

**LOWER POTTS GROVE TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
FEBRUARY 22, 2007**

The work session meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Lower Pottsgrove Township was held on Thursday, February 22, 2007. Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. The following were in attendance: Commissioners Foltz, Troutman, Spadt, Klotz and Doyle; R. Kurtz Holloway, Solicitor; Rodney P. Hawthorne, Township Manager, Alyson Elliott, Assistant Township Manager and Michele Cappelletti, Secretary.

COMMENTS FROM VISITORS:

Mr. Brian Smith, 405 Walnut Ridge, asked for an update on the sale of the Sunnybrook Ballroom. Mr. Hawthorne advised that he recently participated in a walk-through of the property and the matter is currently being handled by the Sunnybrook Preservation Foundation. Mr. Troutman noted that the matter is in the hands of the lawyers and should be resolved in the near future.

Mr. Troutman introduced Mr. Smith to the Board of Commissioners and advised that Mr. Smith is interested in a position on the Township's Parks and Recreation Commission.

Mr. Smith asked when his trash would be picked up if it were missed on the usual trash day. Mr. Hawthorne advised that pick up would be the next day.

RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES:

Resolution No. 704—Mr. Spadt motioned to approve Resolution No. 704 authorizing Township staff to apply for a grant from Green Region, the PECO energy Open Space Grant Program to acquire the Elsie and Paul Norton Tract and approving the expenditure of matching funds necessary for the program's success. Mr. Klotz seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Vote was 5-0.

SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT:

None.

OLD BUSINESS:

Financing Options and Timeline for Municipal Building New Addition—Mr. Hawthorne received the following information from L. Gordon Walker, Managing Director of Public Financial Management, Inc. (PFM):

Option A	Bank Loan Method	Closing occurs in 11 or 12 weeks
Option B	Bond Issue Method	Closing occurs in 16 or 17 weeks

The current estimate for the cost of this project is \$2.7 million. Mr. Hawthorne reported that Don Wirt would be providing better numbers for the Board's consideration.

Mr. Klotz felt that the Board needed more specific information pertaining to the cost of the project before it could decide on the financing option. He requested that Mr. Hawthorne provide additional cost information so the Board can determine if it is feasible to proceed.

Purchase of Real Estate for Open Space—Solicitor Holloway reported that the Township intends to purchase real estate along Keim Street for open space. He received the signed agreement from the seller of the Keim Street property and the agreement is now in the Township's possession for execution.

The Township must schedule a public hearing to allow public comment regarding the Township's purchase of this real estate.

Mr. Spadt motioned to advertise that the Township would hold a public hearing on Monday, March 5, 2007 at 6:45 p.m. at the Township Municipal Building, 2199 Buchert Road, Pottstown, Pennsylvania for the purpose of receiving public comment regarding the Township's intention to purchase real estate along Keim Street. Mr. Troutman seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Vote was 5-0.

Purchase of 2008 Ford Truck—Solicitor Holloway reported that the Ford Super Duty Truck has been ordered. New Holland Auto Group signed a contract agreeing to sell and deliver the 2008 Ford Super Duty F-650 Regular Cab XL truck chassis. E. M. Kutz, Inc. signed a contract agreeing to sell and deliver a 2008 Ford 650 upfitted in accordance with the contract documents.

Solicitor Holloway noted that New Holland Auto Group could not guarantee a time frame for the delivery of the truck to the Township. This is because Ford will not guarantee the delivery of a chassis to New Holland Auto and will not allow them to cancel their order. Therefore, once the order is in, New Holland Auto Group will not allow us to terminate the order and the Township could have to wait for the truck. Also, New Holland Auto Group is the only vender under the Harrisburg PACC that provides these chassis.

The Board of Commissioners felt that the Township might encounter the same problem with another vendor and decided to proceed with ordering the truck. Mr. Troutman motioned to accept the contract from New Holland Auto Group, 508 W. Main Street, New Holland, Pennsylvania, in the amount of \$46,290.50, for the 2008 Ford Super Duty F-650 Regular Cab XL truck chassis. Mr. Doyle seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Vote was 5-0. Mr. Troutman motioned to accept the contract from E. M. Kutz, Inc. 2456 Morgantown Road, Reading, Pennsylvania, in the amount of \$40,937.00, to upfit, within 120 days of receipt from New Holland Auto Group, Inc., the 2008 Ford Super Duty F-650 Regular Cab XL truck chassis. Vote was 5-0.

Sanatoga Park Field Upgrade Phase II—Solicitor Holloway advised that the commencement date for work on the Sanatoga Park Field Upgrade, Phase II needed to be changed to March 5, 2007. The new commencement date is weather permitting and pending receipt of the grading plans from Bursich Associates by February 28, 2007.

Mr. Klotz said that the original grading called for a 2-½% slope. Scott Exley of Bursich Associates felt that a 1% slope from one end of the field to the other would be more desirable. Mr. Exley is investigating what the cost difference would be and he will present his findings to the Township.

Mr. Troutman motioned to approve an addendum to the contract between Lower Pottsgrove Township and Reading Site Contractors changing the commencement date for the Sanatoga Park Phase II field upgrades to March 5, 2007. Mr. Klotz seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Vote was 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS:

Pottsgrove School District Request. Re: No Parking Signs—Mr. Hawthorne received a letter from the Pottsgrove School District requesting that the Township consider the installation of “No Parking” signs on the north side of School Lane from Charlotte Street to the Pottsgrove High School property line. Mr. Hawthorne recommended that Chief Shade meet with school administration and discuss the possibility of opening the gates to the Rickel’s/Genuardi’s parking lot for additional parking for outdoor sporting events.

Mr. Spadt motioned to authorize Township Staff and Police to perform a study to evaluate the parking situation on School Lane and to meet with Pottsgrove School District Administration to discuss additional parking in the Rickel’s/Genuardi’s parking lot. Mr. Doyle seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Vote was 5-0.

Community Map—Mr. Hawthorne received information from Municipal Publications and requested that the Board consider publishing an updated map of the Township. Timeline for the publication is approximately three months and all sponsors are procured by Municipal Publications. There are no costs to the Township for this project.

Mr. Spadt motioned to authorize Township Staff to work with Municipal Publications on producing a community map for Lower Pottsgrove Township. Mr. Doyle seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Vote was 5-0.

Warrant No. 737—Mr. Troutman motioned to approve Warrant No. 737 for the month of January 2007. Mr. Spadt seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Vote was 5-0.

CORRESPONDENCE AND INFORMATION:

The following information was included in the Commissioners packets:

1. Newsletter of Montgomery County Lands Trust. Re: Jonathan Spadt joins MCLT Board.
2. Audit Reports:
 - a. Lower Pottsgrove Township (BOC and Solicitor)
 - b. Tax Collector (BOC)
 - c. Sanatoga Fire Company (BOC)

- d. Ringing Hill Fire Company (BOC)
- 3. PSATC Convention Registration Forms
- 4. Fundraiser for The Carousel at Pottstown
- 5. ACE email to R. Hawthorne. Re: Occidental Superfund Lagoon Clean-Up

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS:

Mr. Doyle felt that the Township should discontinue the streetlight assessments on individual taxpayers. He would like to incorporate this tax into the general fund budget starting in 2008.

Mr. Klotz felt that if the Township discontinued assessing individuals, it would encourage residents in neighborhoods and developments to pursue installing streetlights. He used his own neighborhood as an example.

Mr. Troutman felt that streetlights are for the common good and the light tax assessment is an unfair arrangement in some cases. He agreed with Mr. Doyle.

Mr. Doyle estimated that the Township collects \$25,000.00 per year from the light tax assessment. He suggested that the Township distribute the cost of maintaining the streetlights among all the taxpayers instead of only those living within 300 feet of the streetlights. He asked Mr. Hawthorne to find out how much the Township pays per pole. Mr. Foltz stated that the Township is billed per light. Mr. Hawthorne will research and provide the Board with this information.

Regarding the new addition to the Municipal Building, **Mr. Doyle** would like to see better numbers from Don Wirt. He requested that Planning Commission member Ron Dinnocenti sit in as a spectator during the next meeting with Mr. Wirt. Mr. Foltz responded that Mr. Wirt is working with the Township's Building Committee on this project and he is doing an excellent job. Mr. Foltz did not feel it was necessary to have Mr. Dinnocenti review the plan at this time. Mr. Spadt commented that Mr. Dinnocenti would be reviewing the plan during the Land Development stage of the project.

Mr. Foltz stated that the Township would be considering if the plans for the project are in accordance with what the Township wants and if the Township could afford the new addition. Mr. Troutman asked when the Township would be making its plans for the new addition public. Solicitor Holloway advised that all action by the Board of Commissioners to move forward with this project has been taken in public session and is noted in the public record. In response to Mr. Doyle's question about advertising the project, Solicitor Holloway advised that advertising would be required for any borrowing and the Township would meet all advertising requirements for the completion of the borrowing and all discussions are noted in the minutes.

Mr. Doyle asked if the Planning Commission would see the plan. Solicitor Holloway advised that the Planning Commission would have its input on the land development plan layout, but not on the actual internal layout or building of the project, during Land Development.

Mr. Klotz would like to see representatives of the Township and local business owners recruit new businesses, such as The Olive Garden, for Lower Pottsgrove Township. He felt that the types of new homes and the income of our residents would support new business. He mentioned, in particular, finding a business to occupy the vacant Rickel's/Genuardi's buildings. Mr. Doyle would like to see the Pottsgrove School District buy the Rickel's/Genuardi's buildings and Mr. Klotz does not want to lose big business.

Mr. Hawthorne stated that he does meet with investors and bankers and distributes developers' packets to promote interest in the Township. However, Lower Pottsgrove Township has a Pottstown address and does not meet the demographic criteria to attract certain national chains, such as The Olive Garden. He further explained that The Olive Garden has 19 locations in Pennsylvania and is not going to build anymore in this state.

Mr. Klotz recommended assembling an informational package and setting up a committee to recruit new businesses for Lower Pottsgrove Township. Ms. Elliott stated that she favors an Economic Development Committee consisting of members of the Board, Township staff and local business leaders with an economic development background. She also suggested conducting a census. The Township could then sell itself by setting up initiatives to make people want to be here, such as zoning, incentives, etc. Mr. Troutman recommended tax incentives, such as the LERTA District. Mr. Klotz will meet with Ms. Elliott to begin planning and setting up a committee.

Mr. Klotz commented on the favorable remarks about Chief Mike Shade received from Chief Kelly and Chief Ruxton, who conducted the police chief search for the Township.

Mr. Spadt stated that Chief Shade's performance on his non-competitive test would be discussed at the next Police Committee meeting.

Mr. Klotz felt that the memo from Michele Christman listing the breakdown of the school taxes and Township taxes was very informative.

Mr. Klotz mentioned that long-time Township resident Earl "Smokey" Norton recently passed away. Mr. Klotz credits Smokey with getting him involved in the Township. He stated that Smokey was a fine gentleman, outgoing, very friendly and we will miss him.

Mr. Troutman commented that he was grateful that the Township recognized Smokey Norton's contributions and presented him with a plaque in December. He also said that Smokey would be greatly missed. Mr. Troutman thanked the local police departments for controlling traffic during the long funeral procession.

Mr. Troutman stated that the road crew did a great job during the most recent snowstorm. He was disappointed that some of the businesses on High Street did not clear their sidewalks.

Mr. Troutman requested that the no skating signs be put up on Sanatoga Lake again. He also thanked Mr. Hawthorne for getting the generator prices.

Mr. Foltz received a comment from a North Coventry police officer that he was very pleased with our Police Chief Michael Shade. The word is out that things are going well in the Lower Pottsgrove Police Department. He stated that the Police and Fire Companies did an excellent job handling situations that arose during the snowstorm.

Mr. Spadt commented that the Police Department is doing an excellent job and is receiving full support from Township staff.

MANAGER'S COMMENTS:

Audits—Mr. Hawthorne advised that the Township audits are completed. He asked if the Board would like the auditor, Barbara Akins of Reinhart & Co., to attend a meeting to address any questions or concerns. The Board would like to meet with Ms. Akins and Mr. Hawthorne will schedule her for the March 22, 2007 meeting.

Mr. Hawthorne commented on Michele Christman's memo regarding the school taxes and the Township taxes. He noted for the Commissioners that the memo was provided to show that the total increase in school taxes for this year, based on the same assessment, is \$299.98 and the total Township tax for real estate is only \$234.96. Total school taxes are \$3,753.60 vs. a total Lower Pottsgrove Township tax of \$368.56, which includes fire, trash and real estate.

Mr. Klotz motioned to adjourn the public meeting at 8:00 p.m. Mr. Doyle seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Vote was 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele M. Cappelletti
Township Secretary