post stated that he got emails about the critical incident involving a trench rescue stating their satisfaction with the emergency responders and all were glowing comments.

Fire Marshal

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

Station	Total Calls	Total Hrs. of Service	Total Personnel Hrs.	Total Personnel Training Hrs.
Sanatoga (Station 58)	33	52 hrs. 47 min	107 hrs. 24 min	106 hrs. 30 min
Ringling Hill (Station 59)	29	51 hrs. 20 min	101 hrs. 44 min	63 hrs. 40 min

(Hours are approximate)

Highway Public Works Department

Commissioner Foltz presented the April report.

C.O.G

Commissioner Foltz stated that there was nothing to report.

Engineering

Chris Falencki from McCarthy Engineering read his report for the month of April. Mr. Falencki stated that the entire McCarthy staff and team thanked the board for the appointment as the township engineer.

Solicitor

Solicitor Garner provided a written report with a synopsis of all projects his office worked on during the month of April. Mr. Garner stated that before the next meeting there will be a conditional use application for a proposed Royal Farms. On the agenda is the zoning application from Royal Farms where they are seeking some variance relief but on May 20, 2021 at 6:00 PM there will be a conditional use hearing held in front of them with a court reporter and they will be serving in a judicial capacity not as their legislative capacity. They will sit much like the zoning

units and there is a 98% occupancy and rent is going up since there is a high demand. They have spent a lot of time looking at other projects and what is happening in the last couple of years is an escalation in the level in the detail on the architectural side. The architectural is geared towards the market right now. The clubhouse is the major component of the apartment complexes where people go to work out and spend time every day. One of the most important leasing factors is having a gym that responds to those needs. The clubhouse has been upsized from 4,200 sq ft to almost 6,800 sq ft and that was done because there has been an amenity weigh in the market today. There is a salt water pool, barbeque kitchen area, grass area for children to play and there is sitting areas with outdoor fire places. Tim Cox from Meister Cox Architects is here to answer any of the boards questions they would have on the architectural plans. Mr. Cox stated that the style is like a modern farmhouse style which fits into the local history of the Pennsylvania countryside. It is board and batten cement board which is pretty durable and long-lasting materials. There will be real veneer brick opposed to the thin stick-on brick. Mr. Drauschak stated that when they approached the board before they had a class B rating building now, they are looking at a class A building it is low maintenance at the long-term stand point. Mr. Wagner asked Mr. Drauschak for a better drawing showing the brick so that they will be able to calculate the amount of brick on the building. The apartments will be built by Burkey Construction out of Reading, PA. Mr. Wagner said that the board can take the information that they received on the architectural and vote at the next meeting on it. Mr. Drauschak stated that he would like to keep the project moving along because they would like to break ground in June or July. Commissioner Foltz stated that they are missing a member of the board tonight and he would like to have all opinions before they vote. Commissioner McGroarty agreed with Commissioner Foltz to allow time for the board to review everything and have a full board they wait to vote until the May 20th Board of Commissioners Meeting. Commissioner Mohollen stated that he agreed with the other board members to allow for more time to review the plans.

SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ryan Lehman Agreement— Commissioner McGroarty made a motion to enter into agreement with Ryan Lehman to mow the fields at Bliem and Pleasantview Road. Commissioner Mohollen seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Vote was 4-0 in favor.

Hire Property Maintenance — Commissioner Mohollen made a motion to hire Joe Christman of MAX Resources of Trappe to conduct Property Maintenance complaints at the rate of \$65 an hour and not to exceed 10 hours per week through October 31, 2021. Commissioner McGroarty seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Vote was 4-0 in favor.

RESOLUTION AND ORDINANCE:

Warrant #908- Warrant No. 908 for April 2021 will be distributed via email for the Commissioners' review.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS:

Commissioner McGroarty – had no comments.

Commissioner Mohollen – Commissioner Mohollen thankful that Pleasantview Road is finished and repaved, it looks really nice.

Commissioner Lopez— had no comments.

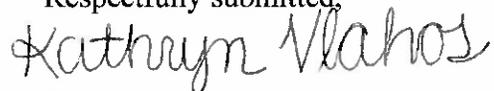
Commissioner Foltz— had no comments.

Mr. Wagner— had no comments.

Solicitor Hovey – had no comments.

There being no further business, the public meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m. The next meeting will be on Thursday, May 20, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. at The Sunnybrook Ballroom.

Respectfully submitted,



Kathryn Vlahos
Township Secretary