

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS of NETHER PROVIDENCE TOWNSHIP – December 3, 2020

Virtual Meeting held via Zoom and shown on YouTube

A public meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Nether Providence Township was called to order at 7:30 PM on Thursday, December 3, 2020 via Zoom call and shown on YouTube.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Commissioner Cooper
Commissioner Garson
Commissioner Knapp
Commissioner McKenzie
Commissioner King (arrived mid-meeting)
Commissioner Molloy

ALSO PRESENT:

Dave Grady Township Manager
David Fiorenza Finance Director

EXCUSED: Commissioner O'Connor

Mr. Knapp chaired meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Mr. Knapp made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 22, 2020 meeting, and Mr. Cooper seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Public Comment – There was no public comment.

Agent Designation – Ms. McKenzie noted that the Township was awarded a grant under the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, and FEMA requires that an agent be designated. Ms. McKenzie made a motion to pass resolution 2020-17 that David Grady, Township Manager, be authorized to execute for and on behalf of Nether Providence Township for this grant program. Mr. Knapp seconded, and the motion passed 5-0.

New Bank Account – Ms. McKenzie said that as part of the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, the Township is required to have a bank account dedicated to the funds for the program. Ms. McKenzie made a motion to authorize the opening of a new PLGIT Bank Account, and Mr. Knapp seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

Survey for Bullens Lane Property – Ms. McKenzie said the Township is being donated land along Bullens Lane, and as part of the title insurance, a survey may be needed. She said Solicitor Robert Scott is working to have the requirement waived. She made a motion to authorize the \$3,600 survey from Catania Engineering, contingent upon the need for the survey, and Mr. Knapp seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

Moore Road Payment – Ms. McKenzie said that the Township will be making a payment to Marino Corporation for the sidewalk construction on Moore Road. This will be the end of the federal grant funding, which was made available due to construction overages, and the remaining funds would be paid from the Township's budgeted portion of \$45,000.

Advertisement for Part-Time Administrative Position – Ms. McKenzie said the Township would be hiring a part-time administrative person, and she made a motion to authorize Mr. Grady to advertise for the position. Mr. Knapp seconded, and the motion passed 5-0.

Stop Sign at Moylan Avenue and Oakland Avenue – Mr. Knapp made a motion to advertise the installation of a stop sign on Oakland Avenue at Moylan Avenue. Mr. Molloy seconded, and the motion passed 5-0.

Review of 2021 Budget – Ms. King arrived at this point. Ms. McKenzie said the 2021 budget had largely been unchanged since prior meetings, except for a few items. She asked Mr. Grady to review some of the changes. Mr.

Grady said Mr. Fiorenza had performed police salary projections for the remainder of 2020, and it appears that the Township will be about \$120,000 under budget, partially due to overbudgeting and partially from Heart and Lung Wages, which are paid under the liability insurance coverage. Mr. Grady said this savings could be set aside in lieu of budgeting for the severance payouts for three officers who are expected to retire in the next couple of years. This would be a reduction of about \$51,000. Mr. Molloy asked about the timing of retirements for those in the DROP program. Mr. Grady explained that the officers can retire at any point in the three-year period, but they cannot stay longer than three years. Mr. Molloy asked if money should be set aside for the hiring of new officers once those officers retire, and Ms. McKenzie said the Township would be saving money since the new officers would come in at a lower salary rate. Mr. Grady also noted that the Possum Hollow road widening, and speed humps planned for 2021 were removed from the General Fund budget as they could be paid from the Liquid Fuels Fund. Mr. Knapp asked about the collective bargaining costs for the police contract. Mr. Grady explained that \$33,000 was budgeted, which was based on the costs from 2018 and 2019 during the last contract negotiations. Mr. Molloy asked about the tree maintenance cost, as 2021 was the first year for which that had been budgeted. Mr. Grady explained that 2020 had an extraordinary number of trees that had to be cut down, around 15 to 16 trees, which was significantly more than the one or two trees in past years.

Mr. Knapp asked about the Township’s fund balance, and Mr. Fiorenza explained that the projection is to have a fund balance of around 5% of expenditures, and the goal is to get closer to 8-10%. Ms. McKenzie said that the Township’s goal in the past was to be closer to \$700,000 and \$800,000, which is in line with the 10% recommendation. Mr. Grady explained that obtaining the short-term loan was beneficial, since the Township is still owed about \$700,000 in grant funds, and that is a large portion of the Township’s cash. Mr. Knapp said he sees communities that do not have tax increases for years, but they draw down on the fund balance in the process, and that eventually becomes a problem.

Mr. Cooper asked Mr. Grady about the idea of a large-scale road resurfacing project. Mr. Grady said he, Mr. Fiorenza, and the Township Engineer would need to discuss the concept in further detail and perform a financial analysis. This discussion could happen in 2021, but the program would not be instituted until a subsequent year. Mr. Knapp asked about technology improvements, and specifically, the agenda software. Mr. Grady said the goal would be to spend the money in 2020, if possible. Mr. Knapp also asked about the sewer evaluation, and Mr. Grady said that the \$15,000 estimate is included in the sewer fund. Mr. Knapp asked if there are restrictions, now that the budget has been advertised, on how much expenses can be adjusted. Mr. Grady said there are no restrictions on the reductions, but there are restrictions on expense increases, meaning more than 10% of the total budget or 25% of sections of the budget. Ms. McKenzie explained that the Township received the total property assessment number the day before, and this would be the basis for resetting the millage. The Township is working through those numbers, and a resolution would be passed on December 10th to reset the millage at a revenue-neutral rate for the Township, although individual properties will see increases and decreases based on their reassessed value.

Approval of Preliminary Budget – Ms. McKenzie made a motion to approve the preliminary 2021 budget. Mr. Knapp seconded. Mr. Molloy thanked everyone for the work on the budget. Mr. Cooper wanted to make sure that budget was actually available for inspection at the Township Building, and Mr. Grady said it would be upon request. The motion passed 6-0.

General Government	\$877,215	
Police	\$2,773,299	
Public Safety	\$542,654	
Public Works	\$1,513,074	
Culture and Recreation	\$212,255	
Debt Service	\$560,104	
Miscellaneous	\$1,191,196	
Total		\$7,699,797

Ms. McKenzie made a motion to authorize advertising the 2021 budget, and Mr. Molloy seconded. The motion carried 6-0.

The meeting was adjourned around 9:15 PM.