

**Towamencin Township
Board of Supervisors
Monthly Meeting
December 11, 2024
7:00 PM**

Present:

H. Charles Wilson III, Chairman
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

Absent:

Laura Smith, Vice Chair

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

Opening Comments

- This Board meeting is being provided via Zoom for residents unable to attend in person but wish to view and hear the meeting live 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 available at the beginning of the meeting.
- The Holiday Light displays at Fischer's Park will be illuminated at night for the holidays during the month of December. Stop by to enjoy our local winter wonderland.
- Towamencin Volunteer Fire Company's Ladies Auxiliary will be escorting Santa through the Township on December 14. Keep an eye out for Santa in your neighborhood.
- In accordance with the Pennsylvania 2nd Class Township Code, the Board of Supervisors will meet on Monday, January 6, 2025, at 7:00 pm to re-organize.

Emailed Public Comments:

Resident Joanne Andrews commented it is ironic that after all the sewer battles (and the sale falling through), there is no sewer rate or tax increase for 2025. She stated Supervisor Wilson needed the sale proceeds so badly and was willing to sell the residents out to a private company, tripling the current sewer rate. She questioned why the Township did not propose a small tax increase to create

funds to cover future costs or repairs. A small increase of 1-2% would raise additional funds for maintenance at a fraction of the cost of what a sale would have cost the residents; adding many residents have requested incremental increases over time, rather than huge increases at once, then questioned if Chairman Wilson is being short-sighted again.

In-Person Comments

Resident John Dulcey followed up on his previous comment made last month regarding a new streetlight at Susan Drive and Keeler Road. He requested a status update from the Board. Township Manager David Kraynik noted he was awaiting an update from the Public Works Director, adding he expected an update at the Committee's next meeting.

Resident Tim Caso noted he attended the last meeting where a discussion took place regarding apartments and residential stability. He asked Supervisor Snyder if she had the studies available that she referenced suggesting renter stability is the same as homeowners. Supervisor Snyder replied she did not have them with her, but that she could provide that information after the meeting. He referenced an excerpt from a Habitat for Humanity study that contradicted Supervisor Snyder's reference. He opposes added apartment buildings for transient reasons, nothing to do with nationality makeup. He feels if the goal is a stable community, renters are the last thing the Township should be focused on.

Resident Joe Silverman wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Supervisor Snyder, seconded by Supervisor Warner, the Board approved the November 26, 2024 Meeting minutes.

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

Zoning, Subdivision and Land Development

Consider Use Hearing: 2060 Detwiler Road, Senior Care Day Care

At the November 13th Meeting, the Board authorized advertising a Conditional Use hearing for a senior daycare center located at 2060 Detwiler Road, with minimal site improvements proposed. The use is permitted by Conditional Use approval within the Limited Industrial Zoning District. The applicant's - Detweiler Holding, LLC. - representatives were present to offer testimony and comments. Solicitor Iannozzi presented the associated exhibits and conducted the hearing. A court reporter was present to make a complete and formal record of the hearing.

Consider Time Extension Request: Conditional Use Approval - Shopping Center Signage

The applicant, Philadelphia Suburban Development Company, requested an extension to the expiration date for the Conditional Use Approval for signage in accordance with Section 153-

1004(B)(3). The current Conditional Use Approval expires on December 13, 2024. PSDC requested an additional six (6) months to obtain any necessary sign permits in connection with the Conditional Use Approval, extending the expiration date for signage to June 13, 2025. The Conditional Use Order allowed the following:

Two pylon entrance signs were permitted to be modified to allow for: (a) reducing the sign size from 128.91 to 126 sq ft; (b) reducing the associated digital display from 45.94 to 18.5 sq ft; and (c) relocating the Allentown Road pylon entrance sign to the southeastern side from the northeastern side at a revised elevation of 287 sq ft from 296 sq ft; and (d) relocating the Forty Foot Road pylon entrance sign further from the ultimate right-of-way.

The Supervisors discussed the minimum time extension they would allow; citing concerns and reservations of the applicant's continued time extension requests.

On a motion by Supervisor Warner, seconded by Supervisor Snyder, the Board approved a final, 30-day time extension request for Conditional Use Approval (CU-2023-01).

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

Consider Waiver of Land Development: Goddard School (1390 S. Valley Forge Road)

In September, the applicant was before the Board expressing interest in converting the vacant Rite Aid building, located at 1360 Valley Forge Road, into a Goddard School. The applicant is requesting a waiver from the land development requirement for the new use on the property. Minimum site improvements are proposed. Kate Harper, esquire for the applicant was present to offer additional project details and answer questions.

On a motion by Supervisor Snyder, seconded by Supervisor Osei, the Board approved the waiver of Land Development for the proposed Goddard School at 1390 S. Valley Forge Road.

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

Old Business

None

New Business

Warrant List

The October Warrant list in the amount of \$1,074,465.02 was presented for approval. On a motion by Supervisor Warner, seconded by Supervisor Osei, the Board approved the warrant list in the amount of \$1,074,465.02.

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

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 December 4. Supervisor Warner provided the Committee's report, summarizing the following topics:

- November 2024 Financials
- Year-end outstanding payments and collections
- Township Audit
- Payroll Process & Software

Consider Approval: Personnel Policy for Fire Services Assistance Program

In conjunction with the proposed Fire Services Assistance Agreement between the Township and Towamencin Volunteer Fire Company, a personnel policy has been drafted outlining the arrangement by the Township to allow full-time Public Works employees, who are certified firefighters, to respond to certain emergency fire calls during working hours and the annual compensation allowance to these employees, who participate in the program. This policy would be added to the Township's personnel handbook as an appendix.

On a motion by Supervisor Snyder, seconded by Supervisor Warner, the Board approved the personnel policy for the Fire Services Assistance Program.

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

Consider Approval - Fire Services Assistance Agreement (Towamencin Volunteer Fire Co.)

At the last meeting, the Board authorized the Township Solicitor to draft an agreement with the Towamencin Volunteer Fire Company that would allow full-time Public Works employees, who are certified firefighters, to respond to certain emergency fire calls during working hours. An annual stipend of \$3,000 would be offered to all qualified employees who participate in the program. These Public Works employees would be covered under the Township's workers' compensation insurance and would adhere to Towamencin Fire Company's policies and

procedures while operating under their direction. The Township recognizes that the Fire Company is a volunteer organization and has staffing challenges during daytime hours. Towamencin Township is committed to providing the best possible fire protection for the community.

On a motion by Supervisor Warner, seconded by Supervisor Osei, the Board approved the Fire Services Assistance Agreement (Towamencin Volunteer Fire Company).

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

Consider Approval – 2025-2029 Police Collective Bargaining Agreement

An agreement has been reached between the Township and the Towamencin Police Bargaining Unit for a new labor contract. The five (5) year contract includes changes in a few categories. Highlights include:

- Wage increases: ranging between 3.5 - 5% between 2025 and 2029
- Vacation time adjustments
- Increase to uniform and education allowances
- Increases to field training officer (FTO) and Sergeant pay
- Increases for sick bonuses

On a motion by Supervisor Snyder, seconded by Supervisor Osei, the Board approved the 2025-2029 Police Collective Bargaining Agreement.

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

Resolution 24-28: 2024 Budget Amendment

The Second-Class Township Code provides that the Board of Supervisors may, by Resolution, amend the Operating and Capital Budgets transferring unencumbered appropriations from one account to another. The Finance Committee has closely monitored revenues and expenditures throughout the year, and based on a year-end projection prepared by staff, it has been determined that certain budget line items need to be amended in the 2024 Budget. Specifically, a transfer of \$658,463.16 is necessary, from the general capital fund to the sewer operating fund, to reimburse professional service fees related to the cancelled sewer sale. This amount is the NextEra monies received from the cancelled sale.

On a motion by Supervisor Osei, seconded by Supervisor Snyder, the Board approved Resolution 24-28, 2024 Budget Amendment.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson III, Joyce F. Snyder, Kristin Warner, Kofi Osei

Voting No: N/A
Abstaining: N/A
Absent: Laura Smith

Resolution 24-29: Adopt 2025 Budget

The Township Supervisors authorized the advertising and public inspection release of the Township’s proposed 2025 Budget at its November 13, 2024 meeting. This resolution will adopt the budget as presented. Highlights include:

- No new property tax increase, millage will remain at 5.6895 mills
- No new borrowing planned for 2025
- No Sewer Rental Fee increase
- Maintain Homestead / Farmstead Exemption to \$50,000

Supervisor Osei stated he is opposed to the budget, and would be voting no, considering inflation and depreciation, adding this budget does not do that. He stated it is not fair to residents to impose a 20% tax increase at once rather than small increments each year. He expressed an overall displeasure for the Board’s decision not to raise taxes for years, stating it creates difficulties for the Township in the future.

On a motion by Supervisor Warner, seconded by Supervisor Snyder, the Board approved Resolution 24-29, Adopt 2025 Budget.

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

Resolution 24-30: Sewer Capital Fund Transfer in lieu of “TAN”

During the first two quarters of the year, certain Township funds could incur temporary indebtedness before the receipt of taxes and other revenue. Rather than incur the costs of a Tax Anticipation Note (“TAN”) from a bank, the Sewer Capital Fund has funds available to temporarily lend to the General, Fire, Park and Recreation and Debt Services Funds as needed in the short term. As an annual practice, staff recommends that a short-term loan - not to exceed \$500,000 - from the Sewer Capital Fund be made available, if needed, in anticipation of taxes and other revenue. The loan shall bear interest at the weekly variable rate computed based on a 365-day year and paid monthly to the Sewer Capital Fund. The principal portion of the loan shall be repaid no later than December 31, 2025.

On a motion by Supervisor Warner, seconded by Supervisor Osei, the Board approved Resolution 24-30, Sewer Capital Fund Transfer in lieu of “TAN”.

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

Resolution 24-31: Sewer Rental Rate

This resolution will establish the annual sewer rate of \$590 for an EDU, which is the same as the 2024 rate.

On a motion by Supervisor Snyder, seconded by Supervisor Warner, the Board approved Resolution 24-31, Sewer Rental Rate.

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

Resolution 24-32: Tax Levy

This action establishes the millage rate at 5.6895 for 2025 to satisfy the requirements of the budget.

On a motion by Supervisor Snyder, seconded by Supervisor Warner, the Board approved Resolution 24-32, Tax Levy.

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

Supervisor Osei stated he is voting no for this resolution for the same reasons stated for the budget.

North Valley View Way Street Light District

The Township’s only established Street Light District is located near the intersection of Valley Forge Road and Morris Road. Property owners within this area are assessed annually to fund the operation and maintenance of the six streetlights in this development. These lights were converted to LED lamps in 2017. The amount assessed to each property is \$35.00 annually.

On a motion by Supervisor Warner, seconded by Supervisor Osei, the Board approved North Valley View Way Street Light District.

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

Resolution 24-34: Homestead Exemption

This resolution establishes the Homestead Exemption at \$50,000. In 2000, the County implemented the Homestead Exemption Program that allows for the reduction in the amount of the assessed value of a property that is taxed by the Township. To participate, the property must

be the primary residence of the property owner; commercial and rental properties do not qualify. Once a property is participating, it will remain in the program unless its status changes (i.e., sold or rented). A new buyer is required to register with the County to participate.

The Township determines the exemption amount annually as part of its budget process. Participating homeowners will receive an exemption on the Township portion of their tax bill.

On a motion by Supervisor Warner, seconded by Supervisor Osei, the Board approved Resolution 24-34, Homestead Exemption.

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

Resolution 24-35: Farmstead Exemption

The farmstead exclusion allows real property tax relief to farmers on the taxes they pay on farm buildings (other than the farmhouse, which receives tax relief through the homestead exclusion), as long as at least one farm owner resides on the farm. This is in addition to other existing real property tax relief programs aimed at farms, such as Act 319 (often referred to as "Clean and Green"), which reduces the assessed value of farmland.

By law, if the homestead exclusion is offered in a taxing jurisdiction, the farmstead exclusion must also be offered. The farmstead exclusion rate is set by the governing body and cannot exceed the amount of the homestead exclusion. This resolution establishes the exemption at \$50,000.

On a motion by Supervisor Osei, seconded by Supervisor Snyder, the Board approved Resolution 24-35, Farmstead Exemption.

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

Resolution 24-36: Adoption of 2025 Fee Schedule

This resolution and document establish the fees charged for various permits and Township services, including zoning, land development, building, fire suppression systems, etc.

On a motion by Supervisor Snyder, seconded by Supervisor Osei, the Board approved Resolution 24-36, Adoption of 2025 Fee Schedule.

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

Resolution 24-37: Investment Policy

At the recommendation of the Township appointed auditors several years ago, the Finance Committee prepared an “Investment Policy” and approved by the Board. The purpose of the policy is to establish cash management and investment guidelines for the stewardship of public funds under the jurisdiction of Towamencin Township. It is the policy of the Township to invest its funds in a manner that will provide the highest investment return with the maximum security, while meeting the Township’s daily cash flow needs and to comply with all state statutes governing the investment of public funds. In accordance with the recommendation of the Auditors, the policy is reviewed annually. It is recommended the Board approve the continuation of this policy for 2025.

On a motion by Supervisor Warner, seconded by Supervisor Osei, the Board approved Resolution 24-37, Investment Policy.

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

Consider Cancelling December 26, 2024 Board Meeting

The Board considered cancelling the December 26th meeting due to a lack of agenda items and holidays.

On a motion by Supervisor Warner, seconded by Supervisor Osei, the Board authorized cancelling the December 26, 2024 Meeting.

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

There being no additional business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:06 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Colleen Ehrle
Director of Administration