

**WHITEMARSH TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

MAY 14, 2020

The Regular Monthly Meeting of the Whitemarsh Township Board of Supervisors was held on Thursday, May 14, 2020 at 6:00 PM, a virtual ZOOM meeting, due to COVID-19 pandemic.

Supervisors Present: Laura Boyle Nester, Chair; Fran McCusker, Vice-Chair; Michael Drossner; Vincent Manuele and Jacy Toll.

Also Present: Richard L. Mellor, Jr., Township Manager; Sean Kilkenny, Township Solicitor; James Hersh, P.E. Township Engineer and Charles L. Guttenplan, AICP

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Tom Blomstrom, Director of Parks and Recreation

Mr. Blomstrom stated he hopes that Township families are remaining safe & healthy during these extraordinary times. As has been announced in the media, many summer programs, activities, and special events are being cancelled throughout the County, Region, and State due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Understandably, the Township has been receiving questions regarding how COVID-19 will affect our Parks and Recreation summer camps this year. As a result and to best serve and communicate with the public, the Parks and Recreation Department has developed a landing page on the Township Website under Parks and Recreation titled "Summer Camp COVID 19 Updates". The direct link is <https://www.whitemarshtwp.org/Summer-Camp-COVID-19-Updates>. This web page will provide answers to some of the most common camp-related questions that we have received. It will also include the most up-to-date summer camp information made available by our department. This information will be updated as developments occur, so participants are encouraged to check back periodically. The landing page will be live at 4:00pm on Thursday, May 14th. At this time, all Whitemarsh Township summer camps are currently running as scheduled. The Parks and Recreation Team are diligently working to develop new processes & protocols aimed to maintain a safe and healthy camp environment, which is always our top priority. This continues to be an extremely fluid situation, and our department will continue to monitor and abide by all guidance provided by the Governor, County, CDC, and DOH, as well as professional recommendations by NRPA & PRPS, as are possible. Please note that, as these guidelines and recommendations become clearer in forthcoming weeks, the Township will be determining the best course for participant and employee safety. This may lead to cancellation of camps and trips, delaying the beginning start dates of camps, reducing the participant attendance at camps, altering hours and camp structures, implementing new inclement weather policies, and requiring a variety of new safety protocols. In the event that there are any relevant updates or changes to our 2020 summer camp plans moving forward, we will be sure to communicate them to the Website "Summer Camp COVID 19 Updates" landing page as soon as possible.

Supervisor McCusker announced a reminder to all residents; please complete your 2020 census if you haven't already. To date, 62% of Montgomery County residents have replied, and 74.4% of Whitemarsh residents have replied. If you have questions about the census, their call center is open from 7am-2am daily: 844-330-2020

Have you requested a Mail-In Ballot for the upcoming Primary Election? The deadline for all Mail-in and Absentee Ballot applications is May 26th. To file an online application, visit www.VOTESPA.com. You can also confirm your registration by contacting the Montgomery County Voter Services Officer at: (610) 278-3280.

Valley Green Bridge is OPEN! Motorists should take note of new traffic signage and vehicle barriers in that area.

The Parks and Recreation Department invites you to join magician Aril Paul tomorrow evening at 7:30 PM for a family-friendly magic show.

Are you searching for way to keep your family entertained this Friday Night? Then Parks and Rec just pulled a rabbit out of their hat! Join Magician Ari Paul at 7:30 PM for an interactive blend of comedy and magic. Register at the Parks page on the Township website. Be sure to check out the many other online programs while you're there.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. April 9, 2020

On a motion by Supervisor McCusker, seconded by Supervisor Drossner (Vote 5-0) the Board of Supervisors approved the April 9, 2020 meeting minutes.

BOARD PUBLIC DISCUSSION ITEMS

ORDINANCES

1. 3-way Stop Sign at West Valley Green Road and Hunt Lane and 3-way Stop Sign at West Valley Green Road and Creek Lane

Mr. Mellor began by explaining Montgomery County is getting ready to open the West Valley Green Bridge. The stop signs proposed will slow traffic down heading to the bridge. Supervisor Manuele stated installing the stop signs is a life-safety situation. There was a discussion about the reconstruction of the bridge. Mr. Mellor explained there will be stop signs and they will light up to alert people to stop. He explained the County will be installing them. He explained this is a life safety issue. He also explained there is a pedestrian crossing near the bridge and this will be another safety precaution. Mr. Mellor stated the Township met with County officials and provided Township input. He explained the signage has been collaboration with the County, but it is the Township who enforces the law. There was a discussion about whether or not the signs will be permanent.

Joan Biddle (Henry Lane) asked why speed bumps weren't considered instead of stop signs. Mr. Mellor explained the County looked at an array of possibilities, he stated because of the bends in the road, etc. the road does not warrant speed humps.

On a motion by Supervisor Drossner, seconded by Supervisor Toll (Vote 5-0) the Board of Supervisors adopted **Ordinance #999** amending Chapter 111, "Vehicles and Traffic", Article II, "Traffic Regulations", of the Code of the Township of Whitmarsh to establish 3-way stop intersections at West Valley Green Road and Hunt Lane and West Valley Green Road and Creek Lane.

2. Brake Retarder Restriction on Joshua and Flourtown Roads

Mr. Mellor explained the Township has received several complaints over the past few years with regards to large trucks utilizing brake retarders commonly referred to as Jake or J-brakes. They are engaged by trucks when downshifting or in the motion of braking. As a result, they are very loud and considered a nuisance by those residents who have complained. He stated the Police Department researched and found several surrounding municipalities have ordinances for specific roadways that restrict their use. In order place this restriction to occur along a State roadway, it required PENNDOT to perform a study to determine if this restriction is permitted. The Township requested the study last year and PENNDOT authorized the Township could allow the brake retarder restriction along the following two sections of State roads: Flourtown Road between Butler Pike and Joshua Road and Joshua Road between Stenton Avenue and Flourtown Road

On a motion by Supervisor Manuel, seconded by Supervisor Toll (Vote 5-0) the Board of Supervisors adopted **Ordinance #1000** amending the Vehicle and Traffic provisions of the Code of the Township of Whitmarsh to prohibit the use of Engine Brake Retarders AKA "Jake Brakes" on Flourtown Road from Joshua Road to Butler Pike and on Joshua Road from Flourtown Road to Stenton Avenue pursuant to a study performed PENNDOT.

RESOLUTIONS

None

MOTIONS

1. Non-uniformed Pension Plan

Mr. Mellor explained Nate Crittendon, Director of Finance and I have been evaluating the non-uniformed pension plans with Michael Courtney from RBC who was appointed plan fiduciary. He stated the Township's non-uniformed defined contribution and deferred compensation plans are currently with ICMA RC. Since a new financial plan manager took over our account a few years ago we have struggled to receive consistent and responsive service to our employees. We also have not examined the pricing in the years that I have been with the organization. The plan costs are paid for by the Township. These two contributing factors are the reason it was prudent to look at other options. According to Mike Courtney, ICMA RC pricing of 15 basis points was high compared to the others in the pension market. We requested ICMA RC to provide us better pricing which they came back with 6.5 basis points. When evaluating other options Nationwide provided the most competitive pricing at 3 basis points. Mr. Crittendon and I met with

Nationwide and were very impressed with their funds offered (Vanguard, T. Rowe Price, etc.) which are common in retirement plans as well as cost efficient. Also, the customer service plan that Nationwide would provide includes meeting with the employees to discuss topics and trends several times per year and conducting individual meetings with the employees to review plan performance and make recommendations. This is no different than what is provided for the police pension plan but ICMA RC has not provided to non-uniformed employees. He explained Mr. Courtney and Nationwide will have an orientation process in order to familiarize employees with the Nationwide funds and web based tools. The timeline for implantation is for late summer. He stated the agreements were reviewed by the Solicitor's office and are acceptable for consideration.

On a motion by Supervisor Drossner, seconded by Supervisor McCusker (Vote 5-0) the Board of Supervisors approved the non-uniformed Pension Plan engagement with Nationwide for the Township's Defined Contribution and Deferred Compensation Plans.

2. Certificates of Appropriateness

Mr. Guttenplan explained there are two Certificates of Appropriateness for a six-foot shadowbox fence to be installed along the rear property lines at 2 and 12 Catherine Lane in the Maple Hill Development. He stated HARB reviewed these two applications at its March 11, 2020 meeting. Noting that it was an extension of the same fence that they recommended approval for the prior month, they passed a unanimous motion recommending approval of both of the Certificates of Appropriateness.

On a motion by Supervisor McCusker, seconded by Supervisor Toll (Vote 5-0) the Board of Supervisors approved the Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of a fence at 2 Catherine Lane.

On a motion by Supervisor McCusker, seconded by Supervisor Toll (Vote 5-0) the Board of Supervisors approved the Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of a fence at 12 Catherine Lane.

Mr. Guttenplan explained there is a Certificate of Appropriateness for a paver patio and sitting wall at 15 Catherine Lane in the Maple Hill Development. This will be constructed in the rear of the home and will not be seen from the street. It is proposed to be constructed of E P Henry pavers in various shades of gray. He stated HARB reviewed this proposal at its March 11, 2020 meeting, and noted that it was similar to other patios reviewed recently in this development.. They passed a unanimous motion recommending approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the patio and sitting wall as proposed.

On a motion by Supervisor McCusker, seconded by Supervisor Drossner (Vote 5-0) the Board of Supervisors approved the Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation patio and wall at 15 Catherine Lane.

3. April 2020 Expenditures and Payroll and Pension Plan Paid Costs

On a motion by Supervisor McCusker, seconded by Supervisor Toll (Vote 5-0) the Board of Supervisors approved expenditures totaling \$1,152,661.86; and payroll totaling \$631,169.90 and pension paid costs totaling \$7,577.52 for April 2020.

AMEND AGENDA

On a motion by Supervisor Drossner, seconded by Supervisor McCusker (Vote 5-0) the Board of Supervisors amended the agenda.

4. Certificates of Appropriateness

Mr. Guttenplan explained there is an additional Certificate of Appropriateness to consider; this one is for a paver patio at 4 Catherine Lane in the Maple Hill Development. This will be constructed in the rear of the home and will not be seen from the street. It is proposed to be constructed of pavers in gray tones (pewter). HARB reviewed this proposal at its May 13, 2020 meeting, held using 'Zoom' technology. They passed a unanimous motion recommending approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the patio as proposed.

On a motion by Supervisor Toll, seconded by Supervisor McCusker (Vote 5-0) the Board of Supervisors approved the Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of a patio at 4 Catherine Lane.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

None

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Supervisor McCusker thanked Emergency Services workers, essential employees and health care workers doing a great job showing the unity in Whitmarsh Township.

Chair Nest agreed and said the community is great and she values all the residents and their insights and comments. She thanks township staff for working together as a team and especially Manager Mellor and Assistant Manager Halbom.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chair Nester announced the Board of Supervisors held an Executive Session on prior to the meeting to discuss litigation and real estate.

ADJOURNMENT

On a Motion by Chair Nester, seconded by Supervisor McCusker the meeting for May 14, 2020 was adjourned at 6:50 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Richard L. Mellor, Jr.
Township Manager

May 14, 2020