

**LOWER PROVIDENCE TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS BUSINESS MEETING
December 15, 2022**

Call to Order: Vice Chair Coless called the hybrid live/virtual meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Protocol for Hybrid Meetings: Vice Chair Coless provided an overview of the protocols for public participation for members of the public attending the meeting virtually over Zoom.

Roll Call:

- a. The following Board members were in attendance: Vice Chair Coless, Supervisors Darby, MacFarland and Sorgini. Chairman Neights was absent.
- b. Also in attendance were: E.J. Mentry, Township Manager; Michael Clarke, Township Solicitor; Tim Woodrow, Township Engineer, Mike Mrozinski, Community Development Director; Rich Lafiata, Director of Finance; Detective Michael Higgins, and Student Representative Kaitlyn Phan.

Vice Chair's Comments

Vice Chair Coless announced that an executive session was held prior to the meeting on December 15, 2022, to discuss personnel and legal matters.

Vice Chair Coless announced that a proclamation was to be presented to Permit Administrator Joan Holley recognizing her service and retirement. Mr. Mrozinski read the proclamation and made the presentation to Mrs. Holley.

1) Presentations

- A) Annual contributions were presented to:
 - i) Visiting Nurse Association
 - ii) Victim Services Center of Montgomery County
 - iii) Family Services on Montgomery County
 - iv) Lower Providence EMS/Medic 322 and Community Center
 - v) Lower Providence Fire Department
- B) Student representative report – Kaitlyn Phan
 - i) Ms. Phan, a student at Methacton High School, shared news and announcements from the school district: A lot extension has made additional parking for juniors available; two shows are planned for Dec. 21 at the Arcola Intermediate School planetarium; the high school's winter concert will be held Dec. 21, and schools will be closed for break from Dec. 23 to Jan. 2.

2) Consent Agenda

- A) **MOTION:** Supervisor Sorgini made a motion to approve the consent agenda, moving the minutes of the Board of Supervisors business meeting of December 1, 2022 into the record. Supervisor Darby seconded the motion.
 - i) The consent agenda also included:
 - (1) Meeting minutes of the Environmental Advisory Council, Parks & Recreation Board, Planning Commission, and Sewer Authority

- (2) Departmental monthly reports for November 2022
- (3) Payment of bills in the amount of \$411, 884.44
- (4) Treasurer's Report
- (5) Escrow Releases: 109 River Road release #2 in the amount of \$40,782.75 and Woodland Avenue tract release #2 in the amount of \$141,865.45
- (6) Authorization to advertise the Board's reorganization meeting for January 3, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. and the Board of Auditors meeting for January 4, 2023 at 4:00 p.m.
- (7) Approval of 2023 holidays
- ii) There was no public comment.
- iii) The motion *passed* 4-0.

3) Old Business

- A) Consideration of Ordinance 675 amending Chapter 11A of Lower Providence Township Code, Environmental Advisory Council ordinance regarding membership
 - i) Mr. Mentry said the item would be tabled to allow appropriate advertisement of the ordinance.
- B) Consideration of bid award for Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) grant for Redwing drainage improvement project
 - i) Mr. Mentry explained that a resident had applied on their own for an NRCS grant for a drainage improvement project. The Township is serving as the required sponsor with no financial obligation. The low bid amount submitted for the work is higher than the grant funds received from state and federal agencies. Both have agreed to additional funding to meet the bid, but the revised amount cannot be processed prior to the scheduled start of work. In the meantime, the homeowner has agreed to provide a bridge loan of \$10,000 to meet the program deadline.
 - ii) **MOTION:** Supervisor Sorgini made a motion to approve the bid award to Site Preparation LLC in the amount of \$97,939.00 conditioned on the property owner providing the bridge loan. Supervisor Darby seconded the motion.
 - iii) There was no public comment.
 - iv) The motion *passed* 4-0.

4) New Business

- A) Consideration of Fund Balance Policy
 - i) Mr. Lafiata said that as discussed at the Board's December 1, 2022 meeting, a Fund Balance Policy has been drafted for the Board's consideration, replacing a policy adopted in 2012. The proposed policy recommends the General Fund maintain a minimum unassigned fund balance of 25% or three months of the next year's operating budget, compared to the current policy of 5%-7%. He said staff intends to revisit the policy in 2023 after the completion of the 2022 audit to consider formal fund balance replenishment plans and guidelines for surpluses.
 - ii) **MOTION:** Supervisor MacFarland made a motion to approve the Fund Balance Policy, seconded by Supervisor Sorgini.
 - iii) There was no public comment.
 - iv) The motion *passed* 4-0.
- B) Commit Fund Balance equal to 25% of the 2023 General Fund operating expenditures per the Fund Balance Policy

- i) Mr. Mentry said this will be an annual action taken by the Board. He said for the 2023 budget designating 25% of the General Fund operating expenditures to the Fund Balance amounts to \$3,264,392.00
 - ii) Supervisor MacFarland noted that because the commitment is a percentage of the operating budget which is anticipated to increase every year, the amount designated to the fund balance therefore would increase yearly.
 - iii) There was discussion on provisions should the fund balance fall below the target.
 - iv) Supervisor Sorgini confirmed that the current Fund Balance is well above the threshold being established.
 - v) **MOTION:** Supervisor Sorgini made a motion to commit a Fund Balance of 25% of the 2023 General Fund operating expenditures. Supervisor MacFarland seconded the motion.
 - vi) There was no public comment.
 - vii) The motion *passed* 4-0.
- C) Consideration of Resolution 2022-37 authorizing creation of a Municipal Complex fund
- i) Mr. Mentry said there was a presentation and discussion at the December 1, 2022 Board meeting regarding excess fund balance beyond was committed in the 25% that included establishing a new fund for major capital improvements to the Township property. It was clarified that the fund would be established and funds moved before the end of 2022.
 - ii) **MOTION:** Supervisor MacFarland made a motion to approve Resolution 2022-37, seconded by Supervisor Darby.
 - iii) There was no public comment.
 - iv) The motion *passed* 4-0.
- D) Consideration of Resolution 2022-38 authorizing Capital Fund, Municipal Complex Fund and Stormwater Fund transfers
- i) Mr. Mentry said the resolution authorizes moving \$1 million into the newly-created Municipal Complex Fund, \$600,000 into the Capital Reserve Fund and \$300,000 into the Stormwater Fund. All of the money is currently sitting in the General Fund in excess of the balance established to be the target per the new fund balance policy.
 - ii) **MOTION:** Supervisor Sorgini made a motion to approve Resolution 2022-38, seconded by Supervisor MacFarland.
 - iii) There was no public comment.
 - iv) The motion *passed* 4-0.
- E) Consideration of proposal for grant writing services
- i) Mr. Mentry said a proposal was before the Board from Cedarville Engineering Group and had been discussed during the budget workshops. The cost was included in the adopted 2023 budget. He said he is seeking approval of the proposal now in order to start formulating a grant plan, but no costs will be incurred under the 2022 budget. The proposal for \$26,000 covers four full grant applications.
 - ii) There was discussion about latitude for smaller grants.
 - iii) **MOTION:** Supervisors MacFarland made a motion to approve the proposal from Cedarville Engineering Group for grant writing services, seconded by Supervisor Darby.
 - iv) There was no public comment.
 - v) The motion *passed* 4-0.
- F) Acceptance of resignation of Joseph Lulis from the Environmental Advisory Council
- i) Vice Chair Coless said Mr. Lulis, who had served on the EAC and the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, had moved out of the Township. Mr. Mentry stated that acceptance of his resignation is a formality.

- ii) **MOTION:** Supervisor Darby made a motion to accept the resignation of Mr. Lulis. Vice Chair Coless seconded the motion
- iii) There was no public comment.
- iv) The motion *passed* 4-0.

5) Announcements/Meetings

- A) Environmental Advisory Council – Dec. 19 at 7:00 p.m.
- B) Parks & Recreation Board – Dec. 20 at 7:00 p.m.
- C) Zoning Hearing Board – Dec. 22 - *Cancelled*
- D) Planning Commission – Dec. 28 – *Cancelled*
- E) The Administration Office will be closed Dec. 23, Dec. 26 and Jan. 2 for the Christmas and New Year's holidays.

6) Comments and other Business

- A) Supervisor Sorgini thanked Mr. Lulis for his service. He reported on the Sewer Authority's December meeting and said the Authority's next construction project is due to begin in January. He said it is important for residents to note that is an independent sewer authority that is working to keep rates low. He noted that the Authority's efforts to repair and replace lines throughout the Township have resulted in the pumping stations no longer having surcharges during heavy rainfall.
- B) Supervisor MacFarland thanked the Township employees for their extraordinary efforts on the Caring and Sharing holiday gift program for less fortunate residents of the community.
- C) Supervisor Darby wished the Township staff and community Happy Holidays.
- D) Vice Chair Coless said details had been finalized for the community holiday party community to be held Dec. 23 at Chadwick's from 4:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. with to-go meals available. She thanked Audubon Land Development and many volunteers for stepping in to help. Questions and RSVPs can be directed to ccoless@lowerprovidence.org.

7) Courtesy of the Floor

- A) There was no public comment.

8) Adjournment

- A) **MOTION:** Supervisor Darby made a motion to adjourn. Supervisor Sorgini seconded the motion. The motion *passed* 4-0. The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Reorganization Meeting: January 3, 2023 @ 6:30 p.m.

Next Business Meeting: January 19, 2023 @ 7:00 p.m.