

Board of Supervisors Meeting
Monday, November 23, 2020, 7:00 p.m.

The implementation of the GoToMeeting Remote Platform for public meetings complies with the Disaster Emergency Orders and Proclamations issued by Governor Wolf to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 Virus.

Attendance: physically present in the meeting room: Supervisors -Elaine DiMonte and Ray McKay. Supervisor Ricki Stumpo was not present. Online participants: Mark Knightly, Public Works Director; Bill Haaf, Energy Team; Jesse Noa, Chairman, Parks, Recreation and Trails ("PRT") Committee.

Public in attendance via remote access: 17

1. **Call to Order:** DiMonte called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. DiMonte indicated that Supervisor Stumpo is not available as she is recovering from surgery. Online participants were reminded that the Township will mute participants to eliminate background noise and feedback or participants can mute themselves. The Township will unmute all to allow for public comment.
2. **Sunshine Announcements:** Board met with GKO Architects on November 18th.
3. **Announcements:** Supervisors offered a reminder to all that in accordance with Township Code, political signs must be removed 7 days after election day.
4. **Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items:** no written submissions were received. Judy Lovell asked if the Supervisors would consider contracting for local police coverage as there is an ongoing issue with unlicensed motorcycles and ATVs utilizing Township roads and trails. DiMonte indicated that this will be discussed with Lieutenant Palmer, Avondale Station, as agenda item #8. Lovell also commented for the record that last month's discussion regarding the dog park was most upsetting given that Supervisor Stumpo had requested Lovell join the PRT Committee for the purpose of planning of a dog park. DiMonte thanked Lovell and noted that this can be discussed under agenda item #13a.
5. **Work Session:** November 18th Work Session was cancelled.
6. **Resolutions:**
 - a. Resolution 2020-18 Adopting 2021 Budget - DiMonte reviewed the Resolution. No public comment. MOTION: DiMonte moved, McKay seconded, to adopt Resolution 2020-18 officially adopting the Pocopson Township 2021 Budget; motion carried.
 - b. Resolution 2020-19 Setting Tax Rates - DiMonte reviewed the Resolution setting the fire protection tax, the ambulance, rescue and other emergency services tax, and the general fund tax on real property. No public comment. MOTION: McKay moved, DiMonte seconded, to adopt Resolution 2020-19 setting the tax rates for 2021; motion carried.

7. **State Police - Lieutenant Nicole Palmer, Avondale Station:** Lieutenant Palmer reported that Supervisor Stumpo had reached out to her regarding after hour activities in Pocopson Park. A patrol check can be set up via the Station CAD System so that all patrol cars will include a check-in at the Park. Palmer stated that the State Police are aware of unlicensed vehicles on the road and have on occasion impounded such vehicles in their storage yard. McKay noted that the dirt bike and ATV riders frequently travel Route 926 traversing Brintons Bridge Road between Pocopson and Pennsbury Townships. Palmer acknowledged that this is a problem in other municipalities and while officers will pursue the vehicles, they will not go off-road to continue pursuit. DiMonte asked if officers have responded to any after hour activities in Pocopson Park. Palmer indicated that there have been no encounters to date. DiMonte noted that the Public Works Department is gathering information for installation of a gate for the Locust Grove Road entrance to the Park. McKay added that a gate will stop cars/trucks from entering the Park but may not be a deterrent to ATVs and motorcycles. Supervisors asked if the Township could provide COVID-19 supplies to the Avondale Station. Lieutenant Palmer indicated that the Station is well stocked at this point thanks to community support. PUBLIC COMMENT: Lovell indicated that she has encouraged everyone to contact the State Police when they see dirt bikes and four-wheelers on the roadways, trails, or in the Park. She indicated that Lieutenant Palmer's presentation has provided her with answers to her questions.
8. **Public Works Report:** Knightly indicated that the Department has been working to ready the trucks, plows, and spreaders for snow and ice removal. There is sufficient road salt available through the end of the year. No public comment.
9. **Facilities:** DiMonte reported that the Board met with GKO Architects on November 18th to finalize the work for the bid package. The Township Solicitor continues to review the bid package which should be ready sometime in January. McKay reported that Barnard House projects for next year will include completion of the exterior and the back section. The Township has received preliminary estimates for this work. PUBLIC COMMENT: attendees acknowledged that the work on the Barnard House thus far is beautiful.
10. **Kennett Area EMS Commission:** no report.
11. **New Business:**
 - a. **Township Energy Team -** Haaf submitted correspondence requesting guidance and recommending actions. He noted that good communication between the Team and Supervisors is essential for input for energy efficiencies for the new Township building. Haaf requested the Board designate a Supervisor with whom the Team can establish a line of communication. McKay indicated that he would serve as the Board Liaison to the Team. Haaf indicated that current Team members offer a wide variety of expertise and expects that following publication of the Township newsletter, additional members may be added.
 - b. **2021 Public Meeting Dates/Legal Advertising -** DiMonte reported that PA law requires municipalities to meet on the first Monday of January to reorganize. The reorganization meeting will be January 4, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. Board approved the Secretary placing the legal advertisement for the meeting. Board will continue to meet

on the last Monday of the month with a work session convened the Wednesday before the Monday meeting if needed. Work sessions will begin at 6:30 p.m. The Board will approve the 2021 holiday schedule during the January 4th reorg meeting.

- c. Constant Contact Email Sign-up/Website Pop-up Form - DiMonte reported that a sign-up for the Constant Contact Email Notification is available on the Township website. When you access the Township website, a pop-up window will allow you to register by entering your name and email. Pass the word around so that you can receive official Township notices. No public comment.
- d. Township Representative to West Chester Public Library - Board recognized that Scott Kirkland has been the representative for several years and is not able to continue as Township Representative. Board is in receipt of the resume of Kiran Rotkar who has expressed interest in serving. No public comment. MOTION: McKay moved, DiMonte seconded, to recommend the appointment of Kiran Rotkar as the Pocopson Township Representative to the West Chester Public Library; motion carried.

12. Old Business:

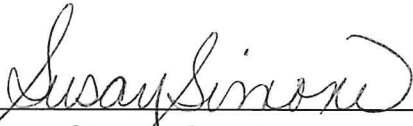
- a. Parks, Recreation and Trails Committee/Dog Park Rules - Judy Lovell reiterated her previous public comment noting that she was upset by last month's public discussion given that Supervisor Stumpo asked her to join the PRT because of her knowledge of canine rescue programs. As a PRT member, Lovell provided sample dog park rules and usage registration samples. The PRT was not aware that County money was used to acquire and develop Pocopson Park and therefore PRT could not limit the registrations for dog park usage. Lovell noted that she spoke to 3 fence vendors and obtained proposals. The PRT had reasoned that the best location in Pocopson Park would be the field area below the adult exercise equipment trail, only to learn that the location had been revised by Public Works Department to the flat area discussed last month. Lovell said she and the PRT had spent a great deal of time on the design of the dog park fencing to accommodate the original sloped area location. She added that a suggestion to move the dog park to the Barnard House Property would remove the project altogether from the PRT agenda. She continued that the project was in no way haphazard and that there is support in the community for a dog park. Lovell commented that Supervisor Stumpo is the liaison to the PRT and attended meetings and provided support until about a year ago. She concluded that the PRT has been unfairly judged on this project. DiMonte responded that she had moved to approve the dog park and the fencing. While she is not a dog owner, she has an open mind for the details of the project, but clearly additional communication is necessary, particularly regarding staffing and administration. McKay responded that he did not have all the facts on the dog park and had continually attempted to educate himself on dog parks generally. His research by visiting dog parks in other municipalities and gathering information on legalities and liabilities was not meant as a criticism of the PRT. Noa commented that the PRT put together rules and a description of the process to use the dog park using exemplars during committee discussions and solely without access to the Township Solicitor. McKay responded that as an elected Supervisor, he

has the responsibility to look at the liability to the Township and to address any legal issues that might accompany the project. If the Board decides to move ahead with the project, lines of communication must be open. Lovell asked to be heard for clarification regarding the PRT's interest in charging a nominal fee for use of the dog park to offset the cost of the project. It is her understanding that this is not possible because of the County funds allocated for development of the Park, even though the Township requires reservation fees for use of other facilities in the Park. McKay responded that County funds were used in acquisition and development of the Park. Charging fees to use or reserve a facility is a separate matter. DiMonte responded that McKay is new to the Board and that Stumpo and the previous Board certainly recognize the PRT dog park project as ongoing. The Board is grateful to Lovell and PRT for all the work they've done to date on this project. However, the Board may have dropped the ball to some extent in not providing the level of feedback, required support, and notifications particularly considering the public and written comments received of late. DiMonte added that the Township will pause now and revisit the project in the spring. The Board will work to find a path forward that includes greater involvement in identifying a location, design, and administration. Based on the number of online participants for this agenda item, the Board recognizes that communication is critical on project details and will work to get information out to the public. McKay echoed DiMonte's comments and added that he would like to see everyone work together. He did not intend to criticize anyone, and he appreciates the work of the PRT. Lovell asked the Board to appoint an active liaison who will be able to attend PRT meetings. DiMonte indicated that this will be considered during the reorganizational meeting on January 4th. McKay had expected to attend the November virtual PRT meeting but was not able to do so due to an emergency. Board thanked PRT members for their comments this evening and agreed to pause the proposed dog park project at this time. Suzy Breiseth asked what the cost for the dog park will be to taxpayers. Noa responded that based on the proposals, the cost is roughly in the \$17,000.00 range. However, the cost fluctuates based on location. Breiseth thanked the Board for their comments this evening and believes the Board will recognize administration and liabilities going forward. Steve Hutton commented that he appreciates the way the Board has graciously handled the discussion and comments, and he thanked the Board for their consideration in rethinking the project. He agreed that communication is vital and that neighbors need to be more attuned into what's going on in the Township. Breiseth also commented that she appreciates the Board acting regarding the Pocopson Park gate.

- b. **PA Historic Marker/Battlefield** - McKay reported that the Brandywine Battlefield Historic Interpretative Marker Project seeks to develop an interpretive historic marker along the route the British took to Chadds Ford. Brandywine Red Clay Alliance has agreed to a posting of a marker on their property along Red Lion Road. The cost is \$3,000.00 and has been discussed and approved during previous public meetings. The marker will be like that which has been erected at the Locust Grove Schoolhouse.

No public comment. MOTION: McKay moved, DiMonte seconded, to approve the Agreement for Services for the development and installation of an interpretive historic marker as described therein; motion carried.

13. **Correspondence:** no correspondence.
14. **Treasurer's Warrants:** DiMonte moved, McKay seconded, to approve the Bill Payment Lists for October 27 - November 23, 2020 recommended for payment by the Treasurer; General Fund: 37 bills totaling \$36011.44; 7 debit card charges totaling \$443.73; Highway Aid: 3 bills totaling \$761.52; Parks, Recreation & Trails: 2 bills for \$612.74; Township Facilities: 3 bills totaling \$25,050.25; motion approved.
15. **Approval of Meeting Minutes:** MOTION: DiMonte moved, McKay seconded, to accept the October 26, 2020 Meeting Minutes as submitted; motion carried.
16. **Adjournment:** at 8:02 p.m., Supervisors wished everyone all the best for a safe and healthy and Happy Thanksgiving and to be thankful for all the many blessings we have, McKay moved, DiMonte seconded to adjourn the meeting; motion carried.



Susan Simone, Secretary



Elaine DiMonte, Vice Chairman