

MINUTES

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

LOWER ALLEN TOWNSHIP

REGULAR MEETING

February 12, 2024

The following were in ATTENDANCE:

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

TOWNSHIP PERSONNEL

Dean W. Villone, President

Thomas G. Vernau, Jr., Township Manager

Jennifer M. Caron, Vice President

Robert W. Diehl, Assistant Township Solicitor

Charles Brown

Rebecca Davis, Public Works Director

Joseph Swartz

Richard Grove, Finance Director

Joshua Nagy (via telephone)

Leon G. Crone, Police Captain

Anthony Deaven, EMS Captain

Nate Sterling, Administrative Secretary

Renee' Greenawalt, Recording Secretary

President Villone called the February 12, 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.

MEETING MINUTES:

President Villone requested a motion to approve the minutes of the January 22, 2023 Regular Meeting. Commissioner **BROWN** made the motion to approve the minutes. Vice President **CARON** seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

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 could do so at that time. There were none.

Items on the Consent Agenda:

- a. Check Register of January 25, 2024 in the amount of \$573,862.55 (for 2023 payments).
- b. Check Register of January 26, 2024 in the amount of \$383,383.21 (for 2024 payments).

Commissioner **BROWN** moved to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. Vice President **CARON** seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

PRESIDENT VILLONE

Manual Check

President Villone requested a motion to approve a manual Check Register of January 23, 2024 in the amount of \$650.00 for Eckert, Seamans, Cherin & Mellott.

Commissioner **BROWN** moved to approve the item. Commissioner **SWARTZ** seconded. The motion carried 4-0 with Vice President **CARON** abstaining due to the fact that the payment was to her law firm.

Resolution 2024-R-06, Hiring of Maxwell Schertzer

President Villone requested a motion to adopt **Resolution 2024-R-06**, appointing Maxwell C. Schertzer to the position of Maintenance Specialist in the Public Works Department effective February 13, 2024. This is a budgeted position and fills a vacancy due to retirement.

Commissioner **NAGY** moved to approve **Resolution 2024-R-06**. Vice President **CARON** seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

Resolution 2024-R-07, Hiring of James Bennett

President Villone requested a motion to adopt **Resolution 2024-R-07**, appointing James R. Bennett as Planner in the Community and Economic Development Department effective February 26, 2024. This is a newly created position that has been budgeted.

Commissioner **SWARTZ** moved to approve **Resolution 2024-R-07**. Commissioner **BROWN** seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

ANY BUSINESS PERTINENT TO THE TOWNSHIP:

President Villone noted that if anyone wished to speak at that time on any subject, there would be 10 minutes allotted per person to speak at the podium. There were none.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

2024 Paving and Infrastructure project, parts A & B

Director Davis introduced the item or discussion and consideration, to approve for staff to prepare and advertise bid specifications for the project. She referenced the maps included in the materials packet which identify the details for the paving and replacement or installation of ADA ramps.

Commissioner **SWARTZ** made the motion to approve. Vice President **CARON** seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

Equipment Purchase Approval

Director Davis introduced the item or discussion and consideration, to purchase the following equipment for the Public Works Department:

- i.) Toyota forklift in the amount of \$27,288.00.
- ii.) Exmark diesel zero turn lawnmower in the amount of \$24,774.00.

Director Davis referenced the justification memo included in the materials packet, which describes the need for the new equipment. She explained that funds would be transferred from the parks account to purchase the items.

Mr. Reynolds explained that the current forklift was purchased in 2001, is heavily used and presents mechanical issues that require costly repair by outside vendors. The mower has engine problems, and the new one would be a diesel mower with a longer life expectancy. President Villone asked about ongoing maintenance for the newer equipment. Mr. Reynolds noted that that the department has purchased newer tools to address repairs but that the evolution of the newer equipment is requiring more use of outside vendors for repair needs. Commissioner Brown clarified that the purchase of the equipment would be in lieu of a truck for the parks department that will not need to be purchased. Commissioner Nagy expressed gratitude to the staff working in fleet maintenance and public works for their efforts in extending the life of the equipment.

Commissioner **NAGY** moved to approve the purchase. Commissioner **BROWN** seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG)

Director Davis introduced the item or discussion and consideration, to approve a commitment of funds for the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) Application for ADA improvements in the Rossmoyne Manor Development. She noted the need to replace 64 ADA ramps and explained that the project is budgeted for \$435,000. Staff is seeking a commitment of 50% of matching funds in the amount of \$217,600. If successful in being awarded the grant, the funds would be spent in 2025.

Commissioner Nagy cautioned that the grant award could be less than anticipated, although he supports the project and noted it should go forward. Ms. Davis noted that the full amount of the project would be included in the budget for 2025. Commissioner Swartz asked about the timing for paving in the area. Ms. Davis said that based on the rating data, the development is one of the areas that is prioritized for resurfacing. President Villone asked Director Grove to speak to the funding model in budget planning. Director Grove noted it was likely that the status of the grant would be available when budget planning begins in the fall and the board would be involved in the decisions regarding the funding model within that

process. Commissioner Caron asked if liquid fuels funds could be used to pay for ADA ramps. Director Davis confirmed that was accurate. She also noted the grant opportunity only became available several years ago. Prior to that the Township incurred the full cost.

Vice President **CARON** moved to approve the commitment of funds for the CDBG program application. Commissioner **BROWN** seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Financial security reduction request #1 for Trinity High School Auxiliary Gymnasiums

Manager Vernau presented the item for discussion and possible action, to consider approval for the financial security reduction #1 for Trinity High School Auxiliary Gymnasiums in the amount of \$56,374.00 leaving a financial security balance of \$9,536.90 and a new expiration date of February 12, 2025. He referred to a letter of agreement from the Township engineer for the partial reduction. The applicant had requested a reduction of the full amount however the engineer identified several outstanding items.

Commissioner Brown inquired about the water runoff from the property which creates an issue at Pete's Field. Director Davis noted that this project included a BMP to mitigate the issue but that there may be a need to conduct a future site visit to consider further mitigation.

Commissioner **BROWN** moved to approve the reduction. Commissioner **SWARTZ** seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

Final Subdivision and Land Development Plan for Cedar Run Business Park

Manager Vernau presented the item for discussion and possible action, to consider acceptance of a sixty (60) day extension from the applicant to render a decision on the plan. He noted the plan is not quite ready for presentation.

Commissioner **BROWN** moved to approve the extension. Vice President **CARON** seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

MANAGER

Alterations to inner lobby door access

Mr. Vernau introduced for discussion the idea of modifying the inner lobby, public entrance space with the objective of securing the kitchen and intern's office areas. To achieve the modification, one wall would be moved, and a new wall constructed to reconfigure the space so that these two areas are not accessible to the public. The projected cost of the project is about \$700 in materials.

Board members expressed consensus to move forward with the proposal.

House Bill No. 32, Stormwater fees

Mr. Vernau introduced the informational item, noting the proposed legislation would permit the Township to levy the stormwater fees independent of the need for the Stormwater Authority. The Stormwater Authority was originally established by mandate for a First-Class Township to enact the fee. President Villone noted that the existing body, which acts as a financing authority, functions well.

COMMISSIONERS REPORTS

President Villone announced that the Board would adjourn to Executive Session following commissioner's reports.

Captain Crone announced that Officer Katie Justh had been awarded Patrol Officer of the Year and would be recognized.

Director Davis announced that Barbara Arnold had applied for and received a Susquehanna River Basin Commissioner grant and was awarded \$5,000 to conduct an educational program with West Shore Recreation for a summer program including litter clean-up and canoeing.

Manager Vernau announced he had been interviewed by Fox 43 for a follow-up story on the Township's solar panel project. It will be televised later in the week.

Commissioner Brown noted, as the liaison to both the sewer and stormwater authorities, that both entities do an excellent job of addressing their responsibilities.

Commissioner Swartz provided an update from the recent Recreation and Parks meeting, noting the Easter Egg Hunt, Gardener's Gathering, and Yappy Hour. He also attended the legislative breakfast hosted by the Harrisburg Regional Chamber and discussed opportunities for improvements to benefit Township residents with Representatives Kutz and Delozier. He noted his attendance at public safety training for newly elected officials and found it to be very extensive and worthwhile.

Vice President Caron noted that she and President Villone attended the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Commissioners (PSATC) Executive Committee Session focused primarily on strategic planning.

President Villone expressed thanks to the staff for their hard work. He also noted receiving legislative updates on priorities at the PSATC event, specifically that the 2023 priorities would carry over to 2024.

Board members also briefly discussed the cost savings realized by the installation of the solar panel arrays.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

President Villone announced the Board would adjourn to discuss two items: 1) Disciplinary action and 2) Community & Economic Development Director search.

ADJOURNMENT