



OFFICIAL UPDATE

This is a brief summary of the June 17, 2020 Franklin Township Board of Supervisors (BOS) meeting held via ZOOM. If you missed watching the meeting, it is available on the Township YouTube page (Franklin TownshipPA). You can also access it from the Township website. All Supervisors and residents were in attendance remotely.

Chairman Morris called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. In attendance were Vice Chairman McVeigh, and Supervisors Auerbach, Dea and Gerstenhaber. Also in attendance were Solicitor Mark Thompson, Manager/Treasurer Joan McVaugh, Assistant Manager Jeff Eastburn and Secretary Sharon Norris. There were 14 members of the public attending via ZOOM.

Public Comment: Brent Van Lith, PC member and Township resident commented on the water/freezing issue at the intersection of Cavender Lane with Walker Rd. The Township is aware of the situation. The high water table is the biggest contributor to this problem. There was not as much of an issue this winter due to the milder temperatures.

Approval of Minutes: On motion by Supervisor Auerbach, 2nded by Chairman Morris, the May 20, 2020 v2 minutes were approved unanimously.

Disposition of Records: On motion by Mrs. Dea, 2nded by Supervisor Gerstenhaber, Resolution 2020-14, authorizing the erasure of the audiotape from the May 20, 2020 Board of Supervisors meeting and the March 5, 2020 PC meeting was adopted. Motion carried 5-0.

Treasurer's Report: On motion by Supervisor Gerstenhaber, 2nded by Mrs. Morris, the May Treasurer's Report was approved 5-0. The report includes the following disbursements and transfers: The General Fund with disbursements and transfers of \$88,585.33; the Park and Recreation Fund with disbursements of \$9,466.67; the Open Space Fund with disbursements of \$6,330.74; the Emergency Services Fund with disbursements of \$2,425.96 and the Fire Hydrant Fund with disbursements of \$580.80; leaving a balance in all funds totaling \$1,350,089.63.

Zoning Officer's Report – Chairman Morris reported that in the month of May 4 permits were issued and 19 inspections took place. \$650 in building fees and \$750 in Misc. fees were collected. \$-0- in Recreation, Open Space and impact fees was collected. There are 3 zoning issues currently being addressed by the Zoning Officer: 1833 New London Road – High Grass – this property has been taken over by the bank and the Zoning Officer is trying to get a contact number. 126 Carriage Run – the property owner was contacted to cease burning trash. 4 Duncan Lane was directed to cut back the bamboo that is extending into the neighbor's yard to 10' of the property line as directed by our Ordinance. The Board directed the Manager to work with the Zoning Officer regarding the violations at 3327 Appleton Road as the Courts are reopening. Additionally, the Solicitor will contact the property owner's attorney.

PC Report – Mr. Gerstenhaber briefly summarized the June 4, 2020 PC meeting where the PC discussed a sketch plan for an automotive repair shop at 1691 New London Rd. where an automotive repair facility previously existed. The July PC meeting has been moved to July 9, 2020 due to the July 4th holiday.

HARB/HC Report: Mr. Lagasse summarized the HARB/HC June 2, 2020 meeting. The May talk is now tentatively scheduled for September. They will not have a table at Election Day. Tracey Schreiner will be moving

out of the Township and will be resigning from the HARB. Liz Randby has volunteered to be the HARB Secretary. He noted that the Comprehensive Plan Task Force has two members from the HARB on it – Nan Latimer and Chuck Phillips - and they will work toward revising the Township history and promoting a walkable village. Paul met with Jim Martin, head of the London Britain Historical Commission who also serves as a trustee of the Friends of White Clay Creek Preserve (since the Big Elk Preserve in FT is part of the White Clay Creek Park system). Paul is going to put Mr. Martin in touch with the Park, Rec and Open Space Committee regarding the prospect of them working together. He updated the Board regarding: vandalism at the Flint Hill Cemetery; trying to find trustee information for Mt. Olivet Cemetery and creating an inventory of the graves at the Church Hill Cemetery.

Business:

General Code Proposal – On motion by Supervisor Dea, 2nded by the Chairman, the Board accepted the proposal from General Code for an Editorial and Legal analysis and Supplement No. 5 to the Code of Ordinances at a cost not to exceed \$6,425.00. The motion carried 4-1 with Supervisor Auerbach voting nay. The Manager checked with Chester County Planning Commission regarding grant opportunities for this type of project and found that at the Editorial Analysis stage there are none available; however, there could be grants available at the implementation point.

Duties of Park, Rec and Open Space Board (PRO) – The first meeting of this newly created Board will take place on Thursday, June 18th at 6:30 p.m. via ZOOM. The Board of Supervisors discussed the budget for this group and what kinds of projects they would like the “PRO” Board to consider. Mr. Auerbach mentioned that there are additional monies in the Park fund available for Park and Recreation projects because the Park loan has been paid off. It was noted that the PRO was responsible for bringing ideas and recommendations to the BOS and could not spend any money without the approval of the BOS. Discussion included whether to incorporate having the monthly FSA report with the PRO board monthly report but it was pointed out that the FSA has separate reporting obligations per Township Ordinance and would thus continue to report directly to the BOS.

Comprehensive Plan Task Force – the First meeting of the Comp Plan Task Force will be the 4th Tuesday of June – June 23, 2020 at 6:30. This meeting will be held virtually via ZOOM. Information on how to access this meeting will be posted on the website as the meeting date gets closer. The Task Force will meet on the 4th Tuesday of each month moving forward.

League Fees – the Township was contacted by the Avon Grove Flag Football League regarding reducing fees for the 2020 season. Since the Leagues did not hold their Spring season and lost money having to refund payments, as well as not knowing what the Fall season will bring, they were hoping the Board would reduce their fees for the 2020 season. On motion by Mr. Auerbach, 2nded by Mrs. Morris, the Board allowed the Leagues at Crossan Park to play at a 50% reduced rate for the remainder of the 2020 playing season. Motion carried 5-0.

Sunshine Act and Township Procurement Policy – The Board had a lengthy discussion on this topic. They agreed they will no longer hold weekly staff meetings attended by 2 supervisors, and the staff. They directed the Manager to make decisions based on what has been budgeted. The Board does not want to micromanage the Manager but they do want to understand all costs associated with a project. The Board also wants the public to know exactly what money is being spent and on what project. Checks will now be signed monthly at the regularly scheduled Board meetings with the exception of the Township contractor who will continue to be paid weekly.

2020 Road Program – A public meeting was held on June 5 to decide which roads were to be part of the 2020 Road Program. At the June 17 meeting, some Board members expressed concerns about having a large-scale road program for a variety of reasons. The Board recently found out that the grant for the Hess Mill Bridge from the Chester County Conservation District has been significantly reduced. Due to the pandemic, EIT tax revenue is way down. The Board is apprehensive about other expenses that may pop up and therefore, would like to stay as close to the Liquid Fuels allotment as possible. The Liquid Fuels allotment this year is \$210,00 and next year it is anticipated to be less. On motion by the Chairman, 2nded by Supervisor Gerstenhaber, the Board agreed to the following road work for this year’s road program: Elbow Lane; Auburn Road including patching; and stormwater work on Laurel Bridge The motion carried 4-1 with Supervisor Auerbach voting nay.

Elbow Lane Tree Work – this was a lengthy discussion with Board members, the public and the Township contractor. The topic was tree work that the Contractor performed in anticipation of future road work. The Contractor, staff and 2 supervisors visited the site with an arborist who was contacted to give an estimate for work that had already been performed and for any additional work they would recommend. In the end, the Board and Contractor came to an agreement that although the Township contractor does good work at a fair price, he is not an arborist. At the recommendation of the arborist, the contractor will level some stumps.

2021 Interim Road and Maintenance Bid – this contract must go out for bid for 2021. The contract runs from November 1 to October 31. It was decided to bid the road maintenance and the paving separately. The Supervisors are pleased with the current Contractor and emphasized that re-bidding a contract after 5 years is a fair process. They emphasized they want to do the best they can for the township and rebidding a contract is a best practice they’d like to implement.

New Auditing Firm for 2020 Township Audit – Supervisor Gerstenhaber led the discussion stating that one of the many things he took away from his new supervisor training at PSATS was that a best practice the Township should implement is appointing a new auditing firm every 5 years. On motion by Mr. Auerbach, 2nded by Mrs. Dea, the Board authorized the Manager to prepare an RFP to gather estimates for a new auditing firm to perform the 2020 Township audit. The motion carried 5-0.

Chester Water Authority – on motion by Supervisor Dea, 2nded by Mr. Gerstenhaber, the Board adopted Resolution 2020-15, supporting Chester Water Authority and expressing concerns about proposed actions in light of Governor Wolf’s Declaration of Fiscal Emergency for the City of Chester. Motion carried 5-0. There are several subdivisions in the Township that are served by Chester Water.

Hess Mill Bridge – The Township just found out that the Conservation District grant award has been reduced to \$272,141. They said we could take it now or wait and see if it is increased at the next grant round. The Manager will reach out to the engineer who developed the bid and the contractor to see if the total project cost can be reduced which will reduce the Twp. contribution. On motion by Chairman Morris, 2nded by Supervisor Auerbach, the Board authorized the Manager to move forward with implementing the Hess Mill Bridge project at a cost of \$180,000 to the Township and \$272,00 to be paid by the CCCD. Motion carried 5-0.

Ford Farm Trail – the Chairman requested that the Manager authorize the contractor to mow the Ford Farm Trail and confirmed with her that, at this time, there was money in the budget for this expense.

Public Comment: Brent Van Lith talked about the requirements the FSA must meet as part of their Charter and suggested that incorporating their reporting with the PRO Board might not make sense. He didn’t want their group to get into trouble by not following the Ordinance. Supervisor Gerstenhaber talked about attending an FSA meeting when he first joined the BOS and was very impressed with the Group and their many volunteer contributions to the Township. There was concern that the PRO group would have a large budget to spend as they

wish. However, Mr. Van Lith's concerns were put to rest as the Board assured him that the PRO Board has no authority to spend money without first getting approval from the BOS, and their budget is not large. Mr. Van Lith asked for clarification on the Interim Road and Maintenance contract. He also complimented the Township Contractor on his work.

A resident on Zoom asked for clarification from the Chairman when she talked about hunting being a safety issue. He stressed that the FSA has not had any incidents in their 10 years hunting in the Park. Mrs. Morris and the resident agreed that it was more of a "potential safety issue" because we allow active hunting, hiking and biking at the same time. We do not close the park when hunting is going on.

Meeting adjourned at 10:47 p.m.