

**LOWER PROVIDENCE TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS BUSINESS MEETING
September 7, 2023**

Call to Order: Chair Coless called the hybrid live/virtual meeting to order at 7:06 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 recognized and welcomed Paul Donnelly, the Township's new assistant manager.

Roll Call:

- a. The following members were in attendance: Chair Coless, Vice Chair Darby, and Supervisors MacFarland, Neights and Sorgini.
- b. Also in attendance were: E.J. Mentry, Township Manager; Lauren Gallagher, Township Solicitor; Paul Donnelly, Assistant Township Manager; Lafiata, Finance Director; Police Chief Mike Jackson, and Matthew Chung, Student Representative.

Chair's Comments

- Chair Coless announced that an Executive Session was held prior to the meeting on September 7, 2023 to discuss personnel and legal matters and contract negotiations.
- Chair Coless introduced and welcomed Paul Donnelly, the new Assistant Township Manager.
- Chair Coless read proclamation regarding Constitution Week, Sept. 17 – 23. Chris Janczuk, representing the Valley Forge Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, spoke on Constitution Week and thanked the Board for their continued support.

1) Presentations

- A. Outgoing student representatives Ashish Jeyapratap and Kaitlyn Phan were recognized for their service to the Board and their initiative. Vice Chair Darby made the presentation.
- B. Student representative Matthew Chung provided a report on Methacton School District news including: Back-to-school events, new cell phone policy, and fall sports. He noted that in the U.S. News & World Report's recent ranking of Pennsylvania high schools, Methacton was ranked 49th, moving up 13 spots from last year. He also noted that the high school girl's soccer team earned the High School Team Academic Award from the United Soccer Coaches Association for 2022-23. The team's GPA of 3.96 was the highest in the Pioneer Athletic Conference and one of the highest in the state.
- C. Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) – Charles Friedlander of Municipal Finance Partners presented the Township's MMO for its pension funds. He explained that a goal of intergeneration equity seeks to have employees fund their pensions while they are still working.
 - a. Mr. Mentry said the Pension Committee recommends that the Township adjust the assumed rate of return for the MMO from 7 percent to 6.75 percent.
 - b. **MOTION** – Supervisor Sorgini made a motion to adjust the assumed rate of return for the MMO to 6.75 percent. Supervisor MacFarland seconded the motion.
 - c. There was no public comment.
 - d. The motion *passed* 5-0.

2) Consent Agenda

- A. **MOTION:** Supervisor Neights made a motion to approve consent agenda, moving the meeting minutes of August 17, 2023, into the record. Vice Chair Darby seconded the motion.
 - a. There was no public comment.
 - b. The motion *passed* 5-0.

3) Old Business

- A. Review of Board of Supervisors' Goals and Projects
- B. Mr. Mentry provided an update on the status of various goals and projects, notably four priority areas:
 - a. Municipal campus/building improvements – Concept plans are expected in the near future from Boyle Construction. They will be evaluated by staff and shared with the Board of Supervisors.
 - b. Stormwater Management – The pipe lining project is scheduled to begin next month and the Township's MS4 permit is moving closer to approval. There is a possibility of securing grant funds for both.
 - c. Parks & Recreation – Former Parks and Recreation Board member Jean Akers will be providing her professional expertise to complete a master plan for Redtail Park. The Township will be able to utilize the finalized master plan to pursue future grants.
 - d. Pedestrian Connections – Previous discussions identified the section of Ridge Pike between Trooper Rd. and Park Ave. as a potential target for sidewalk improvements. There was discussion on additional locations to target for improvements.

4) New Business

- A. Consideration of Rothman Institute Cycling Team Request for Extension of Special Event Operating Hours
 - a. Mr. Mentry explained that the special event permit allows for a 10:00 a.m. start time on Saturdays. The extension is needed for the event's 8:00 a.m. start time.
 - b. **MOTION:** Supervisor Neights, seconded by Supervisor Sorgini, made a motion to grant the request for an extension of special event operating hours.
 - c. There was no public comment.
 - d. The motion *passed* 5-0.
- B. Consideration of Lower Providence Fire Department's Request for Extension of Special Event Operating Hours
 - a. Mr. Mentry said the request is for the Montgomery County Hero Fund benefit event to be held on the firehouse grounds. The extension of hours is only necessary if the event moves from the Saturday, Sept. 30th date to the rain date of Sunday, Oct. 1st.
 - b. **MOTION:** Supervisor Neights made a motion to approve the request for an extension of special event hours, seconded by Supervisor Sorgini.
 - c. There was no public comment.
 - d. The motion *passed* 5-0.
- C. Consideration of Waiver of Park Regulations to Allow for Alcohol at the Township's Annual Fall Festival
 - a. Mr. Mentry said it is proposed to add beer and wine gardens, provided by Conshohocken Brewing Company and Evansburg Vineyards, respectively, to the Fall Festival to be held Oct. 7 in Eagleville Park. Local breweries were approached first; none were available.
 - b. In response to a question from Vice Chair Darby, Mr. Mentry said the gardens would be enclosed and IDs would be checked.

- c. Supervisors Neights made a motion, seconded by Supervisor MacFarland, to waive the park regulations to allow for alcohol at the fall festival.
 - d. There was no public comment.
 - e. The motion *passed* 4-1. Supervisor Sorgini dissented.
- D. Consideration of Parks and Recreation Budget Adjustment
- a. Mr. Lafiata said that the Parks and Recreation Department has had success with its programming, with registrations higher than anticipated for 2023, enabling more programs to be offered than originally budgeted. In order to utilize the increased revenue to continue providing recreation programs for the remainder of 2023, a budget increase is needed.
 - b. **MOTION:** Supervisor Sorgini made a motion to approve the budget adjustment, seconded by Supervisor MacFarland.
 - c. There was no public comment.
 - d. The motion *passed* 5-0.

5) Announcements/Meetings

- Chief Jackson recognized Cpl. Michael Slattery on his retirement from the force. Cpl. Slattery joined the Police Department in 1997 as a dispatcher and served as an officer for 24 years.
- Movie in the Park – “Hocus Pocus” September 15, Eagleville Park at 7:30 p.m.
- The Township Office will close at 1:00 PM on Friday, September 22 for staff training and development.
- “A Taste of Lower Providence” fundraiser for the Lower Providence Community Library – September 23, 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the library
- Sewer Authority - September 11 at 4:30 p.m.
- Environmental Advisory Council - September 18 at 7:00 p.m.
- Library Board - September 18 at 7:00 p.m.
- Parks and Recreation Board - September 19 at 7:00 p.m.
- Planning Commission - September 27 – **CANCELLED**
- Zoning Hearing Board - September 28 at 7:00 p.m.

6) Comments and Other Business

- Supervisor Neights said the library will hold a fundraiser, “A Taste of Lower Providence,” on Saturday, Sept. 23 and a Patriot’s Day ceremony will be held on Monday, Sept. 11 at 6:30 p.m. at the Washington Memorial Chapel in Valley Forge National Historical Park. He noted that as a result of a discussion with residents who attended a recent Planning Commission meeting, line striping had been completed on Smith Road.
- Supervisor MacFarland said the Hero Fund benefit event is a worthwhile event and raises funds for a very good cause.
- Chair Coless said that the Township is monitoring the situation with PFAS and well testing.

7) Courtesy of the Floor

- No public comment.

8) Adjournment

- a. **MOTION:** Vice Chair Darby, seconded by Supervisor Sorgini, made a motion to adjourn. The motion *passed* 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Next Business Meetings: **September 21, 2023**
 October 5, 2023