

**Towamencin Township
Board of Supervisors
Work Session Meeting
June 8, 2016
7:30 PM**

Present:

H. Charles Wilson III, Chairman
Laura Smith, Vice Chairman
David Mosesso

Staff:

Robert A. Ford, Township Manager
Jack Dooley, Esq., Township Solicitor
Tom Zarko, Township Engineer
Paul T. Dickinson, Chief of Police

Absent:

James P. Sinz, Secretary/Asst. Treasurer
Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Treasurer/Asst. Secretary

Chairman Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:35 PM and led the assemblage in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Opening Comments

Chairman Wilson announced the Board met in Executive Session prior to the meeting to review personnel matters and matters of potential litigation.

Public Comments

None.

Approval of Minutes

Supervisor Smith made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of May 25, 2016. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Wilson.

Supervisor Mosesso stated that he had some concerns about the minutes as written. He noted that the minutes included only one sentence regarding his prepared statement that he read at the May 25th meeting concerning the Board censuring him. He would like to see the full statement reflected in the minutes.

Additionally, Supervisor Mosesso noted that each vote indicated that he “had left the dais at 7:53 pm and sat in the audience for the remainder of the meeting. He did not participate in any voting

action or discussion beyond the approval of minutes.” He thought this was unnecessary to be repeated as the minutes stated that he did not participate in any voting action or discussion beyond the approval of minutes. Chairman Wilson asked Township Solicitor Jack Dooley whether it was necessary to repeat this statement following each vote; the solicitor advised that it was not.

The Board directed that the May 25, 2016 minutes be tabled until the next meeting and that no changes be made to the draft at this point.

Zoning, Subdivision & Land Development

ZHB 2016-03 / 1780 Sumneytown Pike (Royal Farms Store)

Chairman Wilson announced that this issue has been removed from the agenda as a revised application was being submitted. This matter will be rescheduled for the Board’s June 22, 2016 meeting.

Old Business

On-Site Sewer Maintenance Program

Chairman Wilson noted that, per direction of the Board at the March 23rd meeting, staff prepared an ordinance amendment to the sewage management program for the Board’s review and further discussion. The Township’s Sanitary Sewer Engineer had recommended the Township revise its ordinance to require septic tank pump-outs be performed a minimum of every three years, instead of the current five year interval. This change will also allow for the inspections to be performed the same year and hopefully for many properties at the same time as the septic tank pump out.

Supervisor Mosesso stated that he was opposed to changing the pump-outs to every three years. He suggested that the inspection and pump-out be coordinated every five years. He held that requiring pump-outs every three years would be an added expense to the homeowners.

Nora Schwartz, resident of 1926 Burgundy Way, asked why the ordinance was being looked at now and whether there have been problems with on-site sewer systems failing.

Supervisor Mosesso stated that the Township had changed the engineering firms tasked with performing the inspections associated with the on-site sewer maintenance program, and that the new firm was asked to review the Township’s current ordinance.

Supervisor Wilson questioned whether the ordinance provided for exceptions to the required pump-out periods, should it be determined that a property had minimal use of the system. Township Manager, Robert Ford, responded that he believed there was such a clause in the draft, but that he could not immediately find it.

Joseph Silverman, resident of 1275 Reiff Road, stated that it depends how an owner uses a septic system when determining the need for pumping out, not necessarily every three years.

On a motion by Supervisor Smith, seconded by Supervisor Mosesso, the Board directed that the draft ordinance be sent to the Township’s Environmental Advisory Council to review and comment on before bringing the draft back to the Board of Supervisors for further discussion.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, David Mosesso
Voting No:
Abstaining:
Absent: Daniel M. Littley, Jr., James P. Sinz

New Business

Resolution 16-28: North Penn Tactical Response Team Weapons Transfer

Chairman Wilson summarized this resolution, noting it provides for the legal transfer of weapons previously assigned to the now defunct North Penn Tactical Response Team (“NPTRT”). In 2015, the North Penn Response Team merged with the Central Montgomery Tactical Response Team to form Montgomery County SWAT – Central Region. While operating as the NPTRT, a number of weapons were purchased by the municipal members for use by police personnel assigned to the team. Twenty-three (23) of these weapons, although purchased with joint funds of the North Penn team, were legally registered to Towamencin Township as the administrator of the team. With the merger of the aforementioned teams, these weapons have become surplus assets of the original NPTRT and should now be transferred to the individual municipalities of the original North Penn team, with two (2) weapons to be retained by Towamencin Township.

On a motion by Supervisor Smith, seconded by Supervisor Mosesso, the Board approved Resolution 16-28, authorizing the transfer of weapons.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, David Mosesso
Voting No:
Abstaining:
Absent: Daniel M. Littley, Jr., James P. Sinz

Commendation for Achieving Eagle Scout Rank– Evan Allen Peters

The Township recognized Evan Allen Peters for achieving the rank of Eagle Scout in the Boy Scouts of America and for his service project. Evan has exhibited steadfast leadership skills, while serving as Patrol Leader, Den Chief, and Assistant Senior Patrol Leader. Evan’s Eagle Scout Project included constructing six bench-tables, which were designed with the ability to make the top fold over, combining with another bench-table to form a full-sized picnic table.

Chairman Wilson read the commendation aloud.

On a motion by Supervisor Mosesso, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the commendation recognizing Evan Allen Peters for achieving Eagle Scout Rank was approved.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, David Mosesso
Voting No:
Abstaining:

Absent: Daniel M. Littley, Jr., James P. Sinz

Request for Funding Support - Montgomery County Farmland Preservation Board

Chairman Wilson summarized that the Montgomery County Farmland Preservation Board recently selected farmland preservation applications in four townships for potential offers of preservation, using State and County farmland preservation dollars. The four townships are Towamencin, New Hanover, Upper Salford and Salford. The Montgomery County Farmland Preservation Program purchases agricultural easements on productive farms in Montgomery County. When the easement is sold, the owner keeps the land, but no longer has the right to build non-agricultural buildings. The land must remain in farming in perpetuity. The farmer may sell the land, but the new owner must continue to grow productive crops or pasture on it. While funding typically comes from the State and County, the Farmland Board generally requests a contribution from the township. For this specific property, a contribution of \$75,535, from the Township, has been suggested.

The Board noted that a response to this request was due by June 30th. In addition, funds had not been allocated in the 2016 Budget for such a purpose, nor was it likely that the Township would be able to accumulate such an amount over the next few years through its Open Space Impact Fees.

On a motion by Supervisor Smith, seconded by Supervisor Mosesso, the Board directed that the Montgomery County Farmland Preservation Board be advised that Towamencin Township would not be able to commit to their funding request.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, David Mosesso

Voting No:

Abstaining:

Absent: Daniel M. Littley, Jr., James P. Sinz

Discussion on Recycling Event – Saturday June 4, 2016

Mr. Ford reported that there was an overwhelming response to the joint electronic recycling event last Saturday, June 4th, which was sponsored by Lower Salford, Franconia, Hatfield and Towamencin Townships. He noted that the e-waste company doing the recycling became overwhelmed by the number of participants and could not process the volume fast enough. Vehicles were backed out onto the road, which was deemed a safety issue by the police. Consequently, the event was shut down early with many residents turned away unable to drop off their electronic equipment.

Mr. Ford advised that Montgomery County used to host four electronic recycling events a year, but due to funding cuts from the State, such events have not been held for the past two years. At the same time, many local stores, such as Best Buy, are no longer providing for this recycling service. It is illegal to throw this electronic equipment in the garbage and is very difficult to recycle; therefore it builds up in residents' homes. When these collection events are held, there is such demand; the volume is very difficult to manage.

Mr. Ford further noted that the four Townships tried to do the right thing by stepping up and arranging for a long time service, which was no longer provided by the County. He advised that the managers of the four participating townships were meeting that Thursday, June 9th, to review what went wrong and how to provide a more successful event in the future. However, he added that thousands of pounds of e-waste was recycled this past Saturday, much of which would continue to pile up in peoples' garages and basements, continuing to be stored. This event serviced over 1,000 people on Saturday.

Chairman Wilson asked if Towamencin Township could host an electronic collection event this summer to assist the residents that were turned away last Saturday. Mr. Ford responded that he would contact various collectors to see if one could be scheduled.

Discussion – Parking and Storage of Recreational Vehicles

Mr. Ford summarized that in November 2015, the Board held a hearing on a proposed ordinance that would amend Chapter 153-502.H (7) of Towamencin Township's code to provide clarification of parking and storage restrictions for recreational vehicles. This initial action originated following complaints made to the township from residents, who had neighbors with RV vehicles. Those residents questioned the location of these parked or stored vehicles. However, following a review of the current RV ordinance, it was found that the language was ambiguous and contradictory; therefore, a proposed amendment was prepared.

Solicitor Dooley recalled that at that November hearing, several residents voiced concern about the ordinance, both specifically and in general. Some stated that they have small lots and could not place there recreational vehicles in the areas specified by the proposed ordinance.

The Board directed staff to rework the ordinance and bring it back to the Board.

Chairman Wilson requested that notice be provided to the residents, who attended the November hearing, as to when this issue will be scheduled for Board review, after staff makes edits to amended ordinance.

Resolution 16-29: Recognition of Service / Pastor Timothy Jordan of Cavalry Baptist Church

Chairman Wilson announced that Cavalry Baptist Church, located on Valley Forge Road in Towamencin Township, had asked if the Board of Supervisors would provide a formal recognition of Dr. Timothy Jordan's 40th anniversary of service as a minister of a church in Towamencin Township, including the congregation's volunteer assistance in constructing the Arneith Entertainment Center at Fischer's Park.

Chairman Wilson read aloud the proposed commendation.

Supervisor Smith made a motion to approve the commendation recognizing Pastor Jordan's 40th anniversary of service as a minister of a church within Towamencin Township. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Wilson.

Supervisor Mosesso noted that he had expressed in correspondence, earlier that day to the other Board members, that he thinks this commendation is inappropriate because Pastor Jordan is a

religious leader. He further stated that since there should be a separation of church and state, he cannot approve this recognition.

Chairman Wilson voiced that the pastor was being recognized for his longtime service within our community.

Supervisor Smith stated that the Board is not endorsing a religion, but rather recognizing an individual for service to the Towamencin community.

The motion to approve the commendation failed.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith

Voting No: David Mosesso

Abstaining:

Absent: Daniel M. Littley, Jr., James P. Sinz

There being no additional business, the meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Robert A. Ford
Township Manager