

A regular meeting of the **PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE** for January 2022 was held tonight via web-conference, Commissioner Ann L. Rappoport presiding. Present were Commissioners Brockington, Areman, Pransky, Holland, and Zygmund-Felt. Also present was Ex-Officio member Norris.

Staff present via web-conference were: Robert A. Zienkowski, Township Manager; Alyson Elliott, Assistant Township Manager; Danielle Pearson, Assistant Director of Fiscal Affairs; Allen Brown, Property Maintenance Supervisor; Roger Phillips, Township Engineer; and Christopher Clewell, Public Works Superintendent.

Ms. Rappoport called the meeting to order at 8:49 p.m.

Ms. Rappoport expressed sorrow at the passing of Mark McDonnell, former Public Works Superintendent who retired after serving the community for 35 years. He was full of energy and warmth; he will be remembered fondly.

1. The Committee reviewed the following reports for the month of December 2021:
  - a. Property Maintenance Supervisor – Ms. Rappoport thanked Allen Brown for the tours he gave students involved in problem-based learning at Cheltenham High School in December.
  - b. Public Information Officer –Ms. Rappoport announced that Phase I of the new website will be installed the weekend of Januarys 23 and should live after that. There will be no disruption to the site during the upgrade. A survey will accompany the new look of the site.
  - c. Director of Parks and Recreation – Ms. Rappoport said Commissioners have received questions about the resignation of Brian Hinson as Director of Parks and Recreation. Mr. Zienkowski recognized Kelly Rebitz for picking up the ball and running with it from the programming side. The Public Works Department will be working to get the pools up and running for the summer as well as managing the maintenance and operation other park facilities.

Upon motion of Ms. Rappoport, the Committee unanimously received the above reports.

2. Receipt of Committee Meeting Minutes:
  - a. Historical Commission – December 9, 2021: Ms. Rapport asked about Zoom capability for citizens committees. She said Mr. Wieckowski, Chair of the Historical Commission was promised reimbursement for upgrading his zoom account so he can host meetings longer than 40 minutes with his free account. Ms. Elliott explained that the Township has enough accounts to cover meeting for its citizen’s committees and staff liaisons should coordinate with Ashley Lupino when meeting agendas are prepared for log in information to the Township’s accounts. Mr. Zienkowski said staff will work with Mr. Wieckowski.
  - b. Twinning Committee – No December Meeting.
  - c. Economic Development Task Force Meeting – No December Meeting.
  - d. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Committee Meeting – No December Meeting.
  - e. Civil Rights Task Force Meeting – December 7, 2021.

Upon motion of Ms. Rappoport, the Committee unanimously received the Committee Meeting Minutes above.

3. Receipt of Staff Meeting Minutes – December 8, 2021

Upon motion of Ms. Rappoport, the Committee unanimously received the staff meeting minutes as stated above.

4. New Business
  - a. Discussion with the Cheltenham Township Library System on no-smoking on Library properties. Mary Kay Moran, Director of Cheltenham Library System, asked for permission and the procedure to prohibit smoking on Library properties.

Mr. Norris asked if the Township has a policy prohibiting smoking on Township properties. Ms. Elliott said she is only aware of the Young Lungs at Play signs near playgrounds and prohibitions inside Township buildings. Mr. Zienkowski said he would look into vaping and smoking prohibitions on Township campuses and work with the Township Solicitor to develop some language.

It was a general consensus of the Committee to move forward with drafting a policy for its consideration.

- b. Approval of a Change Order in the amount of \$4,375.00 to H&K Group, Inc. for emergency streambank stabilization and sediment relocation work on Tookany Creek Parkway near Melrose Country Club for a total of \$81,384.00.

Mr. Philips explained that this work was initiated because of damage from Hurricane Ida. During the construction the contractor found some subsurface conditions that were not as anticipated requiring the wall to be moved toward the creek and additional concrete to help solidify the streambank and Tookany Creek Parkway.

Mr. Zygmund-Felt asked if this washout was located about this project is one of the ones identified on the project list identified as part of the Stormwater Management Fee Feasibility Study. Mr. Philips clarified that it is not part of that project list; and is the result of the hurricane during which there was approximately four feet of water on Tookany Creek Parkway. When the water receded, it moved the channel, jeopardizing the Parkway. This project straightened the channel and solidified the streambank to restore the integrity of the road.

Mr. Philips clarified that this project fixed the problem in this part of the stream and there are many other areas of streambank upstream from this location that need to be stabilized as well. This project is being submitted to the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) for reimbursement from the Hurricane Ida disaster declaration.

Ms. Rappoport asked why the project straightened the streambank, rather than a more meandering course, which is considered a best management practice. Mr. Phillips said that approximately 15 feet of the bank washed away in the latest event, leaving the streambank within two or three feet of the white line on the Tookany Creek Parkway. The Creek is approximately 12 to 15 feet below the roadway. He further explained that in an "S" bend in a stream the sediment that erodes away is deposited in the inside of the curve. As the sediment builds up, it narrows the channel, putting more force on the outside of the "S" bend, creating a failure. The priority was stabilizing the roadway in this case. He further explained that allowing natural vegetation take over is more appropriate than planting trees because the water rises quickly and lowers quickly, with high velocity.

**Recommendation to the Board of Commissioners:** Upon motion of Ms. Rappoport, the Commissioners unanimously recommended approval of a Change Order in the amount of \$4,375.00 to H&K Group, Inc. for emergency streambank stabilization and sediment relocation work on Tookany Creek Parkway near Melrose Country Club for a total of \$81,384.00.

- c. Discussion on Montgomery County Recycling Consortium recommendation for processing, transfer station operation and transportation of recyclable materials.

Mr. Clewell explained that for the last seven years, the Township has participated in the Montgomery County Recycling Consortium with seven other communities, which established a transfer station in Upper Dublin Township on Fitzwatertown Road for member municipalities to send recycling materials to. It was managed by JP Mascaro, but there were significant concerns

about how the transfer station was operating, particularly with respect to odors, litter and efficiency. The Consortium hired a consultant, utilizing funding from a technical assistance grant through the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, to evaluate the transfer station and determine how it could be improved. The contract with JP Mascaro will expire April 21, 2022. JP Mascaro was only contractor that submitted a bid to run the transfer station, but their costs were higher than under the previous contract (38% increase per ton) due to the increase in hauling costs. The cost would increase from \$140 per ton to \$194 per ton to process, haul and operate the transfer station. The Township would continue to receive a 100% of the commodity income.

The Consortium sought out other options and recommends a seven year contract for member municipalities to haul directly to Republic's facility in King of Prussia. This will save \$35 a ton and the Township will retain 100% of the income from the commodity. Mr. Clewell said he will meet with Republic to discuss options for revenue sharing on bulk cardboard. He said it generates approximately \$10-20,000 in revenue for the Township. While the drive time will be longer (about 25 minutes), Republic guarantees a 15 minute wait period, instead of the hour wait at the current facility. Cheltenham has hauled to Republic's King of Prussia facility in the past before it joined the Consortium.

There is an option for a three year extension to the contract; however, the Consortium is looking to apply for grants to improve conditions at the Upper Dublin transfer station so it can return to the facility at the expiration of the seven-year contract with Republic. He anticipates that the Consortium will need the seven years to apply for grants and implement the improvements.

Upper Dublin and Springfield Townships have already approved this proposal and will require a quick decision from all member municipalities. Mr. Clewell said the Township can pull out of the Consortium and go its own way; however, it would not be able to return to the Consortium and the Township does not have enough time to find another option before the April expiration of the contract with JP Mascaro to run the transfer station in Upper Dublin.

**Recommendation to the Board of Commissioners:** Upon motion of Ms. Rappoport, the Commissioners unanimously recommended the Board of Commissioners approve the recommendation from MSW Consultants to enter into an agreement with Republic Services for seven years at \$105/ton, with 100% revenue sharing, for processing, transfer station operation and transportation of recyclable materials.

d. Discussion of water issues at Curtis Hall.

Ms. Elliott explained that Jeffrey A. Miller Catering (JAM) has asked the Township to look into ongoing water issues in the basement of Curtis Hall. Ms. Elliott explained that both the Township and JAM have put significant investment into the building and site to help ameliorate water issues in the building; however, the problems are continuing. Water is coming in from all sides of the building. Ms. Elliott said she has casually spoken with a number of professionals about this issue and would like to work with the Township Engineer to further evaluate the issue, determine the best course of action and provide some cost estimates. There is money in the budget for a remediation project.

Ms. Elliott also noted that Mr. Brown has reported that the heating and air conditioning system in the building is also nearing the end of its useful life and would like to investigate replacing the system. She asked that the Township Engineer look at this project at the same time.

Mr. Norris asked if there are any grants for such a project. Ms. Elliott said that funding for historic preservation projects is tricky and has not been as available as it has in the past; however,

the Township submitted some Curtis projects under the RACP program; she is not sure that this was one of them.

- e. Ms. Rappoport said she recently received a proposal from court system to eliminate the Magisterial District Court that is under the jurisdiction of Judge McHugh when she retires in 2023. This District covers the eastern portion of the Township. She explained that the court system evaluates its efficiency every 10 years to determine whether any changes are required.

Ms. Rappoport asked the Committee if they wanted to weigh in on the impact of this elimination. There is a 30-day comment period that expires at the end of January. Ms. Rappoport expressed concern on the increased workload on Judge Cerski who told her that he understands the impact and will take on the additional work. She said he believes this change may reduce some of the pre-trial, restorative justice, and other assistance provided by the judges to the community.

**Recommendation to the Board of Commissioners:** Upon motion of Mr. Pransky, the Committee unanimously agreed to recommend the Board of Commissioners draft a letter opposing the elimination of Magisterial District No. 38-1-02.

5. Old Business

- a. Ms. Rappoport asked when the next facilities meeting will be held. Mr. Zienkowski said he is looking to schedule the meeting for some time in early February.

6. Announcements –None.

7. Citizens' Forum –None.

8. There being no further business, upon motion of Mr. Pransky, the Committee unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 10:25 p.m.



Robert Zienkowski  
Township Manager

Per Alyson Elliott, Assistant Township Manager