

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS of NETHER PROVIDENCE TOWNSHIP – November 12, 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, November 12, 2020 via Zoom call and shown on YouTube.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Commissioner Cooper
Commissioner Garson
Commissioner Knapp
Commissioner McKenzie
Commissioner King
Commissioner O'Connor
Commissioner Molloy

ALSO PRESENT:

Dave Grady	Township Manager
David Fiorenza	Finance Director
Chief Splain	Police Chief
Charles Catania	Township Engineer

Mr. Knapp chaired meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Mr. Knapp made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 1, 2020 meeting, and Mr. Molloy seconded. The motion passed 7-0. Mr. Knapp made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 8, 2020 meeting, and Mr. Garson seconded. The motion passed 7-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – There was no public comment.

SOLICITORS REPORT – Mr. Scott had nothing to report.

ENGINEERS REPORT – Mr. Catania reported that the 310 Wallingford Avenue development would have an escrow release at the next meeting.

TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT – Mr. Grady said there were free upcoming flu shot clinics in Springfield, Darby, and Secane. The Leiper House would not be having its annual Colonial Christmas due to the COVID crisis. He said fencing was going to be added around the Bullens Lane playground for increased safety. An American Red Cross Blood Drive is scheduled for December 30th at the Township Building. He shared a Delaware County COVID update. Mr. Knapp made a motion to allow Birchrun Builders, as the agent, apply for a highway occupancy permit on behalf of the Township for the property at East Brookhaven Road, and Mr. Cooper seconded. The motion passed 7-0. Mr. Grady noted that provisional ballot challenge hearings were to be held on November 13th at Delaware County. The list is available on the County website.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE REPORT - Matthew Garson

HB531 – Community Solar – Mr. Garson said several Commissioners have received emails from residents asking the Board to support House Bill 531, which is an effort to deregulate community solar. Mr. Garson asked Mr. Grady to circulate the bill again among the Board.

Parks Commission Budget Request – Mr. Gary Silver, as the Chair of the Parks Commission, presented a budget request before the Board. The total request was for \$47,000. This included new signage, landscaping for the parks, lighting, tree assessment and removal, parking lot improvements, development of rain gardens, and new trash cans. Since the tree maintenance was included in the proposed General Fund Budget, he said the Parks Commission request was closer to \$32,000. He thanked the Board for their time. Mr. Garson thanked Mr. Silver and the Parks Commission for all their work, especially in the recent development of Furness Park.

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE – Kaitlin McKenzie

Police Pension Restatement – Ms. McKenzie noted that the pension restatement is still in the negotiations phase with the Township and police union, and the goal is to have this wrapped up soon.

2021 DVHT Wellness Grant Usage – Ms. McKenzie explained that the Delaware Valley Health Trust would be discontinuing its program where it would pay for employee wellness incentives, such as Fitbits or standing desks, but there are still funds available for 2020. Those funds can be used for purchasing new Fitbits or standing desks, for example, or they could be applied to the 2021 premium. Ms. McKenzie made a motion to apply the \$3,722 to the employee wellness incentives to be determined by the Manager, and Mr. Cooper seconded. The motion passed 7-0.

IT Equipment for Meetings – Ms. McKenzie explained that new IT equipment would be needed in order to keep streaming the meetings once the Board resumes meeting in person. The estimate is \$12,546.86, and Ms. McKenzie said there is a \$6,000 contribution from Verizon which, Mr. Scott noted, must be used for telecommunications. Ms. McKenzie made a motion to accept the estimate from GO2 for \$12,546.86, and Mr. Molloy seconded, and the motion passed 7-0.

Accounting Policies and Manual – Ms. McKenzie said Mr. Fiorenza had prepared an accounting policies and manual, and the goal is to approve by the end of 2020.

2021 Budget – Mr. Grady explained there were a number of changes to the General Fund budget in order to bring about savings, including savings in legal and collective bargaining, expectations of continued savings in gasoline and diesel, and a reduction in tree maintenance expenses. The current estimate was just under a 4% increase in the budget, with the expectation of decreasing further as more numbers are adjusted. In the Motor License Fund, Mr. Grady said there had not been any major changes, the total expected revenue is \$391,000. Mr. Grady said the Sewer Fund will not be finalized until the CDCA numbers are available. The current estimate is an 8.21% increase, and Mr. Grady said the Township does not have much control over these numbers. Mr. Cooper asked if there was enough money in the fund in the event that repairs are needed, and Mr. Grady said he believes there is if the trends from past years continue. Mr. Catania and Mr. Fiorenza agreed with the assessment. Mr. Grady presented the Grants Fund Budget, which has revenues higher than expenses because of the timing of when revenues are received as opposed to when they are spent. Ms. McKenzie did the first reading of the budget:

General Government	\$877,215	
Police	\$2,824,299	
Public Safety, Health, Welfare	\$493,460	
Public Works	\$1,431,074	
Culture, Recreation	\$150,759	
Debt Service	\$562,604	
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$1,380,646	
Total:		\$7,720,057

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE REPORT – Robert O’Connor

Mr. O’Connor had stepped away, so Mr. Knapp gave the report.

Road Resurfacing – Mr. Knapp said that any road resurfacing requests from Board members should be submitted to the Township Engineer and Township Manager, and the streets will be added to the evaluation list.

Stop Signs – Mr. Knapp said the Board would hold off on advertising the ordinance for the stop signs at Oakland Avenue and Moylan Avenue until there are other items that also need to be advertised.

Leaf Collection – Mr. Knapp said leaf collection has begun and will continue until mid-December.

Cub Cadet Mower – Mr. Grady said the Media Babe Ruth League had expressed interest in purchasing the Cub Cadet Mower for \$1,400. Mr. Scott said a resolution should be passed and the Township should make sure that the sale price is in line with market value. It was decided to table the discussion until a later meeting.

COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT REPORT- Stephanie King

Media-Smedley Trail Study – Ms. King said the Delaware County Planning Department hosted a public meeting on Tuesday, November 10th to get public input on the draft plan. Delaware County was awarded a \$35,000 grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) to prepare a feasibility study for the Media-Smedley Connector Trail. This trail, which was identified in the County’s Open Space, Recreation, and Greenway Plan, will serve as a major east-west connection in the countywide trail network. It has the potential to directly link three county parks, multiple local parks, and five municipalities, including Nether Providence. As the plan currently shows, the route would go through Surrey Road and the Chesley office park.

Library Board Representative – Ms. King said the Helen Kate Furness Library Board has two Nether Providence representatives that sit on the Board: Donna Ferruzzi and formerly Jane McNerney, who is retiring. She thanked Ms. McNerney for her years of service in representing the Township on the library board. The library board is

recommending that Kelly Kaminski, who is their assistant treasurer and a Township resident, be the appointee. She said the library prefers that the representative be someone who is already involved with the library, and it has been customary that the Helen Kate Furness Library Board nominate that person. Ms. King made a motion to appoint Kelly Kaminski as the Nether Providence Township resident representative on the Helen Kate Furness Library Board, and Mr. Molloy seconded. The motion passed 7-0.

CDBG Application – Ms. King said the Community Development Block Grant is meant to help areas that meet the low-to-moderate income thresholds, and the Garden City Manor is currently the only area that qualifies. The application for the 2021 Community Development Block Grant program is due on January 6th. She noted that in the past, the Township performed infrastructure improvements, such as repaving roads and improving storm or sanitary sewers. The project is meant for public improvements which include streets, sidewalks, curbs and gutters, parks, playgrounds, water and sewer lines, flood and drainage improvements, parking lots, utility lines, and aesthetic amenities on public property such as trees, sculptures, pools of water and fountains, and other works of art. Ms. King suggested considering improvements for Hepford Park. Ms. McKenzie said she would like to see improvements to the fence around Hepford Park. Ms. King noted a public hearing would be held on December 10th.

BUILDING AND ZONING COMMITTEE REPORT – Max Cooper

Media Walk Development – Mr. Cooper said work continues on the site. The contractor made adjustments on Tuesday, and this was after several reviews by the County Conservation District and Township Engineer in response to the runoff that was coming from the site on Wallingford Avenue and the stream along Denis Lane. The developer is in the process of submitting building, electrical, mechanical, plumbing, and fire suppression permits.

Building Permit Discussions – Mr. Cooper discussed the building permit fee schedule, and comparisons with several municipalities were shown. He said the costs appear to be in-line with other communities. The cost is 2% of construction costs along with fees for other permits, such as electrical, mechanical, and plumbing. Mr. Scott said he would discuss with Mr. Grady to find a way to make the formula simpler but still ensure that it is revenue neutral.

Zoning Cases – Mr. Cooper read the agenda for the upcoming Zoning Hearing Board meeting on November 16, 2020. Max and Nicole Cooper of 203 Sycamore Lane are requesting a variance pertaining to enlargement or alteration of nonconforming structures to construct a sunroom and in-law suite. Catherine Hicks of 735 Pine Ridge Road is requesting a variance for impervious surface coverage. Jason and Linda Hill at 509 Glenwood Avenue are requesting a special exception to allow a no impact home-based business where they will process honey from hives to sell off premises and online.

ZHB Appeal – Mr. Garson noted that the Wallingford Presbyterian Church filed a zoning hearing board case for a variance for an electronic sign, and it was denied. The Wallingford Presbyterian Church is filing an appeal to the Delaware County Court of Common Pleas. Mr. Garson made a motion to authorize Mr. Scott to file a notice of intervention on behalf of the Township in the appeal, and Ms. McKenzie seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0.

INFRASTRUCTURE REPEORT – Martin Molloy

Traffic Calming Measures – Mr. Molloy said Mr. Grady drafted a policy, at the Board's request. Mr. Molloy said that he was opposed to the policy since it creates an equity issue, as some parts of the Township would not be able to afford to self-fund traffic calming measures. Ms. McKenzie said she would support the policy because there are streets where people need traffic calming, but would not rise to the top of the traffic calming matrix, so this would be a way to allow the measures to be installed with no cost to the overall Township. Mr. Garson and Mr. Cooper agreed with having a policy for the measures. Mr. Molloy said that if there is a policy, there should be a list of what roads that would be off-limits, for example, on roads where emergency vehicles travel. Mr. O'Connor said he agrees with Mr. Molloy's concerns about the equity. He also was concerned about potential liability. Mr. Scott expressed concerns that people will feel they can get measures installed wherever they want, even if the engineering does not support the request. Mr. Scott noted that the Board should accept anything in writing from residents, and state that the installation does not prevent the Board from removing the measures if it so desires. Mr. Knapp said the Board would table the discussion for a future meeting.

East Rose Valley Sidewalk – Mr. Molloy said the design continues and Mr. Catania is incorporating the comments from neighbors.

East Possum Hollow Road Sidewalk – Mr. Molloy said the DVRPC is coordinating the bid process for construction. Mr. Grady said that There is a possibility that the construction bids will come in higher than the grant amount, and then the Township will need to go to PennDOT to request additional funding. Our design engineer is confident that the Township would receive the extra money, but there is the possibility that PennDOT would say no and then the Township would have to decide what to do at that point.

Pollutant Reduction Plan – Mr. Molloy said the final draft has been sent to the DEP for approval.

Moore Road Payments – Mr. Grady said that the construction costs have come in higher than expected, and both Michael Baker Engineering, as the design engineer, and Pennoni Engineering, as the inspection engineer, petitioned to PennDOT on behalf of the Township. Mr. Grady said it appears that those funds will become available for the Township. He also noted that the Township had budgeted to spend \$45,000 on the project, and payments will start being made from the \$45,000.

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE REPORT- Micah Knapp

Emergency Phones at the Township and Police Department – Mr. Knapp Explained that there is a phone in the lobby of the Township building and a phone outside of the Police Department. Mr. Knapp said that the phones may not be needed as people have cell phones now and this could save the Township some money by removing the phones. Chief Splain said the phone is used on occasion, but he agreed that everyone does have a cell phone. Mr. Knapp said there could be a situation where someone would need police assistance but may be in an emergency and not have a cell phone in their possession. Therefore, he would support retaining the phone outside of the Police Department but removing the phone in the Township building. There was no opposition to that approach.

Appointment of Chief Splain as RTK Officer – Mr. Knapp said Mr. Grady is the Township's current Right-to-Know Officer but there are frequently requests for police information so it would make sense to have Chief Splain as a secondary Right-to-Know officer for police matters. Mr. Knapp made a motion to appoint Chief Splain as a Right-to-Know Officer, and Mr. Garson seconded. Mr. Cooper asked if the Board should be made aware of all Right-to-Know requests. Mr. Scott recommended against it due to the frequency of the requests. Mr. Knapp said the administration already engages in the practice of sharing pertinent requests. The motion passed 7-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:57 PM.