

**LOWER PROVIDENCE TOWNSHIP  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
APRIL 19, 2007 MEETING MINUTES**

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**1) Executive Session:**

- a) Mrs. Altieri called the executive session to order at 6:36 p.m., seconded by Mr. Sassu. The following Board members were present: Marie Altieri; Craig Dininny; Rick Brown and Piero Sassu. Also present were Township Manager Joseph C. Dunbar and Solicitor David Onorato. A discussion took place on legal and personnel issues. Mr. DiPaolo arrived at 7:15 p.m. Mr. Sassu motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 p.m. seconded by Mrs. Altieri.

**2) Public Meeting: Call to Order**

- a) Chairman Dininny called the public meeting to order at 7:37 p.m.

**3) Pledge of Allegiance**

**4) Roll Call:**

- a) The following members were present: Supervisors Altieri, Brown, Dininny, DiPaolo and Sassu.
- b) Also present were Solicitor David Onorato, Township Engineer John Chambers, Police Chief Francis Carroll, Director of Public Works David Shaffer, Administrative Assistant Denise Walsh, Director of Special Projects and Technology William Roth, Director of Community Development Michael Siegel, and Township Manager Joseph Dunbar.
- c) Supervisor Sassu requested a moment of silence in remembrance of the Virginia Tech victims.

**5) Public Participation on Agenda Items:**

- a) Chairman Dininny noted that at the previous meeting he allowed this portion of the agenda to extend beyond the 15-minute timeframe. This is unfair to those people on the agenda, and he will not allow this portion of the agenda to exceed 15 minutes. If someone chooses to speak on a topic now, they will be unable to comment when that item comes up later on the agenda, per Roberts Rules of Order. There is an open comment section at the end of the agenda for people to speak at that time.
- b) Mr. Gerry Grover questioned if anything had been done regarding his question on Commerce Bank? Chairman Dininny noted that this was not an agenda item and should be addressed at the end of the agenda.
- c) Mr. Alan Grant commented that the meeting was being recorded.

**6) Consent Agenda:**

- a) **MOTION** – Supervisor Altieri made a motion to approve the consent agenda items 1a-c. Supervisor Sassu seconded the motion. The motion *passed* 5-0.

**7) Presentations & Commendations:**

- a) Presentation to Geri Golas in recognition of 5 years of service with Lower Providence Township:
  - i) Chairman Dininny presented Geri Golas with a gift from the Township in appreciation of her 5 years of service with the Township. Mrs. Golas thanked the Board.
  - ii) Supervisor Brown noted that he had one change to the April 5, 2007 meeting minutes, previously approved with the consent agenda. For item 13)b)ii), there was no vote on the motion and it should be removed from the minutes.
    - (1) **MOTION** – Supervisor Brown made a motion to pass the minutes as amended. Supervisor DiPaolo seconded the motion. The motion *passed* 5-0.
- b) Presentation and demonstration by Steven Linehan, Regional Director for Connect CTY, NTI Group – mass notification system:
  - i) Mr. Charles DeFrancesco used a PowerPoint presentation to provide an overview of the web based mass notification system that can be used for emergency or general notification of the community. The system can send out messages to registered users via a landline phone, cell phone, PDA, text message or e-mail, noting if the message successfully reaches the user.

- ii) Mr. Steven Linehan, a representative for Connect CTY, the provider of this service, further reviewed the company background and uses of the service. He explained that each household could receive up to five types of notifications (ex. Multiple cell phones, land line phones, e-mail etc.), and that text messages could be translated into six different languages.
- iii) Mr. Dunbar explained that this is different from the system used by Methacton School District in that it can call within specific designated areas such as within a five-mile radius of a certain point, or only on one side of a street.
- iv) Supervisor Brown asked if they would survey the residents to see if they want to use this service? Mr. DeFrancesco indicated that a survey could be done. Mr. Linehan noted that an initial message could be sent out to invite residents to opt in or out of the service.
- v) Mrs. Kirsten Deal, 624 S. Park Avenue, questioned how the information would be obtained on the residents, and if non-published phone numbers would be included? Mr. Linehan explained that public phone records are used to initially populate the data, however non-published phone numbers are not included in this data.
  - (1) Mrs. Deal asked if the numbers would be sold to any outside agency? Mr. Linehan indicated that they would not be sold, the data is private.
  - (2) Mrs. Deal questioned where the system was located? Mr. Linehan noted that it is Internet based, and they have four sites in the United States for servers. The system capacity is 1.2 million calls per hour and 25 million calls per month. They are currently under 10% of that capacity.
  - (3) Mrs. Deal asked how much this system would cost? Mr. Linehan indicated that it would be negotiated with the Township. Mr. Dunbar noted that if the Board would decide to advance this project, they would pursue a Homeland Security grant through Rep. Joe Sestack that would cover the cost for three years.
  - (4) Mrs. Deal questioned if the Township would still buy this service if all residents opt out? Chairman Dininny noted that this was just an informative presentation, and if the majority of people wouldn't want this they wouldn't pursue it.
- vi) Mr. Mark Kelly, Alden Road, questioned how they could track cell phone numbers as people move in and out of the area. Mr. Linehan explained that residents could provide their cell phone or e-mail data via the web portal or through the Township.
- vii) Mr. Dick Focht, Lexington Lane, asked if there was a ballpark figure on the cost? Mr. Dunbar noted it would be in the \$10,000-\$15,000 range for the first year.
- c) **MOTION** – Supervisor Brown made a motion to amend the agenda to move Ordinances & Resolutions up in the meeting. Supervisor Sassu seconded the motion. The motion *passed* 5-0.

**8) Ordinances & Resolutions:**

- a) A resolution authorizing a donation to the American Business Club for the annual Senior Citizens Dinner on May 6, 2007:
  - i) Chairman Dininny read the resolution declaring May 6, 2007 Senior Citizens Day.
  - ii) **MOTION** – Supervisor Brown made a motion to authorize the donation of \$3,500 for the annual Senior Citizens dinner. Supervisor Sassu seconded the motion. The motion *passed* 5-0.
  - iii) A representative from AMBUCs was present to accept the check from Chairman Dininny. He noted that the \$12,000 cost for the banquet covered approximately 550-600 senior citizens. Both West Norriton and Lower Providence select a Senior Citizen of the Year to be honored at the dinner.

**9) Presentations & Commendations Continued:**

- a) Presentation by Bill Roth on recommendation for video recording Board of Supervisors meetings:
  - i) Mr. Roth explained that in 2006 he was asked to look into the cost for video recording of the Board of Supervisors (BOS) meetings. Mr. Roth used a PowerPoint presentation to review data he has collected from neighboring municipalities that record their Township meetings for the Board's consideration. Some of the comments are as follows:

- (1) Most Townships require several employees to perform this service if it is done internally. You need a separate video specialist.
  - (2) There is typically no review or edit of the recording, the meetings are broadcast in their entirety.
  - (3) Such recordings are considered an additional method for communicating with residents.
  - (4) Storage space for the media is a concern.
  - (5) There is a potential for grandstanding by people at the meeting.
  - (6) If the recording is not done professionally it will reflect poorly on the Township.
  - (7) Costs include at least \$13,000 for capital investment and \$10,000 for start-up costs initially. The cost averages \$950 per meeting. If this were done by a professional service (no internal staff) the first year cost would be approximately \$45,800, and \$22,800 for the second year.
  - (8) Mr. Roth noted that this would be a professional production with a professional service, and discussed various options for creating the production.
- ii) Supervisor Brown commended Mr. Roth for the thorough investigation, and noted that he was ready to move forward with this when the rest of the Board is prepared to do so. He suggested funding the recordings with money the Township receives from the cable company for the franchise fee.
  - iii) Mr. Dunbar explained that this was on the 2007 plan for investigation, and could be put in the 2008 budget if the Board chooses to do so.
  - iv) Mr. Scott Frasier commented that he likes this idea, and suggested various avenues that could possibly be used to offer the recordings on demand such as Google, You Tube or a podcast.
  - v) Ms. Linda Tasker asked what the viewership of these recordings was in other Townships? Mr. Roth did not obtain that data, but knows that residents provide feedback if there are problems with the broadcast so they are watched.
  - vi) Mrs. Kirsten Deal indicated that she would like access to the recordings through some other non-cable source.
  - vii) Ms. June Bright, Pawlings Circle, likes the on demand idea and questioned if this could be on the Township web site? Mr. Roth explained that it would require a significant amount of capacity and may therefore be unfeasible.
  - viii) Mr. Roth noted that they would need to bring someone in for the recordings to get the most out of it.
- b) Presentation by Chief Francis Carroll on the Ridge Pike video project:
- i) Chief Carroll used a PowerPoint presentation to provide an overview of the Ridge Pike video project, related to the close loop system. This would provide live video feeds of busy intersections. Chief Carroll explained how the system worked, noting they could control the lights to facilitate traffic flow.
  - ii) Supervisor Sassu noted that emergency vehicles are equipped with pre-emptive traffic devices, and asked how this would affect those devices? Chief Carroll noted that the emergency pre-emptive devices would still work. He explained how this could be used for the July 4<sup>th</sup> traffic scenario after fireworks, to control all lights going one way to move traffic along.
  - iii) Mr. Sassu questioned if they need a permit to change the timing? Chief Carroll that they would go to PennDOT for planned events to change the timings. He noted that the biggest benefit of this system was safety. There have been 40% less accidents since using the close loop system, and this would provide real time video of dangerous intersections.
  - iv) There was no public comment.
- c) Receipt of 2007 Governor's Award for Local Government Excellence:
- i) Chairman Dininny announced that the Township had received the 2007 Governor's Award for Local Government Excellence, and read the details of the award to the audience.

## **10) New Business:**

- a) Letter from Jason Fine of the YMCA dated April 2, 2007 re: waiver of security deposit for the use of ARA fields for summer camp:

- i) Mr. Dunbar explained that the Audubon YMCA was requesting a waiver from the security deposit for the ARA fields as they did last year. The YMCA holds this summer camp in a cooperative effort with Mill Grove, and uses the fields for recreational activities.
  - ii) **MOTION** – Supervisor Brown made a motion to waive the fee. Supervisor DiPaolo seconded the motion. The motion *passed* 5-0.
- b) Authorize the Solicitor to advertise amendments to the Lower Providence Township Zoning Code and Subdivision & Land Development Code regarding the (OSR) Open Space Residential Overlay District:
- i) Chairman Dininny read a prepared statement detailing his thoughts on the Grange Avenue Bridge relocation project, the history of the project, and the dilemma they are in to find a resolution, and various options for resolution. He indicated that they need more time to investigate the options on how to address this problem, which include:
    - (1) Do nothing to realign Grange Avenue, repair or replace the bridge in its' current location with Township funds only.
    - (2) Repair or replace the Grange Avenue Bridge at its current location with Township funds only. Add additional warning signs, guardrails, and / or other devices to warn the motoring public of a dangerous condition.
    - (3) Close Grange Avenue at either end of the approach to the Grange Avenue Bridge, creating cul-de-sac streets and preventing traffic from passing over the current dangerous condition.
    - (4) Proceed through the relocation process which will remove the unsafe condition, but which offers legal hurdles and some opposition likely to delay the construction process for another year or two or longer.
    - (5) Mr. Dininny further discussed the options and their impact, and called for agenda items 4b, c & d to be removed from the agenda and tabled.
  - ii) **MOTION** – Supervisor Sassu made a motion to table items 4b, 4c & 4d. Supervisor Altieri seconded the motion.
    - (1) Mr. Jim Lynch, 68 N. Grange Avenue, spoke of his concern regarding the bridge and his distrust of the Board.
    - (2) Mr. Scott Frasier, 945 N. Grange Avenue, thanked the Board for the motion, noting he is for closing the bridge.
    - (3) Mrs. Kathy Maris, Evansburg, commented that if the road is closed it is a private driveway and the taxpayers should not have to pay to maintain it. Mr. Dininny noted that there would be a cul-de-sac street in front of the closed bridge, and an ingress/egress would need to be provided for Mr. Lynch's driveway and the pumping station.
    - (4) Ms. Joan Bright, 8 Pawlings Circle, remarked that there were better things to be done in the Township than fight with each other.
    - (5) Mr. Greg Nixon, 63 N. Grange Avenue, asked where the land for the cul-de-sac would come from, as this is his land. If they intend to take his land the Township is in for another fight.
    - (6) Mr. Eric Markowitz thanked the Board for taking these items off the agenda. He hopes they are not back here again soon to change the Open Space ordinance.
    - (7) Mr. Dininny explained that it is not that the Board doesn't want to preserve open space, which is important, but the health, safety and welfare of the community must come first and they are trying to determine what is safe for the community.
    - (8) Supervisor Brown remarked that he is not in favor of closing Grange Avenue. It should be repaired, expanded, have guardrails added etc. to make it safe. Closing the road will be an inconvenience for the residents, especially those on Smith Road. He is in favor of fixing the road, noting that a 20-ton truck just provided a test of the bridge and it was OK.
    - (9) Mr. Alan Grant commented that the number of accidents on the road do not justify the major construction of installing cul-de-sacs. He asked if the situation could be fixed without using open space?

- (a) Mr. Dininny noted that this needs to be investigated, but they cannot use the open space right now.
- (b) Mr. Grant remarked that from a liability perspective, the less the Township does the better off they are. The road has been in existence since 1850. He is upset over the amount of money spent on legal fees to pursue upgrading this road.
- (10) Mr. Paul Heinegg supports Mr. Brown's view, however if it is not possible, he is in favor of closing the bridge.
- (11) Mrs. Leslie Bass, 39 Lee Road, requested that Mr. Brown's proposal be added to the list of options as option five.
  - (a) Mr. Dininny noted that he will entertain any ideas and thoughts on the matter but they need to trust the professionals who indicated it is unsafe.
- (12) Mr. Ted Bright, 80 N. Grange Avenue, questioned why no turnaround was installed the last time the bridge was closed?
  - (a) Mr. Brown explained that was temporary and this one is to be a permanent solution. He added that the bridge was rebuilt in the last ten years under the supervision of the Township Engineer.
  - (b) Mr. Dininny remarked that PennDOT indicates the approach to the bridge is unsafe.
  - (c) Mr. Lynch commented that he prefers Mr. Brown's idea to the cul-de-sac.
- (13) Supervisor DiPaolo noted that this matter began in 2003 and it was not the intention of the neighbors to close the road but rather make it safe. The homeowners on the street bought homes on a road that connects Ridge Pike and Germantown Pike and were OK with that. The health, safety and welfare argument is worn out. The higher court overruled the lower court, which does not occur often. The guy who tried to kill himself on the road lived. The road should be repaired and kept open as the best alternative for the neighborhood and the Township. 250 cars a day go over the bridge. There are approximately 83 homes along and off of this road, so this is basically local traffic.
- (14) Mr. Frank Bollick, Shannondell Drive, asked if they intended to destroy the bridge or keep it open for pedestrian traffic? Mr. Dininny stated that it all has to be investigated. If they close the bridge perhaps it could become part of the trail system.
- (15) Ms. Sandra Rose, Moyer Road, concurs with Mr. Brown's proposal.
- (16) Mr. Carmen Branco, Park & Jode Road, questioned Mrs. Altieri's position. Supervisor Altieri indicated that she is also in favor of investigating the options as presented. She has listened to the other Supervisor's ideas and also polled the Township's engineers for their opinions.
- (17) **MOTION VOTE** – The motion *passed* 5-0.

iii) **MOTION** – Supervisor DiPaolo made a motion to direct staff to investigate all options for the bridge. Supervisor Sassu seconded the motion. The motion *passed* 5-0.

c) Agenda items 4 c & d were tabled as discussed above.

## 11) Comments and Other Business:

- a) Other Business from Board Members and Staff –
  - i) Supervisor Brown noted that the Mill Grove Art Show begins tomorrow with over 200 exhibitors. It will be dedicated to the memory of Terri Lipton. He also noted that over \$22,000 was raised at the Library Wine Tasting fundraiser.
  - ii) Mr. Dunbar noted that an Earth Day celebration will be held on Sunday, April 22, from 12 to 3 p.m. The Township, the Library, The Optimist Club, and the John James Audubon Center are sponsoring this event.
  - iii) Mr. Siegel noted that Penn Liberty Bank is requesting an additional 30-day extension for their project.
    - (1) **MOTION** – Supervisor Brown made a motion to grant the extension. Supervisor Altieri seconded the motion. The motion *passed* 5-0.

b) Comments from the Public:

- i) Mr. Gerry Grover, Willow Avenue, asked about his issue with Commerce Bank. Chairman Dininny noted that Mr. Grover was directed at the last meeting to contact the Township to discuss investigating this matter. Mr. Dunbar requested that he call tomorrow afternoon to discuss this.

**8) Adjournment:**

- a) **MOTION** – Supervisor Sassu made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Supervisor Altieri seconded the motion. The motion *passed* 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Joseph C. Dunbar, Secretary