

February 9, 2021

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Commissioners of West Norriton Township was convened via ZOOM at 7:00 PM on the above date by President Miller. Commissioners Eckles, Milazzo, Pavone and Smock were also in attendance, as were: Jason Bobst; Sean Kilkenny, Esquire; Kathy Frederick; Michael Kelly; Stephen Morris; Donna Horn; Michael Valyo; Jon Dzedzy; Michael Housley; T.J. Figaniak; and Erik Garton. There were six (6) additional attendees on the ZOOM meeting.

**Announcement** It was announced by Mr. Miller that an Executive Session was held prior to the meeting to discuss personnel issues.

**Minutes Approval** Upon motion of Mr. Smock, seconded by Ms. Milazzo and unanimously passed by the Board were the minutes of its regular meeting of January 12, 2021.

**Report of Bills Approval of checks** Ms. Horn read the Finance Committee Report and requested approval of: General Fund and Golf Club payroll checks in the amount of \$16,770.49; payroll vouchers in the amount \$257,972.49; and the Payment Approval Report in the amount of \$682,058.26

Upon motion of Ms. Eckles, seconded by Ms. Milazzo and unanimously approved was the aforementioned finance report.

**Committee Reports: Administration & Finance** Mr. Bobst enumerated and highlighted the Agenda items under New Business and mentioned the following:

With regard to item 8a., Holli Reidlinger from the PA Office of the Budget phoned on 2/1/2021 for an acceptance of the RCAP grant, but the office was closed due to a snowstorm. According to Ms. Reidlinger, a decision on the grant was due by 2/2/2021 and an email regarding same was sent on 1/8/2021; however, it was never received by Mr. Bobst. Therefore, the Board's ratification of Mr. Bobst's acceptance of the grant is requested. Mr. Bobst clarified that we have six (6) months from the date of the grant to use the funds. It was further explained by Mr. Bobst that Urban Partners, a company that has worked with RCAP grants for several local municipalities, has been contacted to create a strategic plan, balance sheet, cash flow statement, etc. to move forward with the JGC improvements project.

Treasurer Horn did not present her report at the meeting; however, she has submitted her summary which shows cash balances in the various funds as follows:

	<u>December 31<sup>st</sup></u>	<u>January 31<sup>st</sup></u>
General Fund	9,231,990.46	8,903,685.43
PLGIT 10105000	58,460.56	53,441.68
PLGIT CD - SEWER	1,497,525.49	1,497,542.44
Golf Fund	132,565.95	94,962.41
Escrow Fund	488,386.22	488,480.42
Sinking Fund	6,269.37	6,269.53

Liquid Fuels	321,757.78	280,241.70
Capital Reserve PLGIT	21,418.15	21,419.03
Capital Reserve PLIGIT PLUS	19,520.50	19,520.50
Sewer Capital Acct	3,798,875.06	3,578,711.52
WN 2020 Project Fund	1,529,678.43	1,529,964.25
Vehicle Replacement Fund	650,248.35	674,071.66
Police Pension Citizens	95,281.10	107,554.72
Non-Uniform Pension Citizens	2,993.92	3,873.93
Grants, DUI	0.00	0.00
Grants, Misc.	132,348.44	165,503.19
Traffic Impact Fee	413,868.46	413,945.77

**Public Safety** Chief Kelly highlighted the monthly public safety report and reiterated the testing schedule for the Sergeants exam. In response to an inquiry from Mr. Smock, Chief Kelly explained the "fill in" policy for officers that call out.

Also, it was mentioned by Chief Kelly that the department is doing security details at the Norristown High School from 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday for the COVID vaccine clinic, the cost for which detail is being reimbursed by the County.

**Public Works & Planning** The highlights of the Public Works and Building-Plumbing reports were presented by Mr. Valyo, who mentioned the Public Works Department personnel are working hard moving snow off the roadways to the Township's parks.

It was mentioned by Mr. Bobst that we received Deeds of Dedication for three (3) roads in Phase I of the Markley Farms development (Dorie Drive, Ronald Drive and Worthington Circle) and that the next step is to take ownership of those roads via Ordinance. In response to an inquiry by Ms. Eckles, Mr. Bobst mentioned that, despite not currently owning the roads, we do plow them on a "one in and one out" basis for emergency vehicle access.

**Recreation** The Recreation report was prepared and highlighted by Mr. Dzedzy who mentioned that the park improvement projects are currently on hold due to snow, and that the Recreation Committee will be meeting tomorrow night to plan 2021 events. It was also mentioned by Mr. Dzedzy that the Recreation Department has partnered with Sean Calhoun of Arete Athletics for a kids' boot camp. In response to an inquiry by Ms. Pavone, Mr. Dzedzy explained that the partnership involves the Township taking the registrations and charging a fee for the program, which fee is determined by Mr. Calhoun.

**Jeffersonville Golf Club** Mr. Housley presented the monthly golf report and mentioned that the course being covered in snow is actually welcomed as it insulates the turf. It was also mentioned by Mr. Housley that Pete Trenham ([www.trenhamgolfhistory.com](http://www.trenhamgolfhistory.com)) wrote a neat article on Jeffersonville Golf Club.

**Sanitary Sewer**

The highlights of the monthly Sanitary Report of Gilmore & Associates were presented by Mr. Figaniak who mentioned that the annual Chapter 94 report is in progress.

Also, according to Mr. Figaniak, agreements for the Forrest Avenue Pump Station are signed and the pre-bid meeting is scheduled for tomorrow.

**Engineer**

The Engineer's Report of Gilmore & Associates was prepared and highlighted by Mr. Garton who noted that building at Padden Park has arrived and will be installed soon...weather permitting.

As regards the Jeffersonville Golf Club, Mr. Garton mentioned that the Short Course is out to bid and that eight (8) potential bidders attended the pre-bid meeting, and that plans are being prepared for the half-way house. In response to inquiries by Mr. Smock and Ms. Eckles, it was stated by Mr. Bobst that the funding for the half-way house will come from the RCAP grant or JGC reserve funds, would improve the pace of play and would provide restroom facilities on the course.

The Committee reports were approved by motion of Mr. Smock, seconded by Ms. Eckles and unanimously agreed by the Board.

**Public Comment**

Per Mr. Bobst, no written public comments were received prior to the meeting, and Mr. Miller reiterated the guidelines for public comment.

Kim Haymans-Geisler, 1810 Ardin Drive, expressed her opposition that the proposed half-way house at the Jeffersonville Golf Club just appeared on the agenda this evening with her having no prior knowledge of same.

Mary Ellen Moran of 714 Port Indian Road inquired as to how much money Urban Partners was charging for their business plan study for JGC and where is the \$9M coming from for the planned improvements. Ms. Moran reiterated her concerns over the amount of money the Township has spent recently on recreation.

James Reihman, 217 Colonial Avenue, stated that he is confident that the improvement projects at Jeffersonville Golf Club will be a net positive and a revenue generator, rather than the picture being painted of just spending money for nothing.

There being no further public comment, upon motion of Mr. Smock, seconded by Ms. Pavone and unanimously agreed the public comment portion of the meeting was closed.

**Commissioners'  
Comment**

Mr. Miller commented that the County's announcement that its employees would be paid \$15.00 an hour as a base wage was a topic addressed at the Board's executive session. According to Mr. Miller, after discussion, the Board agreed that a \$15.00 per hour minimum wage for Township employees is critical to ensure that people make a decent living, and that it is the right thing to do. In conclusion, Mr. Miller stated that he is proud of his fellow Board members and its unanimity on this issue.

Ms. Milazzo thanked Mr. Miller for putting the minimum wage issue before the Board. Also, Ms. Milazzo announced that this Saturday, from 9:00-11:00 AM and from 2:00-4:00 PM, the Township would be hosting the East Norriton Middle School Jr. Honor Society's service project with a drive-up donation collection of masks, hand sanitizer, snacks and water bottles to be distributed to the Black Reserve Book Store in Ambler for its children's event.

Ms. Pavone addressed the public's concerns about the half-way house and noted that the Board spent a lot of time and detail of the JGC improvements and that it is her hope that a third party's due diligence as to the possible revenue source thereof will provide clarity. Also, Ms. Pavone noted that the \$15.00 per hour minimum wage raise is not a large outlay of funds, but an important one.

Mr. Smock commented that it would be prudent to have an outside consultant look at the proposed projects at JGC for the comfort of all moving forward.

Ms. Eckles stated that she reiterated the comments of Ms. Pavone and Mr. Smock.

In response to an inquiry by Ms. Moran as to the use of the Montgomery County Planning Commission as the third-party consultant, Mr. Bobst noted that they are a planning agency, not a financial advisor, but that the MCPC did review the project from a planning standpoint.

Mr. Miller concluded the Commissioners' Comments portion of the meeting by advising that, beginning next month, the Commissioners would be giving a brief recap of the Boards and Commissions of the Township for which they are liaisons, and thanked Ms. Pavone for her suggestion to do so.

**Discussion**

Per Mr. Bobst, a proposed resolution for a moratorium on evictions and foreclosures during COVID was received from the solicitors' office, as it was requested to draft a similar resolution for the Municipality of Norristown. Per Mr. Kilkeny, the proposed resolution is straightforward in its request to have local, state and federal government officials be wary of evictions during this time. According to Mr. Kilkeny, the CDC provided guidelines and a form on this, but the problem is that many people being evicted do

not have computers or printers to obtain this form and/or knowledge as to this law. Mr. Kilkenny stated that he was aghast to learn that evictions were being conducted in and around Norristown and questioned whether the proper forms were being produced. In response to an inquiry by Ms. Milazzo, Mr. Kilkenny explained that the tenant must present a CDC form to the landlord that they shall not be evicted until March 31<sup>st</sup>. Ms. Eckles asked if this is something that we want to do in West Norriton, and Ms. Milazzo stated that she believes that it is important to make sure that people know their rights and that they are able to have some protection. This resolution is asking the government to put in a firm moratorium on evictions. If passed, Mr. Bobst would forward a copy of the resolution to our local government officials. The next step in the approval process would be to move this issue under new business to take action tonight and thereby open public comment on this issue only.

Mr. Miller opened public comment; however, none was received. Upon motion of Mr. Miller, seconded by Ms. Milazzo and unanimously agreed, the board closed public comment and the item was moved to the Agenda as item "f."

**New Business**

Upon motion of Mr. Miller, seconded by Ms. Eckles and unanimously agreed, the Board ratified the action of the Township Manager in accepting the \$1M RCAP Grant. Mr. Miller clarified that we are not obligated to use this money until we have an approved plan, and that we have up to 6 months to do so, with no comingling of the funds. Mr. Bobst stated that we do not even draw down the money until a plan and application is submitted to the state and they approve the scope of the work.

Upon motion of Ms. Eckles, seconded by Ms. Milazzo and unanimously agreed, the Board accepted the resignation of Jean Bochnowski from the Environmental Advisory Council. The Board thanked Ms. Bochnowski for her service and wished her well.

Upon motion of Ms. Milazzo, seconded by Mr. Miller and unanimously agreed, the Board appointed Sheridan Earl to the Environmental Advisory Council for the remainder of the term of resigning member Jean Bochnowski.

Upon motion of Mr. Miller, seconded by Ms. Eckles and unanimously agreed, the Board adopted PennDOT's Resolution for Traffic Signal Approval re: signal modifications at Whitehall Road and Marshall Street.

Upon motion of Mr. Miller, seconded by Ms. Milazzo and unanimously agreed, the Board authorized the advertising of Ordinance No. 2021-749 re: Verizon Cable Franchise Agreement (copy attached).

*Upon motion of Ms. Milazzo, seconded by Mr. Miller and unanimously agreed, the Board adopted a Resolution for Moratorium on Evictions and Foreclosures During COVID-19 (copy attached).*

***Schedule of Meetings***

*It was announced by Mr. Bobst that a meeting of the Zoning Hearing Board is scheduled for February 15th at 7:00 PM re: sign ordinance and corridor study.*

***Adjournment***

*There being no further business, at 8:04 PM, on motion of Ms. Eckles and seconded by Ms. Milazzo, the public meeting was adjourned.*

*Kathy Frederick  
Assistant Secretary*