



**West Pottsgrove Township
980 Grosstown Road
Stowe, PA 19464**

**Board of Commissioners Meeting
April 3, 2024
7:00pm**

The regular monthly Board Meeting for the Board of Commissioners was called to order by Board President, Steve Miller.

ROLL CALL

Board members present were Commissioners; Arms, Valentine, Miller, Green, and Shawell. Also present was Township Manager; Debi Roesener, Township Secretary; Courtney Harris, Township Solicitor; Jamie Ottaviano, and Police Chief; Joseph Sokolofski. Fire Chief, Frank Hand, was absent.

MINUTES

A motion was made by Commissioner Shawell to approve the minutes from March 20th, 2024. Commissioner Green seconded the motion. All were in favor of approving the March 20th meeting minutes.

FINANCIAL REPORT

A motion was made by Commissioner Green to approve the Financial Report, Commissioner Shawell seconded the motion. All were in favor of approving the Financial Report.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Commissioner Arms made a motion to pay the list of bills as presented, Commissioner Green seconded the motion. All were in favor of paying the bills as presented.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

None

COMMITTEE REPORTS –

Mr. Valentine – Recreation, Town Watch & Regional Recreation

Mr. Valentine had nothing to report.

Mr. Green – Emergency Management, Finance, Recycling – There were 22.87 tons of single stream recycling for March.

Mr. Arms - Public Works & Code Enforcement – Code Enforcement Report as follows:

CODE CALL	5	PERMITS ISSUED	11
CODE INSPECTION	5	HEARINGS	0
USE & OCCUPANCY	6	COMPLAINTS RESOLVED	2
RENTAL INSPECTIONS	11 UNITS	RENTAL PERMITS	11
RENTAL REGISTRATIONS	23	NOTICE OF VIOLATION	1

CODE NOTICES	1	PROPERTIES POSTED	0
PERMIT INSPECTIONS	17	CITATIONS	72
SITE INSPECTIONS	0	COMPLETED PERMITS	10

U&O Fees: \$900.00 Rental Registration Fees: \$1,535.00 - Building Permit Fees: \$31,832.65 - Construction Costs: \$329,928.00

Mr. Shawell – Regional Planning, Zoning, & Planning Commission

Mr. Shawell stated that Pottstown Borough is refusing to meet with WPT to discuss acquiring additional land from the Borough for parking purposes at the Veterans Memorial Park.

Mr. Miller – Police, Civil Service & Fire

Fire

Mr. Miller read the fire report for the month of March. There was a total of 9 calls, which included 4 EMS, and 5 fire calls.

Police

Chief Joe Sokolofski of the West Pottsgrove Police Department reported 277 calls for the month of March.

TOTAL ARRESTS – ADULT/ JUVENILES	10/0
TRAFFIC CITATIONS	57
TRAFFIC WRITTEN WARNINGS	60
UPLAND SQUARE CALLS	56
CODE ENFORCEMENTS	3
NON-TRAFFIC CITATIONS	5
UPLAND SQUARE MINUTES	1,770

Chief Sokolofski reported that there was an indecent exposure incident on March 24th. There was a male following an adult woman around Walnut and Howard Streets. After a brief exchange the male exposed himself and began to masturbate. Corporal Roeder conducted a follow-up investigation the next day. The victim was able to identify known vagrant Michael Warrick after patrols located him outside the 7-11. Corporal Roeder discovered surveillance cameras at 113 Linden Street, which recorded the encounter and Warrick masturbating. Warrick was arrested later the same day and remanded to MCCF.

Officer Douglas attended FBI Basic Hostage Negotiation training; Officer Peifer attended Crisis Intervention Specialist, Advanced training; Officer Slavin attended Case Preparation Introduction to Criminal Interdiction training; and Officer Zieske attended Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement training.

MANAGER'S REPORT –

- Public Works continues to collect yard waste on Tuesdays as residents call in.
- Staff worked to replenish the playground mulch at the Howard Street and Vine Street parks in addition to painting the playground equipment in March.
- Staff worked to apply millings to reestablish the walking area for the loop trail at Murgia Park in March.

- 1040 Manatawny Rd (Ekaterine Eastmond) – Property Owner was found guilty at the hearing held at the County on Thursday October 12th, 2023. The case has been raised to the State Superior Court level by the owner, so we are currently in a holding pattern. No changes have been made at the property. Codes staff continue to cite the owner. Another hearing with the District Court has been scheduled for Tuesday April 23, 2024. Our solicitor will update.
- 203 E. Race St (Michelle Campbell) – At the County Court hearing on September 7th, 2023, the judge gave the owner an additional 60 days to clean up her property. The owner has made significant progress on cleaning up her property and getting all the vehicles properly registered. Our solicitor contacted the court on Monday December 4, 2023, and the petitions have been deemed moot. The Township issued a follow up letter indicating that if there are signs that they are regressing back to the prior conditions, this will go straight to citations. No additional notices will be issued. The property has regressed, Codes staff continues to monitor the condition of this property, and the owner is being cited daily.
- Both the Codes and Administrative staff have been diligently following up on rental properties in the township. The staff continues to discover properties that have not been properly registered with the township and therefore, have not been inspected. Codes staff are performing ongoing rental inspections. Rental invoices were sent out on December 22nd, 2023, with a due date of January 31st, 2024, which is now in line with the Code requirements. To date there are only 13 outstanding invoices out of 170. We currently have 445 residential rental properties and 104 commercial rental properties registered in the Township.
- Township Newsletter for Spring/Summer 2024 –Newsletter content was submitted to the printer on Monday March 26th, 2024, for an anticipated issue date of May 10th, 2024.
- Mascaro Trash/Recycling –Phone calls and emails have been very limited, and JP Mascaro has been promptly responding to issues as they are brought to their attention. Mascaro provided a list of delinquent customers at the beginning of January which reflected that 170 of the 1394 units billed in the Township had not paid since the beginning of the current trash contract in December 2022. JP began posting toters in mid-March for no collection due to non-payment. We checked in with them at the end of March and most have reached out to pay or make payment arrangements. They will continue to keep us posted. Any residents who refuse to pay will be issued a Notice of Violation.
- Workmen's Compensation - We met with the site inspector on January 29th, 2024, and completed the Initial Loss Survey on February 14th, 2024. On March 4th, 2024, we received a recommendation letter based on the inspection and survey information provided. We were strongly encouraged to develop a safety committee and related safety manuals. This is currently under review.
- Annual Financial Audit – Herbein was in the Township the first full week in February to perform the annual audit. The letter of engagement was executed on January 18th, 2024. Herbein provided an extensive list of documents required to perform the audit. Admin staff collected and uploaded all documents as requested on January 29th, 2024. Herbein requested a closing meeting for March 25th, 2024. Herbein will be presenting the 2023 Financial Audit to the BOC at its April 3rd, 2024, meeting.

- Old Timer's Field – The Township was awarded an additional \$200k in grant funding from DCNR to complete the proposed improvements. There are presently four other smaller grants in place to help offset the construction costs associated with this project. The engineer is currently preparing the contract documents and plans for anticipated bidding in late spring with construction to follow in late summer of 2024.
- Veterans Memorial Park – Several meetings have been held and a preliminary sketch plan has been prepared. The current conceptual master plan includes acquiring an additional parcel of land from the Borough of Pottstown. The Township had discussed this with the Borough Manager and requested to be placed on an upcoming agenda to discuss in detail with Borough Council. This request was denied, and we are currently discussing with other outside parties and also reviewing alternatives to the park layout.
- Anthony Wayne Drive Sanitary Sewer Project – The contractor completed installation of the sewer main, and laterals located within the road right-of-way before the holidays. The area has been temporarily restored to allow the trenches to settle for a minimum of 60 days. The contractor began working on the permanent trench restoration and concrete work the week of March 18th, 2024, and will continue to do so until the project is complete, weather permitting.
- Chapter 94 Report and Grosstown Road WQM Part 2 Permit – HRG has completed the 2023 Chapter 94 Report, and it was submitted on behalf of the Township on March 29th, 2024.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Mr. Ottaviano reported that he attempted to have the current owners, HK Partners, served the Declaration of Taking for 0 W High St., however, it was returned. Because the letter was returned undeliverable the site needs to be posted and we must advertise in the Mercury and the Montgomery County Law Journal. Once the proof of publication is received, Mr. Ottaviano will file the Affidavit of Service. More to come at the next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

PLGIT – Transition from PFM Investment Account - Update – Ms. Roesener updated the Board regarding the transition from PFM to PLGIT. Options were discussed to take an initial loss on the investments and move all the funds to PLGIT now, rather than wait for the investments to mature, which could be three years. Should we wait until the investments mature in PFM we would be paying the monthly service fee with our returns being less than what they could be by moving them to PLGIT. In the end the loss would be a wash based on the increased interest and savings on the monthly managed fee with PFM. Commissioner Green made a motion to transition all investments from PFM to PLGIT now rather than waiting until they mature. Commissioner Valentine seconded the motion. All were in favor of moving the funds now and taking the initial loss.

Ordinance – Sewer Lateral Inspections (revised) – Authorized for Advertisement – This was previously advertised and adopted, however Ms. Roesener noticed that the old definition was used. It has now been corrected and Mr. Ottaviano is asking for authorization to advertise the revised Sewer Lateral Inspection Ordinance. Commissioner Green made a motion to authorize advertisement, seconded by Commissioner Shawell. All were in favor.

NEW BUSINESS

2023 Financial Audit – Presented by Herbein – Megan Thompson from Herbein gave an overview of our 2023 budget. Ms. Thompson stated that we had a clean audit and our reserve account actually increased for the first time in 10 years, rather than decreased as it has each year over the last 10 years. Ms. Thompson stated that we are doing a great job and that cleaning up the accounts has helped to streamline things significantly.

Resolution – 2024 CDBG Grant Application – Jem Ave & Dori Lane Improvements Project – Discuss for Approval – Commissioner Green made a motion for Ms. Roesener to file the grant application, requesting \$250k in grant funding for the estimated \$700K project. Commissioner Shawell seconded the motion. All were in favor.

2023 CDBG Project – Sylvan Dr. Sanitary Replacement Project (Phase 2) – Authorize for Bidding – Commissioner Arms made a motion to authorize for bid, seconded by Commissioner Green. All were in favor.

Code of Ordinance for WPT – Authorize revisions to Chapter 18 – Traffic Re: Glasgow St., Rice St., Grosstown Rd., and Twp Complex Parking – After Pottstown Borough conducted a traffic study in the area of Glasgow and Rice St., and after speaking with the residents that park in this area it was decided that no parking signs “Here to Corner” would be installed at the intersection in the Township section as well as the Borough intersections.. This would also eliminate parking on Grosstown near the deck hockey box. Additionally overnight parking at the Township Complex will no longer be allowed without prior authorization due to liability issues. Commissioner Green made a motion to authorize the revisions to Chapter 18, seconded by Commissioner Valentine. All were in favor.

Municipal Complex – Quotes for Landscaping Services – Review and approve – We requested and received three different quotes. Brewer Landscaping Services came in at \$8,250 which included Spring, Fall, and in between clean-up. Chesco Landscaping came in at \$5,300 for Spring clean-up only, and Above Grade Landscaping came in at \$20,592 for Spring and Fall. Commissioner Shawell made a motion to approve the quote from Brewers Landscaping, seconded by Commissioner Green. All were in favor.

National Night Out – Tuesday August 6, 2024 – Discuss/ Approve hosting event – Ms. Roesener asked for a budget of \$2k to go towards the event. Commissioner Shawell made a motion to approve a budget of \$2k, and to host the event again this year. Commissioner Green seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Litter Library – Commissioner Arms explained the idea of a “Litter Library.” He also stated that Public Works does an excellent job with making sure the parks and playgrounds are clean, however, no matter where you go you can always find some type of litter. The idea would be to provide gloves, or a grabber, or something of a similar nature. This would be so these items are available for residents who utilize the parks to assist with collection of litter while they are using the grounds. Ms. Roesener said she could reach out to Tricia, our PARRC rep, who may have some suggestions. After discussion, Commissioner Arms made a motion to move forward with more research of the Litter Library, seconded by Commissioner Shawell. All were in favor.

Proclamation – National Library Week – The week of April 8th is National Library Week. This is the Townships way of showing support to the Pottstown Library during National Library Week. Commissioner Shawell made a motion to acknowledge this week as National Library Week and show appreciation to the Pottstown Library, seconded by Commissioner Green. Commissioner Arms abstained from the vote. 4-0

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Richard Hornberger – 1629 W High St. – Mr. Hornberger asked if the Board was aware of the homeless issue behind Reeds, Dollar General, and Turkey Hill. The Board stated that we are aware, and we and the police are doing everything we can do. Mr. Hornberger was also informed that we have spoken to state representatives regarding the matter also.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

Upcoming Events

No Zoning Hearing Board Meeting is scheduled for April.

Township Offices will be CLOSED on Thursday April 11th, 2024, for staff training.

BOC Workshop Meeting Wednesday April 17th, 2024 @ 7pm

No Planning Commission Meeting for the month of April

Next BOC Meeting Wednesday May 1st, 2024 @ 7pm

EXECUTIVE SESSION

President Miller stated that there would be an executive session after adjournment. No actions or deliberation would occur and that it is for informational purposes only.

ADJOURNMENT

President Miller asked for a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Commissioner Green, seconded by Commissioner Shawell. The motion was approved unanimously.

The Board of Commissioners Meeting of West Pottsgrove Township concluded at 7:56 P.M. On April 3, 2024.

Respectfully Submitted,

Courtney Harris
Township Secretary - Treasurer