



**West Pottsgrove Township  
980 Grosstown Road  
Stowe, PA 19464**

**Board of Commissioners Meeting  
February 2, 2022  
7:00pm**

The regular monthly Board Meeting for the Board of Commissioners was called to order by Board President; Steve Miller.

**ROLL CALL**

Board members present were Commissioners; Miller, Palladino, Valentine, La Rosa and Green. Also present was Township Manager; Scott Hutt, Township Secretary; Courtney Harris, Township Solicitor; Jamie Ottaviano, Police Chief; Joe Sokolofski and Pottstown Borough Fire Chief; Frank Hand.

**MINUTES**

A motion was made by Commissioner LaRosa to approve the minutes from the Board meeting on January 19, 2022. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Green. All were in favor of the motion.

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

A motion was made by Commissioner Valentine, seconded by Commissioner Green to approve the Financial Report. All were in favor of approving the Financial Report.

**PAYMENT OF BILLS**

A motion was made by Commissioner Green, seconded by Commissioner Valentine to approve paying all bills as presented, in the total amount of \$318,723.35. All were in favor of paying the bills as presented.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS**

Gail Johns 1044 Manatawny Road – Ms. Johns questioned why there were no printed bill lists for the public. Mr. Hutt said he could make them available to her.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Mr. Paladino – Public Works & Code Enforcement – Code Enforcement Report as follows:

CODE CALL	0	PERMITS ISSUED	8
CODE INSPECTION	0	HEARINGS	0
USE & OCCUPANCY	4	COMPLAINTS RESOLVED	0
RENTAL INSPECTIONS	72 UNITS	RENTAL PERMITS	72
RENTAL REGISTRATIONS	8	NOTICE OF VIOLATION	0
CODE NOTICES	0	PROPERTIES POSTED	0
PERMIT INSPECTIONS	14	CITATIONS	0
SITE INSPECTIONS	1	COMPLETED PERMITS	11

Rental Registration Fees: \$0.00 - Building Permit Fees: \$2,937.50 - Construction Costs: \$166,285.00

Mr. Valentine – Recreation, Town Watch & Regional Recreation

Mr. Valentine reported under Regional Recreation that Scott Hutt will be working on trying to obtain a Grant for the ball field.

Mr. Green – Emergency Management, Recycling, & Finance

Mr. Green reported that we had 27.15 tons of recyclables for the month of December 2021 and he had not yet received numbers for January. Under finance Mr. Green stated he met with PFM to look at our investment funds to see how we are doing as well as planning a long term budget for investing.

Mr. LaRosa – Regional Planning, Zoning, & Planning Commission

Nothing to report at this time.

Mr. Miller – Police, Civil Service & Fire

Fire

Mr. Miller turned over the fire portion of the report to Fire Chief; Frank Hand. Chief Hand stated that from January 2021 – December 2021 Pottstown Borough reported to 91 calls in West Pottsgrove Township. 20 calls were EMS related and 71 calls were fire related. He did inform the Board that the number could be off slightly due to the transition of responding Fire Companies. For the month of January there were 11 calls, 5 were EMS and 6 were Fire calls. They had one false alarm that was a scam and were able to pick up on it quickly.

Police

Chief Joe Sokolofski of the West Pottsgrove Police Department reported 380 calls for the month of January.

ARRESTS - ADULT	6
TRAFFIC CITATIONS	45
WRITTEN WARNING	43
UPLAND SQUARE	30
CODE ENFORCEMENTS	4
ABANDONED VEHICLES	6

**MANAGERS REPORT**

Public Works

Mr. Hutt thanked our Department of Public Works team as they do a great job with winter events, including clearing roads and preventing icy conditions as much as possible. The Township is coordinating with TRM to get the new inverter installed in the newest public works truck.

In late January the Township contacted PECO regarding tree limbs hanging on power lines on Manatawny Street. PECO was going to investigate and determine whose lines are being compromised.

Mr. Hutt stated that we are aware the LED lights above the traffic signals at Upland Square are not working properly. We have submitted a work order with our maintenance company, they are awaiting parts and should be fixed by the end of next week.

Ullman Tree Service worked on removing dead trees from Murgia Park. These trees were deemed a safety hazard, and were too large for our public works team to remove themselves.

In 2021 the Township contacted PENNDOT with a request to make the intersection of Grosstown Road and Old Reading Pike a 4-way stop. Mr. Hutt reached out again looking for a decision but has not heard back. Once clarity is received he will report back.

### Bursich Associates

On January 25<sup>th</sup> there was a site meeting with representatives from West and Upper Pottsgrove Townships to finalize the plans for a low volume road grant for Nagle Road. The costs will be split between the two municipalities and Liquid Fuels will be utilized to offset costs by both.

The Engineers are working with the contractor to finalize the remaining items on the punch-list for the Grosstown Road Sanitary Sewer Project. Hoping that will be completed shortly and can be closed out.

The Quinter Street Project is near complete, outside of testing. The sanitary sewer portion is complete. This will be closed out in the spring when asphalt plans resume production.

### Constellation Energy

In January we executed a new energy agreement with Constellation Energy since our previous agreement expired. This is a 4 year agreement with fixed rate prices. This was done due to the prices in flux, this way we were able to lock in the lowest rate available.

### Code Violations

The Township issued 7 code violations for the month of January. These ranged from property maintenance to work without permits. A reminder to our residents to ensure they keep up with proper maintenance and the permitting process.

### Zoning/Land Development

On January 20<sup>th</sup> the Zoning Hearing Board was convened to hear the application of Heritage Coach at 449 Old Reading Pike. This hearing resulted in a special exception being granted to allow the use of automotive sales and repairs in the Industrial Zone. Automotive sales and repairs is not a permitted use in the Industrial Zone.

### Planning Commission

Planning Commission met on January 27<sup>th</sup> to get an update on the progress with Panda Express in the Upland Square shopping Center. Construction is set to begin mid to late February weather depending. In addition, two prospective developers presented plans to build storage facilities for their respective businesses. These owners will seek any variances or special exceptions as required by the Townships Zoning Ordinance.

### Liquid Fuels

On January 28, 2022 our 2021 usage report was submitted and approved. We are awaiting final auditor approval. The Township has a 25-year road overlay plan and these funds will continue to address our biggest road concerns within the Township.

### ARPA Funds

The scope for acceptable uses of these funds keeps expanding. The Township remains dedicated to utilizing these funds for water and sewer projects. We will continue to take in any new guidance that is offered. As of now the reporting deadline remains at the end of April.

### PARRC

We are in the process of obtaining grants to upgrade Old Timers Field behind the Township complex. Quotes will be coming in for fencing, dugout repairs, and other miscellaneous items. On January 21<sup>st</sup>, Mr. Hutt met with Pottsgrove Little League to discuss the updates and what the Township can do that will benefit the league.

## **SOLICITORS REPORT**

There was nothing to report at this time.

## **OLD BUISNESS**

### **PFM Sewer Valuation/RFQ's**

There are multiple parties who have engaged the Township regarding our request for qualifications. The final submissions are not formally due until February 8<sup>th</sup>. Once that deadline passes the Township will meet with PFM to review the submissions. This process is not final and is merely the Township doing our diligence to see what our options are.

## **NEW BUISNESS**

### **Trusty Security Specialists**

Mr. Hutt stated that the technology in the board room is outdated and our projector screens don't make for great visibility for presentations or zoom conferences. During the budget process upgrades were discussed and a quote has been obtained in the amount of \$3,000. This is to upgrade to two 70" smart TV's with swinging brackets. A motion was made by Commissioner Palladino, seconded by Commissioner Valentine. All were in favor of the technology upgrades and the quote provided by Trusty Security Specialists.

## **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

### **Linda Kollar – 1076 Manatawny Street**

Ms. Kollar asked if the Board of Commissioners were planning to meet with the new fire entity in order to get a fire company back in the Township since West End is dissolving. President Miller answered by stating that West End has an attorney and WPT has an attorney and all communication is to be handled among the attorneys. As of today WPT's attorney has not received any documents stating that West End is officially dissolving.

### **Patrick Griffin - 305 Jem Ave**

Mr. Griffin expressed concern regarding the sewer project in the areas of Sylvan Drive, Jem Ave., & Dori Lane as well as pot holes in the same area. Mr. Griffin expressed frustration that we are a year into the five-year plan and no update has been provided regarding his concerns. Commissioner Green reminded Mr. Griffin of a previous meeting, where the plan to hot patch the roads in question were discussed. The plan was to get up to that area as soon as the temperature and weather allowed. Mr. Griffin reiterated that he was questioning the sewer project and not the paving. Mr. Griffin continued to express concern that there was no longer a Sewer Authority to go to with comments and concerns and that he had to go to the Board now. He also expressed concern that a contractor would be digging up the road in front of his house and then two days later he would be required to have the funds to replace his sewer lateral. Mr. Hutt explained that sewer projects like this do not just pop up, and are organized and discussed in public meetings which would allow plenty of time for the residents to plan. Mr. Hutt also explained that The Sewer Authority was dismantled because they did not go out for any grants or anything else and responsibility fell on the Township. The Commissioners continued to reassure Mr. Griffin that our Engineer is involved in the sewer process and when the time comes a public discussion would occur. Commissioner Green mentioned that the area in question hasn't even come up as requiring immediate replacements of sewer lines. Mr. Griffin asked if he would be able to see an Engineering report from Bursich if we wasn't able to attend a meeting. Commissioner Green stated he would mention the concern of the sewer line replacement in the area of Mr. Griffin's neighborhood to the Engineer to get more clarity. Mr. Griffin also expressed frustration with not having the bill list and meeting minutes available to him at tonight's meeting. Mr. Hutt reminded him that these documents will all be available with our updated website. An exact date was not provided as to when these items would be readily accessible on the website.

Michelle Sassaman – 31 Fairview St.

Ms. Sassaman asked the Board if they were planning to recognize the new entity “Stowe” as a fire company. She stated that they need to know what the Boards intentions are so they know how to handle things between the two entities moving forward. She specified that West End is dissolving and that they have been doing everything asked of them by the Board of Commissioners. She expressed frustration regarding the relationship between the fire companies and the Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Miller reminder her that attorneys are involved and no meetings or decisions would occur without authorization from the attorneys. Mr. Hutt also stated that the Attorney General would need to recognize Stowe as a fire company before the Township could and there is a process in order to do that. He also stated that in order to dissolve West End they would need to go through the Attorney General for that as well. Township Solicitor; Jamie Ottaviano commented stating that he is not officially aware that West End is dissolving, he hasn’t received any documents or reports stating so. Commissioner Miller reiterated that nothing will be discussed until the attorney of West End contacts the Townships attorney. Ms. Sassaman also asked about when the contract would be signed with Pottstown Borough and what the MIL rate was going to be. Mr. Hutt stated that it will be discussed internally and that it isn’t time to re-evaluate that.

Kylie Kollar – 1076 Manatawny St.

Ms. Kollar stated that there was a meeting in August where a resolution was executed to dissolve West End Fire Company. She stated she believes Ms. Sassaman is asking if the Board is going to meet with Stowe or not because if the Board is willing to recognize Stowe as a Fire Company they want to transfer the assets of West End to Stowe. She expressed that if the Board has no interest in speaking to Stowe then they need to go in another direction. Ms. Kollar expressed frustration that there is no longer a Fire Company in the Township even though Pottstown Borough is doing a great job. Commissioner Green stated that they would need to sell the assets of West End in order to pay off debts and cannot just transfer the assets to Stowe. Commissioner Miller stated again. West Ends attorney needs to contact the Townships attorney.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Mr. Hutt stated that Commissioner LaRosa had an announcement and handed it over to him.

Commissioner LaRosa stated that he accepted a new position last August where he was hired as General Manager of a company managing condominiums in a new complex. Unfortunately he stated he needs to resign from Township Commissioner as this new job requires a lot of his time and he was already missed several Township meetings. Commissioner LaRosa read a very nice resignation letter highlighting his 10 years as a West Pottsgrove Township Commissioner. He stated he plans to still participate Township activities and assist with the Townships newsletters.

President Miller asked for a motion to accept the resignation of Commissioner Pete LaRosa. Commissioner Green made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Valentine. All were in favor of accepting the resignation of Commissioner LaRosa. President Miller thanked Commissioner LaRosa for his service to the Township and serving on the Board.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

President Miller called an executive session at 7:32pm. He announced the meeting is not adjourning and they will be back out with information.

**RECONVENE**

President Miller reconvened the meeting after the executive session. The purpose of the executive session was due to the resignation of Commissioner LaRosa and how the Board is going to handle the vacancy. President Miller then turned the meeting over to Township Solicitor; Jamie Ottaviano.

Mr. Ottaviano stated that in Section 530 of the First Class Township Code of West Pottsgrove Township, anytime a Township Commissioner resigns, the Board has up to thirty days to accept that resignation. The Board has already accepted the resignation tonight. The Board now has the ability to appoint someone to fill the vacancy for the rest of his term. The appointment must be done within thirty days from the date the resignation was accepted (today). The appointed person must be a registered-elect, meaning a person who is a registered voter and who resides in the Township.

Mr. Hutt announced that the Township will begin to advertise tomorrow February 3, 2022 for resumes and letter of intents, they will be due by the close of business on Tuesday February 15, 2022. At the Workshop meeting on Wednesday February 16, 2022, the applicants will be allowed to speak for three minutes about their desire to fill the vacancy. The Board will then enter executive session to deliberate, and then will reconvene for a vote. If possible, depending on Judge Palladino's availability, the Board would like to have that person sworn in at that time.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

President Miller asked for a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Commissioner Valentine, seconded by Commissioner LaRosa. The motion was approved unanimously.

The Board of Commissioners Meeting of West Pottsgrove Township has concluded at 7:43P.M. On February 2, 2022.

Respectfully Submitted,



Courtney Harris  
Township Secretary