

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS of NETHER PROVIDENCE TOWNSHIP – October 12, 2023

A public meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Nether Providence Township was called to order at 7:30 PM on Thursday, October 12th, 2023—Legislative Meeting.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT:

Commissioner Henry
Commissioner Barnes
Commissioner Cooper
Commissioner Garson
Commissioner McKenzie
Commissioner O’Connor
Commissioner Molloy

ALSO PRESENT:

Dave Grady	Township Manager
Robert Scott	Township Solicitor
Charles Catania	Township Engineer

8 members of the public were in attendance.

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

PUBLIC COMMENT: There was no public comment.

Funded Organization Requests

Helen Kate Furness Free Library: President Emily Lovitz, Executive Director Leah Kulikowski, and Treasurer Katie Boland represented the library:

Ms. Lovitz said they anticipate that over 33,000 people will visit the library this year - a 20% increase over last year. They will be offering expanded evening hours until 7 PM, Monday through Thursday. Since January, they have offered 186 programs for all ages, reaching 4,328 people. (46% more programs with a 79% increase in attendance). They expect to once again circulate over 100,000 items this year. Museum and attraction passes have been in high demand, checking out 321 times so far this year (a 38% increase over last year). The library has raised \$113,221 so far this year. They adopted an Endowment Spending Policy in February of 2023 that requires them to approve a budget including the use of 3.5-4.5% of endowment funds, whether in the current year or to be set aside for a larger project, such as for a capital expenditure. They thanked the Township’s Public Works Department for providing building maintenance assistance to the library. New: Repaired sewer pipe in children’s library. For 2023, they are requesting \$171,000 from the Township. This \$7,000 increase would allow them to work on two of their main staffing goals: Increasing the benefits package by 2.5% for full-time employees and increasing the part-time hours of an employee from 4 to 20. Ms. McKenzie thanked the library for their time and said the Township would look for ways to continue the library both financially and operationally.

Approval of Minutes – September 28, 2023- Ms. McKenzie made a motion to approve the September 28 meeting minutes. Mr. O’Connor seconded the motion which passed 6-0 with Mr. Molloy abstaining.

SOLICITORS REPORT – None

ENGINEER REPORT- Mr. Catania said that traffic studies are being performed on Manchester Avenue.

Government Relations – Max Cooper

Local Share Account (LSA) Grant Program Opening Until Nov. 30th - Mr. Cooper said, as mentioned at past meetings, the Township is exploring the idea of solarizing the Township Building, the Public Works Garage, and the fire companies. The Township is resuming conversations with Solarize Delco to explore the project costs and plans.

Parks & Open Space Committee- Beth Henry

Gouley Park Updates – Pickleball – Ms. Henry said it was noted at a past meeting that the arrangement at Creekside Swim Club for the Township to rehabilitate and lease the tennis courts for conversion to pickleball courts did not work out. As such, the pickleball group has been asking that Gouley Park be given consideration for the installation of courts. Mr. Garson said he and Mr. O’Connor have both spoken to representatives of the group and noted that the Board may want to see how the potential turf field arrangement impacts the overall site and neighborhood before committing to more facilities at the site. The board decided to wait until the field and land use agreement is settled and then look heavily into pickleball solutions within the next year.

Funded Organization: South Media Fire Company:

Chief Max Hopkins, President Rob Hopkins, and Treasurer Linda Lawson represented the South Media Fire Company. Chief Hopkins explained that they completed several projects this year, including a new roof, new HVAC system, and new apron in front of the station. He said they brought in new members, including an IT professional who may start driving the trucks. He also mentioned they received a \$430,000 Federal grant to aid specifically for recruiting members and retaining members. He said that truck maintenance has been costly, and they are expecting more maintenance costs later this year. He said they are requesting a \$3,000 increase over last year due to the increased costs for truck maintenance. Ms. McKenzie thanked South Media Fire Company for their time and efforts.

Public Safety Committee Report- Matt Garson

Towing Contract Review – Mr. Garson said an amended contract has been prepared and is being reviewed by Solicitor Scott.

Twyckenham and Luckie Lane – He said this ordinance has been advertised and is ready for approval. This would make this an all-way stop at the three-way intersection. Mr. Garson made a motion to approve the three-way stop for Twyckenham Road and Luckie Lane. Ms. McKenzie seconded the motion, which passed 7-0.

Finance and Administration Committee -Kait McKenzie

2023 Financial Update – Ms. McKenzie summarized that the Township is 75% of the way through the year and we have spent about 75.7% of the budget and 97.5% of the revenues have been collected. She said the budget appears to be on track, and there are no major concerns. There have been cost overages in tree maintenance, police overtime, and professional services costs, but those have been offset by increased permit revenue and interest revenues.

Funded Organization Presentations – Ms. McKenzie said Garden City Fire will present their request at the next meeting.

2024 Budget Meeting Schedule – Ms. McKenzie said the board will meet on October 19th, November 2nd, November 16th, November 30th, December 7th, and December 21st (if needed) to discuss the budget. This will be in addition to the normal 2nd and 4th Thursdays, except for Thanksgiving.

2024 Budget – She said the 2024 budget is in draft form and will be discussed in more detail next Thursday. The first reading of the budget will be November 9th.

Non-uniform Plan 2024 MMO Reduction Amendment – She said the Township’s actuary revised the minimum municipal obligation (MMO), which is the amount of funding the Township needs to contribute to the pension plans to keep them actuarially sound. The revised 2024 MMO no longer includes an amortization expense, as the experience gains have made the amortization unnecessary. Ms. McKenzie motioned to approve the 2024 MMO Non-uniform revised MMO of \$102,462.00. Mr. Garson seconded the motion, which passed 7-0.

Community, Health, and Environment Report – Shaina Barnes

Plastic Bag Ordinance – Mrs. Barnes said the single-use plastic bag ordinance has been drafted based on the Media Borough ordinance. The Township’s version removed references to straws. The ban would be effective as of June 30, 2024, in the draft ordinance. The Board discussed. Ms. McKenzie made a motion to advertise an Ordinance regulating and prohibiting the use of single-use plastic bags by commercial establishments operating within the township of Nether Providence. Mrs. Barnes seconded the motion, which passed 7-0.

Infrastructure and Public Works Committee – Robert O’Connor

Funding for Public Works Garage – He said the Township had set aside \$600,000 in American Rescue Plan Act funding for the garage, but as was mentioned when the bids were received, unexpected site work and general price increases brought the total cost to \$1,187,714.00. This leaves about \$587,714 that is needed in additional funding. The Board had wanted to see how the elevator project came in with bidding results, which were fortunately within the grant budget. The Board discussed revisiting the loan and how much a potential loan would be.

Building and Zoning Committee Report – Marty Molloy

Award of the 703 Atlanta Court Demolition Bid – He said the Township received bids for the demolition of 703 Atlanta Court, a property that is vacant and has fallen into such disrepair that it is dangerous and an attractive nuisance to the neighborhood. The County will provide the demolition funding through the Office of Housing and Community Development. The low bidder was Ben Washington General Contractors, LLC in the amount of \$50,405, which is within the grant budget. Mr. Molloy made a motion to accept the bid in the amount of \$50,405. Mr. Garson seconded the motion, which passed 7-0.

Delaware County Land Bank Consideration – Mr. Molloy said the conflicts attorney, Samantha Newell of Rudolph Clarke, is reviewing the land bank intergovernmental agreement documents. There are no other updates.

TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT – David Grady

Mr. Grady announced that the Township will once again be hosting the Halloween decorating contest this year. Additional information about the contest will be provided on the website. If you wish to have your house included in the competition, please contact the Township. For residents in Wards 2, 3, and 4, curbside leaf collection is set to commence next week. The Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) event is scheduled for October 14th in Upper Chichester. Please note that registration is mandatory, and you can find the registration link on the Township's website. This Saturday, an E-recycling event will take place at Rose Tree Park. Due to ongoing construction at the public works garage, the yard waste drop-off facility will remain closed until the new year.

In recognition of Fire Prevention Month, special thanks are extended to the staff, Fire Marshal Jack Gresh, SMFC who visited WES, and GCFD for their upcoming truck-or-treat event on October 25.

A heartfelt expression of gratitude is also extended to everyone who contributed to the success of Family Fun Day, including the police, fire companies, PWD, and office staff, especially Maureen Feyas, who was the main planner and organizer for Family Fun Day.

Ms. McKenzie said the next meeting is on October 19, 2023. The meeting was adjourned around 8:30 PM.