

The stated meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Abington was held on Thursday, May 11, 2023, via webinar and in-person at the Township Administration Building, Abington, PA, with President Hecker presiding.

CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present: Commissioners ROTHMAN, DiPLACIDO, VAUGHN, THOMPSON, WINEGRAD, HENRY, ZAPPONE, CARSWELL, SPIEGELMAN, BOLE, SCHREIBER, VAHEY, HECKER
Excused: Commissioners BRODSKY, BOWMAN

Also Present: Township Manager MANFREDI
Township Solicitor CLARKE

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

BOARD PRESIDENT ANNOUNCEMENTS: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS:

Lora Lehmann, resident, asked for more transparency regarding personnel changes.

Adele Kubel, resident, asked who will replace Commissioner Thompson.

President Hecker replied there is a process per the First Class Township Code that will be followed after acceptance of Commissioner Thompson's resignation.

Mike Tobin, resident, questioned whether the person replacing Commissioner Thompson will chair the Comprehensive Plan Development Team. Also, what is the process for getting a question/answer period for residents during these meetings?

President Hecker replied we have no idea who will replace Commissioner Thompson because the formal process has not begun, and the process will be explained during the agenda item.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Vice President Vahey made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Bole to approve Items a. and b. as listed under Consent Agenda as follows:

To approve the minutes from the Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting of April 13, 2023.

To ratify the Opioid Settlement Agreements.

President Hecker asked for any comments from Commissioners. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 13-0.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Item BOC-02-051123:

Vice President Vahey made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Schreiber to adopt Resolution No. 23-006 affirming the Township Procurement Policy.

President Hecker asked for any comments from Commissioners. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 13-0.

Item BOC-03-051123:

Vice President Vahey made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Schreiber to advertise Traffic Safety Ordinance No. 2206 amending Chapter 156 “Vehicles and Traffic,” Article II – “Traffic Regulations,” Section 14 – “Stop Intersections;” Section 18 – “Vehicle Weight Limits Established;” and Article III – “Parking Regulations” Section 25 – “Parking Prohibited at All Times; No Parking Between Signs; No Parking Here to Corner; Parking Prohibited Except Certain Hours; No Stopping or Standing” and to add “Stop” signs on Huron Avenue southbound at Cypress Avenue and northbound at Jenkintown Road, Laurance Avenue, eastbound at Huron Avenue, Roanoke Avenue eastbound at Huron Avenue, Crefeld Avenue eastbound at Huron Avenue, establish a maximum vehicle weight limit of 6 tons on Washington Lane between Township Line Road and Wyncote Road and add a “No Parking Here to Corner” sign on Rossiter southside at Fitzwatertown Road.

President Hecker asked for any comments from Commissioners. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 13-0.

Item BOC-04-051123:

Vice President Vahey made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Schreiber to appoint Patricia Gallagher, Steven Sacavage and Anna Nicholaides to the Shade Tree Commission for a term ending on 12/31/27 as included in Exhibit A.

President Hecker asked for any comments from Commissioners.

Vice President Vahey recognized Ms. Nicholaides and Mr. Sacavage who worked as volunteers on the Shade Tree Commission for years without an official appointment, so he is excited to see their promotion tonight.

Commissioner Thompson recognized Ms. Gallagher for her work on the Comprehensive Plan Development Team and congratulated her continuance on the Shade Tree Commission.

MOTION was ADOPTED 13-0.

Item BOC-05-051123:

Vice President Vahey made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Thompson to adopt Resolution No. 23-007 approving an Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement between the Township of Abington and Upper Moreland Township to allow the use of the Upper Moreland Township Board of Code Appeals and authorize the Township Manager to execute the agreement.

President Hecker asked for any comments from Commissioners. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 13-0.

Item BOC-06-051123:

Vice President Vahey made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Thompson to affirm the acceptance of \$865,375 through County of Montgomery, PA Pandemic Recovery Fund, and to approve the subrecipient agreement by and between the County of Montgomery, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the Township of Abington, and authorize the proper officials to execute the agreement.

President Hecker asked for any comments from Commissioners. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 13-0.

Item BOC-07-051123:

Vice President Vahey made a MOTION, seconded by President Hecker to accept the resignation of Michael Thompson, Commissioner for Ward 6, effective May 12, 2023.

President Hecker asked for any comments from Commissioners.

Commissioner Bole thanked Commissioner Thompson for the time he spent discussing numerous topics concerning matters of land development helping us better serve the Township.

MOTION was ADOPTED 13-0.

President Hecker said we have accepted the resignation of Commissioner Michael Thompson, and the First Class Township Code requires that the Board of Commissioners make an appointment to that role within 30 days, so Ward 6 residents will be asked to submit a letter of interest and resume to the Township.

FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Item FC-01-051123:

Commissioner Winegrad made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Carswell to approve the March 2023 expenditures in the amount of \$2,532,112.52 and salaries and wages in the amount of \$2,176,052.51, and authorize the proper officials to sign in payment of bills and contracts as they mature through the month of June 2023.

Roll call resulted in motion being passed 13-0. Commissioners Brodsky and Bowman were absent during roll call.

Item FC-03-051123:

Commissioner Winegrad made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Carswell to adopt Resolution No. 23-008 to authorize and reaffirm the Abington Township Fire Department Length of Service Award Programs (LOSAP) and set forth the funding source and procedure for funding the program.

Mr. McAneney explained that LOSAP is a defined contribution program for eligible members of the fire department. The Abington Township Fire Department is all-volunteer with approximately 230 active members, averaging 1,700 calls for service, and 20-25 of them are fires. Maintaining the LOSAP has been an integral part of our recruitment and retention process, which is a monetary award eligible to members turning 60 years old. He requested the Board of Commissioners pass this and thanked them for their support.

President Hecker asked for any comments from Commissioners. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 13-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Adele Kubel, resident, expressed concern about neglect and environmental blight at Raymour & Flanagan that has no daily maintenance service, and the 500 block of Old York Road has decimated curb sides; also, about the amount of public speaking time.

Manager Manfredi replied steps are being taken to address issues with the Raymour & Flanagan property, and there is a draft ordinance that has been presented in committee that addresses curbs and sidewalks.

George Clay, resident, 100 York Apartments, expressed concern about mold underneath the wallpaper in the hallway, that when removed was not cleaned, and then painted over, which is a health issue. There is a broken elevator, water leaks in the basement, and the garage door is broken, which are safety concerns. Also, how can the building be made ADA accessible?

President Hecker replied regarding ADA accessibility, the Township will need to look into whether there have been any violations, and we will follow up on it.

Commissioner Zappone asked about the inspection of elevators.

Mr. McAneney replied the 100 York Apartments has two elevators in service and the others have been out for the past two months, and they have been cited twice for it. The 101 Washington Lane building has two elevators working that are in compliance with Township code.

Manager Manfredi added that the Township will verify whether there has been the proper treatment of mold.

Ross Able, resident, thanked Commissioner Thompson for all his fantastic work on the Comprehensive Plan as well as to Commissioner Spiegelman for his help with salvaging a door from the demolition on Susquehanna Road.

Also, he requested that the Township work with Jenkintown Borough, Cheltenham Township and PennDOT to study traffic calming on Rt. 611 specifically adjacent to Jenkintown reducing the speed limit from 40 to 25 MPH as well as on The Fairway, and he would like the Township to pursue grants for sidewalks east of Jenkintown.

Manager Manfredi replied there has been discussions with a member of the Jenkintown Planning Commission about scheduling a meeting.

Lora Lehmann, resident, expressed concern about the issues at 100 York Apartments.

Trevor Lee, resident and member of the Jenkintown Abington Neighbors Association, commented that he supports the Township pursuing a park at Noble Station as well as the TOD plans for a walkable mixed-use environment.

Nora Salzman, resident, encouraged the Township to proactively engage with SEPTA as the changes with the bridge will negatively impact many residents, and she would like to be able to provide input as well as be apprised of the changes of this multiyear plan. She also supports traffic calming for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Karen Milovcich, resident, expressed concern about not overdeveloping and “destroying our community,” which is why we are over-populated and have too much traffic, and there is not enough space, services, or goods.

Lisa Mallon, resident, expressed concern that the draft Comprehensive Plan’s buildout analysis includes 244 units at Redstone at Baederwood with an estimated new population of 407 along The Fairway as well as the potential shopping center and infill residential developments and the 297 units in Noble near Trader Joe’s. She moved here for the living environment and safe neighborhoods, and there has been discussion about parks, but there are plans for additional apartment buildings in the same locations as proposed parks.

Mike Tobin, resident, commented that people moved out of the city because they want space and we do not want more apartment buildings. Our schools are not equipped to handle the influx of students, “the roads are terrible,” and additional units will increase greenhouse gas emissions. The Comprehensive Plan does nothing for affordable housing because they will not be low-income housing, so before it is approved make sure the Township knows what the citizens want.

Manager Manfredi replied that the Comprehensive Plan Development Team worked with a planner to develop a document that still has not been completed. Dates will be scheduled for additional public input specifically on the future land use map, and then it will be brought before the Comprehensive Plan Consistency Committee where public input will be taken, and that will take place prior to review by the Board of Commissioners.

Also, he thanked Mr. McAneney and Fire Marshal Platz for their tireless work enforcing Township codes.

Vice President Vahey said that he and Commissioner Mike Thompson ran together in 2017, and then again two years ago, and there is a connection you build with a running mate supporting each other through political quagmires and some personal challenges. He thanked Mike for being such a good friend and he will be missed.

President Hecker shared those sentiments, and he has learned a great deal about architecture and land development from Mike who has an uncanny ability to translate that language into something we can understand, digest and work together in making important decisions on behalf of the Township. Commissioner Thompson's compassion and dedication for making this community a better place is remarkable and his leadership around an inclusive park is something that will be remembered in this Township for years to come.

President Hecker and Vice President Vahey presented Commissioner Michael Thompson with a Citation acknowledging his outstanding service and dedication as member of the Board of Commissioners, and in remembrance of his achievements and serving the people of Abington with respect and care with this formal expression of gratitude and thanks on behalf of the Township Manager and the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Abington on this 11th day of May 2023.

ADJOURNMENT: 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Vile, Minutes Secretary

The following resolutions were adopted by the Board of Commissioners on May 11, 2023:

Resolution No. 23-006

Resolution No. 23-007

Resolution No. 23-008