

**Towamencin Township
Board of Supervisors
Monthly Meeting
January 24, 2024
7:00 PM**

Present:

H. Charles Wilson III, Chairman
Laura Smith, Vice Chair
Joyce F. Snyder, Secretary
Kristin Warner, Treasurer
Kofi Osei, Asst. Treasurer/Asst. Secretary

Staff:

David G. Kraynik, Township Manager
Robert J. Iannozzi, Jr., Esq., Township Solicitor
Mary Stover, Township Engineer
Niral Modi, IT Director
Timothy Troxel, Chief of Police

Present Remotely:

Colleen Ehrle, Director of Administration

Absent:

Chairman Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and led the assemblage in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Awards & Recognition

Swearing-in New Police Officers

Chairman Wilson shared it was the Board's honor and privilege to witness the swearing-in of two new officers, Brandon Kinest and Matthew Fernandez. Chief Troxel provided a brief bio and introduced both officers. Chairman Wilson administered the oath to both officers, with their family by their side. The Board welcomed the new officers to Towamencin Township.

Opening Comments

- This Board meeting is provided live via Zoom for residents, who are unable to attend in person but wish to view and hear the meeting remotely. 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 held at the beginning of the meeting.
- The Board met in executive session prior to tonight's meeting to discuss personnel matters.

- Towamencin has partnered with the Montgomery County-Norristown Public Library to provide additional library services to our residents. The first preschool story time was provided earlier in the day. Stay tuned to our website and Facebook page for monthly programming.
- A reminder to residents to come up to a microphone, when prompted for questions, as Zoom does not pick up voices from the audience.
- Agenda change announcement: PSDC has cancelled their attendance at tonight's meeting. An update will be provided at a future meeting.

Public Comments – Emailed/mailed submissions:

Resident Tina Rumsey requested that information read aloud by the Supervisors at the Board meetings be visually presented, citing a significant amount of mumbling during meetings, and this would make it easier to understand what is being said.

Resident Ron Hugick compared Towamencin's Fischer's Park to Doylestown's Peace Valley Park, both passive parks, whose residents enjoy the trails and nature each offer. He referenced various uses of the multi-purpose field at Fischer's - picnics, pick-up baseball, cricket, soccer, lacrosse, kick ball, frisbee, wiffle ball, etc. With all the available use, he questioned why this field would be considered for paved parking and pickleball courts. He had concerns the park could become another single-sport park such as soccer at Grist Mill, and baseball at Butch Clemens. For comparison, he suggested considering other successful parks with multi-sport venues such as Central Park in Doylestown or Carpenter Park in Horsham. He proposed Towamencin can have the best of both worlds, a passive park like Fischer's and a multi-sport park. Lastly, he asked if memberships would be charged for pickleball.

Resident Jackie Swanson commented on the proposed pickleball courts at Fischer's Park. She referenced the 2010 Fischer's Park Master Plan which indicates a passive recreation park where recreational activities do not require prepared facilities. She stressed paved pickleball courts are prepared facilities. Additionally, she cited years ago, the Township was approached with the need for additional baseball/softball fields, with Fischer's Park was suggested for Tournaments; the answer was "no." She asked the Board to consider keeping the park a beautiful, natural open space.

Resident Timothy Gallagher commented he is not opposed to pickleball, but he is at Fischer's Park. He asked if the current Supervisors want to leave a legacy that they are the ones that ruined the only beautiful, passive park in the Township. He can't wait for the next election cycle with a supervisor seat on the ballot; suggesting residents need people who are concerned about the residents.

Resident Rebecca Curlett asked the Open Space and Parks Advisory Committee and Board to offer a public survey before moving forward with plans for pickleball courts at Fischer's Park. Everyone she has spoken with is opposed to this plan. She would like Fischer's Park to remain a quiet park. She continued adding impervious coverage, such as a parking lot, will cause additional flooding problems.

In-Person Comments

Resident Bruce Bailey referenced the awards and citations hanging upon the walls of the Meeting Hall building, especially those related to Fischer's Park. Mr. Bailey expressed his opposition to pickleball courts at Fischer's Park. He then directed his last comment towards the need for spending cuts.

Resident Tina Gallagher noted she attended the January Open Space and Parks Advisory Committee meeting to hear about the concept plan for Fischer's Park. She feels many residents are unaware pickleball is being considered. She shared a quote, "local government transparency is essential in the climate of scrutiny in which we live, authorities should be open and honest about how they use money and represent them in conversations held and decisions made." She questioned if there has been any discussion regarding pickleball outside of the Committee and if residents have been surveyed. She is opposed to plans that would include paving and pickleball at Fischer's, citing the environment and sound annoyance. She requested the concept plan be shared and asked that residents have input. She called on the Committee to continue being stewards of Fischer's Park and not advance the concept plan.

Resident Joe Silverman referenced the Act 12 hearing held two days prior and suggested that the Supervisors who voted to sell the sewer system watch the meeting. He noted Supervisor Osei and Tony Bellitto of North Penn Water Authority made excellent comments. He cited a comment made by Mr. Bellitto's ability to operate their entire organization, with 52 employees, for the same price tag as one Aqua CEO. He encouraged the audience to watch the meeting. Lastly, he asked that a pothole at the intersection of Franklin Street and Sumneytown Pike be addressed.

Resident Paul Andrews echoed Mr. Silverman's comments about the Act 12 hearing and encouraged others to watch it. Mr. Andrews noted he was opposed to the proposed pickleball courts at Fischer's Park, because of the noise associated with the sport. He appreciates the time the Committee has invested locating space for pickleball. He visits the park often and appreciates the quiet. He asked that noise be considered in the decision process, adding pickleball is a luxury and is not needed.

Resident Joe Meehan, OSPAC Chairman, commented he felt there was a bullseye on him regarding the pickleball commentary. He reiterated that he hears what residents are saying. He reinforced that the plan presented was a concept plan, and nothing is set in stone, other options are being considered. He stated the Committee respects resident input and asked that residents not jump to conclusions. He added pickleball is not just a sport, but also a social activity to join the community which is very much needed now. He added the OSPAC works hard and considers all aspects during the decision-making process.

Resident Gisela Koch noted she attended the OSPAC meeting as well. She referenced Fischer's Park should not be first choice for pickleball and asked why money is being spent to conduct a study for something that does not belong there. She added a community center may be more desirable. She concluded pickleball is a wish and should be prioritized.

Joe Silverman commented that electric car charging stations have many issues, one being temperature regulation; he asked that this and other factors be considered during planning associated tractor trailer accommodations.

Tina Gallagher noted she attended the Comprehensive Plan Update meeting, where Peter Simone referenced a shared resources plan for Upper Gwynedd Township, that indicated Fischer's Park was rated the number one park on that survey plan. She felt that was because they are not coming to Fischer's for pickleball.

Paul Andrews commented there is no bullseye on Joe Meehan or the OSPAC Committee. He acknowledged they do a great job and residents appreciate their efforts. He simply wanted to remind them, residents like our parks and appreciate the quiet, and request they remain that way.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Supervisor Smith, seconded by Supervisor Warner, the Board approved the January 2nd Reorganization Meeting minutes.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Joyce Snyder, Kristin Warner, Kofi Osei
Voting No: N/A
Abstaining: N/A
Absent: N/A

On a motion by Supervisor Smith, seconded by Supervisor Snyder, the Board approved the January 10th Meeting minutes.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Joyce Snyder, Kristin Warner, Kofi Osei
Voting No: N/A
Abstaining: N/A
Absent: N/A

Zoning, Subdivision and Land Development

Consider Conditional Use Order: Caracausa Acquisitions, LP (Belfair Square)

At the January 10th meeting, the Board of Supervisors approved the applicant's request to reaffirm a previous Conditional Use Order granted on January 12, 2022, with modifications including allowance for disturbance of steep slopes and the applicant's agreement to meet all landscaping requirements outlined in various waivers. The Conditional Use permits the construction of 16 townhomes (Use R-5 - Townhouse Dwelling) with a carport in the Residential Business and Professional (RBP) Overlay Zoning District subject to the condition that the development and use of the subject property be in accordance with the testimony and exhibits presented. The Township Solicitor prepared a Conditional Use Order for the Board's review and consideration. Mr. Iannozzi read a summary of the Order.

On a motion by Supervisor Smith, seconded by Supervisor Osei, the Board approved the Conditional Use Order: Caracausa Acquisitions, LP (Belfair Square).

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Joyce Snyder, Kristin Warner, Kofi Osei
Voting No: N/A
Abstaining: N/A

Absent: N/A

Resolution 24-09: Preliminary Plan Approval Land Development Caracausa Acquisitions, LP (Belfair Square)

At the January 10th meeting, applicant David Caracausa presented the latest updates to the Belfair Square Plans, including waiver requests, with the Board authorizing staff to prepare preliminary/final land development resolutions for the Belfair Square project. Cornerstone Premier Homes proposes to consolidate nine separate parcels into a single 3.94-acre development site, featuring 16 townhouses with public and site improvements located along Welsh Road, between Vernon Court and Grist Mill Road.

On a motion by Supervisor Snyder, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board approved Resolution 24-09, Preliminary Plan Approval Land Development Caracausa Acquisitions, LP (Belfair Square).

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Joyce Snyder, Kristin Warner, Kofi Osei
Voting No: N/A
Abstaining: N/A
Absent: N/A

Resolution 24-10: Final Land Development Approval Caracausa Acquisitions, LP (Belfair Square)

At the January 10th meeting, applicant David Caracausa presented the latest updates to the Belfair Square plans, including waiver requests, with the Board authorizing staff to prepare preliminary/final land development resolutions for the Belfair Square Project.

On a motion by Supervisor Osei, seconded by Supervisor Snyder, the Board approved resolution 24-10, Final Land Development Caracausa Acquisitions, LP (Belfair Square).

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Joyce Snyder, Kristin Warner, Kofi Osei
Voting No: N/A
Abstaining: N/A
Absent: N/A

Hearing: ELO Entertainment Lifestyle Overlay Ordinance Amendment – Public Hearing

In November, representatives from Philadelphia Suburban Development Corporation (PSDC) proposed amending the ELO Entertainment Lifestyle Overlay Zoning District through a zoning map revision and text amendment. The proposed map amendment includes revising the size of the “residential” section of the ELO District in order to permit commercial use along the frontage of Forty Foot Road. The text amendment proposes to revise setback regulations and add height restrictions. The amendment would establish a 75-foot front yard setback from the ultimate right-of-way on Forty Foot Road and a maximum building height of 20 feet for buildings along Forty Foot Road frontage. The Board authorized advertising the proposed zoning map and ELO text

language changes at their November 8, 2023 meeting. The applicants' representatives Ed Hughes, Esq., and John Anderson, P.E., were present to address hearing comments. Solicitor Iannozzi read the advertised legal notices and marked exhibits. Mr. Anderson and Mr. Hughes were sworn in to present the requested amendments. The hearing ended with no comments, questions, or objections.

Ordinance 24-01: ELO Entertainment Lifestyle Overlay Amendment

Adoption of this ordinance would amend the Township's Zoning Code to provide regulations pertaining to the matter as presented in the proceeding public hearing.

Supervisor Osei commented that the County Planning Commission recommended that the zoning be simplified and suggested that their recommendation be considered under the comprehensive plan.

On a motion by Supervisor Warner, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board approved the ELO Entertainment Lifestyle Overlay Amendment.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Joyce Snyder, Kristin Warner, Kofi Osei
Voting No: N/A
Abstaining: N/A
Absent: N/A

Old Business

None

New Business

Warrant List

The January Warrant list in the amount of \$729,442.87 was presented for approval.

On a motion by Supervisor Smith, seconded by Supervisor Warner, the Board approved the warrant list in the amount of \$1,671,554.63.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Joyce Snyder, Kristin Warner, Kofi Osei
Voting No: N/A
Abstaining: N/A
Absent: N/A

Public Works Report

The Public Works Committee meets monthly to scope projects and identify efficiencies related to Township infrastructure, properties, and equipment. The Committee met January 18th. Supervisor Smith provided the Committee's report summarizing the following topics:

- Weikel Road Project

- Central Drive Storm Sewer Repairs
- Bocce Courts at Fischer's Park
- 2024 Road Paving & ADA Ramp Project
- Landscape Signage at the Turnpike
- Green Lane Park Soccer Fields
- Welsh/Orvilla Road Intersection Improvement Project
- Route 309 Connector/Sumneytown Pike Improvements
- SR 1058 HT4 Improvements along SR63
- Forty Foot Road/Newbury Way/PSDC Traffic Signal
- Fischer's Park Improvements
- Electric Vehicle Charging Stations
- Grant Opportunities
 - PennDOT Green Light Go
 - Community Conservation Partnership Program (parks and stormwater)
 - COVID-19 ARPA Capital Projects Fund/Multi-purpose Community Facilities Program
- Comprehensive plan
- MS4 Permit Requirements
- Long Term Storm Sewer Maintenance Plan
- Old Forty Foot Road/Rittenhouse Road PennDOT Safety Improvements
- Kriebel Road (at Anders) Speed/Safety Resident Concern
- 2024 Pool Season

Finance Committee Report

The Township Finance Committee meets monthly to monitor economic indicators and the pulse of the Township's revenues and expenditures. They also address various requests and concerns that may arise. The Committee met on January 17th. Supervisor Warner provided the Committee's report summarizing the following topics:

- Towamencin Volunteer Fire Company
- 2023 December Financials
- General Fund expenditures, revenues, and fund balance
- Long-Range Financial Forecasting
- 2023 Audit
- Stream stabilization fee use
- Comprehensive Plan consultants to attend February Meeting

Authorization to Advertise: Municipal Building Roof Replacement Project

The Township budgeted funds for exterior building projects at the Municipal Complex including renovations to the Administration and Meeting Hall Building, and the interconnecting breezeway between the buildings. The scope of work included roof replacements, removal and replacement of the existing wood siding, replacement of decorative barn doors, repair/replace existing fascia and miscellaneous roofing improvements at the noted buildings. At the June 14, 2023, meeting,

the Board approved the Township Engineer's proposal to facilitate the project's Engineering/Design/Bidding Phase. The contract documents are complete, and the project is ready to go out to bid.

On a motion by Supervisor Smith, seconded by Supervisor Warner, the Board authorized the Municipal Building Roof Replacement Project.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Joyce Snyder, Kristin Warner, Kofi Osei
Voting No: N/A
Abstaining: N/A
Absent: N/A

Open Space & Parks Advisory Committee Associate Member Request

The Open Space & Parks Advisory Committee was established by Resolution 04-12 on March 24, 2004, and currently includes nine voting members. The Committee has expressed an interest in establishing an associate member classification of no more than two individuals for this Committee. These non-voting members would be invited to participate in meetings and receive all OSPAC meeting agendas and minutes, etc.

OSPAC Chairman Joe Meehan presented the committee's request advocating for the addition of two associate members that would offer a direct line of communication to the pool/Towamencin Swim Team group and the Township's Special Events Committee.

Chairman Wilson expressed a concern having the OSPAC Committee involved or intervening in communication between the operations of swim team and/or pool management. He outlined the current communication lines in place with Township Administration and felt that was appropriate and working well.

The Board prefers not to establish associate members. However, an alternative solution to OSPAC's request included having the Events Coordinator Katie Cleary, attend the OSPAC's meetings as a staff liaison.

Volunteer Committee Appointments

Residents have submitted applications expressing their interest in serving on the Township's various volunteer committees. The Board considers these volunteer committee appointment requests:

- Environmental Advisory Committee, term expiring 12/31/26 - Rich Costlow (Associate)
- Environmental Advisory Committee, term expiring 12/31/26 - David McCreary (Regular)
- Special Events Committee, term expiring 12/31/26 - Megan Satalino
- Emergency Operations Committee, term expiring 12/31/26 - Andrew Phipps

On a motion by Supervisor Snyder, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board approved the Volunteer Committee Appointments.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Joyce Snyder, Kristin Warner, Kofi Osei
Voting No: N/A
Abstaining: N/A
Absent: N/A

Additional Business

Supervisor Snyder commended the Public Works department for their hard work with plowing efforts, keeping residents safe during last week's snowstorm.

Supervisor Snyder made a motion requesting the Board be fiscally responsible, thereby requesting staff to terminate the sewer sale.

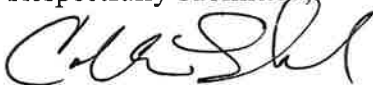
Supervisor Osei added he will no longer try to convince the Board on the merits of the sewer sale. He noted Towamencin voters are very discerning as to what they vote yes and no to. Further, he referenced a few hundred thousand dollars that have been budgeted to defend the sewer sale, emphasizing these costs are not fair to Towamencin ratepayers. As a compromise he suggested issuing a letter of intent to PA American Water to terminate the sale without liability, with no additional money being spent to defend the sale or litigation.

On a motion by Supervisor Snyder, seconded by Supervisor Osei, the motion requesting staff to terminate the sale/issue a letter of intent to PA American Water to terminate the sale did not carry with a 3:2 vote.

Voting Yes: Joyce Snyder, Kofi Osei
Voting No: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Kristin Warner
Abstaining: N/A
Absent: N/A

There being no additional business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:54 pm.

Respectfully submitted,


Colleen Ehrle
Director of Administration