

The stated meeting of the Public Works Committee of the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Abington was held on Monday, August 29, 2016 at the Township Administration Building, Abington, PA., with Commissioner Hecker presiding.

CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present: Commissioners HECKER, FARREN, KLINE, MYERS, ROTHMAN

Township Manager LEFEVRE
Township Solicitor CLARKE
Township Engineer POWERS
Director of Code Enforcement MATTEO
Director of W.W.T.P. WRIGLEY

Also Present: Commissioners LUKER, KALINOSKI, SCHREIBER, SANCHEZ, MARKMAN, DiPLACIDO, ZAPPONE, GILLESPIE

MINUTES: Commissioner Myers made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Rothman to approve the minutes of the July 6, 2016 Public Works Committee Meeting.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

Perfluorochemicals (PFCs) and Drinking Water Update:

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Update by AQUA Pennsylvania on their efforts related to PFCs and the safety of our drinking water.

Manager LeFevre announced that several officials from AQUA PA are here this evening to update the Board on their efforts to address water-quality issues in Montgomery County. He introduced President of AQUA PA, Steve Taggart, Chief Environmental Officer, Chris Crocket and Manager of the Eastern Division, Rob McNamara to the Board.

Mr. Taggart also introduced Marc Lucca, Vice President of Distribution of Operations, who was also present this evening.

PFCs, which are Perfluorochemicals, are found in a variety of different things one being firefighting foam that was found at Willow Grove Naval Air Station as well as the Warfare Center in Warminster, PA.

In 2012, EPA issued their UCMR (Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule) and PFCs was one that was listed. So we did our monitoring in 2013 through 2015 and came up negative through EPA's required methodology at all of our sites throughout Southeastern Pennsylvania, and although there was a well system that tested positive in Bristol Township, everything else was negative.

AQUA sells 225,000 gallons of water a day to the HWA (Horsham Water Authority) and officials of HWA asked for proof from AQUA that there are no PFCs in our water, and we agreed. Samples were taken in April 2016, and much to our surprise results were positive at 15 parts per trillion and the sources that feed those wells are from Abington, Upper Dublin and Neshaminy Treatment Plant and those samples came up positive at all three of those wells.

Since then, we took more samples and results show they are all well below EPA guidelines and we also tested wells in Chalfont that came up positive and negative at a well near Peddler's Village.

Customers in Horsham have it in their water from the runoff from the Air Station in Willow Grove and the affluent from the sewer treatment plant in Horsham. It is not taken out by the process of the wastewater treatment plant and it has traveled 25 miles downstream getting into our treatment plant in Neshaminy, and we monitor these sites every two weeks taking samples.

Dr. Crocket said a part per trillion is a grain of sand in an Olympic-sized swimming pool. The PFCs in firefighting foam are very persistent in the environment and we sampled 15 wells at our locations in the Southeastern PA area, and other than Peddler's Village, all of our sites tested positive at trace levels.

EPA created a health advisory where they determined levels of concern and this chemical is not regulated, so it does not have the traditional maximum contaminant limit. In 2009, EPA determined a short-term advisory, which was 600 parts per trillion.

At the same time that Horsham was analyzing its sample with the new method, AQUA was collecting our samples and then EPA lowered the health advisory limit down to 70 parts per trillion for a lifetime health advisory.

80% of exposure of this chemical comes from your home and the environment and 20% comes from drinking water. All samples collected by AQUA have been below the health advisory from our active sources. The only site that was near that 70 parts per trillion was in Chalfont and that well was taken offline.

There are only four certified labs in the United States that runs this testing, and the lab we use is in California. We can wait anywhere from three to eight weeks to get results from that laboratory.

Mr. Taggart said recently, we have met with the State Secretary of DEP and the Chairman of Public Utility and we have an upcoming meeting with officials of EPA as well as a meeting with the Air National Guard on this matter. We hired an engineering firm to help us figure out what is happening with the groundwater and look at the wells that have higher levels and possible treatment. The next phase will be to look at the Neshaminy Treatment Plant for possible treatment there.

Commissioner Hecker asked what are the primary water sources in Abington Township for the wells that the residents use for drinking water?

Mr. Taggart replied there are two wells in Abington; one well has come up positive and we took samples from another well and have not received results yet.

Commissioner Hecker asked for any comments from Commissioners.

Commissioner Kline asked is there a connection between this lab and AQUA or was this lab referred to by EPA officials, and if so, is the test results sent directly to EPA?

Mr. Taggart replied test results are sent directly to AQUA, and it is Eurofins Lab in California.

Commissioner Kline clarified that this lab was hired by AQUA and they send results directly to AQUA. Is that correct?

Mr. Taggart replied that is correct. We collect the samples and send the samples to Eurofins lab and they send the results directly to AQUA.

Commissioner Kline asked at what level does this chemical become more of an issue?

Mr. Taggart replied 70 parts per trillion, which is based on unborn children, pregnant women, etc.

Commissioner Kline asked is that a countrywide level?

Mr. Taggart replied yes, that is countrywide by EPA.

Commissioner Kline asked for the half-life time that this chemical can exist.

Mr. Taggart replied the half-life is about five years.

Commissioner Rothman clarified that there is only results for a one-time sample of a well in Abington. Is that correct?

Mr. Taggart replied yes, and we will be getting results shortly for the second set of tests.

Commissioner Myers commented that the concern is about the drinking water and it is also water that is bathed in. Is there any concern about this chemical being ingested through the skin, and if so, should we be taking any precautions?

Mr. Taggert replied it is not ingested through the skin. It is through inhalation of dust or by food or in the drinking water.

Commissioner Myers reminded AQUA reps that Abington Township pays for this water as AQUA water is not free and we have an expectation that what we drink from the tap is 100% safe. She understands that AQUA is doing everything they can, but she feels AQUA needs to do more. This is very distressing to a lot of people in Abington Township, and although Abington does not border Horsham Township, this is very concerning to residents and she is sure that AQUA is taking this very seriously.

Mr. Taggert replied yes, we are.

Commissioner Kline asked about testing of private wells.

Mr. Taggert replied AQUA does not take samples from private wells. Property owners can hire someone to test it for them at their expense. Also, EPA collects private well samples.

Commissioner Farren asked does AQUA know how this area compares with other parts of the country in terms of levels of contamination.

Mr. Taggert replied no.

Commissioner Rothman asked what does 70 parts per trillion over the course of a lifetime mean?

Dr. Crocket replied EPA assumes that you are drinking eight glasses of water per day that has 70 parts per trillion every day for 70 years and that could cause birth defects and long-term cancer risks.

Commissioner Rothman asked are water filters on refrigerators or Brita water filter machines impacted?

Dr. Crocket replied those filters are certified by NSF (National Sanitation Foundation) and they put them through a series of tests although they have not done a certification test yet for this chemical, but original studies suggest that given the type of chemical that it is and that we use carbon to remove it and it sticks to carbon, so therefore, home filtration systems that use that carbon filter will probably be removing it, although right now, they cannot quantify it.

2014 Capital Improvement Program – Demolition of 1004 Irvin Road

Commissioner Hecker made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Farren to approve and enter into contract with Tamco Construction, Inc. for the demolition of 1004 Irvin Road in the amount of \$33,600.00; to be funded by 2014 Bond Issue.

Commissioner Hecker asked for any comments from Commissioners or staff. There were none.

Commissioner Hecker asked for any public comments. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

2015 HUD Program – Tennis Avenue/North Hills Avenue/Fairview Avenue Storm Projects

Commissioner Hecker made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Rothman to approve final payment for the Tennis Avenue/North Hills Avenue/Fairview Avenue Storm Sewer Project, to N. Abbonizio Contractors, Inc. in the amount of \$11,802.65; to be funded from the 2015 HUD Program.

Commissioner Hecker asked for any comments from Commissioners or staff. There were none.

Commissioner Hecker asked for any public comments. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

Rockwell Road Sidewalk Project

Commissioner Hecker made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Kline to approve final payment for the Rockwell Road Sidewalk Project to Biase Landscaping, LLC in the amount of \$2,300.00; to be funded from Fund Balance.

Commissioner Hecker thanked members of this committee as well as the full Board for their support of this project as the sidewalks have dramatically improved the walkability on this road coupled with the four-way regulated intersection at Rockwell and Rubicam making it safer for the residents.

Commissioner Hecker asked for any comments from Commissioners or staff. There were none.

Commissioner Hecker asked for any public comments. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

Ordinance No. 2124 – Old Welsh Road – Sanitary Sewer Project

Commissioner Hecker made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Farren to adopt Ordinance No. 2124 adding 1908 Paper Mill Road to the Old Welsh Road Sanitary Sewer District.

Commissioner Hecker asked for any comments from Commissioners or staff.

Commissioner Kline asked about the northern-end of Old Welsh Road.

Mr. Powers replied we are still working on that issue.

Commissioner Hecker asked for any public comments.

Lora Lehmann, 1431 Bryant Lane, expressed concern about the cost of appraisals, and she asked for a copy of the RFP.

Solicitor Clarke noted that \$2,000 is an incredibly reasonable price for these benefit assessments.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

Resolution No. 16-029 – To Apply for a PA Small Water and Sewer Program Grant

Commissioner Hecker made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Farren to adopt Resolution No. 16-029 to authorize the Township of Abington to submit an application formally requesting a grant of funds from the PA Small Water and Sewer Program for 2016.

Commissioner Hecker asked for any comments from Commissioners or staff. There were none.

Commissioner Hecker asked for any public comments. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

Edge Hill Road/Tyson Avenue Right-of-Way Acquisition Update

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Update on Right-of-Way acquisition efforts of the Township Solicitors' office on the Edge Hill Road/Tyson Avenue project.

Solicitor Clarke explained that this is for information only pending on how this proceeds over the next month and we may be coming back before the Board seeking action.

We have been working with PennDOT on the Edge Hill Road/Tyson Avenue reconstruction project, and back on January 27, 2016, a community meeting was held in which representatives of his office, Township Engineer Powers and Commissioners Gillespie and Zappone were in attendance to handout packets to all of the residents who are impacted by this project.

There are 212 properties impacted, and for the last seven months, we have been working with PennDOT, Township staff and Pennoni Associates in order to get right-of-way agreements on the 212 properties returned. To-date, agreements for 19 property owners have not been sent out as some are being changed due to scope of project, etc. 143 property owners have returned the settlement documents, so 50 property owners have not returned their packet agreements.

When we met with the property owners back in January, we made it clear that this project cannot move forward until we have site control. This is important because funding is available now from PennDOT, and if we are unable to acquire all necessary rights-of-way, there is the possibility that this funding could disappear and may be available at a future date or it may never be available again.

PennDOT likes to put their money on shovel-ready projects, which means site control. We have begun the process of contacting property owners who have not returned their packets/documents. PennDOT requires that we have three contacts with them where we alert them that, if they do not return signed agreements, then the Township may need to seek additional intervention through filing of taking through eminent domain in order to acquire these properties.

Out of the 50 property owners, we are working on a few items with them and we feel we may be able to get it wrapped up, but there is a fair amount of people who indicated they have no intention of signing or they are completely non-responsive.

We will probably be coming to the Board at the October meetings asking for the authority to begin filing the declaration of taking of these properties. We need to stagger them and the timetable for filing of declarations of taking can take three to four months before having a resolution regarding titles to the property.

Commissioner Hecker asked for any comments from Commissioners.

Commissioner Myers said it was mentioned that some property owners indicated they have no intention of responding; have they given specific reasons why they have no intention of responding?

Solicitor Clarke replied yes. They range from not liking the idea of taking down a certain tree in front of their house; some indicated they don't want sidewalks and curbs; and other general issues such as that and some are just not responding at all.

Commissioner Myers questioned whether it may be an issue of money for some of them.

Solicitor Clarke replied it might be, but they are told if they want to dispute the amount of money being offered, they are permitted to do that while still giving the Township the easement required to do the work. Some have signed after being told about disputing the amount of money.

Commissioner Gillespie asked how many have not responded at all?

Solicitor Clarke replied he does not know at this time, but will report back on it. A rep from his office has a watch list of those who will not speak with us at all.

Commissioner Luker asked for the deadline for those who will not respond.

Solicitor Clarke replied we are going through PennDOT's protocol in regards to three contacts, and after the third minimum contact has been made in early September, there may be a filing in October.

Commissioner Hecker asked for any general comments relating to Public Works.

Lora Lehmann, 1431 Bryant Lane, expressed concern that she feels that a standard RFP was not sent out. Also, she expressed concern about spraying of chemicals on State highways.

ADJOURNMENT: 7:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael LeFevre, Township Manager

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