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Board of Supervisors Meeting

Monday, November 20, 2023, 7:00 p.m.

Attendance: Supervisors Elaine DiMonte, Ricki Stumpo and Raymond McKay; Mark Knightly, Public Works Director; Robert Johnston, P.E., Gilmore & Associates, Township Engineering.

Public in-person attendance: 4

1. **Call to Order:** DiMonte called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. **Sunshine Announcements:** DiMonte and McKay met with the Treasurer and personnel on November 15th on a personnel matter. DiMonte and McKay met on November 17th with Township Engineer and Knightly regarding the West Creek Road Gravix Wall Project.
3. **Announcements:** Stumpo announced that she was re-elected Township Supervisor and publicly thanked everyone who voted for her. She has spoken to her opponent Andrea Gosselin and encouraged Gosselin to be active in Township matters.
4. **Public Comment Non-Agenda Items:** Mike Gibbons commented that he wanted to introduce himself to the full Board. He'd met Supervisor McKay previously at the Trimble's Ford site ("site") regarding concerns brought to the attention of the Township. Gibbons expressed that he is an advocate for children discovering the benefits of participating in ATV and motorcross. Their participation gets them outdoors and fosters camaraderie. Gibbons provided data on a local motorcross club and pointed out that the members are respectful people who are organized in much the same way as baseball or soccer clubs. He offered that riding on public roads creates a dangerous situation for riders and the community and creates a negative street culture. For this reason, riding on the 30+- Trimble's Ford site is a solution. He reached out to immediate landowners who have expressed no grievance to him with regard to the motorcross activity. He regrets that the Township was contacted by landowners from other municipalities. DiMonte asked how often the motorcross club meets at the site. Gibbons responded 2 or 3 times per month and never before 11:00 a.m. or after 5:00 p.m. Gibbons offered that the Township Zoning Official as well as County Agency Representatives have found that the motorcross track is in compliance. Stumpo asked if there was a way to suppress the sound of the motorcross vehicles, perhaps a way to silence the mufflers. Gibbons offered that electric vehicles are new to the marketplace. The club is looking into them and could look at limiting the muffler noise. DiMonte commented that earth disturbance on the property is a concern. Gibbons responded that the current site has been deemed to be in compliance with the Township and environmental agencies. All site work was completed under the 2021 Grading, Erosion, and Sediment Control Permit. McKay noted that originally, the concern was construction of the track in the floodplain and the construction of the jump ramps. He also noted the physical distance of the voices of concern from other municipalities when juxtaposed with the Trimble's Ford site. DiMonte thanked Gibbons for attending and appreciated that he took time to express his comments.
5. **November 15th Work Session:** DiMonte noted that the Work Session was cancelled.
6. **2024 Budget:**
 - a. Motion to approve 2024 Budget - DiMonte reported the Proposed Preliminary Budget was posted and availability advertised following the October meeting. She thanked Treasurer Peter Barsz and his team for their work in preparing the budget. She noted that there is no tax increase for 2024. There may be an increase in 2025 reflective of the payments that will be due to support Fire and Emergency Services. There was no public

comment or discussion. MOTION: DiMonte moved, Stumpo seconded, to adopt Resolution 2023-12 officially adopting the Pocopson Township 2024 Budget; motion carried.

- b. Motion to set 2024 Tax Rates – DiMonte reviewed the Resolution setting the tax for Fire and EMS and the General Fund Tax on Real Property. No public comment. MOTION: DiMonte moved, McKay seconded, to adopt Resolution 2023-13 setting the tax rates for 2024; motion carried.

7. **Chester County Prison – Acting Warden Howard L. Holland:** Holland thanked stakeholders for their patience and cooperation with the evolving security issues. He offered an update that included and was not limited to approval of a K9 program, a 5-week cycle for reviewing/processing applications for employment and identifying next evolution of robust security technology at every rank and level, including training for promoting from within. DiMonte commented that the Township is receptive to what has been proposed. She asked about the viability of pushing a top-down approach to address community concerns. Holland offered that there are methodologies that address establishing a command structure identifying training within, work force programs, medical and mental health treatment, and routine block work with inmates. DiMonte asked about the use of monitoring ankle bracelets. Holland offered that uniforms have been ordered and personnel are reviewing components of the ankle bracelet technology to identify what works. Stumpo asked how many maximum-security prisoners are housed at the facility and what is the current population. Holland commented that there are generally 35 maximum security prisoners at any given time as a result of due process, the court system generally, and until individual cases are adjudicated. Transport to court is coordinated by the Sheriff's Office. The population is 689 as of today. DiMonte and McKay commented that it is important to keep information flowing between the Prison and the community-at-large and offered that an article in the Township newsletter and notices pushed via the Constant Contact Platform would be appropriate. DiMonte commented that previously the suggestion was made to include a community liaison to the County Prison Board. She has reached out to County Commissioner Maxwell and understands that the liaison would not be a voting member of the Board. Discussions continue with the County on the concept of the prison liaison. In addition, as follow-up to the Town Hall Meetings, she asked about the status of the work to enclose the Prison Yard. Holland commented that to get an idea on what it will take to construct an enclosed yard, a team from Chester County visited a Franklin County Prison Facility with an enclosed yard. PUBLIC COMMENT: Randy Mims asked about the status of installation of security cameras as well as the inefficiencies with the emergency notification system. Mims noted that it does not appear that the website for the Prison has been updated to include information about the "escape siren." Holland will follow up with the County Department of Computing and Information Service. Holland provided his email to communicate directly with Mims regarding his concerns. Sarah Mims commented that the concern was also raised during the Town Hall Meetings that the siren cannot be heard throughout the Township. The siren cannot be heard on her property. She also asked what measures have been taken to shorten the time period between an escape and the sounding of the siren. Holland responded that discussions continue to shorten the time period and improve the protocols via notices sent on ReadyChesco. He also said that discussions are underway to improve the siren audio. Stephanie Hoopman commented that she would prefer the County overcommunicate. She inquired as to recent retirement of the Deputy Warden and Major for Security and Holland's status as Acting Warden. Holland responded that the positions will be filled by January.

Holland's status has not been finalized. Hoopman asked if an architect has been chosen to design the enclosed yard and if additional razor wire is in place. Holland responded that enclosed yard designs are under review and capping and additional wire is in place. Steve Meyers inquired as to reciprocity with the Delaware County Prison. Holland indicated that it depends on the court case. The Board thanked Holland for attending this evening and looks forward to future updates.

8. **Kennett Library ("Library") Presentation:** Bradley Peiper, Board President and Township Representative to the Library Board and Chris Manna, Library Executive Director, presented an update on the Library. They presented a virtual tour highlighting features of the new facility such as the auditorium, cooking class area, and maker space. They emphasized that the structure is a Library and a Community Resource Center. Statistics presented included the 109% increase in the visitation rate compared to this time last year, circulation is third highest in the County, and computer usage is 4 times that of the old library. They thanked the Board for the continued financial support. Supervisors commented that Library officials and personnel are to be congratulated and credited for bringing programs and resources to the community. They thanked Peiper and Manna for their attendance this evening.
9. **Public Works Report:**
 - a. West Creek Road Gravix Wall Project Update - Knightly reported he met with Township Engineer Robert Johnston and Supervisors McKay and DiMonte on Friday to discuss the schedule. DiMonte noted subject of the meeting included confirming completion of fabrication of the wall castings. Johnston offered that the contractor, Jurich, has not confirmed fabrication of the precast wall components. Scheduling is squarely dependent upon delivery of all the components and not partial deliveries as contractors generally want to mobilize at one time, including survey work and vegetation clearing. DiMonte firmly stated that the schedule will be released after the contractor has answered all engineering questions. Residents will be notified of the schedule as soon as it is available. PUBLIC COMMENT: Steve Meyers inquired as to the lead time to fabricate the castings and release the schedule. DiMonte stated that project meetings will be held in accordance with the work schedule. Knightly indicated that he expects to meet weekly with Jurich once the project is underway. DiMonte inquired as to the over-the-winter work schedule, in particular, ice and snow control for West Creek Road during construction. Knightly indicated the Public Works Department will be prepared to clear the alternate route for safe passage; however, if there is a significant snow fall, Jurich will not be working on West Creek Road, and it will be cleared as it is customarily cleared. Meyers asked and Knightly confirmed that once construction begins, West Creek Road will be closed from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. It will not be closed overnight. DiMonte indicated that the Township will push Jurich for an update and move that information out to the community as soon as possible.
 - b. Procurement Request Radar Speed Displays - Board noted concerns with regard to speeding on Township Roads as well as on State Route 52 that could be alleviated with the use of a speed display board. Board acknowledged purchase of the speed display board from All Traffic Solutions, Quote Q-80725 in the amount of \$11,001.46. Knightly reported personnel will begin training on Wednesday on data collection and general usage.
10. **Facilities:** no report.
11. **Kennett Area Fire/EMS Commission ("Commission"):** McKay reported the Commission met on November 14th. He reported that Kennett Borough is no longer part of the Commission.

The Commission is focusing on a position description for a potential administrator. The position would be paid with benefits. Kennett Township has offered that the administrator would work out of the Kennett Township Office. Commission members would like the potential administrator to work independently without undue influence from any one municipal commission member. McKay noted the Commission has accomplished a great deal including unification of the fire companies under one command as well as undertaking a fleet analysis. Finances have increased to provide fiscal stability for the emergency providers. Cuyler Walker, who works gratis, is credited for the accomplishments of the Commission. The next meeting is December 12th.

12. New Business:

- a. Resolution for Depositories for Township Funds - Treasurer and Treasurer Support Staff have recommended consolidation of a number of the Township accounts. DiMonte reviewed Resolution 2023-14 amending depositories for Township Funds. MOTION: DiMonte moved, McKay seconded, to adopt Resolution 2023-14 as recommended by the Treasurer; motion carried.
- b. ReadyChesCo Registration to push notices - DiMonte reported that the Township made an inquiry to the County Emergency Services Department regarding use of the ReadyChesCo System to push notices. She remarked that the Township can leverage pushing notices via the ReadyChesCo registration list in addition to the Constant Contact Subscriber list. There is no charge to the Township to access the ReadyChesCo list. Board approved the text of the notice encouraging ReadyChesCo registration.
- c. Brandywine Valley SPCA Contract Renewal - Board acknowledged receipt of the 5-year agreement to renew the full-service contract. The Contract is due by December 15, 2023. MOTION: DiMonte moved, Stumpo seconded, to approve renewing the Brandywine Valley SPCA Contract; motion carried.
- d. Farmland Lease Renewal - Baily - Board reviewed the particulars of the current 5-year lease with Bernard Baily to farm acreage on the Barnard House Property. MOTION: DiMonte moved, McKay seconded, to approve extending the Farmland Lease Agreement with E. Bernard Baily contingent upon submission of the 2023 lease payment and Certificate of Insurance; motion carried.

13. Old Business:

- a. Request for PennDOT Traffic Engineering Study - Locust Grove / Lenape Unionville Road Intersection - DiMonte reviewed a suggestion received from the Office of State Representative Christina Sappey to reach back out to PennDOT for a traffic study of the Intersection for data reflective to include 2017 through 2023. The previous PennDOT Study included 2017 to 2021 and concluded that the data did not support installation of a 4-way stop for the Intersection. Board agreed that the Secretary should request the engineering study as recommended by the Office of Representative Sappey.

14. Correspondence: no correspondence.

- 15. Treasurer Warrants:** McKay asked that the size of the font for the Treasurer's Report be increased as it is difficult to read on paper. DiMonte noted it is legible in electronic format when increasing the viewing percentage. MOTION: DiMonte moved, McKay seconded, to approve the Bill Payment Lists for the period October 24, 2023 to November 20, 2023 recommended for payment by the Treasurer: General Fund: 47 checks totaling \$114,548.93; Liquid Fuels Fund: 4 checks totaling \$9,506.37; Township Facilities Fund: 0 checks totaling \$0; Parks and Recreation Fund: 1 check totaling \$231.00; ARPA Fund: 0 checks totaling \$0;

Open Space Fund: 2 ACH transactions totaling \$2,447.17; Fire & EMS Fund: 0 checks totaling \$0; motion carried.

16. **Approval of Meeting Minutes:** Stumpo moved, McKay seconded, to approve the October 23, 2023 Meeting Minutes as reviewed and corrected; motion carried.

17. **Adjournment:** at 8:42 p.m. Stumpo moved, McKay seconded to adjourn the meeting; motion carried.



Susan Simone, Secretary



Elaine DiMonte, Chairwoman