

**Towamencin Township
Board of Supervisors
Monthly Meeting
August 25, 2021
7:30 PM**

Present:

H. Charles Wilson III, Chairman
Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Vice Chairman
Daniel Bell, Treasurer
Richard Marino, Secretary
Laura Smith, Asst. Treasurer/Asst. Secretary

Staff:

Donald D. Delamater, Township Manager
Colleen Ehrle, Assistant to Township Manager
Jack Dooley, Esq., Township Solicitor
Mary Stover, Township Engineer
Niral Modi, IT Staff
Timothy Troxel, Chief of Police

Absent:

Brooke Neve, Assistant Township Manager/Finance Director

Chairman Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:38 PM and led the assemblage in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Opening Comments

Chairman Wilson made the following announcements:

- This Board meeting is being held in person at the Township Meeting Hall and also being provided via Zoom, a video streaming option, for residents who may not be able to attend in person. As accorded by law and notice, public comments submitted by 4:30 pm on the day of the meeting will be read at the start of the meeting. For those physically present, public comment will be available at the beginning of the meeting.
- Reminders were made about the upcoming events in September at Fischer's Park, including:
 - Towamencin Day – Saturday, September 11th from 12 pm - 4 pm
 - Lolly & YoYo Performance/Trolls World Tour - Friday, August 27th at 6 pm
 - Don't Call Me Francis Band – Friday, September 3rd at 7 pm
 - Shot of Southern Band – Thursday, September 9th at 6:30pm
 - Real Diamond – Thursday, September 16th at 6:00pm

- The Township's Open Space and Parks Advisory Committee is seeking volunteers as “Friends of Fischer’s Park.” The volunteers will help maintain and make minor improvements to the park. Contact the Township if you have time and would like to contribute.
- The Board met in Executive Session prior to this evening’s meeting to discuss legal and personnel matters.

Awards & Recognition

Police Department Re-Accreditation Recognition

We are delighted to have the opportunity to recognize our police department for achieving re-accreditation from the Pennsylvania Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission. Police Chief Troxel provided background on the assessment process, a summary on the distinction and work involved with the accreditation.

Chief Troxel explained this accreditation was first achieved in 2012, which lasts three years, and has been achieved with every re-accreditation opportunity since. He noted the honor is due in no small part by the officers efforts, and the teamwork and standards they follow. The Chief thanked everyone working at the department. Chairman Wilson congratulated the Chief and the department for this continued distinction, noting it benefits the community, the department and taxpayers.

Public Comments

Chairman Wilson read the emailed submissions, summaries below.

Resident Kathy Weber, 1518 Ivywood Way, asked that the Board reconsider a sale of the sewer system if it translated to increased sewer bills.

Resident Jonathan Ferullo, 113 Finch Run, expressed his opposition to selling the sewer treatment plant to a private agency/third party and would rather see the municipality bump up the sewer bill and continue to own the facility.

Resident Joan Skoczen, 2020 Parkview Drive, expressed opposition to selling the sewer treatment plant, acknowledging the plant will need upgrades in future, but preferred taxpayers pay for such upgrades, over selling the plant.

Resident Anita Scherer, 104 Spring Mill Way, expressed opposition to selling the sewer system, noting her retired status and struggle as is.

Resident Jenn Foster, 105 Concord Place, expressed opposition to selling the sewer system, stressing a loss of control/input for upgrades, infrastructure, land, and rate hikes.

Resident David and Barbara Martin, 903 Buckboard Way, expressed opposition to selling the sewer system - stressing expected rate hikes, loss of control by the Township, and fixed income/retiree status.

Residents, Tom & Diane Doyle, 1657 Bishopwood Blvd, expressed their opposition to selling the sewer system.

In-Person Public Comments:

Resident Michael Wert, 402 Centennial Court, expressed his opposition to the prospect of selling the sewer system as a means to address the Township's debt.

Resident Kofi Osei, of 105 Cambridge Way, provided examples of his financial analysis for sewer rate forecasting, and expressed not raising rates for a decade would indicate a lack of fiscal planning. He reiterated that any related Townhall meetings be advertised through the mail.

Tina Gallagher, 117 Misty Meadow Lane, expressed her concern about the information compiled on the Township's website, noting it is not easy to follow and challenging to navigate. She requested the information be presented more clearly.

Chairman Wilson noted a FAQ is being developed to add to the website/enews, etc. and that in an attempt to be transparent, Township staff provided extensive documentation in the data room. He reiterated no decision has been made as the process still has many steps ahead.

Resident Pam McAuliff, 1781 Kriebel Road, referenced her professional accounting background working for municipal sewer authorities. She contended Towamencin's sewer rate is low and was in favor of increasing rates over selling the asset. She suggested increasing billing frequency to quarterly/semi-annually versus annually to help defer financial impacts.

Resident Martin Cohen, 18 Westhampton Way, described his fear of a private utility increasing rates to a ridiculous degree, and advised consideration when assessing proceeds over uncontrolled rates.

Approval of Minutes: August 11, 2021

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board approved the August 11, 2021 minutes.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Richard Marino, Daniel Bell, Laura Smith
Voting No: N/A
Abstaining: N/A
Absent: N/A

Zoning, Subdivision and Land Development

Resolution 21-24: Waiver of Land Development Approval: Christ Lutheran Church

The Christ Lutheran Church, located at 2211 Mainland Road, submitted an application for a waiver of land development. The applicant proposes to remove an existing 1,250 sqft rubberized playground area and construct a pavilion with walkway. In addition, the applicant is proposing an 816 sqft expansion to the accessory building used for their Shepard's Shelf Food Pantry. Per the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, an improvement of a non-residential property or the division of space to create a leasehold is considered land development. However, due to the minor nature of the site improvements, the applicant has requested and the Township Engineer has recommended approval of the waiver of land development with conditions as noted in the engineer's waiver of land development letter. This waiver request was reviewed by the Board at their August 11th public meeting and the approval resolution is ready for the Board's consideration.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board approved Resolution 21-24, Waiver of Land Development Approval: Christ Lutheran Church.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Richard Marino, Daniel Bell, Laura Smith
Voting No: N/A
Abstaining: N/A
Absent: N/A

Preliminary Plan Presentation – Dock Woods Health Care Expansion

Living Branches has submitted a land development application for a 17,540 sqft building addition proposed for the Dock Woods Health Care Facility with associated site improvements including modifications to the parking area and stormwater management facilities to accommodate the proposed expansion. The proposed land development was reviewed and recommended for approval by the Township’s Planning Commission at their August 2, 2021 meeting.

Carl N. Weiner, Esq., representing the applicant, presented an overview of the proposed development to the Board. Mr. Weiner reviewed the requested waivers, deferrals and consultant comments.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board authorized staff to prepare the resolution for preliminary plan approval to be included on a subsequent Board agenda.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Richard Marino, Daniel Bell, Laura Smith
Voting No: N/A
Abstaining: N/A
Absent: N/A

ZHB 2021-04: Forge Gate Apartments – Sign Variance

The Zoning Hearing Board previously approved an off-premise monument sign for the Forge Gate Apartments, located at 1001 Snyder Avenue. The approval was specific to the sign proposed at that time and that exists today. KBF Associates wishes to change the sign and therefore has applied to the Zoning Hearing Board.

It was the consensus of the Board not to send the Township Solicitor to appear before the Zoning Hearing Board on this application.

Old Business

Blueprint Brewery: “Wheels Toward Hope” 5K Update

Representatives of Blueprint Brewery requested the Township’s approval to host a 5K on Sunday, September 26th at 11 am within the industrial park located off of Gehman Road in Towamencin. The event will be held to benefit the non-profit organization Wheels Toward Hope, which helps quadriplegics and paraplegics in Montgomery and Bucks Counties. The race

will start and end at Blueprint Brewery Co., located at 1571 Gehman Road, and will be contained within the industrial park, utilizing portions of Gehman Road and some of the parking lots. Approximately 100 participants are anticipated, who will follow the rules of the road. No road closures are needed, nor is there fire police assistance request for the event. The Board approved this request at their last meeting, subject to representatives of Blueprint Brewery coming back to the Board with confirmation that other businesses and property owner(s) approve the route access.

Suzanne Greco, event organizer and Blueprint Brewery employee, noted that the affected businesses within the industrial park were contacted and all allowed the parking lot access of the proposed route, except one business. Ms. Greco added there is plenty of parking. Chairman Wilson wished her luck on her event.

New Business

Warrant List

The August warrant list was presented for approval. On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Bell, the Board approved the warrant list in the amount of \$839,047.32.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Richard Marino, Daniel Bell, Laura Smith

Voting No: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

Absent: N/A

Public Works Committee Report

The Public Works Committee meets on a monthly basis to scope projects and identify deficiencies related to Township infrastructure, properties, and equipment. The Committee met on August 24th. Supervisor Marino provided the Committee's report with the following topics reviewed:

- Weikel Road Drainage/Pedestrian Walkways Improvement Project
- 1540 Kriebel Road Storm Sewer Drainage Issue
- 1060 Valley Forge Road Drainage Concerns
- 2021 Road Paving & ADA Ramp Replacements
- 1691 Meadow Glen Drive Drainage Complaint
- Pennsylvania Turnpike Right-of-Way Landscape Improvement Areas
- Bustard Road Park Signage
- Finch Run Sinkhole
- MS4 Permit/Program Update
- Public Works Advisory Meeting Date Change
- Cemetery Maintenance (behind Holiday Inn)

Supervisor Marino described the current state of the cemetery as overgrown, with no regular maintenance in place. He referenced and recommended a practice where municipalities maintain an abandoned/derelict property, and begin the process to assume control of the cemetery.

On a motion by Supervisor Marino, seconded by Supervisor Littley, the Board authorized the Public Works Department to incorporate regular maintenance to the property.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Richard Marino, Daniel Bell, Laura Smith

Voting No: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

Absent: N/A

On a motion by Supervisor Marino, seconded by Supervisor Littley, the Board authorized Township staff to begin the process to assume control of the cemetery.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Richard Marino, Daniel Bell, Laura Smith

Voting No: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

Absent: N/A

Sewer System Monetization Status Report

As part of the Township's ongoing exploration of a possible sale of its sewer system, the Board has asked PFM Financial Advisors to provide regular updates on how the process has been proceeding. Chairman Wilson read the August report. Recent events included:

- Continuing to populate the data room with various documents requested from the bidders or uncovered as part of the Township's ongoing due diligence.
- Continuing drafting all the necessary bidding documents.

Immediate next steps include:

- Continue fielding due diligence questions received from the bidders and continue populating the virtual data room accordingly.
- Continue drafting the various required bidding documents.

2017 Green-Light-Go Grant – Scope of Work Update

The 2017 Green-Light-Go Grant in the amount of \$341,000 was previously rescinded by PennDOT, but was restored with PennDOT's 2021 budget. The Township's Traffic Engineer recommended that the scope of work be modified to remove intersections that have been funded by other sources, and include additional work at other intersections for the difference in grant funding. The projects would have to be completed by May 2022 in accordance with the grant guidelines.

Traffic Engineer Chad Dixon, of McMahon Associates, Inc., provided a summary report referencing the improvement recommendations and additions to consider with the additional grant

funding. Mr. Dixon outlined the schedule: coordinate modifications with PennDOT in September – October, advertise bid in November, award contract in January, construction to run February through May 2022. Chairman Wilson expressed the importance of pressing forward in a timely manner to make that grant deadline.

Authorize Fretz Road Truck Restriction Study Proposal

As requested by the Board, the Township’s Traffic Engineer has submitted a proposal to perform an engineering study to evaluate a potential truck restriction along Fretz Road, between Wambold and Tomlinson Roads. A truck restriction is currently in place on Fretz Road, between Tomlinson and Allentown Roads. The primary objective of this study would be to determine if the portion of Fretz Road, between Wambold Road and Tomlinson Road, should be partially or fully restricted from truck traffic due to inadequate roadway geometry and other engineering criteria.

The Township Traffic Engineer, McMahon Associates, Inc., submitted a proposal in the amount of \$7,800 to perform this study. Chad Dixon of McMahon Associates, Inc., provided an overview of the proposed truck study’s scope of work.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Bell, the Board approved McMahon Associates’ proposal in the amount of \$7,800 for the Fretz Road truck restriction study.

- Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Richard Marino, Daniel Bell, Laura Smith
- Voting No: N/A
- Abstaining: N/A
- Absent: N/A

Resolution 21-25: Designating Depositories for Township Funds

In accordance with §708 of the Pennsylvania 2nd Class Township Code, the Board of Supervisors shall designate by resolution a depository or depositories for township funds. The designation is valid for a period of one year or until another depository or other depositories are designated by similar action of the Board of Supervisors. This resolution would confirm Township Manager Donald D. Delamater as an additional signatory to the accounts.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board approved Resolution 21-25, Designating Depositories for Township Funds.

- Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Richard Marino, Daniel Bell, Laura Smith
- Voting No: N/A
- Abstaining: N/A
- Absent: N/A

Kriebel Road Trail – Transportation Alternatives Set Aside Grant Update

This project involves a pedestrian multi-use trail that will run from Valley View Way to Trumbauer Road along the Kriebel Road sanitary sewer interceptor line. The Township received a Transportation Alternatives Set Aside grant in the amount of \$846,000, which is a federal grant

administered through PennDOT with oversight by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC). The project was let by PennDOT on August 12, 2021. The apparent low bidder was DOLI Construction Corporation with a bid of \$750,744.00.

When combined with construction inspection costs of \$100,619.84 and a PennDOT oversight fee of \$8,460, the total cost is \$859,853.84, exceeding the grant amount of \$846,000 by \$13,853.84. PennDOT requires that Towamencin Township provide correspondence stating the Township is willing to fund the additional \$13,853.84 beyond the grant funding, before they move forward awarding the bid to DOLI.

The Township's consulting engineer on the project, Joe Carlin, of Gilmore and Associates, provided a brief overview of the project and anticipated schedule. Supervisor Marino asked if there was a switch to PennDOT's bridge design specifications. Mr. Carlin confirmed the change in bridge specifications.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board authorized Township Manager Donald Delamater to draft a letter acknowledging the Board's approval of the project's \$13,853.84 overage.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Richard Marino, Daniel Bell, Laura Smith
Voting No: N/A
Abstaining: N/A
Absent: N/A

Appointment - Chief Administrative Officer for Pension Plans

This action is required to document the appointment of Donald D. Delamater as the Chief Administrative Officer to the Township's Pension Plans.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Bell, the Board appointed Donald D. Delamater as the Chief Administrative Officer to the Township's Pension Plans.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Richard Marino, Daniel Bell, Laura Smith
Voting No: N/A
Abstaining: N/A
Absent: N/A

Supervisor Littley provided safety tips with it getting darker earlier and back to school resuming.

There being no additional business, the meeting adjourned at 9:11 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Colleen Ehrle

Assistant to Township Manager