

A regular meeting of the **PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE** for November 2021 was held tonight via web-conference, Commissioner Ann L. Rappoport presiding. Present were Commissioners Brockington, Areman, Holland, and Zygmund-Felt. Also present was Ex-Officio member Norris. Commissioner Pransky was absent.

Staff present via web-conference were: Robert A. Zienkowski, Township Manager; Alyson Elliott, Assistant Township Manager; Nathan Crittendon, Director of Fiscal Affairs; Allen Brown, Property Supervisor; Lauren Walter, Special Projects Coordinator; Christopher Clewell, Public Works Superintendent; and Brian Hinson, Director of Parks and Recreation.

Ms. Rappoport called the meeting to order at 8:30 p.m.

1. The Committee reviewed the following reports for the month of October 2021:
 - a. Property Maintenance Supervisor
 - b. Public Information Officer
 - c. Director of Parks and Recreation

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

2. Receipt of Committee Meeting Minutes:

- a. Historical Commission – October 14, 2021

Ms. Rappoport noted that the Historical Commission has reached out to Goodman Properties, the developer for the new Wawa, about gaining access to the home on Waverly Road to photograph and document it. They have not had their requests for access returned by the developer. Mr. Areman noted that the home is currently occupied by a renter and asked if this documentation process would impact the property owner's ability to do anything with it. Ms. Rappoport noted that it is her understanding that this does not put any burden on the property owner; it is purely for documentation purposes. She said she can ask the Historical Commission to draft a letter clarifying the scope of work and lack of obligation on the property owner's part.

- b. Twinning Committee – No October Meeting
- c. Economic Development Task Force Meeting – No October Meeting
- d. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Committee Meeting – No October Meeting
- e. Civil Rights Task Force Meeting – No October Meeting

Upon motion of Mr. Areman, the Committee unanimously received the Committee Meeting Minutes above.

3. Receipt of Staff Meeting Minutes – October 27, 2021

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

4. Report of the Township Manager

- a. Discussion of the Proposed 2022 Budget for the Recreation Department

Mr. Hinson provided a summary of the Recreation Department's operating budget for 2022:

- No new hires or vehicles
- Program costs remain the same, with the exception of a \$5,000 increase for summer concerts to allow for streaming costs
- Suggested increasing the summer camp fee and family membership fees in 2022, if they are able to be run in 2022.
- Asked for an increase for summer staff salaries in order to retain staff and be competitive with other jobs that are paying higher rates

Ms. Rappoport noted that there are no major maintenance or operating increases for playgrounds and fields. Mr. Hinson said those costs have been moved over to the Parks Maintenance category in the Public Works Operating Budget. As for playground upgrades, they are placed in the Capital Budget.

Mr. Norris asked about the cost of live streaming the concerts. Mr. Hinson said Einstein donates \$12,000 toward the concerts, but its donation does not cover the additional cost for streaming. The Committee discussed reaching out to Einstein for additional funding and/or reaching out to other sponsors to make up the additional cost. Mr. Zienkowski said he would reach out to Einstein.

Mr. Brockington asked if Mr. Hinson if he thought he would have trouble recruiting staff without the proposed pay increase. Mr. Hinson said the Township currently pays \$9.50 an hour, vs. the \$12 to \$15 per hour they can get at other places of employment. The last increase was three years ago. Mr. Brockington asked if the School District as reinstated its lifeguard certification, which is part of the curriculum. Mr. Hinson said he will reach to the school district. The School's program is free of charge to students; however, the Township offers a certification program before the schools open at \$275. The Red Cross offers training at \$375.

Mr. Zienkowski noted that the line items that were transferred from Recreation to Public Works are non-revenue generating and already managed by the Public Works Department. This change does not change any of the Capital projects; however, it does move some of the expenses that are classified as operating expenses out of the capital budget into the operating budget where they belong to provide for greater accounting of the true costs of managing Township parks.

- b. Facilities Committee – Ms. Rappoport asked for an update on the facilities committee. Mr. Zienkowski said he is working to schedule a meeting, but it looks like it will be a Sunday evening. Meetings will be open to the public. Once it gets up and running, regular reports will be provided to the Public Affairs Committee. Mr. Zienkowski said staff and commissioners are still looking for temporary homes for the libraries. The ability to retrofit is difficult.

5. New Business

- a. Update on the Township website.
Lauren Walter provided an update on the redesign portion of the website upgrade and navigated a JPG of the homepage for the Committee's review. She said the redesign will be live approximately three weeks after approval and will include MunicipalEngage, a notification system that can be scheduled anytime and will not be required to wait until 5:30 p.m. each day like the current e-blast.

Mr. Zygmund-Felt expressed concern about the fonts, saying that script fonts are difficult for people in certain age groups to read. He also would like to see what the navigation map will look like to make sure legacy information is not included. Ms. Walter said site map revision will be part of the redesign process and will involve public feedback.

Ms. Rappoport said the Featured Items are visible only after scrolling down. Ms. Walter explained that scrolling will be required, which is part of the mobile-friendly design. Ms. Rappoport said she would like to see the calendar without scrolling. She said she would also like to see legacy information be easily accessible from the website.

Mr. Norris said he is anxious to see this first phase implemented; it looks like a significant improvement over the current website. He asked whether staff or Municipal One will be managing the content. Ms. Walter said she will be managing the day-to-day updates to the website, but changes to the architecture of the site will need to be done by Municipal One.

Edie Cerebi, *300 Maple Avenue*, said she is delighted that the website is being updated. She said that legacy information is important and does not want to lose a word of the current site. The public is a very important stakeholder and wants to make sure it is involved before it is too late. Mr. Zienkowski said the public's input will be valuable and changes can still be made. Ms. Walter said that since Municipal One is the Township's current webpage provider, the face lift can be done quickly to address some site design challenges. The overhaul of content will be done later with much more public input.

Ms. Rappoport said she wants to ensure that information from the current site is archived and available to the public even when the new site is revamped. Mr. Holland asked whether the old site can be accessed via a link in the new site. Mr. Zienkowski said staff will investigate these requests.

Staff will work on the comments from the Committee and public and return to the Public Affairs Committee for review before making any changes live.

- b. Upon motion of Ms. Rappoport, the Committee unanimously recommended the Board of Commissioners adopt a resolution authorizing staff to apply for a grant under the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development's (DCED) Strategic Management Planning Program to purchase financial management software in the amount of \$200,000.

Ms. Elliott said that at the request of the Board of Commissioners, she reached out to DCED to determine whether new financial management software would be eligible for grant funding under this program – which is the same grant that funded the Strategic Financial Management Plan completed by PFM. It looks like it will be eligible for funding, which is a 50/50 match up to \$200,000. The software is anticipated to cost approximately \$1 million.

6. Old Business

- a. Ms. Rappoport noted that the Township's approval of the right of way for the DEP Flood Control Project and that this paves the way for the Township to begin acquiring properties for the project. Mr. Zienkowski suggested this be discussed at an upcoming Executive Session since it is a real estate matter.

Mr. Pransky entered at 9:26 p.m.

7. Announcements

- a. Ms. Rappoport announced that Cheltenham High School is continuing with its Problem-Based Learning program. The students are preparing to study a Township building that has space needs and make recommendations.

8. Citizens' Forum – None.

9. There being no further business, upon motion of Mr. Zygmund-Felt, the Committee unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 9:28 p.m.



Robert Zienkowski
Township Manager

Per Alyson Elliott, Assistant Township Manager

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