

June 3, 2008
Township Building

A regular meeting of the **PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE** was held tonight, Chairman Morton J. Simon, Jr. presiding. Members present were Commissioners Greenwald, McKeown, Portner, Sharkey, and Swavola. Also present was Ex-Officio member Muldawer. Staff present were Nancy Gibson, Public Information Officer; Bryan T. Havir, Assistant Township Manager; Ruth Littner Shaw, Main Street Manager; and David G. Kraynik, Township Manager. A Public Attendance List is attached.

Mr. Simon called the meeting to order.

1. Upon motion of Mr. Greenwald, and unanimously approved by the Committee, the Report of the Property Supervisor for the month of May, 2008 was accepted.

2. Upon motion of Mr. Greenwald, and unanimously approved by the Committee, the Report of the Public Information and Complaint Officer for the month of May, 2008, was accepted.

3. Upon motion of Mr. Greenwald, and unanimously approved by the Committee, the Report of the Main Street Manager for the month of May, 2008 was accepted.

4. The Committee considered inviting the Cheltenham School District to appoint a liaison to the Twinning Committee as recommended by the Twinning Committee at its May 7, 2008 meeting. Mr. Simon advised that the purpose of the request is to have the School District participation in school-based twinning efforts. Upon motion of Mr. Greenwald, the Committee unanimously concurred with the recommendation and directed Staff to write an invitation letter to the School District.

5. Upon motion of Mr. Muldawer, and unanimously approved by the Committee, the Twinning Committee Meeting Minutes dated May 7, 2008 were accepted.

6. Upon motion of Mr. Swavola, and unanimously approved by the Committee, the Historical Commission Meeting Minutes dated May 8, 2008 were accepted.

7. Upon motion of Mr. Sharkey, and unanimously approved by the Committee, the Staff Meeting Minutes dated May 13, 2008 were accepted.

8. Ryan Heiser, muralist, presented a plan for a mural art design for the pedestrian tunnel near the Elkins Park Train Station. He presented a schematic and described the mural's "nature" theme featuring native plants and wildlife that will be portrayed with subtle landscapes. Mr. Heiser stated that the purpose of the mural is to encourage people to use the tunnel and to deter graffiti. He proposed community participation in the form of a community day event as a kick-off.

There was discussion regarding lighting, water retention and incorporating Township history into the mural. Mr. Heiser stated that the current fluorescent lighting needs to be cleaned. Mr. Heiser stated that there will be a clear coat over the mural. The Committee concluded that the tunnel needed more bright lighting, and perhaps there would be future grants available to provide for this.

Mr. Kraynik reported that the Township has responsibility regarding stormwater outside the tunnel, and SEPTA has responsibility regarding stormwater in the tunnel. Tom Cross, Vice Chairman of the Economic Development Task Force reported that the Task Force determined that to include historical references would dilute the mural's intent. The Committee unanimously approved the concept of the Mural Design as presented this evening.

9. Ms. Shaw presented the final Elkins Park East Streetscape Improvement Design. She reviewed a schematic and updated the Committee on certain revisions that were made as a result of the February 25, 2008 Elkins Park Streetscape Public meeting held at the Elkins Park Library (*see attached*).

Mr. Simon noted that there has been an improvement in handicap accessibility to the stores in the revised plan. In response to a question by Mr. Swavola, Ms. Shaw stated that she was certain that the speed bumps were reviewed by the Police Department.

The Committee unanimously approved the final Elkins Park East Streetscape Improvement Design as presented this evening.

10. Upon motion of Mr. Greenwald, and unanimously approved by the Committee, the Economic Development Task Force Meeting Minutes dated May 14, 2008, were accepted.

11. Upon motion of Mr. Sharkey, and unanimously approved by the Committee, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Committee Meeting Minutes dated May 15, 2008, were accepted.

12. Mr. Portner presented two newspaper articles from the Philadelphia Inquirer regarding certain discriminatory issues associated with the Cradle of Liberty Council of the Boy Scouts. He asked that they be made part of the record (*see attachments*). He stated that at the May 27, 2008 meeting of the Human Relations Committee, Ex-Officio Committee member Dr. David Flaks ‘excoriated’ him verbally and via e-mails about other previously circulated articles. Mr. Portner clarified that he distributed said articles for informational purposes only and found the reaction to these articles to be disheartening.

Mr. Greenwald noted that in the Minutes of the Human Relations Committee dated May 27, 2008, Dr. Flaks was referred to as Mr. Flaks. He asked that the Minutes be amended.

13. Upon motion of Mr. Greenwald, and unanimously approved by the Committee, the Human Relations Committee Meeting Minutes dated May 27, 2008, were accepted.

14. The Committee considered a new agreement with TelVue Corporation for the operation of Channel 42. Due to a lack of sponsorship to support the services that TelVue provides, it is asking for a new agreement that would provide for a monthly fee of \$150 to cover said services. This fee would be shared 50/50 by the Township and the School District.

In response to a question from Mr. Sharkey regarding the benefits of said service, Ms. Gibson advised that TelVue offers such features as scrolling, emergency notices, and it is web-based. These are features that the Township does not have the ability to provide. Additionally, the School District has the responsibility of transmitting Channel 42, and it has eliminated the signal. It would be costly for the School District to restore it. In response to a question from Mr. McKeown, Mr. Kraynik advised that the Township and the School District do not get specific percentages of shared time on the channel but that whatever information is given to TelVue from both entities is put on the channel.

Mr. Simon suggested that TelVue be asked to amend the agreement so that if the Township obtains more sponsors than is needed, a portion of the monthly fee would be waived and that the interest penalty for late fee be waived. Ms. Gibson will contact TelVue about this.

15. Upon motion of Mr. Greenwald, and unanimously approved by the Committee, it is recommended to the Board of Commissioners, approval of an Agreement with TelVue Virtual Television Networks, of Mt. Laurel, NJ, that includes a monthly fee of \$150 to be shared 50/50 by the Township and the School District (*see attachment*).

16. Upon motion of Mr. McKeown, it is recommended to the Board of Commissioners the adoption of a Resolution honoring Catherine Thompson upon her retirement after 17-years of service to the Township.

17. Under Old Business: Mr. Simon raised the issue of School District participation in a Transit Revitalization Investment District (“TRID”). Discussion ensued regarding the Pennsylvania

School Code that prevents participation of the School District in a TRID and TRID legislation that requires said participation. He questioned whether or not the Township should ask for a continuance of the Township's contract with its consultants on TRID. Mr. Havir advised that the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission will not grant an extension of said contract and has suggested that the Township apply for another round of funding in the fall. In the interim, the program will have to be suspended. Additionally, it is anticipated that the county would contribute \$285,000 to a TRID District in the vicinity of Cheltenham and Ogontz Avenues. It was Mr. Portner's opinion that the Township should not move forward on this project until a legal opinion is rendered. The Committee unanimously directed Staff to write a letter to state officials asking for legislation that would relieve and eliminate the conflict between the School District Code and TRID legislation thus allowing a School District to participate in a TRID.

18. Under Citizens' Forum:

a. Albert Meinster, 7830 Spring Avenue, was of the opinion that the newspaper articles Mr. Portner distributed to the Human Relations Committee regarding Boy Scout issues were products of the Wall Street Journal, which in Mr. Meinster's opinion, was a conservative newspaper, that said articles did not make for well-rounded participation of all points of view.

b. There was an inquiry as to the status of a recent survey the Township mailed to residents in the vicinity of the pedestrian bridge between Mill Road and Mountain Avenue. Said survey was at the request of SEPTA to gauge residents' interest in keeping the bridge. It was explained that thus far, most respondents are in favor of keeping the bridge. SEPTA's proposed improvements for fencing and other improvements were discussed. Albert Meinster asked the Township to investigate whether or not it has an easement for the bridge.

There being no further business, upon motion of Mr. Swavola, and unanimously approved by the Committee, the meeting was adjourned.

David G. Kraynik
Township Manager

as per Anna Marie Felix