

The stated meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Abington was held on Thursday, September 12, 2024 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 BRODSKY, ROTHMAN, DiPLACIDO, BROWNE, WINEGRAD, HENRY, ZAPPONE, YOUNG-GERTZ, SPIEGELMAN, BOLE, SCHREIBER, BOWMAN, VAHEY, HECKER
Excused: Commissioner LANEY-MARTIN

Also Present: Township Manager Manfredi
Assistant Legal Counsel Gallagher

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

BOARD PRESIDENT ANNOUNCEMENTS: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS:

Adele Kubel, resident, expressed concern about citizens on zoom not being able to speak about the 1583 Rothley property, and that a citizen requested documents that were not provided in time for the meeting.

Joe Rooney, resident, commented yesterday was the 9/11 tragedy, and he thanked the police and first responders for their unbelievable efforts every day. Also, regarding the finance report, he questioned whether a check was written to pay the fine; he asked about the check for Open Records to Rudolph Clarke; a check for Cricket Avenue Sheridan; and what the Township pays Jay Blumenthal.

President Hecker replied answers will be provided.

Lora Lehmann, resident, expressed concern about the EDC using unlimited amounts of professional time including legal and engineering and they need to keep a time record on what is not direct Township business. Also, regarding the Vacant Property Review Board, Abington people should be deciding what happens to the property in Abington. Also, the Cedar Road item should not be passed.

President Hecker replied that is exactly what will be occurring as the members listed will be moved from voting to nonvoting status.

Mike Tobin, resident, commented that he is glad the voting rights will be taken away from those members and he would like to see more Abington residents on that committee. He would like that committee to be reengaged, and he would volunteer to be on that committee. He understands there are startup costs for the EDC, but it needs to stand on its own and the costs generated need to be justified. We need to see whether they will bring anything to the community, and if not, disband it.

President Hecker said we agree and that is why the agreement is structured the way it is to give the manager the ability to control how much time and labor is being spent as we work on a plan to make the EDC sustainable over time.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Vice President Vahey made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Spiegelman to approve Items a. – d. as listed under Consent Agenda as follows:

To approve the minutes from the Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting of August 8, 2024.

To adopt Traffic Safety Ordinance No. 2218 amending Chapter 156 – “Vehicles and Traffic,” Article III – “Traffic 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 Section 28 – “Special Purpose Parking Zones” to add the following: “No Parking Here To Corner” signs on Colonial Avenue, east side, at Radcliffe Avenue and a point 30’ north and Colonial Avenue, east side, at Lafayette Avenue and a point 30’ south; and “Handicapped Parking” signs at 2217 Albright Avenue and 2549 Ardsley Avenue and; remove a “Handicapped Parking” sign at 1024 Tyson Avenue.

To approve the Abington Township Fire Department Records Management System contract and authorize the Township Manager to execute the agreement.

To adopt Ordinance No. 2217 amending Chapter 160 – Towing Sections 4 and 5 and 7 through 9; and repealing all inconsistent ordinances.

MOTION was ADOPTED 14-0.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

BOC-04-091224:

Vice President Vahey made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner DiPlacido to approve SD-21-03-365 Cedar Road Final Major Subdivision Land Development Plan and adopt Resolution No. 24-033.

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

MOTION was ADOPTED 14-0.

Item BOC-05-091224:

Vice President Vahey made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Schreiber to approve the Management Services Agreement between the Abington Township Economic Development Corporation and Abington Township.

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

MOTION was ADOPTED 14-0.

Item BOC-06-091224:

Vice President Vahey made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Schreiber to adopt Resolution No. 24-034 accepting the recommendation of the Management Committee regarding formation of a Municipal Consortium to implement the WQIP.

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

MOTION was ADOPTED 14-0.

Item BOC-07-091224:

Vice President Vahey made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Spiegelman to authorize amending and advertising Ordinance No. 2098 – Vacant Property Review Board by amending Section 49.3, providing that the Executive Director of the Redevelopment Authority (RDA) and member of the Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) serve as advisory ex-officio members versus voting members.

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

MOTION was ADOPTED 14-0.

FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Item FC-01-091224:

Commissioner Winegrad made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Brodsky to approve the July 2024 expenditures in the amount of \$3,149,231.90 and salaries and wages in the amount of \$2,496,403.46 and authorize the proper officials to sign and approve invoices and supporting documentation in payment of bills and contracts as they mature through the month of October 2024.

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

Item FC-02-091224:

Commissioner Winegrad made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Brodsky to adopt Resolution No. 24-035 recognizing that the Township's minimum municipal funding obligation for the calendar year 2025 with respect to the Municipal Non-Uniformed Employee, Police and Non-Uniformed Employee Defined Contribution Plans, is \$925,984.00, \$3,631,594.00, and \$340,000.00, respectively.

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

MOTION was ADOPTED 14-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Adele Kubel, resident, expressed concern that Abington Jefferson Hospital owns blighted properties causing neighborhood decline and homeowners to move out and then speculators to move in. The center islands of Old York consist of crumbled cement and 4 ft. weeds; the Rydal Train Station Bridge has trash and garbage piling up on Susquehanna; \$19 million in COVID funding with no new resources and citizens were promised resources for the Roslyn Library improvement; and why are blighted property owners given opportunities to build apartments.

Joe Rooney, resident, thanked Adele for the work she does. Also, he thanked Mr. McAneney for his assistance with getting Verizon to fix the power pole that had been down on Maple Avenue since August. He asked about spot zoning on Rothley and how do we say "no" when someone else wants to do the same on another property?

Fran Early, representing the North Hills Community Association, announced that we will be having a Scarecrow Contest, and he provided an informational flyer to the Township.

Lora Lehmann, resident, expressed concern about the time and money being spent on the Economic Development Corporation without showing what we are getting for it. The Vacant Property Review Board was set up for speculators to be connected to the people who want to get rid of properties and the code is not being enforced causing much of the blight.

Ross Abel, resident, said he supports learning about Vision Zero in helping to prevent deaths on our streets through traffic calming and infrastructure for pedestrians, children, the disabled and cyclists. According to PennDOT from 2018 to 2022, there were three pedestrians killed on Old York Road and 46 injured bike drivers. He requested that the Township work with Montco and DVRPC to pursue a multi-municipal traffic calming study with Jenkintown and Cheltenham neighbors to bring safety to our residents.

He thanked Commissioner Winegrad for his work on the Abington Jenkintown Connections Plan as well as the Township and Public Works Department for making it happen. He would like to see Washington Lane be made safer and more walkable by finding ways to slow traffic by lowering speed limits, installing “Stop” signs, and raised crossings. Also, how we can give residents a process to request traffic calming and safer street infrastructure in their neighborhood.

President Hecker said he along with Commissioner Winegrad are working with Township staff to identify additional ways to bring traffic calming to Washington Lane.

Mike Tobin, resident, questioned whether the Township has signed off and approved the St. Basil’s property development. Also, regarding the Comp Plan, citizens had many questions, and it has been over a year since we last met and there is a lot that still needs to be resolved. And the Vacant Property Review Board does need to be restarted, and he would like to see more Abington citizens on that committee.

Commissioner Browne recognized Mr. Fran Early, who is a valued member of the North Hills community who worked hard in getting the North Hills Community Association off the ground, and he thanked Fran for his leadership and looks forward to working with him in the future.

ADJOURNMENT: 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Vile, Minutes Secretary

The following ordinances and resolutions were adopted by the Board of Commissioners on September 12, 2024:

Ordinance No. 2217

Ordinance No. 2218

Resolution No. 24-033

Resolution No. 24-034

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