



WEST POTTS GROVE TOWNSHIP
980 GROSSTOWN ROAD
STOWE, PA 19464
BOARD MEETING
JULY 7, 2021

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

Roll Call

Board members present were Commissioners Miller, Valentine, Palladino, La Rosa and Green. Also present was Township Manager; Scott Hutt, Township Secretary; Joanne Herb and Attorney; Ken Picardi. Absent was Officer in Charge; Tim Roeder. Also present at the Meeting was Fire Chief; Nick Egan.

President Miller announced; prior to our Township Meeting, the Board of Commissioners had an Executive Meeting with the Fire Department and the committee that was formed to discuss the issues of West End Fire Department. No decisions were made; it was for informational purposes only.

Also, I would like to say; it has come to my attention there was a case filed in Court; Steven Miller versus Board of Trustees Police and Fireman's Retirement System. The case involves a person named Steven Miller who was employed as a Sheriff Officer. I will tell you; I was in law enforcement, but was employed by a Municipal Police Department as a Police Officer; not for a Sheriff's Department. For the record, the person who is listed in the Court case may have the same name as I do; but it is not me. Let me say that again; I was never involved in the court case involving Board of Trustees Police and Fireman's Retirement System. If anyone has heard anything, trust me, it was not me.

Minutes

A motion by Commissioner Green, seconded by Commissioner Valentine to approve the Minutes of the previous Board Meeting. Roll Call: Palladino; yes, Valentine; yes, La Rosa; yes, Green; yes, Miller; yes.

Financial Report

A motion by Commissioner La Rosa, seconded by Commissioner Green to approve the Financial Report. Roll Call: Palladino; yes, Valentine; yes, La Rosa; yes, Green; yes, Miller; yes.

Payment of Bills

A motion by Commissioner Green, seconded by Vice President Palladino to approve all bills in the amount of \$232,392.01 for the *General Fund*, \$136,434.52 for the *Sewer Fund* and \$13,811.50 from the *Grosstown Road Project Fund*. All funds totaled \$382,638.03. Roll Call: Palladino; yes, Valentine; yes, La Rosa; yes, Green; yes, Miller; yes.

Citizen's Comments on Agenda Items

There was none.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

MR. PALLADINO: COG, PUBLIC WORKS, CODE ENFORCEMENT

Code Enforcement Report – June 2021

<i>Code Calls – 4</i>	<i>Permits Issued – 15</i>
<i>Code Inspections – 4</i>	<i>Hearings – 0</i>
<i>Code Complaints -4</i>	<i>Complaints Resolved – 2</i>
<i>Rental Inspections – 6 Units</i>	<i>Rental Permits – 6</i>
<i>Code Notices – 0</i>	<i>Property’s Posted – 1</i>
<i>Permit Inspections – 21</i>	<i>Warrants Served – 0</i>
<i>Site Inspections – 0</i>	<i>Completed Permits – 5</i>
<i>Rental Registration Fees</i>	<i>\$ 16,330.00</i>
<i>Building Permit Fees</i>	<i>\$ 6,262.50</i>
<i>Construction Costs</i>	<i>\$ 157,725.00</i>

MR. VALENTINE: RECREATION, TOWN WATCH, REGIONAL RECREATION RECREATION

Commissioner Valentine reported; Pottsgrove Rec will be doing the Summer Playground this year. So far, there was approximately 40 kids signed up. By now it could be more.

MR. GREEN: EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, RECYCLING, FINANCE

Recycling

Commissioner Green noted; they still haven’t sent us the report, so hopefully by next meeting I will have two reports.

Emergency Management

A motion by Vice President Palladino, seconded by Commissioner Valentine to adopt the **RESOLUTION 2021,EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN OF WEST POTTSBOROUGH TOWNSHIP, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA.** Roll Call: Palladino; yes, Valentine; yes, La Rosa; yes, Green; yes, Miller; yes.

MR. MILLER: POLICE, CIVIL SERVICE, FIRE

Fire

President Miller stated; beings that the Fire Chief is here, I will let him read the Fire Report.

Fire Chief; Nick Egan reported; There were 18 calls in Montgomery County; 11 in West Pottsgrove Township, 3 in the Pottstown Borough, 3 in Upper Pottsgrove and 1 in Lower Pottsgrove. There was 14 calls in Berks County; 6 in Douglass Township and 8 in Amity Township. There was 13.50 hours of company training, with 38 personnel trained. There was 76 hours of Fire Academy training, 6.5 hours of public outreach on 2 events, 2.5 hours of paperwork man hours, 7 meeting hours on 2 events and we had 9 hours on 3 fundraising events, for a total of 29 man hours.

Police

Officer in Charge; Tim Roeder was absent. Commissioner Miller read the Police report.

Total Calls **(June)** – 360
Total Citations – 22
 Traffic – 20
 Non-Traffic – 2
 Traffic Warnings – 0
Assists – 41
Crimes – 22
Investigations 27
Mileage – 3,004

Abandoned Vehicle Report

Vehicles Acted on - 3
Vehicles Tagged Abandoned - 3
Vehicles Removed from Roadway – 0
Vehicles Removed from Private Property – 0
Vehicles Pending Action - 0

Juvenile Report – June

Calls – 27
Arrests – 1
Citations -1
Parent/Juvenile Conferences – 2
Missing Person – 0
Child Abuse – 1
Community Relations – 3

Officer in Charge; Tim Roeder asked President Miller to read the following;

I am requesting approval from the Board of Commissioners to hire Ryan Stead for the position of a part-time Police Officer. Ryan has passed the background check and if the Board approves my request he will also need to pass a physical and drug screening prior to the completion of his hiring. It will not be in addition to as far as hours are concerned, it will be used to fill in for the people he has; so he is maintaining the hours.

A motion by Vice President Palladino, seconded by Commissioner Green to approve the hiring of Ryan Stead as a part-time Police Officer. Roll Call: Palladino; yes, Valentine; yes, La Rosa; yes, Green; yes, Miller; yes.

Civil Service

President Miller reported; for those of you who do not know; July 9 we are testing for the position of a full-time Police Officer. We will be giving the exam to the candidates that signed up for it. In addition to that, the Civil Service Commission met, and after reviewing the physical agility portion of the test, which will not be done this week; found it needed to be updated, as what was in there was antiquated. The Civil Service Commission has updated it to what we felt would have been current standards.

Manager's Report

Public Works –

- We are getting the final quotes to replace the roof on the salt shed.
- The handicap spots on Elm Street had fresh coats of paint applied to them.
- The dead tree removal from the parking lot area of Murgia Park is complete. We are working on quotes for other dead trees that are in need of removal, but our staff could not handle.

- We assisted and consulted with utility testing for the School Lane and Quinter Street projects. Those items will be discussed in later portions of the report.

West Pottsgrove Police Department

- As President Miller stated; this Friday, July 9, we will be administering the written exam for our entry level full-time Officer.
- Joseph Sokolofski, the new Police Chief, will be sworn in on August 4, the first Board Meeting in August. His first day on the job will be August 16.
- We have recently been coordinating with our State legislators and further vetting when Grants are available to obtain body cams for our Officers. Chief Sokolofski will be updated and ultimately taking over this project when he starts.

Grosstown Road Sanitary Sewer Project

- Last week; trench restoration, paving, driveway aprons and concrete work was completed. This week the remainder of the TV work that our Public Works Department has requested is being completed. On June 24, we had a Site Meeting to review additional punch-list items that were to be addressed. As I understand, we are moving along smoothly with each item. The final mill and overlay we had advertised a time frame for in June based upon our contractor’s projections. However, due to weather delays, previous obligations on another job site and staffing issues; they were unable to stay within that time frame. We have now been told the final portion will be conducted the week of July 12, 2021.

Property Maintenance

- I want to reiterate that we encourage everyone in the Township to keep up with property maintenance, grass cutting and things of that nature. Please be sure to also cut the weeds at the curb. Lately, we have been dealing with bushes and shrubs obstructing travel lanes. Please be sure to trim these, as they are a safety hazard.

Township Website

- The TREX bench color poll is closed and the winner, with 59% of the vote is; Chestnut. I will place the order this week.

Brown – 0%
White – 12%
Off-White – 12%
Cream – 12%
Black – 6%

Additional Municipal Projects

- With regards to School Lane; on July 2, 2021 we conducted our utility depth testing at the intersection of School Lane and East Vine Street. It was determined that 4 inch pipes would be required to install a storm sewer system at that location. Bursich will update more on this at the upcoming Workshop Meeting.

- We are still on target to advertise bids on July 15, hold our Pre-Bid Meeting on July 19 and ultimately; award the contract on August 18. Substantial completion is targeted for November 17.

PECO

- We were previously advised the utility pole outside of the Township would be replaced this week. I am still awaiting confirmation on a specific date. PECO is responsible for advising residents of any potential power outages, but when they were out on site, they advised the Township complex is solely affected.

ARPA Funds

- At our last meeting, we spoke about the finalized submission of the Township’s application. Today we received our first installment. We are currently discussing ideas on how to best spend these monies and consulting with other municipalities about best practices, given the Governments moving target on reporting and use.

*Two installments of \$200,860.22
Total amount of \$401,720.44*

OLD BUSINESS

Revise Fee Schedule – U & O Ordinance Fees

Mr. Hutt reported; In June, we approved our Use and Occupancy Ordinance. We are finalizing our application for residential and commercial that will be uploaded to our website within the next week.

- Residential will be \$150 and \$50 for re-inspections.
- Commercial will be as follows:

Low Hazard Occupancy (Business, Medical Office, Mercantile Store)

*1-2,000 square feet - \$110.00
2,001-5,000 square feet - \$160.00
5,001 – 10,000 square feet - \$210.00
10,000 – 100,000 square feet - \$260.00
100,001 – square feet or greater - \$310.00*

Moderate/High Hazard Occupancy (Restaurant/Bar, Church/School, Institutional, Industrial Factory, Service Station/Repair Garage, Storage, Hotel/Motel/Apartment with 3 or more dwelling units)

*1-2,000 square feet - \$200.00
2,001 – 5,000 square feet - \$250.00
5,001 – 10,000 square feet - \$300.00
10,000 – 100,000 square feet - \$400.00
100,001 square feet or greater - \$500.00*

The Administrative Fee is \$64.00

A motion by Vice President Palladino, seconded by Commissioner Green to approve the revised Fee Schedule for the U & O Ordinance. Roll Call: Palladino; yes, Valentine; yes, La Rosa; yes, Green; yes, Miller; yes.

Hometown Press Contract

Mr. Hutt reported; this is the company who would be contracted to assist us with our previously discussed and approved newsletter. We received a discount of \$235 per issue with our assistance with ad sales. The newsletter is capped at 16 pages and will be issued bi-annually; the first one is in the Fall, then in Spring. Commissioner La Rosa commented; I will be the liaison between the Township and company. Stories that will be coming out this fall will be the new Police Chief, important phone numbers, the trash schedule; things like that, and all it will cost us is the postage. Commissioner La Rosa noted; if anyone would like to advertise, let us know and I'll be happy to contact the company.

A motion by Commissioner La Rosa, seconded by Commissioner Valentine to approve signing the contract for the upcoming newsletter. Roll Call: Palladino; yes, Valentine; yes, La Rosa; yes, Green; yes, Miller; yes.

NEW BUSINESS

PennDot Memorandum of Agreement – ITS (Intelligent Traffic Systems)

Mr. Hutt reported; A Cooperative Memorandum of Agreement was executed in November of 2020 regarding Municipalities allowing cameras on specific traffic lights so a live feed system can be set up. The ITS currently exists from 202 to Oaks, and they wish to have it all the way down 422 and in its surrounding areas. The ITS would help aid flow when needed; being construction, weather, accidents, etc. PennDOT has since revised their agreement, including our SAP Vendor, Federal ID number and additional signatory lines for State Highway Administration. These are clerical changes only. The agreement remains at no cost to the Township.

A motion by Commissioner Green, seconded by Commissioner La Rosa to approve the Cooperative Memorandum of Agreement with PennDot. Roll Call: Palladino; yes, Valentine; yes, La Rosa; yes, Green; yes, Miller; yes.

Purchase of Extended Warranties (2) for Township Vehicles

Mr. Hutt reported; we are looking for approval to purchase two extended warranties for our two newest vehicles, both being 2021 Explorers; one for the Township and one is a PD Vehicle. Both warranties would be for 100K miles or 7 years, at the cost of \$5,180.00.

A motion by Commissioner La Rosa, seconded by Vice President Palladino to approve two extended warranties at the cost of \$5,180.00 for both 2021 Explorers. Roll Call: Palladino; yes, Valentine; yes, La Rosa; yes, Green; yes, Miller; yes.

Citizen's Comments

Dave Hunsicker – 252 Berks Street, Stowe – commented; I am here over something ridiculous because someone managed to strike a cord and rang my tuning fork. He commented; who raised the price from \$50 to \$75 for the Rental License fee? Did I miss something? Did you vote on it? Mr. Hutt stated; we voted on it. It has not been increased in over a decade, so we checked with what neighboring municipalities were charging and brought it up to date. Mr. Hunsicker stated; I'm here to give you a perspective from a different view point. He continued; I have been living in this Township since 1987, raised two kids and have an ex-wife. I pay school and property taxes since 1987; \$3,000 a year for school tax for 10 years is \$30,000. I have two sons that have been gone for 14 years. I'm not crying about that; we all have obligations and things we're dealing with, but this one thing that "just got my goat", as my mother would say. In 1986, I inherited a piece of property and I rent it out. They sent me this Rental License thing because I'm not responsible enough to rent a house out by myself, I've got to be monitored because it's the government's responsibility to see I'm doing the right things because we've got Codes. I put someone in that house and I don't kill them with rent, because when you do that they don't last very long. You want someone nice in there, someone dependable. This house is heated by oil, and asked the Board if they knew how much the price of oil went up. He noted; I'm not a rich man, I'm not getting rich; I'm retired and living off of Social Security. If I wind up on the street, I know one of you will be nice enough to take me in because of the goodness of your heart. People that live in this world are struggling to hang on. I don't have a pension, a government pension; I depend on this money to survive and each year, what I get; half goes to pay school tax, property taxes and homeowner insurance. I'm not vacationing in Florida every summer; it's hanging on by a thread, so just think about these things. What kind of recourse do I have? It is exhausting; nothing ever goes down, it just keeps going up. The point of me being here is just to vent.

Curtis Meyer – 20 Dogwood Lane – voiced his concerns with regards to Holly Acres, noting it's got the highest density of children in the Township and the people just fly through there. Mr. Meyer requested Police enforcement in there, so the speeding can be controlled. He stated; the speed limit is 15 mph and they must be going about 40 mph through there; coming off of Grosstown Road and onto Holly Drive. President Miller stated; we will pass this on to the Police, noting; our Officer in Charge is on vacation right now, but we will pass it on. Mr. Meyer stated; you've got the thing on Berks Street where you can time them, you could do that there too.

Correspondence

There was none.

Adjournment

President Miller stated; before we adjourn, I did state that we had an Executive Session earlier with the Fire Department and now we are going into an Executive Session. No official action or deliberation will occur during this Executive Session; instead, it will be for informational purposes and to discuss personnel matters only.

Commissioner Green commented; along with the comment about speeders, could you also talk to our Office in Charge about Grosstown Road too? That accident we had last night; we had people flying through and had pieces of parts of cars all over the place. Even with the Police cars lights on, they still were just flying by and they're going to kill someone there; they think it's a racetrack – they need to slow down everywhere.

John Bukey – 202 Grosstown Road – commented; you’re absolutely right about Grosstown Road, especially north of Holly Drive and up over the hill. Mr. Bukey also asked about the intersection of Grosstown Road and Old Reading Pike, noting; you guys did a great job of trimming that hedge, but there is still a problem where you’ve got to pull out to see a car. He asked; is that a PennDot road and can we request a 4-way stop sign there? Vice President Palladino noted; it’s a County road. President Miller stated; we can try, but it does take some time.

The Board Meeting adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

Respectfully Yours,

*Joanne Herb
Township Secretary*