

MINUTES
EXETER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING
MONDAY, APRIL 27, 2020

Public Meeting

A Regular Meeting of the Exeter Township Board of Supervisors held virtually was called to order on Monday, April 27, 2020 at 7:00PM by David Speece, Chairperson.

Supervisors Present:

David Speece, Chairperson
Michelle Kircher, Vice Chairperson
John Cusatis
Gregory Galtere
Joseph Staub

Absent:

None

Others in Attendance:

Clarence Hamm, Interim Township Manager
Laurie Getz, Township Secretary
Sam Cortes, Fox Rothschild, Solicitor
Joe Rogosky, Township Engineer
Wendell Morris, Chief of Police

REGULAR MEETING

The Meeting was opened with the Pledge to the Flag.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Speece announced that this meeting is being carried out in the same format as the last virtual meeting. Supervisors will consider tabling any non-business critical items.

PRESENTATIONS

Laurie Getz presented the results of the September 2019 community survey conducted. Ms. Getz explained that this presentation was originally made to the Board in October, 2019. Ms. Getz reviewed data from the 982 responses received to the survey. Most respondents indicated that they never visit the current township building. Parks and Recreation, Administration, and Tax Collector are the most popular. 75% of respondents rated a community center as fairly important or must have. 67% of respondents stated they would be likely to use a community center. Adult health and fitness programs, youth sports and programming were commonly mentioned items.

A copy of the presentation is attached to these minutes.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Agenda Items

Public comments were submitted in advance of the meeting via email and voicemail. The e-mailed comments were dictated by computer software.

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David Hughes; Does not feel this is an item that needs to be discussed during the current crisis. Interprets the survey data differently than presented. Thinks that these plans are related to the prior board and administration officials and thinks that the new supervisors were elected to do things differently. Does not feel that the response sample is representative of the population, 5% of the population responded. Points out that 18% of respondents said that they are unlikely to use a community center. Thinks the school can and does provide youth sports programming as well as the Parks Department. Health and fitness needs can be met by other private sources. Can't be sure all respondents are residents. Would like to see this project dismissed.

REGULAR APPROVALS

Minutes April 13, 2020

MOTION of Mr. Cusatis seconded by Mr. Galtere, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED the April 13, 2020 minutes.

Disbursements, April 27, 2020

Ms. Savage explained that \$3600 expense for police tasers. Black Cypher charges are for a current invoice, and a past-due invoice that was never received before. Exeter Township Fire Department is receiving a reimbursement for incentives. McMahon charges are for engineering and production costs for the Perkiomen Avenue Streetscape Project. Not reimbursable, but goes towards our match for grant funding received on the project. Sottosanti charges are for lawn-mowing contract, township-owned properties. Weikel Sportswear is for staff apparel for public-facing positions, budgeted item.

MOTION of Mr. Speece seconded by Mr. Staub, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED payment of the bills presented on the Disbursement List dated April 27, 2020 in the amounts of \$219,875.64 in the General Fund; \$15,339.18 in the Utility Fund; \$39,857.00 in the Fire Fund; \$5,249.62 in the Developer's Escrow Fund; \$12,196.67 in the Sewer Fund; \$4,225.87 in the Golf Fund; \$2,682.85 in the RCC F&B Fund; \$1,852.04 in the Promenade Fund; \$55,585.59 in the Capital Improvement Fund; \$6,277.00 in the Park Fund; \$4,892.07 in State Liquid Fuels Fund, subject to audit.

Treasurer's Report - March

MOTION of Mr. Staub seconded by Mr. Cusatis, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED the March Treasurer's Report subject to audit.

Mr. Staub stated that revenue will likely be down due to current circumstances and we may have to review the budget and prepare for additional steps needed to be taken to balance the budget.

Ms. Savage explained that she attended an Albright webinar recently with experts discussing projected lower tax revenue across municipalities. We collect 90% of our property tax revenue during the discount period. Earned Income Tax is over 30% of our revenues, September and December payments are projected to be 30% down due to high unemployment rates. Real estate transfer tax and business privilege tax will also be down.

Mr. Cusatis stated that he expects this will impact the 2021 budget. **Mr. Speece** stated that its important not to be too short-sighted with planning for future projects that are several years away.

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion on Wastewater Treatment Plant Sale Proceeds Fund

Mr. Speece explained that a summary page has been provided and is available on the website to show the public what has been spent, and what remains for the future. This was posted to the website the day after the last meeting.

Discussion on RFP Responses of Architect for the Promenade Shopping Center

Mr. Speece explained that there was an RFP out for architects for the property. This discussion is to choose a few to hold discussions with, but not to select an architect to work with in the future.

Ms. Kircher stated that until it has been established what will be done with the property, and before spending any money, we should not get into anything. Would like to do another study and talk to the residents and find out what they really want. Has concerns. Thinks it is too soon to have an architect. Doesn't think money should be spent.

Mr. Staub clarified that it is his understanding that this would be just to discuss with the architects, and no money would be spent. **Mr. Speece** confirmed. **Mr. Staub** suggested taking the low bidders but also including a higher one for comparison. Does not see an issue with collecting information, but agrees with not committing to spending money at this time.

Mr. Cusatis agreed with **Mr. Staub's** statements. Stated that he thought **Mr. Galtere** had a good experience with one of the architects when he was at Boyertown School District. **Mr. Galtere** stated that it was KCBA, and they were a low bidder on this RFP. He is unsure how to make a decision without seeing numbers. That is where an architect will help, to determine costs.

Ms. Kircher asked who said this is the best place to put all of these things. Wants to know what the architects will be told to do. **Mr. Galtere** stated his understanding is to first interview and choose, and then ask them to do proposals and costing on the project. **Mr. Cusatis** stated that they will be told Police Department, Fire Department, Highway Department, Community Center.

Mr. Hamm stated that without making a commitment to one of the architects, they're not going to provide information and numbers just in discussion with no payment. Stated that staff researched and visited many other township buildings last year, KCBA is doing a lot of local work. Without a commitment to an architect, they're not going to give plans/proposals. **Mr. Galtere** agreed, the first step is to choose one. **Mr. Speece** stated that this is something to get started on now. **Mr. Cusatis** stated that this discussion has been ongoing since January, it's time to make a decision. **Mr. Speece** agreed that something needs to be done, we have tenants at the property we can't just do nothing.

Ms. Kircher stated a plan should have been made before buying the property. Selling the wastewater treatment plant got rid of the only property that made the township money. **Mr. Speece** indicated that revisiting the past is not productive. **Mr. Cusatis** stated that there is a plan for the property that was shared with the community.

MOTION of **Mr. Galtere** seconded by **Mr. Cusatis**, the Board APPROVED interviewing the first three lowest bidders as well as a fourth respondent specifically the company from Wyomissing.

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Ms. Kircher is opposed.

Adopt Short-Term Lodging Ordinance

Mr. Speece explained that this matter has been delayed several times, this is on the agenda now because there is a 90-day adoption timeframe that we are nearing.

Mr. Brugger explained that the ordinance has been reviewed by the Township Planning Commission, and the County Planning Commission twice, and held a public hearing. Concerns were expressed at that time by realtor groups. Mr. Brugger met with that group, and staff has reviewed the various concerns. Township staff does not recommend any changes as a result of those concerns, and recommend that the ordinance be adopted as-is.

Mr. Speece stated that there have been several discussions on this, and much public comment. A lot of work has been done on this ordinance. **Mr. Cusatis** asked for clarification on the timing of the ordinance, how close to the 90-days. **Mr. Brugger** stated that he needs direction tonight as we are approaching the 90-day timeframe.

Mr. Cortes explained that this is a Zoning Ordinance Amendment, and so the 90-day timeframe does not strictly apply but it would be best practice.

Mr. Staub asked Mr. Brugger to explain the grandfathering. **Mr. Brugger** stated that it would apply to any short-term lodging that is currently operating in the township outside of a permitted zoning district as outlined in this ordinance. What prompted this ordinance being drafted was the existence of short-term lodging located within residential areas. Under this ordinance, those would be permitted to continue so long as they do not expand their use and that they follow licensing procedures.

MOTION of Mr. Galtere seconded by Mr. Cusatis, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED adopted Short-Term Lodging Ordinance No. 831.

NEW BUSINESS

Consider Approving Property Tax Relief Resolution

Ms. Savage explained that Berks County has passed a resolution to extend the flat rate period from June 30th to September 30th. The County is asking that all municipalities pass the same resolution in the interest of ease and continuity through the collection process. This proposed resolution will waive late fees through the end of September.

Mr. Speece stated that he feels this will help many residents, thinks it's a good thing.

MOTION of Mr. Cusatis seconded by Mr. Galtere, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED adopting Resolution No. 13 Granting Property Tax Relief.

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Authorize Cohen Law Group to Negotiate Cable Franchise Agreement with Comcast

Mr. Speece referred to the summary provided on the agenda. Deadline to join is today. **Mr. Hamm** commented that if we don't contract with Cohen we will still have to negotiate but on our own. It will end up costing more in the long run.

Mr. Staub stated that the 10-year total revenue as a result of this could be about \$330,000. **Mr. Cusatis** referenced the summary on the agenda and stated he felt it sufficiently addressed resident questions on this matter.

MOTION of Mr. Staub seconded by Mr. Cusatis, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED authorizing Cohen Law Group to Negotiate the Cable Franchise Agreement with Comcast.

Approve Contract with Stratix to Update Sharepoint in the Amount of \$8,050

Mr. Brugger explained that our current system is out of date, 60,000 township documents are housed within Sharepoint. We are operating on a 2010 application, Stratix has proposed migrating our data from the in-house server onto the cloud. Cost for the cloud is included.

Mr. Cusatis asked why our existing IT provider can't do the migration. **Mr. Brugger** explained that this is not their specialty. **Mr. Cusatis** stated that his concern is that the Township has had issues with Stratix in the past.

Mr. Speece asked if this is a budgeted item. **Ms. Savage** confirmed that it is budgeted as a capital expense. **Mr. Speece** asked if this is a time-sensitive issue. **Mr. Brugger** stated that our current server is outdated, we migrated GIS data earlier in the year to the cloud due to that. This is the second piece of that migration. Our current Sharepoint system is not supported until we update it. **Mr. Staub** stated that at a prior meeting it was said that we were prohibited from housing data on the cloud, do we have clarification on that? **Mr. Cortes** stated that he is unaware of any issue, but they have not looked at that specific issue.

MOTION of Mr. Galtere seconded by Mr. Staub, the Board APPROVED Contract with Stratix to Update Sharepoint in the Amount of \$8,050.

Mr. Cusatis is opposed.

Mr. Speece asked for confirmation that our IT company cannot perform this work, and that this is the best price. **Mr. Brugger** confirmed.

Lincolnwood Community Expansion Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) discussion

Mr. Rogosky explained that this has gone before the planning commission. The developer is required to do a traffic study as part of the land development process. Our ordinance requires that the study area be approved by the Board of Supervisors. A transportation impact assessment scope has been presented to the Township. A complete traffic study has been requested in accordance with our ordinance. The planning commission has approved the scope of work, are asking the Board of Supervisors to agree with

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the scope to include seven intersections along Lincoln Road. Discussed possibility of a second access to the community alleviate some of the traffic at the Walmart area.

Ms. Kircher asked if there are going to be children in the community or just adults. **Mr. Rogosky** stated that at this point in the process that question has not been addressed. Pedestrian and school bus issues will be reviewed in the process.

MOTION of Mr. Speece seconded by Mr. Cusatis, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED the seven intersections included in the Lincolnwood Community Expansion Traffic Impact Assessment.

R.M. Palmer Warehouse Time Extension Request

Mr. Brugger explained that the Township has received a withdraw letter from the developer, asking that the Board accept the withdraw.

MOTION of Mr. Galtere seconded by Mr. Staub, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED accepting the letter of withdraw.

Approve Lease Terms with First National Bank for John Deere 2500B PrecisionCut Gas Riding Tee Mower

Mr. Speece explained that this is not a traditional lease, you do own the equipment at the end of the term. Raised the question if it is business critical.

Mr. Staub made the recommendation that the funds come from the equipment fund. **Mr. Galtere** agreed. **Mr. Cusatis** asked if this is a budgeted item. **Ms. Savage** clarified that it is budgeted for in the golf fund, and not in the equipment fund.

MOTION of Mr. Staub seconded by Mr. Galtere, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED lease terms with First National Bank for John Deere 2500B PrecisionCut Gas Riding Tee Mower.

Authorize Advertisement of Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Daniel Boone Homestead Master Plan

Mr. Brugger explained that the master plan process will take about a year to complete. We are time limited on the grant money. We are asking for authorization to advertise at this time because the advertisement process itself will take some time. We have already received \$25,000 of the \$50,000 grant funding.

MOTION of Mr. Cusatis seconded by Mr. Galtere, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED authorizing advertisement of Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Daniel Boone Homestead Master Plan.

Update on Community Communications Committee

Mr. Galtere explained that the committee is currently working on a monthly electronic newsletter. We have established an account with MailChimp so people can sign up through our website, and are currently

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waiting on our website company to complete the back-end work to connect our page to a mailing list sign up. When that is complete, the committee will start encouraging people to sign up.

Discussed electronic sign. **Mr. Galtere** reached out to Amity Township for details on their sign. Their sign is one color, LED. Has to be only one color due to their ordinance. We are not subject to the same restrictions. He has spoken to a local company and received some potential options that can be done. Discussing location on 422 where the library sign is. Angled and double sided so both directions of traffic can see it. Will continue looking into options.

Mr. Staub stated that a resident texted him and suggested looking into Daktronics.

Update on Reading Country Club Clubhouse Committee

Mr. Galtere and Mr. Cusatis explained that this proposal is for a feasibility study. He will be engaged to review all aspects of the food and beverage business potential at the clubhouse.

MOTION of Mr. Galtere seconded by Mr. Cusatis, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED engaging ChefSoul for a feasibility study for the amount of \$5,500.

Authorize Background Check for Cost Not To Exceed \$3,000

Mr. Speece explained that this is related to the search for a Township Manager. This background check is part of the hiring process. Believe to be a few weeks away from a formal offer, this must be completed first. Interviewed quite a few good candidates and feel good about the process.

MOTION of Mr. Galtere seconded by Mr. Staub, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED authorizing background Check for Cost Not To Exceed \$3,000.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Clarence Hamm; Manager Report/Highway Department/Public Works: Working at Farming Ridge to expand and replace sidewalk. Finishing about 80,000 feet that were never completed previously. Working on fixing picnic tables. Storm basin work and pipe replacement. Working on Pineland Park grass, street sweeping. Repair work at Reading Country Club. May 4th the contractor will be paving the W. Neversink culvert.

Mr. Cusatis asked if anything is being done with the tennis court at Farming Ridge, or if it will be a parking lot. **Mr. Hamm** stated that for now it will be made into much-needed parking. There are no plans to turn it into another court at this time. The other tennis court will be fixed up. **Mr. Cusatis** asked about pickleball. **Ms. Getz** explained that there is a pickleball court at Lorane Hollow, and there are plans included in our park improvement grant applications for the addition of more pickleball courts throughout the parks.

Ms. Getz announced that parks and rental facilities will remain closed through the end of May due to COVID-19.

Mr. Hamm and **Mr. Speece** mentioned that the Reading Country Club will be reopening May 1st.

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Joe Rogosky, Great Valley Engineers: Butter Lane culvert project proceeding, working on the collaboration with Mt. Penn Water Water. Neversink culvert paving will be starting next week.

Chief Wendell Morris; Police Department: Chief Morris thanked the public for their overwhelming support during this time. A significant portion of the PPE that the officers have has been donated by the community.

SOLICITOR REPORT

Sam Cortes, Fox Rothchild: Announced that there were two executive sessions, one on 4/16 and 4/20 to discuss personnel.

PUBLIC COMMENT – *General Comments*

None

SUPERVISOR REPORTS

Ms. Kircher: Hopes everyone continues to be safe. Thanked police, fire, ambulance, and those working to care for us during this time.

Mr. Staub: Thanks to those supporting us during this time. The golf course has been greenlighted to open with restrictions as of May 1st. We will post the restrictions on our website when available, and will also email out to customers. Is happy to have the course re-open.

Mr. Cusatis: Announced that the May Days fireworks have been cancelled for May 16th due to COVID-19. Thanked first responders, and the Township Administration and Board of Supervisors who are all working hard during these times.

Mr. Galtere: Provided an update on the Exeter Area Food Pantry gives. 384 different households, 576 families 169 new households have been served. Extended compliments to the food pantry, and to Clarence and his staff for the help provided and logistics. Apologized to the Board for not having brought up a question of waiving any fees for the use of the space at the Promenade.

MOTION by Mr. Cusatis, seconded by Mr. Speece the Board APPROVED waiving any past and future fees for use of the Promenade Shopping Center for the Exeter Area Food Pantry distributions.

Mr. Galtere abstained.

Mr. Hamm clarified that Township expenses are being tracked and will be submitted for reimbursement by the emergency services grant funding available.

Mr. Speece thanked the staff for remote-working and setting up these meetings, all of the Township employees and first responders who are working during this difficult time. Wished everyone safety.

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ADJOURNMENT

MOTION of Mr. Cusatis, seconded by Mr. Speece, the meeting adjourned at 8:37PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laurie Getz
Township Secretary

DRAFT