



**WEST POTTS GROVE TOWNSHIP**  
**980 GROSSTOWN ROAD**  
**STOWE, PA 19464**  
**WORKSHOP MEETING**  
**JUNE 16, 2021**  
**7:00 P.M.**

The regular monthly Workshop Meeting of the Board of Commissioners was called to Order by the 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; Joanne Herb and Township Solicitor; Jamie Ottaviano.

**MINUTES**

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

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Sewer Projects Update by Bursich Associates**

Gus Meyer, from Bursich Associates reported;

*Grosstown Road Project:* Obviously, the paving has not begun yet and we have no definite date when it will begin. We were originally told it would begin this week, however, now we're told it will not. They were working in Upper Providence and were delayed due to rain, so it sounds like they were set back a few days. We are anticipating it to begin next week. It will start on Edgewood and Acorn and work it's way out to Grosstown. They have some trench restoration that needs to be done for the work that was done on Edgewood before the mill and overlay begins on Grosstown Road. We need also need to review the televising of the 51 laterals and the 13 or 14 on Acorn to make sure that is satisfactory. When they are satisfactory, we then have a successful project. So far, Drew and I have agreed the main was installed properly and the whole system was flushed twice, which had to do with bad televising, or televising that showed sediments and stone from the length of construction.

**School Lane Phase 2 – CDBG Grant Project**

Gus Meyer reported; we recently had some other work done with Quinter Street as far as locating the exact configurations of the laterals. That was successful, however, it did not tell us 100% of the information we were hoping to find, but it gave us 90% of the information, so we will be able to piece the rest of the information together. There are five residents that are affected and we realize that one of those laterals is capped, which will reduce the scope of our work, costs associated with that and with the variables left; will also help us narrow the scope as well as provide us some cost savings. That is specific to us locating the exact locations where these clean-outs currently don't exist, will be located. Now that we know the lateral configurations and which houses, we can assign locations to those laterals and better define where the actual construction will take place.

If you remember; we had a large concrete sidewalk out in front of a commercial business and without knowing the information, we had to include 100 square yards of concrete replacement in case it went diagonal right through all of that. With that information, we will now be able to reduce concrete costs. There is some talk about combining the two projects. We looked at different scenarios and have one pending unknown right now which is; if we combine these projects, will the County allow us to combine the Grant monies as well. We get \$200,000 for each project. If we do School Lane this year, taking the sewer components out of the Phase II project, there will be a \$170,000 cost associated with that and it's roughly a \$60,000 cost savings with taking the sewer out of it. If we do it next year, the combination of Quinter and School Lane, and I mean by next year; starting this year and the paving done next year; the first scenario being that you combine both projects and wait until next year to complete them. They would go out to bid in October, award the bids sometime around the holidays, the project would start sometime after that weather permitting, and the paving would take place right at the fold of the project. In that scenario and with the hopes the County would allow us to combine the resources; the Township would only have to put out an estimated \$40,000 total for both projects. Mr. Meyer continued; if we do the other scenario and start this year/fall, and not do the overlay and paving until next year, there will still be a substantial cost savings, which I would estimate about \$25,000. One variable we haven't thought of yet and needs to be discussed; can we use Liquid Fuels monies to do just the trench restoration on Quinter Street. I don't see why not, but we'll have to talk with PennDot. The trench restoration cost associated with doing the work this year, which is essentially an extra inch and a half of base course for Quinter Street, increases the cost by about \$13,000 to \$15,000. Yet, at the same time you're saving \$60,000 by not doing the sewer work. Referring to School Lane, Mr. Meyer stated; I just drove my Tahoe through it the other day and was really surprised at how bad School Lane is. I understand you want to get this done, but it still gives you a good road, noting; just like Roberts Drive and the condition it is in now is what you would have for the wintertime if you choose to combine them; start this year and finish the overlay next year. Ultimately, our recommendation would be to combine the projects and get clarification from the County, specifically whether they will allow the CDBG funds that won't be fully utilized on School Lane, to be rolled over into the Quinter Street project. We estimate the Township's buy-in would be approximately \$40,000 if that would happen. Either one of those scenarios; if we combine them, whether we start this year or put it out next year; gives you a decent road. It is a matter of if you want to go through another winter with the condition School Lane is in. Mr. Meyer stated; there's definitely three options, noting; you can do them separately or combine them and start this year, knowing there are some materials some people can't even order right now, so in a time frame standpoint, we're thinking every contractor is going to want an additional 30-60 days on their contract. I also spoke with Scott on what you might call cost savings, even though you want to have the project done properly from School Lane Phase I, the so-called speed bump on School Lane and Race Street and some of the pulling that is happening on School Lane in between the alley and ADA Ramps. There was \$35,000 not paid to the contractor that was agreed upon, noting; there are some things that should be addressed in School Lane Phase I yet. They aren't a safety issue, but they weren't done properly and another aspect of the project that may have to be considered. Mr. Meyer stated; if we do the project of School Lane this year it will cost the Township \$170,000, and if we do it in 2022 we are looking at \$155,000. If we combine the two, without knowing what the County's answer would be; there is a good possibility the total buy-in for both projects would only be \$40,000. We do not know what the bids for Quinter Street will come in at, although we can anticipate they will come back cheaper than what they did originally. Part of the paving aspect is a variable as well, with the use of Liquid Fuels funds.

I'm anticipating seeing a \$15,000 to \$25,000 cost reduction now, with the information we can include with the Quinter Street package. Vice President Palladino asked; if you combine the two and it goes over the amount; we have a chance of losing both Grants, is that correct? Mr. Meyer stated; yes, if you would choose not to accept that price, whatever it may be. Vice President Palladino noted; we keep pushing School Lane off and it should have been done two years ago, adding; as it is now, it is almost impossible to go across it without breaking something. Commissioner Green asked; who was quality control on the final inspection of School Lane Phase I? Mr. Meyer stated; we were. Commissioner Green stated; so in other words, you guys missed that stuff that you're saying is there now. Mr. Meyer stated; no, we caught it and reported that this is wrong. Commissioner Green commented; but Scott is just finding out about it now, how did you just notify him about that now? Mr. Meyer stated; we notified Craig about it right away; about two years ago this happened. Commissioner Green noted; ok, so you did notify us at the time, it just was not with Scott. Mr. Meyer stated; correct and I would bet that it's in the Minutes, if I had to guess. Mr. Meyer continued; I believe it was installed like that and Craig found it while responding to an incident in the firetruck. President Miller commented; are you guys looking into whether we can combine things or what we can use it for? Mr. Meyer stated; we can combine the projects, the County has no problem with that; it's whether or not they will allow us to roll over that. We've asked the County if it's plausible and haven't gotten a response yet. With regards to Tom's point; I understand as well, wanting to see that road repaired and in decent condition as soon as possible. Like I said; there are a few options and if you combine the projects there are combined demobilization costs, you will save on soft administration costs from us because you'll be administering one contract as opposed to two and time in the field should be reduced as well; there are a lot of pros to this. The biggest con Tom has already mentioned; if you fully delayed it until next year, and whether or not it can be patched; that I don't know. As soon as we have the answers from the County and when we look into if Liquid Fuels funds are eligible for use of just the trench restoration; that will save the \$16,000 of the increase. Once Drew and I can zero in on the details that are yet to be determined on the physical property on Quinter Street, we will have a number within \$5,000 as to where a good estimate should be.

Vice President Palladino commented; are we bypassing this and leaving School Lane alone? President Miller stated; no, I thought he was going to get further information. Vice President Palladino commented; what further information do you need; he laid out everything that could possibly happen. President Miller noted; that is fine. Vice President Palladino noted; including the fact we could lose both Grants. President Miller noted; it's up for discussion. Vice President Palladino stated; all I know is School Lane was supposed to be done two years ago, with a sewer line; which later the sewer line was eliminated. Part of that money went to Sylvan Drive to put a sewer line in there. What I do not understand is where this portion of the Grant is coming from, because all of that Grant money was to do School Lane overlay and the sewer line. When the sewer line couldn't get tied into Pottstown, that money was moved to Sylvan Drive; so where is the rest of this \$200,000 coming from? Mr. Meyer asked; the Grant money? Vice President Palladino stated; that's correct, the Grant money for School Lane. Mr. Meyer stated; it's coming from the County. Vice President Palladino stated; yes, it's coming from the County, but that money was moved when the sewer line could not be installed on School Lane. Mr. Meyer stated; that is not what I understand. Mr. Hutt commented; they still have us at the full \$200,000 amount in their system. Vice President Palladino stated; there is a \$200,000 in that system, but that money was also moved from the project to Sylvan Drive. Commissioner Green noted; it was allocated for the Sylvan Drive project which was not overlaid. There should be a portion of that left over; so where did it go? Mr. Meyer stated; Sylvan was never overlaid.

Vice President Palladino stated; they had to go to the County to get permission to move the Grant to there; so what happened in between and why is there \$200,000 left? Vice President Palladino asked; what did that project cost up on Sylvan Drive? Mr. Meyer stated; I couldn't tell you off of the top of my head; I want to say \$160,000. Vice President noted; before you make any type of judgement on the fact we have \$200,000, I think there was a mistake made in the County paperwork. Commissioner Green stated; we should have the money from the overlay left. Vice President Palladino stated again; that money was moved. The Sewer Authority had to get permission from the County to move the money from School Lane to Sylvan Drive. Commissioner Green commented; I don't remember the Sewer Authority reporting they paid anything out of their account for it, I thought it all came from the Grant. Mr. Meyer stated; in my experience, we would've had to ask for an extension for that Grant continuously, to keep it active. Commissioner Green stated; we did, I remember Craig asking for an extension for that Grant and we got the extension, which was stipulated for work on Sylvan Drive. Mr. Meyer stated; what I suspect happened was; that happened and a new application was applied for on School Lane all over again. Commissioner Green stated; so we have new \$200,000 Grant then. Mr. Meyer commented; that's what construction cost eligibility is for the program, \$200,000 and typically you always get it if you exceed the cost of your project; which most do. Vice President Palladino stated; I don't remember anyone coming to this Board and saying can we apply for another Grant for Sylvan, adding; I sit on this chair, but I'm not asleep. President Miller agreed, stating he didn't remember that either. Mr. Meyer stated; we will have to check with County on this, but we are under the understanding that \$200,000 is available. President Miller commented; if there is another \$200,000, there should be another \$40,000 that was left from that other Grant for the overlay. Mr. Meyer stated; and if there was, you would've needed to continually extend that Grant, or you would've relinquished those funds. Commissioner Green noted; if the money was there, why wasn't it overlaid? Mr. Hutt asked what time of year it was, to which Mr. Meyer noted; it was October. Vice President Palladino stated; you know and I know that if that sewer project would've moved through School Lane, we would've not been talking about Quinter Street because the pinch points would've been changed, and when Pottstown came back to us and said; fine, you can tie in but you have to do our road; it was an impossibility to put that sewer line down through School Lane.

A motion by Commissioner Green, contingent upon our findings with regards to the \$200,000 Grant that we received with the School Lane project road overlay, and not combining anything; just doing School Lane, to move forward on this, Vice President Palladino seconded it. Roll Call: Palladino; yes, Valentine; yes, La Rosa; yes, Green; yes, Miller; yes.

President Miller commented; you need to find out what we have to do. Mr. Meyer stated; we might not have a project. Vice President Palladino stated; everyone has this Quinter Street pinch point in their head.

Commissioner Green amended the original motion he made, making another motion; contingent on how this works out, if there's money left over from Sylvan Drive; we get that on the books and get that overlaid this year. Mr. Hutt noted; I don't think that is this at all based upon having to continually file for extensions, adding; I'm not aware of any of that. Solicitor Ottaviano asked; was the Grant applied through the Sewer Authority? Mr. Meyer stated; I would imagine it would've been back then. Mr. Hutt noted; which one did we change recently; we changed over Quinter to School Lane, to the Township from the Authority.

Solicitor Ottaviano stated; correct, that was in an email I had sent to the County. My point was, the application came in through the Sewer Authority and the Sewer Authority hasn't been in existence, so no one has been applying for extensions for that Grant.

Commissioner Green stated he would like to change the motion to; making Sylvan Drive the next priority when it comes to overlay, after School Lane, Vice President Palladino seconded this motion. Roll Call: Palladino; yes, Valentine; yes, La Rosa; yes, Green; yes, Miller; yes.

Mr. Meyer stated; I would assume the funding for Quinter Street; we would continue moving on with that, putting it out to bid in the fall as planned. We also move forward with School Lane as planned, it is still going to happen.

**Update on Municipal Projects by Bursich Associates**

Mr. Hutt reported on *Old Reading Pike*; on June 10, the Draft Project Closeout Payment Reimbursement Package was forwarded to DCED for their review and comments. Bursich Associates will be handling the final on that.

Mr. Hutt also reported on *Murgia Park Phase 3*; Bursich has updated the potential trail line from the previous sketch and attached a copy for the Township reference. There will be additional Engineering costs associates with permitting, design and bidding any future phase of the park. No additional work will be performed for this project without approval from the Township.

**Nagle Road – Low Volume Road Grant**

Mr. Hutt reported; since both Townships; Upper and West, have executed the Cost Sharing Agreement, Bursich is looking for our Board's final approval to move forward and complete the Grant package to MCCD for consideration to receive the Low Volume Road Grant funding. PennDot will also be provided plans and specs so we can utilize Liquid Fuels for the project.

A motion by Vice President Palladino, seconded by Commissioner Green to approve moving forward and complete the Grant package. Roll Call: Palladino; yes, Valentine; yes, La Rosa; yes, Green; yes, Miller; yes.

Commissioner Valentine asked; Nagle Road is no sidewalk or curb, it is all just macadam right now, right? Why can't we look for a Low Volume Road Grant for Bowman Lane, noting; that is in horrible shape. He added; there are homes up there that are paying taxes. Mr. Hutt noted; there is also a discrepancy with the name we call Bowman's Lane and it being an alley, so we need to finalize that part. Commissioner Valentine noted; I know it's called Bowman's Lane, I don't know what it says on the maps. Vice President Palladino stated; if you look at it on the maps, it is an alley and is not an ordained road; although we fill in the potholes and run a snowplow through it, which has been done forever.

**Use & Occupancy Ordinance**

Solicitor Ottaviano reported; at our last meeting two weeks ago, I had a Draft of a Use & Occupancy Ordinance that we had a discussion about. This Board authorized me to advertise it, which was properly advertised in the Pottstown Mercury on June 1. This Use & Occupancy Permit better insures that the property located within the Township, whether it is commercial or residential property; is up to code.

What will trigger this Ordinance is when that property is going to be transferred or sold to someone else. It puts the burden on the sellers to apply for an application and makes sure the property is up to code prior to the transfer. Scott, Joe Chrisman and I have a meeting scheduled for next Tuesday. Should this Board adopt this Ordinance tonight, our next steps would be working on an Allocation with Joe's input, as well as a Fee Schedule with Joe's input, bringing it before the Board for your review. Commissioner Green asked if the Use & Occupancy Ordinance applies to rentals and leased properties as well, adding; in other words, if someone rents or leases a property; they need a Use and Occupancy inspection. Mr. Hutt noted; even if it is the same renter every two years, they still need an inspection. Solicitor Ottaviano stated; it does, you are correct and is already on the books that way.

A motion by Commissioner Green, seconded by Commissioner La Rosa to approve and adopt the **ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WEST POTTS GROVE, MONTOMGERY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, MONITORING AND REGULATING LEASED PROPERTY AND PROPERTY IN WHICH TITLE OF OWNERSHIP IS TRANSFERRED AND REQUIRING AN INSPECTION OF SUCH PROPERTY TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH THE TOWNSHIP PROPERTY MAINTENANCE, USE AND ZONING CODES AND REQUIRING THE ISSUANCE OF A CERTIFICATE OF USE AND OCCUPANCY PRIOR TO THE TRANSFER OF PROPERTY IN THE TOWNSHIP.** Roll Call: Palladino; yes, Valentine; yes, La Rosa; yes, Green; yes, Miller; yes.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**West Pottsgrove Township Chief of Police – Appointment**

Mr. Hutt commented; after an exhaustive search, we are pleased to announce the hiring of West Pottsgrove Township's next Chief of Police; Joseph Sokolofski. Chief Sokolofski will be coming to the Township with an extensive career in the PA State Police; where he will be retiring from. He will officially start on August 16, 2021. Congratulations and welcome aboard Chief Sokolofski.

**Purchase of 2021 Ford Explorer – Administrative**

Mr. Hutt reported; Whitmoyer Ford, who we purchased our last two vehicles from, offered us a generous value for the current Jeep used for Administrative purposes. With the trade-in value and COSTARS pricing, we are looking at a purchase price of \$17,800.00. I will also be looking at extended warranties for the Chief's new vehicle and the Township's; if approved by the Township.

A motion by Commissioner La Rosa, seconded by Commissioner Green to authorize the trade-in of the Jeep for a 2021 Ford Explorer; for Administrative purposes, at the price of \$17,800.00. Mr. Hutt noted; with the pump out front leaving, we are saving about \$16,000 a year since it is not in the budget for this year. President Miller added; so while it is not in the budget, we are getting rid of "silent night" and it is basically a wash. Roll Call: Palladino; yes, Valentine; yes, La Rosa; yes, Green; yes, Miller; yes.

**Township Newsletter**

Commissioner La Rosa reported; the last Newsletter we had was Spring of 2016, which was done in house. The Manager's Report was by Ed Whetstone and the Township Manager was Craig Lloyd. The name chosen by a resident through a contest was the "West Pottsgrove Informer". Prior to that, we had a beautiful glossy book, which was professionally done and dated 2008, with the President of the Board; Diana Gulotta. I contacted this company; Hometown Press, and asked a few questions, one being; how much would this cost. The President of the company said it would cost the Township nothing, only postage. The company produces publications contacting advertisers; they print and publish it and they want to know how many we want to print, as they work on volume.

Commissioner La Rosa noted; we are looking at about 2,600 and all we have to pay for is the postage. In my previous life I was in publishing. I would like to spearhead this project with the blessing of the Board, adding; all we've got to do is provide a copy. The next/first issue will be fall of this year, so we talk about the new Police Chief, things going on in the winter, calendar of events and so forth. Commissioner La Rosa stated; the questions I'll try to answer before we go anywhere else is; the newsletter is going to come out twice a year; Fall and Spring, how does the company make money; ad revenue, so they'll sell as many as they want and as little as they can. Is there a minimum number of ads to be sold for the publication; none, what does the Township have to do to sell ads; just provide the name and addresses, and we just need to provide the information to the publication. We did a rough estimate yesterday with the company with regards to postage, and it will be roughly \$700 per issue to send this out. I do not see any reason why we wouldn't do this, but I'm putting it out for any comments or questions.

Commissioner Valentine noted; if we did this, we had a contest for the name; can we still keep it that name? Commissioner La Rosa stated; it's ours, we can do whatever we want, adding; we can keep it, put it on the website and ask for suggestions, along with asking the residents what they would like to see.

A motion by Commissioner La Rosa, seconded by Vice President Palladino to move forward with the West Pottsgrove Township Newsletter. Roll Call: Palladino; yes, Valentine; yes, La Rosa; yes, Green; yes, Miller; yes.

President Miller commented; I will put you in charge of not the content, but as the liaison; yourself and the Township Manager, to gather the information. Vice President Palladino stated; I disagree, you should be in charge of the content and limit people's sentences and paragraphs. Commissioner Valentine also stated; reach out to the Commissioners for any input for articles.

#### **ARPA Funds**

Mr. Hutt reported; the Township's application to receive the American Rescue Plan Act funds has been successfully submitted. We are confirmed to receive the \$401,720.44, which will come in two installment payments. As previously discussed, our Township has only a few options for these funds; primarily being water and sewer. We are awaiting further guidance from the Government, as this remains a moving target.

Vice President Palladino stated; you have to give this young man credit because he started the application and the next day we got the email back saying what a great job he did on the application.

#### **CITIZEN'S COMMENTS**

There was none.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE**

There was none.

**ADJOURNMENT**

President Miller commented; before we adjourn, we are going to be going into 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.

A motion by Commissioner Green, seconded by Commissioner La Rosa to head into the Executive Session. Roll Call: Palladino; yes, Valentine; yes, La Rosa; yes, Green; yes, Miller; yes. The Workshop Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

*Respectfully Yours,*

*Joanne Herb  
Township Secretary*