

MINUTES
EXETER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING
MONDAY, JUNE 8, 2020

Public Meeting

A Regular Meeting of the Exeter Township Board of Supervisors held virtually was called to order on Monday, June 8, 2020 at 7:01 PM 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
Alicia Luke, Fox Rothschild, Solicitor
Wendell Morris, Chief of Police
Joseph Rogosky, Great Valley Consultants, Township Engineer

REGULAR MEETING

The Meeting was opened with the Pledge to the Flag.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Agenda Items

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

Terry Reilly; Discussed architect for the Promenade Shopping Center. Thinks that the process being followed is backwards, would have liked to have seen more information obtained first and shared with the public. Mentioned KCBA stating that he feels it would be best to seek out a firm that does not have prior dealings with the Board.

Discussion ensued by the Board, all members with the exception of Mr. Galtere mentioned that they have no prior dealings with KCBA.

John Carmello; Asked questions about the disbursements, discussed the process of needs analysis for the Promenade Shopping Center. Would have liked to have seen that done prior. Discussed appointment of the Township Manager. Questioned whether the new manager will be required to reside in the Township.

David Hughes; Discussed the Promenade Shopping Center, has concerns regarding the way the project has been handled. Has concerns with KCBA's prior involvement with the Township as they prepared plans for facilities prior. Would like to see another firm considered that does not have prior involvement with

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the Township.

REGULAR APPROVALS

Minutes – May 26, 2020

MOTION of Mr. Cusatis seconded by Mr. Galtere, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED the May 26, 2020 Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes.

Disbursements – June 8, 2020

Mr. Staub asked for clarification on several charges including chemicals for the Reading Country Club, Environmental Engineer charges, Park and Rec fee checks issued, Awesome Signs vinyl lettering, and ITE Fire Apparatus.

Ms. Savage explained that the chemicals are purchased in bulk in the spring in order to achieve cost savings because they're discounted at that time. Smaller orders are made throughout the year. The environmental engineer charges were related to repairs to the Wastewater Treatment Plant made in September 2019, the invoices were never initially received. The checks being issued for Parks and Rec user fees are for cancelled rentals or summer program registrations. The vinyl lettering was for a new police vehicle, and the fire apparatus charges were for repairs to the ETFD tower truck and was paid from the fire apparatus fund.

MOTION of Mr. Galtere seconded by Mr. Cusatis, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED payment of the bills presented on the Disbursement List dated June 4, 2020 in the amounts of 258,651.77 in the General Fund; \$997.08 in the Utility Fund; \$7,257.08 in the Capital Police Fund; \$330.00 in the Developer's Escrow Fund; \$15,956.60 in the Sewer Fund; \$28,621.78 in the Golf Fund; \$896.16 in the RCC F&B Fund; \$735.00 in the Promenade Fund; \$61,171.25 in the Equipment Fund; \$33,186.36 in the Apparatus Fund; \$165.23 in the Park Fund; \$59,861.89 in the State Liquid Fuels Fund.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Monthly Right to Know Report - May

Mr. Speece stated that this report has been uploaded to the website.

Monthly Golf Report - May

Mr. Staub explained that the snack shack has been open at the Reading Country Club, and the new golf carts have been received. May's rounds are up slightly year-over-year. The course has been doing well operating within the COVID restrictions.

Discussion surrounding collecting data to evaluate the impact that COVID-19 has had on operations.

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Continuation of Discussion on Architect for Needs Analysis of Township Facilities

Mr. Speece explained that the Board had asked the Administration to find out what options we might have. **Mr. Hamm** explained that the Administration reached out to KCBA for a proposal for consulting work. They have submitted a proposal for review by the Board, work to be done in phases starting with a review.

Mr. Speece clarified that the point of this step is to collect more data in a lower cost way, on an hourly basis, before enlisting someone for the project. **Mr. Hamm** stated that the staff had toured many facilities, and KCBA designed many of the ones that were well-designed, specifically the police departments.

Mr Cusatis asked for a status on the virtual tours of our existing facilities that were discussed last week. **Mr. Hamm** and Chief Morris stated that the staff will complete. There will be some areas of the Police Department that cannot be shown.

Mr. Speece explained that the vision has been to repurpose a long vacant property that no one was interested in purchasing, to improve the Township in the most cost-effective manner.

Mr. Hamm pointed out that many discussions have transpired over the year with retailers who indicated that the Promenade is not a good retail property due to its location. Where the existing Township facilities sit is more valuable real estate.

Mr. Staub does not believe that now is the time to move forward with the project. **Ms. Kircher** agreed with **Mr. Staub**. Both indicated that they think the new manager should lead the project.

Discussion ensued regarding the timeline of the project.

Discussion on RFP Reviews for Township Solicitor

Mr. Speece suggested that two supervisors work with the new Township Manager to review and make recommendation.

Mr. Hamm stated that he feels it would be beneficial to wait until the end of the year given that we are 6 months into the year already, we have resolved many large expense legal issues, and we have a number of ongoing matters that our current Solicitor will need to be involved in. Recommended waiting until the end of the year or until the new manager starts and let him decide.

Mr. Galtere stated that with a new manager coming on board, perhaps it would be beneficial to develop a relationship with a new solicitor at the same time.

Mr. Speece suggested that two supervisors work together as a committee to review the RFP's and make recommendations to the Board. **Mr. Staub** volunteered for the committee. **Ms. Kircher** also volunteered. **Mr. Cusatis** stated that he would send notes to the committee members as he has comments on two of the bids.

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NEW BUSINESS

Discussion and Appointment of Township Manager

Mr. Speece explained that an extensive search has been underway in partnership with Paul Janssen from Albright College's Center for Excellence in Local Government.

Paul Janssen joined the call to provide an overview of the Township Manager search. The search began in late January, the job posting ran for approximately 6-weeks. 24 applicants were received, 15 of those were identified as viable and moved on to the initial screening. 11 of the 15 were identified as having met all of the qualifications included in the posting. The Board was provided with a ranked list, of which they selected five (5) candidates to interview. The Board unanimously selected the top three to interview for a second-round and have ultimately selected a candidate for consideration of approval.

MOTION of Mr. Speece seconded by Mr. Galtere, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED the appointment of Jeff Bartlett to the position of Township Manager pending the successful passing of drug screen and physical at a salary of \$120,000.

MOTION of Mr. Speece seconded by Mr. Cusatis the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED waiving the residency requirement for the position of Township Manager.

Mr. Bartlett joined the call and thanked the supervisors for the opportunity.

Approve Final Reimbursement Agreement with Mt. Penn Borough Municipal Authority (MTBMA)

Mr. Rogosky explained that this agreement is related to the Butter Lane culvert work. Mt. Penn water authority's water main is in conflict with our new culvert. This reimbursement agreement has been established in order to have our contractor complete relocation of the water main. Mt. Penn will be reimbursing us for that work.

MOTION of Mr. Galtere seconded by Mr. Cusatis, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED final Reimbursement Agreement with Mt. Penn Borough Municipal Authority (MTBMA).

Discussion on Community Park

Mr. Hamm is still working on prices for repairs and will be organizing tours for the inside of the building as well as the pavilions. Some structures on the property, particularly the restrooms, may need significant work if it can be done. Will continue to organize tours for board members.

Mr. Staub mentioned that it may be helpful to share the amount of money that has been spent for repairs as a result of vandalism. **Mr. Speece** stated that he recently observed a large crowd of people having a party under the pavilion not social distancing. **Mr. Staub** stated that the board will all go and take a look at the park, but it does not seem to make sense to put a lot of money into a park that we do not own.

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Authorize Advertisement of Telecommunications Design Manual

Ms. Getz explained that this manual is related to the telecommunications ordinance that is being worked on.

MOTION of Ms. Kircher seconded by Mr. Cusatis, the Board UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED advertisement of telecommunications design manual.

Update on Community Communications Committee

Mr. Galtere and **Ms. Getz** explained that the new electronic newsletter is ready to go and will be sent out this week. The hope is that residents will continue to sign up for the email list.

Mr. Galtere explained that a postcard will be sent to all residents who have received a paper newsletter with information on the email list, and residents who want a paper newsletter will opt-in.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Chief Wendell Morris; Police Department: Chief Morris stated that it has been a challenging time for law enforcement amid the recent protests. Exeter officers have been called to support other law enforcement organizations, and have done a great job and have received many compliments from residents and others. Mentioned that the Department does not currently have riot gear, that will be an item they will be looking into in the future.

Mr. Cusatis asked about sensitivity training for police officers.

Chief Morris responded indicating that some have already received the training, he will be working to get everyone trained. He is qualified to provide the training himself. **Mr. Galtere** suggested that all staff, and not just police officers, should be trained as well. Should be an ongoing discussion, anti-defamation league is an excellent resource.

SOLICITOR REPORT

Alicia Luke, Fox Rothchild: Nothing to report.

ENGINEER REPORT

Joe Rogosky, Great Valley Consultants: Discussed Gibraltar Road construction project. The plans have changed, there is a limited time for comments and he will be working on compiling township comments.

Discussed complaint received at Gibraltar Rd, Ryan Court and Pheasant Run requesting a multi-way stop sign. ETPD conducted a study, data was reviewed and compared to all regulations and criteria and it was determined that the intersection does not meet the criteria for a multi-way stop sign. It is their recommendation that the intersection remain as is.

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Received correspondence on Green Light Go applications submitted, due to COVID-19 and reduction in transportation revenue no grants will be awarded this cycle. Our application will be retained for consideration in the next available cycle.

Working on easement agreements related to the Butter Lane culvert project.

Hilldale storm sewer project, proceeding with design and working around utilities. Design expected to be finalized and hope to advertise this summer.

Correspondence received from Berks County regarding the Transportation Improvements Program. There are three projects included in the program that are located in Exeter.

Clarence Hamm; Interim Manager/Highway Department/Public Works: Have been prepping for the bituminous seal coat project on four roads, will be starting soon. State mowing has been completed. Still working to repair after sustaining significant damage from last week's storm. Expect to continue working on that for the next few days.

PUBLIC COMMENT – General Comments

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

Terry Reilly; Discussed that his general comment submitted for the last meeting was almost missed before being included at the end of the meeting. Mentioned an email that he received from Mr. Cusatis.

Dorothy Reilly; Discussed various topics; wondering if other businesses received a waiver like the one granted to Mascaro. Discussed maintenance, asked why things are being allowed to become run down. Believes that public meetings should be held in person again now that Berks County is in the yellow phase of reopening as 25 people are permitted to gather. Asked when the library will open.

John Carmello; Discussed the Reading Country Club, believes it needs to be included on the agenda and operations need to be discussed. Asked if the Board has officially opposed the rate increase that PA American has applied to the PUC for. Would like to see public comments read at the time that the item they are referencing appear on the agenda, rather than at the beginning and the end.

David Hughes; Discussed the rental deferral granted at the last meeting for Monroe Muffler. Disagrees that Monroe should have been granted a deferral. Stated that Monroe is a publicly traded company with sufficient revenue.

SUPERVISOR REPORTS

Ms. Kircher: Stated that she was searching deeds on the internet, wants to know why John Granger's name is on the deeds at the promenade. **Ms. Luke** stated that she would look into it, but they are not in his name personally it would have been on behalf of the Township. **Ms. Kircher** asked about the DCED
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reports, asked if it has been received back. Asked for a copy from **Ms. Savage**. Supports the police, thanked them for their work.

Mr. Staub: Thanked the police, offered his support.

Mr. Galtere: Thanked the police and the Chief. Canned food drive this past weekend, 50 volunteers and over 6500 cans collected. There is another collection this Thursday from 6-8pm. 334 families received food even during the severe storm that happened at the same time. Demonstrates the need in our community.

Mr. Cusatis: Thanked all emergency services for partnering with the Exeter School District for graduation and other events.

Mr. Speece: Mentioned the public meetings, does not think it's safe to rush back. It's important to keep staff and public safe. Will return when it's safe to do so. Thanked everyone for their work during challenging times.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION of Mr. Cusatis, seconded by Ms. Kircher, the meeting adjourned at 8:56 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Laurie Getz
Township Secretary