

A regular meeting of the **PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE** for July 2021 was held tonight via web-conference, Commissioner Ann L. Rappoport presiding. Present were Commissioners Brockington, Pransky, Areman, 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; Brian Hinson, Director of Park and Recreation.

Ms. Rappoport called the meeting to order at 8:28 p.m.

Ms. Rappoport acknowledged the loss of some community members who had an impact on the Township – Paul Pronan, Park Guard and William Spence, a Glenside Community Service Award recipient.

1. The Committee reviewed the following reports for the month of June 2021:

- a. Property Maintenance Supervisor
- b. Public Information Officer – Ms. Rappoport noted that the Township calendar and annual report has been delivered to homes. This is an important resource that provides all the information you need about the Township. There are extras in the Township building and in the libraries. Mr. Brockington suggested placing some at the pools. Mr. Zygmund-Felt agreed, as long as the Township is able to keep enough for distribution in New Resident Packets.
- c. Director of Parks and Recreation – Ms. Rappoport acknowledged the Parks and Recreation Department and all its hard work during this busy season.

Mr. Hinson said the pools are doing well. Both pools were inspected by the state and both passed inspection. Toward the end of the season, flyers about new hours due to staffing at the end of the season will be distributed. Ms. Rappoport said there were two lifeguard saves that came to the attention of the Board. She thanked the lifeguards and underscored their importance.

Ms. Rappoport also announced that another installment of the Summer Concerts in the Park will take place next Sunday night at Curtis Arboretum.

Upon motion of Mr. Zygmund-Felt, the Committee unanimously received the above reports.

2. Receipt of Committee Meeting Minutes:

- a. Historical Commission – June 10, 2021  
Ms. Rappoport thanked them for their work to clean up and revitalize the carriage house for meetings and other activities.
- b. Twinning Committee – No May Meeting
- c. Economic Development Task Force Meeting – June 15, 2021
- d. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Committee Meeting – June 24, 2021
- e. Civil Rights Task Force Meeting – June 3, 2021

This Friday afternoon, there is some training from the state for the Human Relations Committee.

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

3. Receipt of Staff Meeting Minutes – June 23, 2021

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

4. Report of the Township Manager – None.

5. New Business

a. Chelten Hills Garden Proposal

Amber Weithoner, 7924 Heather Road, described her proposal to naturalize the grassy island at the intersection of Chelten Hills Drive and Widener Road and said that she is willing to reduce the scope and size of the plantings, as recommended by the Police Department.

Bonnie Cline, 643 Widener Road, served as a representative of a group of neighbors who live immediately adjacent to the grassy median. Ms. Cline provided a series of photos showing the lack of visibility as it currently exists. She also expressed concerns about ongoing maintenance of the space once it is installed, noting that the planted island in the Custis Woods neighborhood looks overgrown and vastly limits visibility. She said she is not opposed to the concept of the proposal, just the location.

Rhonda Isser suggested that any neighbors interested in doing a project like this should be required to apply for a permit and execute a contract agreeing to maintain it.

Mr. Areman said the Custis Woods garden looks much better today than it did in the photos submitted by Ms. Cline, due to hard work of the Custis Woods/Twickenham Association.

Ms. Rappoport and the Committee said they appreciate Ms. Weithoner's project, but this is not the right place for it. She suggested working with the Environmental Advisory Council on another project.

Ms. Rappoport also asked staff to look at the property at Old York Road and Chelten Hills Drive to see if it can be cleaned up.

Upon motion of Mr. Pransky, the Committee unanimously agreed that the proposed garden project at the intersection of Chelten Hills Drive and Widener Road, while a good idea, is not appropriate for this location due to safety concerns.

b. **Recommendation to the Board of Commissioners:** Upon motion of Mr. Zygmund-Felt, the Committee unanimously recommended the Board of Commissioners concur with the Montgomery County Consortium Bid to provide Heating Oil for Township Facilities to Tioga Fuel Company, Philadelphia, PA, at a rate of \$2.356/gallon for the 2021-2022 heating season.

Ms. Rappoport suggested the Township look into replacing the oil furnaces with other, more environmentally-friendly heating sources in order to help the Township meet its goal Ready for 100 goals.

c. **Recommendation to the Board of Commissioners:** Upon motion of Ms. Rappoport, the Committee unanimously recommended the Board of Commissioners adopt a Resolution authorizing the submission of a grant through the Montgomery County Transportation Program requesting \$333,000 to replace the West Glenside Avenue Bridge over Shady Nook.

Ms. Rappoport said she would like to see if there is room left over in the grant to add one of the bridges the Public Works Committee discussed this month. Ms. Elliott said she will review the costs and talk with the County to see if they can be added in while maintaining competitiveness and report back by the Board of Commissioners meeting next week.

6. Old Business

a. Update on the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Glenside Flood Control Project

Ms. Elliott reported that Mark Malach has retired from DEP and one of their staff members has been assigned to fill in until a permanent replacement can be found. They submitted a revised set of right-of-way plans for approval by the Township. They have been sent to the Township Engineer for review and she anticipates that they will be on the August Public Works agenda for consideration. Appraisals for the right-of-way parcels have been received and forwarded to the Commissioners for their review and consideration.

Ms. Rappoport asked if SEPTA had been approached for the money it committed as part of the CLOMR approval. Ms. Elliott said she is not aware, but will look into it.

b. Update on the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Tookany Creek Flood Reduction Feasibility Study

Mr. Pransky said that he and several Commissioners have been meeting with the USACE on a regular basis, but not much progress has been made. He said that the risk and uncertainty analysis has been completed and the final report will be submitted to USACE Regional Headquarters for review next month. He noted that the report finds that the project will be most effective for high frequency events up to approximately the 17-year storm equivalent, but will be less effective larger, less frequent storm events.

c. Stormwater Remediation Fee Public Meeting – Mr. Zygmund-Felt announced that a public meeting will be held to discuss the stormwater remediation fee. Ms. Elliott said the meeting is scheduled for the last Wednesday in August, August 25 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. Flyers are being finalized and will be mailed out to all property owners, including nonprofit entities, rather than the ‘Resident’ list that we mail our newsletters and calendars to, as this is a very important topic for our property owners. The goal will be take the issue to the Board for its consideration in September.

7. Expenditures

- a. **Recommendation to the Board of Commissioners:** Upon motion of Rappoport, the Committee unanimously recommended the Board of Commissioners approve a purchase order for Henry J. Thompson Plumbing and Heating, Inc. in the amount of \$2,584.00 for plumbing repairs at Glenside Pool.
- b. Consider recommending the Board of Commissioners approve a purchase for the Park and Facilities in the amount of \$1,775.00 to replace and upgrade the damaged water fountains in Wall Park, Renninger Park, and Thomas Williams Park.

The Committee discussed whether replacing public drinking fountains is a priority given the Township’s budgetary concerns and during a pandemic. Mr. Zienkowski noted that the Board should determine whether it wants to continue to provide water fountains to the public so staff can cap the water lines when they fail – many fountains will permit water bottles to be refilled.

Upon motion of Ms. Rappoport, the Committee unanimously recommended that the Board of Commissioners hold off on replacing and upgrading damaged water fountains at Wall Park, Renninger Park and Thomas Williams Park this year.

8. Announcements

- a. Ms. Rappoport said the various Friends groups in the Township’s parks are planning work days, particularly in the fall. Check them out to join.
- b. Ms. Rappoport announced that Judy Gratz will be hosting walking tours in Tookany Creek Park from 10:30 a.m. to noon on the third Saturday of the month (see attached flyer). The event is co-sponsored by the Township’s Parks and Recreation Department and the Tookany/Tacony-Frankford Watershed Partnership. The first tour is this Saturday, July 17, 2021 and will focus on *Flowering and Non-Flowering, Native and Non-Native Plants*. Registration is required.

- c. Ms. Rappoport reported that a blue heron has been sited at Perley Bird Sanctuary, which is testament to the work the Township and its partners have put into preserving and restoring the creeks in the Township.

9. Citizens' Forum

Rhonda Isser, *7307 Twelfth St*, asked for an update on the proposed website upgrade. Mr. Pransky said he hopes to provide an update next month.

10. There being no further business, upon motion of Mr. Pransky, the Committee unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 9:31 p.m.



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Robert Zienkowski  
Township Manager

Per Alyson Elliott, Assistant Township Manager

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