

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS of NETHER PROVIDENCE TOWNSHIP – May 12, 2022

A public meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Nether Providence Township was called to order at 7:30 PM on Thursday, May 12, 2022. Legislative Meeting

ROLL CALL

PRESENT:

Commissioner Knapp
Commissioner McKenzie
Commissioner Barnes
Commissioner Garson
Commissioner Cooper
Commissioner O'Connor

Excused:

Commissioner Knapp
Commissioner Molloy

ALSO PRESENT:

Dave Grady	Township Manager
Robert Scott	Township Solicitor
Charles Catania	Township Engineer
Chief Splain	Police Chief

No members of the public were in attendance.

Ms. McKenzie chaired the meeting. She announced that Executive Session would be held after the meeting.

Approval of Minutes- Ms. McKenzie made a motion to approve the Minutes for April 21, 2022. Mr. Cooper seconded the motion which, passed 5-0. Ms. McKenzie made a motion to approve the Minutes for April 28th, 2022. Mr. Cooper seconded the motion, which passed 3-0 with Mr. Garson and Mr. O'Connor abstaining.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – No public comment.

SOLICITORS REPORT – Mr. Scott had nothing to report.

ENGINEER REPORT- Mr. Catania said the Pine Ridge drainage is going out to bid soon.

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS REPORT- Max Cooper

DCED Greenways, Trails, and Recreation Program- Mr. Cooper said the program has a 15% match and allows for projects up to \$250,000. Past ideas included Furness Park and Houston Park. In 2021, the Township applied for a grant through Giant Food Stores for repairs at Houston Park, which included a small parking area, and beautification/preservation efforts towards the bridge. Improvements could be made to the path as well. Since the grant was not awarded, this program could be a good candidate for the Houston work. The Parks Commission discussed Furness Phase II and this Houston project, and they concluded that the Houston project would be the preferred application, especially considering that the County Greenways Program is expected to reopen this year. The Board was in agreement to pursue the project idea further.

DCED Watershed Restoration and Protection Program – Mr. Cooper said the program has a 15% match. He said at the last meeting, the Canterbury Road basin was determined to have the greatest impact towards the pollutant reduction requirement. Mr. Grady said a resolution will be ready at the next meeting.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE REPORT – Matthew Garson

Bird Town PA Community- Mr. Garson said a member of the Township's Parks Commission connected the Township to the Bird Town PA Program. Only 34 municipalities, including two in Delaware County, are certified. There is no cost to apply. Becoming certified would open the Township up to opportunities for programs that could benefit the bird populations and environment in Township. The Parks Commission was supportive of the application. The Board agreed to have a representative from the Parks Commission apply.

Gouley Park Playground- Mr. Garson said there was a change order that included adding benches, swings, and the cost of freight to the order. The Board had previously approved the purchase of the playground equipment. The final total is now \$123,789.00. He said now it does put the costs overbudget by \$14,789 between freight and the add-ons. Mr. Garson suggested the overage could be covered by funds in the Parks Capital fund and/or ARPA funds. Mr. Garson moved to increase the cost by \$14,789 from the Parks Capital fund. Ms. McKenzie seconded the motion, which passed 5-0.

Love our Parks – June Parks Commission Events – Mr. Garson said the Parks Commission is organizing several cleanup events in each of the parks in June. Each park has a representative who is leading the event. Dates will be made available soon for the locations.

Hepford Movie Night – He said the Township has tentatively scheduled a movie night in Hepford Park on July 9th. A second movie night in Sapovits is being scheduled for August.

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE REPORT- Kaitlin McKenzie

Approval of Volunteer Firefighter Tax Rebates – Ms. McKenzie made a motion to approve the list of active volunteer firefighters who are eligible for the 20% tax rebate provided by the township. Mr. Garson seconded the motion, which passed 5-0.

Penn Street –Ms. McKenzie said the Board will discuss with a possible decision at the meeting on May 26th. The responses that were received were mixed, with 10 in favor and 9 opposed.

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE – Kaitlin McKenzie

2021 Audit Fee Approval – Ms. McKenzie asked the Board to consider approving the 2021 audit fee of \$14,225, which would include the creation of full financial statements and footnotes. The 2020 audit was the first that included “full financial statements” and footnotes as part of the federally required single audit. Prior to 2020, only the DCED-required audit was performed. Removing the full financial statements would only save \$950 off the audit fee. Ms. McKenzie made a motion to approve the 2021 Audit Fee in the amount of \$14,225. Mr. Garson seconded the motion, which passed 5-0.

Finance Update – Mr. Grady gave an update from the contracted accountant, Julie Davis of Dunlap SLK, for the 2021 financial year. Mr. Grady said there was an approximately \$700,000 surplus from real estate transfer tax, real estate tax, permit fees, and tax certifications, which helps offset the prior year losses. He said expenditures were only \$6,600 over budget. The end of the 2021 fiscal year's fund balance was \$2.3 million, but once the Township pays back the \$1 million loan, then the Township's fund balance of about \$1.3 million will be in the 15% range that is recommended by the Government Finance Officers Association. He said the sewer capital, general fund, sewer fund, and the pension funds were all adequate at the end of the fiscal year.

Sewer Rent Rebate Criteria – Ms. McKenzie said the sewer rent income limits have not been adjusted in several years. The current limit for gross income is \$18,000. She said it may make sense to consider raising the figure and tying it to another index. Possibilities included the DCED Weatherization Limits or the LIHWAP Program, although the latter program is listed as a temporary program. The Board wanted to think about the ideas further.

Employee 457 Plan Update – Ms. McKenzie said the Township employees have the option of contributing tax-free earnings into a 457 plan, which is like a 401K in the private sector. Currently, the Township's plan is set up to allow in-service (i.e., not yet retired) withdrawals at the age of 70, but the age can be reduced to 59.5. There would be no impact to the Township if the change were made, and it gives the employees more flexibility in the use of their savings. Ms. McKenzie made a motion for the Township Manager to amend the 457 plan document with MissionSquare to allow for in-service withdrawals beginning at age 59.5. Mr. Garson seconded the motion, which passed 5-0.

COMMUNITY, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENT REPORT- Shaina Barnes

2022 Summer Camp Registration Open –Informational- Ms. Barnes said the 2022 summer camp registration still has openings. The camp begins the week of June 27th and goes through July 28th, Monday through Friday, 8:30 AM to noon. The fee for all five weeks is \$295. Also, there are openings for camp counselor positions, and employees must be at least 16 years old.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE REPORT – Robert O’Connor

Speed Humps on Putnam Blvd – Mr. O’Connor said there was a request for speed humps along Putnam Boulevard. Mr. O’Connor said he, Mr. Catania, and Mr. Grady met with representatives of each of the HOAs along Putnam. There was a consensus towards adding a raised crosswalk near the clubhouse/pool, and the addition of two speed humps in the straightaway in between Moore Road and Saybrook Drive. He said more information and feedback are being gathered. Mr. Catania will price out the improvements, which could be done by Public Works.

Surrey Rd Streetlight Request- Mr. O’Connor said the Township received a quote to place a light on pole 11 in front of 918 Surrey, mid-block for \$1,185, and there’s an estimated \$12 a month electricity charge for the lights from PECO. The Township also received a quote for a light at the intersection of Surrey and Quaint in the amount of \$2,997. He said that the impacted neighbors would be contacted to see if they agree with the streetlight’s installation at the corner of Surrey Road and Quaint Road.

BUILDING AND ZONING COMMITTEE REPORT – Kait McKenzie

Rental Inspections for property owners of 53+ units – Ms. McKenzie said this topic would be tabled until the next meeting.

Oak Valley Potential Subdivision – She said in June, a developer may be presenting a potential development of the Oak Valley subdivision, which was originally approved in 2006. She said more discussions are being held with the potential developer.

Zoning Hearing Board Agenda – Ms. McKenzie said there are three cases for the May meeting. A residential variance request on Canterbury for a variance from setbacks in the side yard and aggregate; a residential variance on Parkridge Drive proposing the enlargement of a nonconforming structure; and a residential variance on Chestnut Lane requesting a variance from a side yard setback and aggregate setback as well as the enlargement of a nonconforming structure.

TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT – David Grady

Mr. Grady said the Leiper House is Reopening, starting the weekend of Mother’s Day on weekends through December. He thanked the CAT club for their clean-ups all throughout the Township. He also said there will be a CAT club clean up on May 21 on the Blue Route northbound off ramp. South Media Fire Company Food Truck Fridays will be having another event in June, and he said to keep checking their Facebook page for more details. He said the LIHEAP Program is still open for residents that need help with household water or sewer payment assistance. He said the Furness Library is holding their annual appeal, and he said to visit their website to donate. He said Senator Kane’s Veterans breakfast celebration is May 21st. Registration is required, and for more information, go to www.PASenatorKane.com.

Ms. McKenzie said the next meeting is a workshop meeting May 28th. The meeting was adjourned around 9:00 PM.