

MINUTES

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

LOWER ALLEN TOWNSHIP

REGULAR MEETING

April 8, 2024

The following were in ATTENDANCE:

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

TOWNSHIP PERSONNEL

Dean W. Villone, President

Thomas G. Vernau, Township Manager

Jennifer M. Caron, Vice President

Rebecca Davis, Assistant Manager/Public Works Dir.

Charles Brown

Robert W. Diehl, Assistant Township Solicitor

Joshua Nagy

David Holl, Public Safety Director

Joseph Swartz

Alycia Knoll, Finance Director

Isaac Sweeney, CED Director

Nate Sterling, Administrative Secretary

Renee' Greenawalt, Recording Secretary

President Villone called the April 8, 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 welcomed and introduced Mr. Isaac Sweeney, the Township's new Community and Economic Development Director.

MEETING MINUTES:

President Villone requested a motion to approve the minutes of the March 11, 2024 Regular Meeting. Vice President **CARON** moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner **NAGY** seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

President Villone requested a motion to approve the minutes of the March 25, 2024 Regular Meeting. Commissioner **BROWN** moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner **SWARTZ** seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: Any item on the agenda.

President Villone advised the audience that if there were any items 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 April 5, 2024, in the amount of \$254,654.46.

b. Moving Tom Rigling, Training and Volunteer Coordinator in the Public Safety Department from probationary status to regular full-time status effective April 9, 2023.

Commissioner **NAGY** moved to approve the items on the Consent Agenda and highlighted Tom Rigling for his efforts and creativity working with the fire companies. Vice President **CARON** seconded. With no further discussion the consent agenda was approved by a vote of 5-0.

PRESIDENT

Township Treasurer

President Villone requested a motion to appoint Alycia J. Knoll as Township Treasurer effective April 8, 2024.

Commissioner **BROWN** made the motion, seconded by Vice President **CARON**. The motion passed 5-0. A short discussion ensued on the duties of the Treasurer.

Appointment of Accounting Specialist

President Villone requested a motion to approve **Resolution 2024-R-14**, A Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of Lower Allen Township, appointing Julie A. Echterling as an Accounting Specialist in the Finance Department, effective April 8, 2024.

Commissioner **NAGY** made the motion, seconded by Vice President **CARON**. The motion passed 5-0.

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. Victoria A. Capparella noted a family residence in Lower Allen Township at 900 S. 31st Street. She addressed the Commissioners to express her concerns regarding the change to addresses and street signs in the Cressman Manor neighborhood whereby the directional aspect of the address was recently removed. She also expressed disappointment in the communication received from the Township regarding the change.

Manager Vernau explained the change in addresses was due to several problems expressed by residents of that neighborhood in receiving package deliveries. Upon investigation, it was found that the streets were dedicated to the Township in 1962 without a directional. The street signs do not include a directional. Cumberland County was asked to change their records to remove the directional, and County in turn notified the post office. The change was made to address confusion and assist residents in receiving package deliveries. The intent of the letter sent to residents was to inform them of the pending change, which is designated by the local municipality.

President Villone thanked Ms. Capparella for her comments and noted the issue would be taken under advisement.

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Cedar Run Business Park

Mr. Sweeney presented the item for discussion and possible action, to consider acceptance of a sixty-day extension for the Final Subdivision and Land Development Plan for Cedar Run Business Park.

Commissioner Nagy noted the repeat request from the applicant and inquired about the reason for additional extensions. Mr. Vernau noted that the pace set by the developer is typically permitted to the degree that the development is supported. He noted his understanding that the delays involve outside agency approvals. Taking no action would allow the plan to be approved automatically. President Villone also noted that automatic approvals also still require compliance with municipal code and outside agency approvals.

With no further discussion, Vice President **CARON** moved to accept the 60-day extension. Commissioner **BROWN** seconded and the motion passed 5-0.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

Payment to Chemung Supply

Assistant Manager Davis introduced the item for discussion and possible action, to approve a payment to Chemung Supply in the amount of \$23,450.00 for stormwater infrastructure for the 2024 Infrastructure and paving project. She noted that materials were purchased through the CapCOG bidding process.

President Villone asked if the expenditure aligned with the stormwater budget. Assistant Manager Davis confirmed that the payment was in line with the budget which includes \$125,000 for materials.

Commissioner **NAGY** made the motion to approve the payment, seconded by Commissioner **BROWN**. The motion passed 5-0.

Lower Allen Community Park Paving Project

Assistant Manager Davis introduced the item for discussion and possible action, to approve the preparation and

advertisement of bids for the paving project at Lower Allen Community Park. She referenced a map of the project which identified the prioritized areas for paving. She explained that the work originally had been intended for the prior year but time for bidding ran out. She also noted the paving would be completed by the end of October.

Vice President **CARON** moved to authorize the staff to prepare and advertise the bids. Commissioner **BROWN** seconded the motion, which passed 5-0.

MANAGER

Intermunicipal agreement – Food Processing Residuals (FPR) research

Mr. Vernau introduced the item for discussion, to consider entering an intermunicipal agreement to address the issue of applying food processing residuals (FPRs) to farm fields. He summarized a recent discussion that had occurred at the Municipal Advisory Board meeting about the issue which has become problematic in other municipalities.

Commissioner Brown characterized the practice as “waste farming”, whereby food processing waste products are applied to farmland fields. It causes a very offensive odor which has spurred complaints by township residents. He noted the practice has become profitable, primarily because states south of Pennsylvania have banned it.

Manager Vernau said that entering into the agreement would involve an outlay of funding by the Township to pay for legal fees in efforts aimed at banning the practice in Pennsylvania. He noted that three municipalities surrounding Carlisle were participating. Commissioner Brown said that Dickinson and South Middletown townships have hundreds of acres being used in this way and suggested that Lower Allen’s contribution be commensurate with the affected acreage.

President Villone expressed some concern about the value of the expenditure to the residents of the Township and asked for some additional information about the impact the issue had on residents. Commissioner Nagy echoed the economic concerns. He also asked about potential opt-out provisions in the agreement.

Vice President Caron also requested additional information about the impact on residents and noted the contribution be relative to the impact on the Township.

Commissioner Swartz referenced a manual published by the Department of Environmental Protection and suggested some research into what the Commonwealth of PA has done to address the issue, which might inform the decision to join the effort or determine whether the arrangement is necessary to accomplish the desired goal, noting there might be solution mechanisms already in place.

Board members reached consensus to seek additional information before taking any action.

RPF for Pension Attorney

Manager Vernau provided an informational update to note that the current pension attorney would be retiring and had provided both a proposed RFP and a list of potential candidates to receive the RFP. He also noted that staff were considering the option of utilizing an advisory service rather than an attorney.

2023 Feral Cat Colony Report

Manager Vernau provided a report for 2023 highlighting the success of the “Nobody’s Cats” program. Five new colonies were registered for a total of twenty-nine colonies including 181 cats. 169 of those have been spayed or neutered and are being cared for. Three colonies have gone extinct. The birth rate in the colonies is very low due to the success of the trap, neuter and return program. He noted that the biggest problem currently is the increase in the abandonment of cats.

COMMISSIONERS REPORTS

President Villone announced that the meeting would recess to Executive Session for discussion of two items: (1) succession planning, and (2) an employee pay increase.

Commissioner Swartz provided several updates from the Frederickson Library, noting the reopening of the upper parking lot and book drop-off. He also announced the upcoming blueberry sale, book sale and bike raffles.

Commissioner Nagy expressed a desire for the Board to consider moving ahead with engaging a strategic planning process in addition to succession planning. He thanked Assistant Manager Davis for her assistance in addressing a malfunctioning traffic light. Lastly, he summarized the discussion from the recent Recreation and Parks Board meeting about smoking in the Township’s parks and asked the Board to consider designating all Township parks as non-smoking. President Villone expressed support for a future discussion on the topic and asked staff to research the policies of neighboring municipalities as well as any relevant laws.

Commissioner Brown extended welcomes to Mr. Sweeney and Ms. Knoll. He announced upcoming recycling events being sponsored by Cumberland County. He noted recent phone calls from residents who reported positive feedback regarding their interactions with Township staff, and he expressed well wishes for Cedar Cliff Youth Baseball on their opening day, reminding everyone to exercise caution when driving past ball fields.

Vice President Caron reported on her participation in the PA State Association of Township Commissioners Executive Committee, which is underway to determine the ultimate direction of the association.

President Villone reported positive news from the Township's pension committee, characterizing the program as being in very good financial status. He also noted the PSATC Executive Committee conference and the opportunity to advocate for legislative priorities. He highlighted issues such as use of radar and public notice advertising. Lastly, he indicated support for starting a strategic planning effort and directed the manager to consider potential dates and times as well as projected costs for engaging an outside facilitator versus an in-house effort.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

President Villone announced a meeting recess to executive session at 7:22 PM

The meeting was reconvened at 8:13 PM.

Vice President **CARON** moved to increase the Human Resources Coordinator salary to \$70,000, effective April 8, 2024. The motion was seconded by Commissioner **BROWN** and passed 5-0.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:14 PM.