

**LOWER PROVIDENCE TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS BUSINESS MEETING
May 4, 2023**

Call to Order: Chair Coless called the hybrid live/virtual meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Protocol for Hybrid Meetings: Chair Coless provided an overview of the protocols for public participation for members of the public attending the meeting virtually over Zoom. She said that due to technical difficulties, those watching on Zoom should use the chat function if they wish to comment.

Roll Call:

- a. The following members were in attendance: Chair Coless, Vice Chair Darby, Supervisors MacFarland, Neights and Sorgini.
- b. Also in attendance were: E.J. Mentry, Township Manager; Lauren Gallagher, Township Solicitor; Ted Locker, Township Engineer; Casey Moore, Traffic Engineer, Michael Mrozinski, Community Development Director; and Michael Jackson, Chief of Police.

Chair's Comments

Chair Coless announced that an Executive Session was held on May 1, 2023, to discuss legal matters and on May 4, 2023, prior to the meeting to discuss legal and personnel matters.

Chair Coless read proclamations for Police Week and Public Works Week.

1) Presentations

- A. The 2022 Officer of the Year/Respect for Law Award was presented to Detective Charles King by Beth Ann Bitner Mazza on behalf of the Lower Providence Optimist Club. Chief Jackson listed Detective King's accomplishments and exemplary service.
- B. Bird Town Pennsylvania Presentation: EAC Vice-Chair Amber Minnick and Heidi Shiver, President of Bird Town PA. Ms. Shiver presented an overview of the Bird Town program. The Board will consider a resolution supporting the initiatives of Bird Town Pennsylvania at the June 1, 2023 meeting.

2) Consent Agenda

- A. **MOTION:** Supervisor Neights made a motion to approve consent agenda items 2(a) and (b), including moving the meeting minutes of April 20, 2023, into the record, and escrow release No. 5, Woodland Avenue Tracts, in the amount of \$130,001.65. Vice Chair Darby seconded the motion.
 - a. There was no public comment.
 - b. Mr. Mentry reminded the public watching virtually to use the Zoom chat feature to comment because of technical difficulties.
 - c. The motion *passed* 5-0.

3) Old Business

- A. Approval of Resolution 2023-22 Adopting Bird Town Initiatives
 - a. This item has been tabled until the June 1, 2023, meeting.

B. Consideration of Conditional Use Application - 960 Rittenhouse Road

- a. Solicitor Gallagher noted that a public hearing on the Conditional Use was held at the April 20th Board meeting. Tonight's decision by the Board on the application will be memorialized with a resolution to be considered at the June 1st meeting.
- b. **MOTION:** Supervisor Sorgini made a motion to grant the Conditional Use application subject to all conditions discussed at the April 20, 2023, meeting to be set forth in a written decision which will be considered for final adoption at the June 1, 2023 meeting. Supervisor Neights seconded the motion.
- c. There was no public comment.
- d. The motion *passed* 5-0.

4) **New Business**

A. Request for Waiver of Fence Standards at 27 Sunnyside Avenue

- a. Mr. Mrozinski said that the waiver would permit the installation of a solid-style fence at 27 Sunnyside Avenue along the side of the property which extends into the frontage on Sunnyside Ave. A shared property line is with a commercial business and the homeowner desires additional privacy. The homeowner is aware of sight distance concerns and will not extend solid fencing into the line of sight of Sunnyside Ave. motorists.
- b. **MOTION:** Supervisor Sorgini made a motion to approve the waiver of fence standards at 27 Sunnyside Avenue. Vice Chair Darby seconded the motion.
- c. There was no public comment.
- d. The motion *passed* 5-0.

B. Request for Waiver of Subdivision and Land Development for Car Canopy at Montgomery County Complex

- a. Mr. Mrozinski said the County had been working on the land development project in different portions over several years. This is a relatively small portion of the project which involves the addition of a pad and canopy for two Department of Health vehicles.
- b. Steve Gerlach from the County Department of Health clarified that the project includes a stone pad with a permanently fixed canvas canopy to protect vehicles with electric sprayers for mosquito control.
- c. **MOTION:** Supervisor Neights made a motion to grant the waiver of Subdivision and Land Development for the addition of a car canopy at the Montgomery County Complex. Supervisor Sorgini seconded the motion.
- d. Supervisor MacFarland asked about the status of the County's Archives Building and trail project. County project manager Dominic Valente said the approximate completion for the Archives Building is mid-July and that they will be moving into the Coroner's Building on May 8. He did not know the status of the trail project.
- e. Supervisor Sorgini said the Township would welcome the opportunity to see the new buildings.
- f. There was no public comment.
- g. The motion *passed* 5-0.
- h. Mr. Mentry noted that the waiver approval will be ratified by resolution at the June 1 meeting.

C. Review of Westrum Luxor Apartment Sketch Plan

- a. Representatives from Westrum in attendance included Carrie Nase-Poust, attorney for the applicant, John Westrum, John Herzog, Brian McKenzie, Michael Maier, and David Steward from T&M Associates, project engineer

- b. The project proposes a 193-unit, five-story Luxor Lifestyle Apartment Building on approximately 4 acres at 3838 Ridge Pike. The site is in the Ridge Pike West Zoning District. Zoning relief is needed and is proposed through an ordinance amendment. Mr. Maier reviewed the amenities, apartment sizes, demographics and minimal school district impact.
- c. There was discussion regarding traffic concerns, the ultimate Ridge Pike right-of-way, additional parking and circulation at Collegeville Bakery, shared driveway access, and potential easement connections to the rear of Ridge Pike properties.

D. Acceptance of Resignation of Jeanine Sheldon from Vacancy Board and Appointment of New Vacancy Board Chair

- a. Mr. Mentry explained that the Vacancy Board Chair serves to break a tie in the event there's a vacancy on the Board of Supervisors and the remaining four supervisors are unable to reach a decision within 30 days. He said letters of interest for the position were received from Erica Cohen, Mike Comroe and Helen Dunn and noted that whoever is appointed to the position cannot serve on any other boards/commission/council.
- b. **MOTION:** Supervisor Neights made a motion to accept the resignation of Jeanine Sheldon. Supervisor Sorgini seconded the motion with gratitude to Jeanine.
- c. There was no public comment.
- d. The motion was *passed* 5-0.
- e. Nominations for appointment of new Vacancy Board Chair
MOTION: Supervisor Neights nominated Erica Cohen and Chair Coless seconded the motion.
MOTION: Supervisor Sorgini nominated Mike Comroe and Supervisor MacFarland seconded the motion.
- f. There was no public comment.
- g. The motion to appoint Erica Cohen *passed* 3-2 resulting in no need for a vote on the second nomination.

E. Consideration of a Request from the Lower Providence Fire Department for Extension of Operating Hours and Waiver of Permit Fees for the Fireman's Fair

- a. Mr. Mentry noted that the Lower Providence Fire Department submits this request every year; the dates this year for the extended hours are June 2, 3, 9 and 10.
- b. **MOTION:** Supervisor MacFarland made a motion to approve the request from the Lower Providence Fire Department for the extension of operating hours for the annual Fireman's Fair. Vice Chair Darby seconded the motion.
- c. There was no public comment.
- d. The motion was *passed* 5-0.
- e. **MOTION:** Supervisor Neights made a motion to approve the waiving of the permit fees from the Lower Providence Fire Department. Supervisor Sorgini seconded the motion. *(The motion and vote came after Item F when Mr. Mrozinski noted that no action had been taken on the permit fee waiver.)*
- f. There was no public comment.
- g. The motion was *passed* 5-0.

F. Pipe Lining Project Approval

- a. Chair Coless noted that this item was tabled at the start of the meeting.

G. Approval to Dispose of Asset

- a. Mr. Mentry explained that the Township needs to follow a process when disposing of Township property. If the value of the property is in excess of \$2000 the Township is required to go through a formal bidding process; if the value is under \$2000 just Board approval is required. The request from the Police Department falls under \$2000.
- b. Chief Jackson stated the department transitioned to new handguns last year, moving from 40 caliber to 9 mm., resulting in ammunition that is no longer needed. He is requesting to turn the ammunition in to the vendor for a credit toward future ammunition purchases.
- c. **MOTION:** Supervisor Neights made a motion to approve to dispose of the ammunition and Supervisor Sorgini seconded the motion.
- d. There was no public comment.
- e. The motion was *passed* 5-0.

5) **Announcements/Meetings**

- Sewer Authority – May 8 at 4:30 p.m.
- Environmental Advisory Council – May 15 at 7:00 p.m.
- Library Board – May 15 at 7:00 p.m.
- Parks & Recreation Board – CANCELLED
- Planning Commission – May 24 at 7:00 p.m.
- Zoning Hearing Board – May 25 at 7:00 p.m.

6) **Comments and Other Business**

- a. Supervisor Sorgini noted that the Sewer Authority continues to do construction projects and paving work in conjunction with the township. He and Chair Coless met with Library Board to continue to further the relationship with the library.
- b. Supervisor Neights said he is excited to see the EAC being an energized group and bringing the Bird Town Initiative to the Township. He reminded everyone that May 14 is Mother's Day.
- c. Supervisor MacFarland announced that he is stepping away from the Business Development Committee for the time being for personal reasons.
- d. Chair Coless said the Montgomery County Senior Games are continuing through May 5th. She acknowledged Park and Recreation Director Jane Delaney for her involvement in coordinating the games.

7) **Courtesy of the Floor**

- a. Beth Ann Bittner Mazza, Township resident, thanked the board for allowing the Lower Providence Optimist Club to present the 2022 Officer of the Year Award. She noted EMS week is May 21-27th and International Firefighter Day is May 4.

8) **Adjournment**

- a. **MOTION:** Vice Chair Darby made a motion to adjourn. Supervisor Neights seconded the motion. The motion *passed* 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

Next Business Meeting: May 18, 2023 – *Cancelled*
June 1, 2023