

The stated meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Abington was held as a Zoom webinar and teleconference on Thursday, June 10, 2021, with President Spiegelman presiding.

CALL TO ORDER: 6:31 p.m.

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

Also Present: Township Manager MANFREDI
Assistant Township Manager WEHMEYER
Township Treasurer BLUMENTHAL
Township Solicitor CLARKE

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

BOARD PRESIDENT ANNOUNCEMENTS:

President Spiegelman announced that on June 7th and June 10th Executive Sessions were held by the Board of Commissioners to discuss employee and employment matters.

Also, on Friday, June 4th, the Progress Pride Flag was hoisted up the flagpole in front of the Township building in celebration of June Pride Month, and he thanked everyone who attended this historic moment. Images of the flag can be found on the Township's website and Facebook page.

PRESENTATIONS: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS:

Patrick Kucharski, 601 Monroe Avenue, commented that the massage establishment located at Monroe Avenue and Jenkintown Road was closed, and he and his family are grateful. The proposed ordinance is so important not only for the safety of his family, but for the entire Township. Also, the County has formed a new Human Trafficking Taskforce and he would be willing as a citizen to volunteer to help those in need.

Lora Lehmann, 1431 Bryant Lane, expressed concern about the massage parlor issue and suggested a special town hall meeting to discuss it.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Vice President Hecker made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Brodsky to approve Items a. – h. as listed under Consent Agenda as follows:

To approve the minutes from the Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting of May 13, 2021.

To approve the stipulation to settle the matter of Noble Town Center v. the Montgomery Assessment Appeals ET AL and authorize Wisler Pearlstine to sign the stipulation on behalf of the Township of Abington.

To approve the stipulation to settle the matter of Hillside Cemetery v. the Montgomery Assessment Appeals ET AL and authorize Wisler Pearlstine to sign the stipulation on behalf of the Township of Abington.

To approve a Traffic Signal Maintenance Agreement between the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Transportation, and the Township of Abington for Old York Road (SR 0611) and Rodman Avenue; and for Old York Road (SR 0611) and Baeder Road/Hilltop Road adopting a resolution authorizing the Township Manager to sign accordingly.

To approve the release of Escrow No. 1 on the Land Development – LD-18-05 – Mediplex Abington Project located at 1137 – 1151 Old York Road in the amount of \$532,955.25.

To approve the release of Escrow No. 1 on the Subdivision – 1768 Kimball Avenue in the amount of \$10,750.00.

To award the Ardsley Community Center ADA Lift Contract to LJ Paolella Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$127,748.00 and authorize the Township Manager to execute the contract.

To accept the Financial Reports for April 2021 including Investments, Clearing Fund, Deferred Revenue/Expense Activity, Petty Cash Balances, Travel Expenses and Statement of Conditions.

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

MOTION was ADOPTED 14-0.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:

Item BOC-03-061021:

Vice President Hecker made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Carswell to amend the Per Diem Union CBA and the Police CBA to provide for Emancipation Day as a paid holiday.

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

MOTION was ADOPTED 14-0.

Item BOC-04-061021:

Vice President Hecker made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Schreiber to adopt Resolution No. 21-015 ratifying the Declaration of Disaster and State of Emergency from May 27, 2021 to June 10, 2021, and approving the Declaration through June 17, 2021.

President Spiegelman asked for any comments from Commissioners.

Commissioner Thompson questioned how the legislature's actions today will affect this agenda item that extends the declaration through June 17th.

Solicitor Clarke replied what the legislature passed today seemingly has a provision that will allow portions of various codes that were suspended during the emergency to continue until the declaration of emergency expires sometime in September. A copy of the Bill has been received and will be reviewed and we will consult with State Legislators to get clarity on whether we will continue virtual meetings throughout the summer or return to in-person meetings in July.

MOTION was ADOPTED 14-0.

LAND USE COMMITTEE:

Item LU-03-061021:

Commissioner Thompson made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Vahey to adopt Ordinance No. 2183 repealing and replacing Chapter 105 - "Massage Establishments" in its entirety.

President Spiegelman asked for any comments from Commissioners.

Commissioner Thompson thanked the residents of Ardsley for their comments on this ordinance, which made a huge difference and were very impactful, and he fully supports moving this forward.

He also thanked the Abington Police Department as they were taking action on-scene last month while discussion on this matter was taking place. He asked Chief Molly for an update.

Chief Molloy reported that over the last several months, there were two arrests, and these types of investigations can be complex when they involve multi-jurisdictions. We have worked closely with Commissioner Thompson and Commissioner Zappone on this ordinance to provide another tool to address this issue as well as limit exposure of victims in other massage parlors in the Township. Lt. Steve Fink, Commander of Investigations Division, did an outstanding job executing a search warrant and he continues to work to bring an end to this matter.

MOTION was ADOPTED 14-0.

FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Receive Treasurer's Report:

Township Treasurer Jay W. Blumenthal reported that monies deposited into Republic Bank for the month of May 2021 were in the amount of \$14,456,789 representing an increase over prior year of \$9,562,966, and an increase of \$13,708,649 YTD. Real estate taxes collected in May 2021 were \$664,953 as compared to May of 2020 of \$1,51,134, representing a decrease of 986,181, which is a matter of timing.

Item FC-01-061021:

Commissioner Vahey made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Myers to approve the April 2021 expenditures in the amount of \$2,170,276.86 and salaries and wages in the amount of \$1,892,257.39 and authorize the proper officials to sign vouchers in payment of bills and contracts as they mature through the month of July 2021.

Roll call resulted in motion being passed 14-0. Commissioner Vaughn was absent during roll call.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Lora Lehmann, 1431 Bryant Lane, commented that she sent signed petitions by residents for “no residential” at the Willow Grove Mall. Also, she expressed concern about speaking rights.

Mike Tobin, resident of Fox Chase Manor, asked for resident's questions to be directly answered immediately during the meeting. Also, he is "anti-overdevelopment" and whatever is done at the mall will set the stage for other properties to be redeveloped. The Township needs to get the public involved in the process early and we do not want mass congestion of residential buildings in the Township. Also, the developer needs to follow the existing rules.

Manager Manfredi replied that the Commissioners as well as Township staff are happy to answer any questions.

Linda Montz, 47 Twin Brooks Drive, commented that we are just "spinning our wheels unless we get a humongous amount of people to complain," and much of what is being discussed are "done deals," and she can accept that as we have elected the Board and that is their job.

President Spiegelman replied that each Commissioner does in fact listen to all our constituents and the decisions made are intended to serve the greater good for all residents of the Township collectively.

Patrick Kucharski, 601 Monroe Avenue, suggested researching what types of massage parlors are in existence in each ward as well as inventory other existing ordinances.

Mandy McClenaghan, 719 Harrison Avenue, said it takes outstanding citizens to speak up against the massage parlors that cause unsafe conditions in the neighborhoods.

Fredrick Wright, resident, questioned whether there is a firm date for when in-person meetings will be held.

President Spiegelman replied that the target date to resume in-person meetings will be in September with whatever necessary precautions.

ADJOURNMENT: 7:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Vile, Minutes Secretary

The following resolution and ordinance were adopted by the Board of Commissioners on June 10, 2021 as follows:

Resolution No. 21-015

Ordinance No. 2183