

## MINUTES

### BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

### LOWER ALLEN TOWNSHIP

### REGULAR MEETING

January 22, 2024

The following were in ATTENDANCE:

### BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

### TOWNSHIP PERSONNEL

Dean W. Villone, President

Rebecca Davis, Public Works Director

Jennifer Caron, Vice President

Steven P. Miner, Township Solicitor

Joshua Nagy

David Holl, Public Safety Director

Charles Brown

Richard Grove, Finance Director

Joseph Swartz

Leon G. Crone, Police Captain

Anthony Deaven, EMS Captain

Nate Sterling, Administrative Secretary

Renee' Greenawalt, Recording Secretary

President Villone called the January 22, 2024 Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners to order at 6:00 PM. He announced that Proof of Publication for the meeting was available for review. This was followed by a prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance. President Villone noted that Commissioner Nagy was absent for the start of the meeting but would be arriving late.

### MEETING MINUTES:

President Villone requested a motion to approve the minutes of the December 11, 2023 Regular Meeting. Commissioner **BROWN** made the motion to approve the minutes. Vice President **CARON** seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

President Villone requested a motion to approve the minutes of the January 2, 2024 Reorganization Meeting. Commissioner **BROWN** made the motion to approve the minutes. Vice President **CARON** seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

### AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: Any item on the agenda.

President Villone advised the audience that if there were any item on that evening's agenda that they wish to comment on, to please indicate as such. There were none.

### CONSENT AGENDA:

President Villone stated that any Commissioner, staff member, or anyone in attendance who would like to have an item on the Consent Agenda removed for further discussion, they could do so at that time. There were none.

Items on the Consent Agenda:

a. Department Reports for the month of December for Community Development, Fleet Maintenance, Facility Maintenance, Public Works, Public Safety.

b. Tax Collector reports including revised reports for September through November, 2023 and original reports for December 2023, and the January 2024 & EOY 2023 report.

- c. Check Register of January 11, 2024 in the amount of \$55,962.23 (for 2023 payments).
- d. Check Register of January 12, 2024 in the amount of \$ 243,743.99 (for 2024 payments).
- e. Moving Laurie Nissel from probationary to regular full-time status as Police Records Supervisor in the Police Department effective December 27, 2023.
- f. Moving Margaret Feldman from probationary to regular full-time status as Police Records Specialist in the Police Department effective January 17, 2024.
- g. Moving Julie Koranda from probationary to regular full-time status as Accounting Specialist in the Finance Department effective January 5, 2024.

Commissioner **BROWN** moved to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. Vice President **CARON** seconded. The motion carried 4-0.

### **PRESIDENT VILLONE**

President Villone noted that Director Davis would be presenting staff reports in Manager Vernau's absence. Next, he announced the 2024-2025 Commissioner Appointments as follows:

#### **Capital Region COG**

Delegate: Jennifer M. Caron  
Alternate: Charles Brown

#### **West Shore Recreation Board**

Representative: Joseph Swartz  
Alternate: Beth Ann McCoy

#### **Lower Allen Recreation Board**

Liaison: Joshua Nagy  
Alternate: Joseph Swartz

#### **Cumberland Co. Tax Collection Committee**

Representative: Dean W. Villone  
Alternate: Thomas G. Vernau

#### **Municipal Advisory Board**

Representative: Jennifer M. Caron  
Alternate: Dean W. Villone

#### **Sewer Authority/Stormwater Authority**

Liaison: Charles Brown  
Alternate: Joshua Nagy

#### **Planning Commission**

Liaison: Joseph Swartz  
Alternate: Dean W. Villone

#### **Pension Committee**

Chairperson: Dean W. Villone  
Alternate: Joseph Swartz

#### **Fire Committee**

Liaison: Joshua Nagy  
Alternate: Charles Brown

#### **Police Department**

Liaison: Dean W. Villone  
Alternate: Joshua Nagy

#### **Cumberland County Emergency Planning**

Representative: Joshua Nagy  
Alternate: Dean W. Villone

President Villone noted he considered both the primary and the alternate appointments to be primary.

**ANY BUSINESS PERTINENT TO THE TOWNSHIP:**

President Villone noted that if anyone wished to speak at that time, there would be 10 minutes allotted per person to speak at the podium.

Ms. Sandra Colello briefly presented information about Medard's House, a free, after-school program serving middle and high school students within the West Shore School District. The faith-based organization provides transportation between the school and the center, and then transportation home following programming four days per week. The program focuses on serving the community through prevention efforts, identifying needs, making referrals to outside agency services, and providing meals to participants.

Commissioners expressed their appreciation for the program and the information presented, noting the rising issue of food insecurity within Cumberland County.

**PUBLIC SAFETY DIRECTOR**

**Fire Service volunteer recruitment and retention**

Director Holl introduced for discussion the concept of a shift stipend and bonus program for volunteers. He emphasized the declines in volunteer participation and the need to consider incentive options. The first is a shift stipend for those volunteers who sign up for specific shifts to respond from the station. The payments cannot exceed twenty percent of the average salary of career firefighters in the area. He cited successes experienced by a neighboring municipality following this type of model.

Commissioner Nagy joined the meeting at 6:23 p.m.

President Villone noted his support for the program but also expressed preference to support retention efforts. Director Holl said the program would include minimum training requirements and would also support retention by providing additional opportunities for training and experience with responding to fire calls.

Commissioner Nagy expressed support for the shift stipend.

Mr. Brian Ariano noted support for the program and reiterated the advantages of having volunteers on site to gain direct experience with gear and apparatus, as well as exposure to operational procedures. The incentive increases on-site participation, helping to prepare volunteers to be knowledgeable and ready to go.

There was some discussion regarding the structuring of stipend payments and distribution of such. Solicitor Miner referenced prior research conducted for the live-in program. Payments are made to the fire company, which is then distributed to volunteers in accordance with volunteer shift sign-ups.

Director Holl also introduced the idea of a volunteer recruitment sign-on bonus program, whereby current volunteers could earn bonuses for recruiting new volunteers, with additional bonus opportunities earned with increased levels of training achieved. Although there is not currently a similar program deployed within the fire service, it is a model utilized widely in other industries.

Director Holl said funds were available in the budget for these programs, and that he was not yet asking for a formal approval but rather a consensus of support for the concept before moving forward with the development of a program.

Board members confirmed their consensus to support development of the program.

**PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR**

**2023 Infrastructure Repair and Paving Project Payment Estimate No. 3**

Director Davis presented the item for discussion and possible action, to consider approval for the 2023 Infrastructure Repair and Paving Project Payment Estimate No. 3 in the amount of \$765,739.82 to Kinsley Construction, Inc. which includes two changes orders. Director Davis noted withholding of \$78,000 absent receipt of proper forms for the subcontracting of the ADA ramps. She added that actual costs were about eleven percent over the bid, which fared very well in terms of overall cost.

Commissioner **BROWN** made the motion to approve Payment Estimate No. 3 as recommended by staff. Commissioner **NAGY** seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

**2024 Stormwater Basin Retrofit Projects Bid Advertisement**

Director Davis presented the item for discussion and possible action, to consider approval for staff to prepare and advertise bid specifications for the 2024 Stormwater Basin Retrofit Projects. She noted that the three projects would be bid out separately.

Commissioner **BROWN** made the motion to approve advertisement of the bids. Vice President **CARON** seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

#### **2024 and 2025 Stormwater Basin Bioretention Maintenance Bids Advertisement**

Director Davis presented the item for discussion and possible action, to consider approval for staff to prepare and advertise bid specifications for the Stormwater Basin Bioretention Maintenance for 2024 and 2025. She noted that it is cumbersome and costly to advertise the projects separately, and that securing a contract for a two-year period would offer the opportunity to add three more basins in the second year of the contract.

Commissioner **NAGY** made the motion to approve the advertisement of the bids. Commissioner **SWARTZ** seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

President Villone expressed appreciation to the Public Works staff for their efforts in addressing the recent snow events. Director Davis noted her pride in the work done by the staff.

#### **COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

##### **Lark Meadows Financial Security Reduction Request #3**

Director Davis presented the item for discussion and possible action, to consider approval for the financial security reduction #3 for Lark Meadows in the amount of \$23,787.60 leaving a financial security balance of \$119,051.86 and a new expiration date of January 22, 2025.

Commissioner **BROWN** moved to approve the request, seconded by Vice President **CARON**. The motion passed 5-0.

##### **Lower Allen Commons, Financial Security Increase**

Director Davis presented the item for discussion and possible action, to consider approval for financial security increase for Lower Allen Commons, Condominium #2, Mountz Jewelers to a new amount of \$71,415.41 and a new expiration date of January 22, 2025. She noted there had been no request for a reduction and this request represents the typical ten percent increase.

Commissioner **BROWN** moved to approve the request, seconded by Vice President **CARON**. The motion passed 5-0.

#### **MANAGER**

##### **Firefighter tax credits for 2023**

Director Davis introduced for discussion and possible action; approval of the firefighter tax credits for the tax year 2023 for the list of eligible volunteers, in accordance with Ordinance 2017-18, enacted previously by the Board.

Commissioner Nagy suggested that some effort go towards reconsidering what constitutes eligibility for the credit. President Villone agreed that there could be fire service-related activities that are missed in comprising the eligibility and should be considered. Director Holl affirmed that a deeper look was necessary to broaden the eligibility definition for the tax credit. Additionally, it was important to properly account for all time counted towards the credit.

Also discussed was the issue of volunteers who do not qualify for the credit due to locale of residency outside the municipality. It was suggested to conduct outreach to mutual aid neighbors to consider solutions. President Villone also committed to discuss the issue with state legislators.

Commissioner **NAGY** made the motion to approve the 2023 firefighter tax credits. Commissioner **BROWN** seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

##### **Norfolk Southern Lemoyne Connection Track Project**

Director Davis introduced the item for discussion. Norfolk Southern is proposing the construction of a new connector to divert traffic and keep routes on the West Shore. The intent is for those lines operating from the Enola yard to avoid any need to cross the river to Harrisburg and then return to the Camp Hill/Lemoyne area. The connection requires an archeological investigation in which Lower Allen Township has been invited to be a party to the case. Director Davis noted that both she and Manager Vernau would participate in relevant meetings. She also noted that the new connector is projected to increase local trains by 3-4 per day. It is anticipated that more detailed maps will be provided as the project moves forward.

#### **COMMISSIONERS REPORTS**

Commissioner Nagy applauded the efforts by Public Works staff on addressing road maintenance during the snowstorms.

Commissioner Swartz echoed compliments to staff for their efforts as well as for their welcome transition for him as a Commissioner. He also noted his upcoming attendance at a legislative forum hosted by the Harrisburg Regional Chamber and CREDC.

Vice President Caron reported her attendance at the recent CapCOG dinner, accompanied by President Villone and Commissioner Brown. She also noted her planned attendance at an upcoming Municipal Advisory Board meeting. Next, she referenced recent discussions with Manager Vernau about the possibility of implementing a Junior Commissioner program for the Township, to facilitate opportunities for local students and to receive reports from the local schools. All Board members expressed support for the idea.

President Villone also noted the annual CapCOG dinner, describing it as very informative and interesting. The event's keynote speaker had walked attendees through major police incidents involving active shooters. He expressed gratitude for the public safety and police departments for their efforts in preparedness. President Villone also noted his attendance at the recent Planning Commission meeting where a plan for a proposed Ford Truck Center was reviewed and would be presented soon to the Board of Commissioners. In closing, he mentioned the upcoming executive committee meeting for the PA Association of Township Commissioners, noting that the Central Region was in the leadership role for the upcoming year and would be going through strategic planning. He noted he would be joined by Vice President Caron.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:33 PM.