

LAWRENCE PARK TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

6:00 p.m.

June 14, 2023

4230 Iroquois Avenue

In Attendance: Commissioner J. Golden, Commissioner T. Benovic, Commissioner B. Rodemaker, Commissioner S. Trojak, Commissioner J. Moffett, Solicitor A. Martinucci, Engineer A. Holland, Secretary C. Cunningham, Chief J. Morell

~Commissioner Golden called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was performed~

REPORTS:

Engineers Report:

Soudan Lift Station

- PA DEP WQM Permit – Target date for issuing the permit is July 20th. No comments received.
- USDA – ongoing coordination to address review comments. Resolving administrative and contract document comments. Limited technical comments will be addressed next.

PennDOT Bureau of Public Transportation – Transit and Multimodal Feasibility Study

- Water Street/Lawrence Parkway and Pedestrian Bridges included.
- MT and Urban are waiting for approval/NTP from PennDOT.

Cunningham Lift Station Grinder – DCED Grant Application Coordination

- Under review by DCED. Decisions as early as July, but more likely September.

Solicitors Report:

- At the last meeting, the Commissioners approved a 3-year lease, with no rent increases during the term, for MDJ Ferricks' offices. Subsequently, we have been approached by the County to ask if the Township would consider making that a 5-year lease with no rent increases.
- We have worked with Township staff to respond to various Right to Know Requests.
- We have been asked to review various aspects of the contract for the Soudan Lift Station project to ensure the Township's compliance with those terms.
- We have wrapped-up all outstanding items regarding the resolution of Chief Morell's unfair labor practice.
- We have responded to questions regarding personnel matters.

~Commissioner Trojak made a motion to approve all reports as presented. Commissioner Moffett seconded the motion; the motion carried~

Visitors: Bud Hughes, Ed Eller, Rory Brady, Dale Durst, Dale Williams, Kate Griffin, Linda Blum, Melissa Weismiller, Janet Martinez, Kathy Seib, Tom Buchleitner, Chris Buchleitner

Signed in to speak: Bud Hughes, Rory Brady, Tom Buchleitner

~Bud Hughes asked if the MDJ lease is increased from 3 to 5 years would the Township be able to increase the rent by 5%? Solicitor Martinucci said that Commissioners "could" go back and ask for that. Hughes asked how the building renovations were being paid for. Commissioner Golden stated that the County is paying for that as the first year's rent and they are covering prevailing wages, but we will be billed the monthly rent payments and that will go toward the construction. Solicitor Martinucci said that the rent is going to be no less than the build out and that the cost of the improvements annualized is going to be monthly rent. After that it will be a regular monthly amount. Hughes wanted to thank Officer Riggle for helping his granddaughter as she was chased by a kid with a taser. He wants to encourage children not to be afraid of police officers because they are there to protect them.

~Tom Buchleitner asked about the leaf pick up status. Commissioner Moffett stated that all the specifics are not in place yet but they were looking at a few things to free up the maintenance personnel to attend to their other duties. Essentially the idea is to be able to have residents use biodegradable bags that could be picked up year-round. Buchleitner asked about the idea of hiring more maintenance staff to help with the shortage. Commissioner Moffett stated it has not been budgeted for at this time. Buchleitner proposed that instead of hiring 1 police officer, the Board should consider hiring 2 maintenance men for the same cost as 1 officer. Buchleitner also stated that he has worked with budgets for over 28 years with those budgets consisting of \$22 million dollars. He also said he worked on budgets as a Commissioner to Lawrence Park in past years, and considering the square mileage, the number of residents, and the number of police officers per resident, these numbers should be considered. With less than 2 square miles to patrol, how many officers are needed? Buchleitner said he would like it to be looked at, because there is not enough maintenance people to get all the things done in the Township such as the streets getting clogged up, water backs up, etc. (as was discussed in the work session). Buchleitner said he is not here to try to solve or disrupt things and he has nothing against the police, he would just like certain things to be considered. Commissioner Moffett said he appreciates the resident's feedback and ideas and the Board will always welcome input. Buchleitner asked about the Board's suggestion at the work session of contracting out Street Sweeping. His concern is the high cost that it would entail. Buchleitner said with his years of experience his thought is that contracting out is throwing money away, and asked what kind of assessment was made of the equipment repairs. Commissioner Moffett stated he would get that information from the Maintenance crew and would gladly share it with Mr. Buchleitner. Moffett said that considering the deteriorating equipment we have, there are many costs in yearly repairs. Moffett also stated he is looking to set up a meeting with Harborcreek to see if there is something they can do to help with these issues. Commissioner Benovic stated it is not just the leaf machine, but also the street sweeper is very old and now we must weigh maintenance of vs. new equipment and manpower. Buchleitner said that is why you need to appreciate equipment in the budget looking 3-5 even 10 years later you must make concessions now. Buchleitner said he has heard rumors that Lawrence Park is merging with Harborcreek and asked if that was true. Commissioner Golden said that we need to have talks with other Communities who are closest to us. Golden said with the rising costs of everything it is causing Communities to struggle, so this idea is in the initial stages. Commissioner Trojak stated Municipalities across the state are struggling and looking for ways to help their communities as well. Solicitor Martinucci stated that if there would be a merger that it would be a public process and that it would appear on the ballot for residents of the Communities to vote.

~Bud Hughes asked if the budget meetings are open to the public. Commissioner Golden told him they are. The meetings will begin in September and will be set up at a Board of Commissioners meeting, and then will be advertised in the newspaper.

~Dale Williams asked if the Board had a Capital Improvement Project line in their budget for equipment instead of hitting everyone with a big tax increase. Commissioner Golden said there is a line item for Improvement and repairs.~

Bills:

- Commissioner Benovic made a motion to pay bills as presented, Commissioner Rodemaker seconded the motion; the motion carried.

Minutes:

- Commissioner Trojak made a motion to approve BOC Minutes from May 10, 2023, Commissioner Moffett seconded the motion; the motion carried.

Old Business: N/A

New Business:

~Commissioner Rodemaker motioned to hire Taylor Webb as part time crossing guard, Commissioner Benovic seconded; the motion carried.~

~Rory Brady spoke about Shakespeare in the park. He said that he wants to give the community a better awareness of the performing arts. The performance will only be approximately 1 hour long and is family friendly. This will be held in Napier Park on August 7,8 & 9th and is free to attend.~

~Commissioner Benovic said that a food truck benefiting IHS Volleyball will be available during the July 4th fireworks only. Also, the IHS Cheerleaders will be having a fundraiser between the parade and the fireworks and they also will have a food truck. Benovic said that all vendors must fill out an application. Benovic also stated that the IHS Homecoming parade is scheduled for 9/29/2023.~

~Commissioner Rodemaker motioned to approve the IHS Homecoming parade on 9/29/23, Commissioner Trojak seconded; the motion carried.~

~Commissioner Trojak motioned to approve waving the Food Truck Vendor fee for July 4th, Commissioner Benovic seconded; the motion carried.~

~Commissioner Benovic said the concerts in the Gazebo begin this week and a laser show this Friday at dusk in Napier Park will kick off the events in the parks.~

~Commissioner Moffett motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:36 p.m., Commissioner Trojak seconded; the motion carried.~

Respectfully Submitted:

Cindy Jo Cunningham
Board of Commissioner's Secretary