

**LOWER POTTS GROVE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING**  
**Thursday July 6, 2023**

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

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

Edward C. Wagner: Manager, Richard Bell: Police Chief, Lew Babel: Fire Marshal, Nick Perilli: Township Engineer, Jen Marsteller: Treasurer, Ken Picardi: 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 June 8, 2023 Board of Commissioners meeting. Commissioner Keohane seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

**PRESENTATION:**

Commissioner Lopez requested that the Commissioners join him in presenting a plaque to Mr. Joe Zlomek in recognition of his retirement as Managing Editor of the Former Sanatoga Post. Commissioner Lopez went on to praise Mr. Zlomek for his outstanding work and service to the Lower Pottsgrove Township citizens for the past fifteen (15) years. Mr. Zlomek took a moment to convey how honored he is to have covered the Township, and associate with the Lower Pottsgrove Commissioners and staff. He thanked everyone and expressed that not only will he remember that he was with neighbors, but he was with people he can call friends. Commissioner McGroarty thanked Mr. Zlomek for his years of service both reporting fairly on the Township, and for his work on the Park and Recreation Committee. On behalf of him and his wife, Commissioner McGroarty wished him an enjoyable retirement. Commissioner Mohollen thanked Mr. Zlomek for his perpetual fairness and wished him a happy retirement. Commissioner Keohane passed on his appreciation for helping him during his time on the Park and Recreation Board and continually since then, adding that his contributions will be missed. He wished him many years of happiness during his retirement. Commissioner Swavely, in wishing him a happy retirement, pointed out that Mr. Zlomek has been a true friend to the Township, and its residents and that he is grateful for his support. Mr. Zlomek thanked everyone again and promised that he won't be a stranger.

**REPORT FROM THE TOWNSHIP MANAGER:**

Mr. Wagner reviewed that the new Township website timeline was emailed to the Commissioners and various staff will be attending a brief virtual training session next week as part of the Go Live preparation. Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development has awarded the Township \$20,000 for the preemption system at the intersection of Buchert Road and Keim Street. The contract with Telco was executed last week but the

installation date has yet to be arranged. Fire Chiefs from Sanatoga Fire Company and Ringing Hill Fire Company were both notified. John Fogel received confirmation from Sacks & Sons that paving will begin in August. Although an exact date has not been announced, the affected roads are Heather Lane, Bradley Way, Medical Drive which will be done at night, Heritage Drive, and a portion of Industrial Highway. The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) traffic counts have been placed to measure traffic volume at various locations around the Township. Commissioner Mohollen asked if there was any update regarding the paving of High Street, noting that it hasn't been started in Pottstown. Mr. Wagner informed the Commissioners that he does not have a confirmed date that it will start but Mr. Fogel will complete the replacement of the castings next week.

**COMMENTS BY VISITORS:**

**Jon Calle 1559 N. Pleasant View Road** recapped that a few meetings prior, there was discussion regarding the traffic count locations DVRPC chose. He explained that as the owner of a corner lot on N. Pleasant View Road, he is concerned about the danger, noting that the speed limit sign has been knocked over many times, cars have lost bumpers, lights, and side view mirrors. Mr. Calle explained that Mr. Wagner provided him with contact information, and he was able to get a traffic counter on his corner as the first step to get PennDOT to alleviate the dangerous conditions.

**Tony Doyle 1745 Kepler Road** asked Chief Bell if the Township has ever purchased drones. Chief Bell explained that the Township has access to them if needed through Montgomery County. Commissioner Lopez explained further that the county has five (5) drones, three (3) tethered and two (2) that can be operated by individuals with an FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) license. Mr. Doyle also inquired if there was any update regarding the property at High Street and Pleasant View Road. Commissioner Lopez explained that it is premature to put the property up for sale as we haven't acquired the new building yet. Mr. Doyle announced how pleased he is with the arrow at the intersection of High Street and Pleasant View Road but asked if the Township can adjust the timing to add a few seconds to the arrow so more cars can get through. Commissioner Lopez explained that the traffic light is part of the closed loop system in Pottstown so the timing for the light must stay in conjunction with the other lights, not leaving much room for variance.

**REPORTS OF OFFICIALS AND COMMISSIONS:**

**Police:**

Chief Bell presented the Police report for the month of June 2023.

<b>CALLS FOR SERVICE</b>	<b>973</b>
<b>Directed Patrols / Extra Patrols</b>	<b>424</b>
<b>ASSISTS:</b>	
<b>Given by Lower Pottsgrove PD</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Received by Lower Pottsgrove PD</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT:</b>	
<b>Violations Indicated</b>	<b>174</b>
<b>Traffic Citations Issued</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>DUI Arrests</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Accident Investigations</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS:</b>	
<b>Violations Indicate</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Adults Arrested</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Juveniles Handled</b>	<b>0</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>0</b>
<b>MH/Involuntary Commitment</b>	<b>4</b>

Chief Bell announced that the Civil Service Commission will meet July 7 at 10:00 A.M. to discuss personnel matters and possible testing procedures for hiring a new officer when a position becomes available. Commissioner Mohollen questioned the increase of overtime for the month of June. Chief Bell explained that there is an officer out on leave for a planned medical procedure; in addition, an officer from that same shift went out with a non-work related off duty injury. Unfortunately, with both officers out from the same shift, it caused significant shortness on the shift that required overtime to safely cover. He added that the issue should resolve itself as one of the officers is coming back next week. Commissioner Mohollen added that Chief Bell consistently does an incredible job managing the Department.

**Emergency Management:**

Commissioner Lopez reported there were no Emergency Operations Center (EOC) activations for the month of June 2023. On June 1, Commissioner Lopez reviewed the roles and duties for the upcoming Limerick Exercise with Nicole Varady and Amy Henderson. The monthly Emergency Management Training Meeting was held on June 21 where Commissioner Lopez and Ms. Henderson received certified training on the duties and responsibilities of the Emergency Management Coordinator and Area Office Orientation for Emergency Management Coordinators. Both training courses were provided by PEMA at no cost to the Township. Ms. Henderson has completed the first segment of her training towards receiving her Municipal Associates Certification. Commissioner Lopez recognized that Ms. Henderson has been working hard to obtain her certifications and meet the deadlines and has done an excellent job. He went on to explain that Ms. Varady is involved as a back-up for Amy should the need arise. Commissioner Lopez reported that the Emergency Management Facebook page continues to be successful and receiving positive feedback. He also announced that as preparations for the September Limerick Exercise continue, there will be a tabletop exercise in August to prepare. Commissioner Keohane inquired about the date and time in hopes that he can attend. Commissioner Lopez announced it will be at 10:00 A.M. on August 23.

**Fire Marshal:**

Fire Marshal Lew Babel presented the June 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>	35	22 hrs. 24 min	100 hrs. 44 mins	112 hrs. 45 mins	31 hrs. 25 mins
<b>Ringling Hill (Station 59)</b>	26	16 hrs. 06 mins	49 hrs. 09 mins	343 hrs. 15 mins	10 hrs. 00 mins

**Highway Public Works Department:**

Mr. Wagner presented the June 2023 report prepared by John Fogel which includes replacing six (6) manhole castings for paving, tar sealing Brookside Farms and scratch coating for oil and chip on Potter Drive. Parks and guide rails were sprayed for weed control, trees were trimmed along

Township roads, trees were cleared along the trails at Shire Drive and the Township parks were cut. The Public Works Department repaired the guide rail at Pruss Hill Road, replaced a steel storm sewer pipe also on Pruss Hill Road, cleaned storm sewers, serviced the mowers and the 19 F-350 and rewired the trailer lighting on a tow behind trailer.

**Engineer:**

Nick Perilli of McCarthy Engineering Associates provided a written Engineer's Report for the month of June 2023 updating the Board on various ongoing projects in the Township. There were no questions.

**Treasurer:**

Jen Marsteller provided a written report for the month of June 2023. The total collected is about 96.49% of the taxes which is comparable to last year at this time which was 96.33% and consistent with previous years. There were no questions.

**Solicitor:**

Solicitor Picardi provided the written report from Solicitor Ottaviano with a synopsis of all projects his office worked on for the month of June. 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 if the Summer Concert Series is cancelled on Sunday due to weather, it will be held Monday 7/10 at 7:00 P.M.

**Planning Commission:**

Mr. Wagner announced that the Township Planning Commission meeting for July has been cancelled. Commissioner Lopez explained that he attended the Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Planning Committee Meeting on June 28 via Zoom. The purpose of his attendance was to obtain a letter of support for a grant for the repair of the North Adams Street Bridge. The bridge project costs \$606,674.10; and the construction costs are \$470,290.00 so the Township is looking to get assistance from the county. Douglas Township made a motion in favor of the letter of support and West Pottsgrove seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved. There is currently a weight restriction on the bridge. Commissioner Mohollen asked if the bridge will be totally shut down during the work. Commissioner Lopez and Mr. Wagner confirmed that the repairs will require a total shut down. Commissioner Swavely asked Chief Bell if there are any resources available should there be weight issues before the work begins. Chief Bell advised that the quarry would be an option to utilize the platform scale. The Township doesn't currently have portable scales and he is the only Officer who is a certified weighmaster. If issues arise and there are consistently overweight vehicles using the bridge, he will contact the Department of Transportation or the State Police to come out to assist.

**Lower Pottsgrove Township Authority:**

Mr. Wagner reported that the Authority is meeting on Monday July 10. There is an upcoming sewer project on Hilltop Road to fix leaking laterals due to the outdated Terracotta pipes. Phase 1 will consist of Buchert Road to almost Cedar Hill Road. For Phase 2, the Township applied for an H2O Grant through the Pennsylvania Commonwealth. Phase 2 will include Cedar Hill Road to

Brooke Road and out to Keim Street. Fred Ebert of Ebert Engineering ran the numbers for the first six (6) months of 2023, the flows are down 33% from last year. The drought and lack of snow last winter could have affected the numbers, but the evidence shows that the liner projects and lateral ordinance are having a positive impact on the flow. Last year, there was only one (1) wet Sanitary Sewer Overflow (SSO) and (1) dry SSO where the main was clogged with rags. This year, to date, we have had zero.

**CORRESPONDENCE AND INFORMATION:**

**2023-05 Zoning Hearing Application for 1994 Quail Lane in the R-2 Residential District. The Applicant is requesting a variance to 250-59. B to encroach in the side yard setbacks for the construction of a new deck.**

Mr. Wagner explained that the homeowner is replacing an existing deck. The subdivision met the old Zoning requirements regarding property size, so relief is needed from the side yard setbacks. The decision will be deferred to the Zoning Hearing Board.

**2023-06 Zoning Hearing Application for 1438 Buchert Road in the R-2 Residential District. The Applicant is requesting a special exception to 250-21 and a variance from 250-51. B for accessory garage and building height.**

Mr. Wagner explained that the 30' x 30' proposed garage requires a special exception because it is between 600 and 1000 square feet. The maximum height permitted in the R-2 District is 15 feet and the homeowner is asking for 17 feet, so the variance is needed as well. The decision will be deferred to the Zoning Hearing Board.

**OLD BUSINESS: NONE**

**SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT: NONE**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Confirmation approval for Fire Police to assist with the Norco Fair July 3-8**

Commissioner Lopez explained that this was approved through a letter from the Fire Chief, so the Board of Commissioners is being asked to ratify the action that was already taken.

Commissioner Mohollen made a motion to confirm approval for the Fire Police to assist with the Norco Fair July 3-8. Commissioner Swavely seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

**Confirmation approval for Fire Police to assist with the July 4<sup>th</sup> Waltz's Golf Farm Fireworks Event**

Commissioner Lopez explained that this was also approved through a letter from the Fire Chief, so the Board of Commissioners is being asked to ratify the action that was already taken.

Commissioner Mohollen made a motion to confirm approval for the Fire Police to assist with the July 4<sup>th</sup> Waltz's Golf Farm Fireworks Event. Commissioner Keohane seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

**Motion to authorize McCarthy Engineering to begin surveying and applying for DEP GP11 Permit for the N. Adams Street Bridge with a not to exceed figure of \$25,000.**

Mr. Perilli explained that a large factor in having grant applications approved is project readiness. By beginning the permit process through the Department of Environmental Protection it shows the county that the Township is serious about applying and acting. The more action taken before we have the grant, the better it looks. Commissioner Mohollen confirmed that this

procedure does not need to be repeated, it can be used whether the grant is approved for this year or not.

Commissioner McGroarty made a motion to authorize McCarthy Engineering to begin surveying and applying for DEP GP11 permit for the N. Adams Street Bridge with a not to exceed figure of \$25,000. Commissioner Mohollen seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

#### **RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES:**

##### **Resolution 1320-23 authorizing the submission of a grant application for the County Transportation Program N. Adams Street Bridge.**

Commissioner McGroarty made a motion to adopt Resolution 1320-23 authorizing the submission of a grant application for the County Transportation Program N. Adams Street Bridge. Commissioner Keohane seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

##### **Ordinance 364 Chapter 165 Peddling & Soliciting for consideration and discussion**

Mr. Wagner explained that the Ordinance was advertised in the Pottstown Mercury on June 13. Solicitors Picardi and Ottaviano prepared the Ordinance, cleaning up Chapter 194 and making it more stringent.

Commissioner Keohane made a motion to adopt Ordinance 364 Chapter 165 Peddling and Soliciting. Commissioner Mohollen seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

#### **APPROVAL OF WARRANT #933 FOR THE MONTH OF MAY 2023**

Commissioner Mohollen made a motion to approve Warrant #933 for the month of May 2023. Commissioner McGroarty seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

#### **ACCEPT TREASURER'S REPORT FOR MAY 2023**

Commissioner Mohollen inquired if the Treasurers' reports for both May and June can be accepted together. Solicitor Picardi advised that they can.

Commissioner Mollen made a motion to accept the Treasurers' reports for May and June 2023. Commissioner McGroarty seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. The vote was 5-0 in favor.

#### **REVIEW OF WARRANT #934 FOR THE MONTH OF JUNE 2023**

Mr. Wagner announced that it is in progress.

#### **COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS:**

Commissioner McGroarty had no comments.

Commissioner Keohane voiced his excitement to get the Summer Concerts going and hopes the weather cooperates.

Commissioner Mohollen thanked Mr. Wagner for working with our State Representative Joe Ciresi to get the funds for the preemption system as it will play a role in the safety of the community. Mr. Wagner added that he sent a message to Representative Ciresi thanking him.

Commissioner Swavely had no comments.

Mr. Picardi voiced how nice it is to be back in the Township where he lived for twenty (20) years.

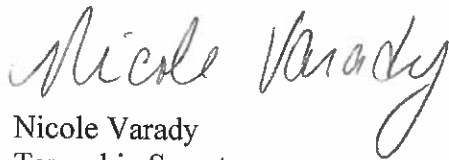
Mr. Wagner pointed out that Nicole Varady has taken an active interest in learning about Zoning and is doing a great job. He and Joe Groff have relayed that to her but would like the Commissioners to know as well. They thanked her for her efforts.

Commissioner Lopez announced that currently there is no business for July 20. He asked if everyone agreed to cancel the next meeting. Commissioner Mohollen confirmed that the next meeting will be August 7.

Commissioner Lopez officially announced that the July 20 Board of Commissioners meeting has been cancelled so the next meeting will be Monday August 7, 2023, at 6:30 P.M. at the Lower Pottsgrove Township Building.

Commissioner Mohollen made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner McGroarty seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. The vote was 5-0 in favor. There being no further business, the public meeting was adjourned at 7:23 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nicole Varady". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Nicole Varady  
Township Secretary