

The stated meeting of the Public Affairs Committee of the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Abington was held on Wednesday, November 2, 2016 at the Township Administration Building, Abington, PA., with Commissioner Spiegelman presiding.

CALL TO ORDER: 7:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present: Commissioners SPIEGELMAN, BOWMAN, SCHREIBER, ROTHMAN, KALINOSKI

Township Manager LEFEVRE
Assistant Township Manager WEHMEYER
Assistant Legal Counsel GALLAGHER
Director of Parks and Recreation WENDELL
Community Development Director STROTHER

Also Present: Commissioners LUKER, KLINE, DiPLACIDO, HECKER, FARREN, MYERS, SANCHEZ, ZAPPONE, MARKMAN

MINUTES: Commissioner Spiegelman made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Kalinoski to approve the minutes of the October 5, 2016 Public Affairs Committee Meeting.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

Parks and Recreation Report:

Director of Parks and Recreation, Mr. Doug Wendell reported that the public participation survey for the pool feasibility study is now available online at <http://www.surveymonster.com/r/AbingtonPool> and the site will be available until November 14th. It was also emailed to pool members as we are looking for feedback.

Commissioner Spiegelman announced there is an opening on the Abington Library Board of Directors, and if anyone is interested, please send an email to Manager LeFevre. Deadline for submission is at the end of this month.

Multimodal Transportation Fund Program – DCED Grant Award Acceptance Request

Commissioner Spiegelman made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Kalinoski to accept the Multimodal Transportation Fund (MTF) grant from the Department of the Community and Economic Development (DCED) in the amount of \$812,486.00 to support the Old York Road/Susquehanna Road project.

Commissioner Spiegelman asked for any comments from Commissioners or staff.

Assistant Township Manager Wehmeyer announced there was a special meeting held on this topic on October 24th and the video of the presentation is available online.

Commissioner Spiegelman said the two items listed on the agenda are motions to accept two grants; one from DCED and the other from PennDOT to support multimodal transportation fund program. Each grant will require a Township match of 30% totaling \$600,000.00. The match has been factored into a 2017 bond issue, so the Township is prepared if the Board decides to move forward with this project.

This is a project to acquire properties at the corner of Old York and Susquehanna Roads for demolition in order to improve one of the worst intersections in the Township, and open the area for future development such as a town center. This will also improve the safety and efficiency for multiple-modes of transportation.

Commissioner Myers commented that she attended the meeting could not support this project anymore than she already does as it is overdue and the idea of a town-center is wonderful.

Commissioner Sanchez commented that he fully supports this as well as it will improve traffic and commerce as this potential development site will bring walkability and pedestrian safety into the mix.

Commissioner Kline commented that he spoke with Doug Callantine, Chairman of the EDC, and encouraged the committee to continue working on this project so as the Township will be in the “driver seat” as to what will eventually come of that assembled property to generate economic development.

Commissioner Spiegelman asked for any public comments.

Raymond Bell, 2076 Parkview Avenue, commented that he has not heard discussion about “residents and the environment” in regards to this project.

Commissioner Spiegelman replied that was the first meeting and one of many future public meetings as there are plans for an advisory group of local residents to provide input.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

Multimodal Transportation Fund Program – PennDOT Grant Award Acceptance Request

Commissioner Spiegelman made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Kalinoski to accept the Multimodal Transportation Fund Program grant from PennDOT in the amount of \$588,153.00 for improvements to the intersection of Old York and Susquehanna Roads.

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

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

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

Montgomery County Redevelopment Authority Agreement Request

Commissioner Spiegelman made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Kalinoski to authorize an agreement to partner with the Montgomery County Redevelopment Authority for the Old York Road/Susquehanna project.

Commissioner Spiegelman asked for any comments from Commissioners or staff.

Assistant Township Wehmeyer commented that we will team up with the MCRA (Montgomery County Redevelopment Authority) as they are the experts in redevelopment and to assist in agreements of sale for the five properties in question.

Commissioner Kline questioned whether there has been an actual agreement drafted.

Ms. Wehmeyer replied yes, and a copy will be provided to the Board.

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

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

Resolution No. 16-030 for PECO Green Region Grant for Jackson Park

Commissioner Spiegelman made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Rothman to approve Resolution No. 16-030, which authorizes the Bureau of Parks and Recreation to make application to the Natural Lands Trust for the 2016 PECO Green Region Grant in the amount of \$8,000.00. The funding will be used for the removal of invasive vegetation in Jackson Park.

Commissioner Spiegelman asked for any comments from Commissioners or staff.

Mr. Wendell commented that this is a continuation of removal of invasive vegetation in Jackson Park.

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

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

Commissioner Spiegelman asked for any general comments relating to Public Affairs.

Commissioner Markman commented that the Baederwood Shopping Center is going to trade this year, so the Township will be receiving funds from that either this year or early next year.

Also, for discussion purposes, he questioned how the Board feels about potentially holding all committee meetings on one evening as they are this evening.

Commissioner DiPlacido commented that he feels it would be workable depending on the amount of items on the agendas. If it is a heavy load then it should be spread out, but if it is like this evening, he would be in favor of it.

Commissioner Spiegelman commented that it is not always known ahead of time how many items will be on the agenda. What is the timeframe for advertisement of committee meetings?

Ms. Gallagher replied meetings are advertised at the beginning of the year, and if a meeting date is changed, timeframe to advertise the change is 24-hours notice in advance of the meeting, and it needs to be sent to the newspaper one week in advance.

Commissioner Rothman commented that he feels it would be easier for residents who may want to speak on an issue that they would not need to attend two nights.

Commissioner Myers commented that maybe two or three times a year we needed to have these meetings on one night due to a holiday or an event and she often wondered why these meetings were not held on one night on a regular basis. She agrees there may be an issue that would need more time, but that has been done on separate evenings in the past.

Presently, these meetings have been streamlined still having full discussion by the Board and time for residents to speak. She feels it would be easier for the Board, Township staff and residents to have four meetings held on one evening a month, and although we may need to stay later, we would get a night off.

Commissioner Schreiber commented that she is in favor of holding the meetings on one night, but there should be an option of switching the order of when each meeting is held.

Commissioner Bowman commented that he is in favor of holding four meetings on one night especially due to the 24-hour notice advertisement requirement.

Commissioner Hecker agreed this idea has merit, but we should consider the scheduling of presentations out of respect to the presenters.

Commissioner Spiegelman questioned when this would be listed as a Public Affairs agenda item.

Manager LeFevre replied it can be listed for discussion and vote at the December meeting.

Raymond Bell, 2076 Parkview Avenue, expressed concern that this should also accommodate residents of the community, and he asked for the agendas to be posted earlier prior to the meetings.

ADJOURNMENT: 7:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael LeFevre, Township Manager

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