

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

AUGUST 10, 2023

The Regular Monthly Meeting of the Whitemarsh Township Board of Supervisors was held on Thursday, August 10, 2023 at 7:00 PM, in the Whitemarsh Township Building, 616 Germantown Pike, Lafayette Hill, PA.

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

Supervisor Absent: Patrice Turenne

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair McCusker spoke about the train derailment in Whitemarsh on July 18, 2023. He commended local EMS the Police, Fire Companies, Whitemarsh Community Ambulance Association, the Whitemarsh Fire Marshal, and State and Federal response to the incident.

Police Department Promotions

Chief Christopher Ward introduced the Police Department Promotions. He explained the retirement of Lt. Jeff Nowak created an opening for a Lieutenant in our agency.

- On April 17, 2023, the Promotional Process for the Lieutenant's position was started. Four Sergeants submitted letters of interest to participate in the competitive promotional process.
- On June 27, 2023, all four candidates participated in a testing process and oral interview. During the week of July 11, the four candidates participated in a second interview conducted by the Township Manager.
- Since the successful candidate comes from the rank of Sergeant, an opening was created for a Sergeant to be promoted. Since the top candidate for the position of Sergeant comes from the rank of Corporal, this also created an opening to promote a Corporal.
- The promotions for the position of Sergeant and Corporal were determined from the Sergeant and Corporal Promotional Process that occurred in 2022. 14 members of our agency participated in that promotional process.
- The names of the candidates for promotion were presented to and approved by the Board of Supervisors and the Township Manager
- I would like to thank the Board and the Township Manager for giving us the opportunity to recognize these officers this evening.

- It is my pleasure to introduce the three officers who are being promoted this evening, starting with the first female to hold the rank of Lieutenant with the Whitemarsh Township Police Department, Lt. Amanda Johnson.

Amanda Johnson

- Amanda Johnson has been a police officer in Whitemarsh Township for 18 years

- Amanda began her career in Whitemarsh on this very week in 2005. During her career Amanda has earned multiple Unit Citations, Special Service Citations, and Life Saving Awards.

- Amanda has been the department's Accreditation Manager for the last six years. Amanda has led us through our last two accreditation cycles, including the cycle that ended in April of this year and resulted in the Whitemarsh Township Police Department being awarded Premier Accreditation status in the state of Pennsylvania. Amanda's hard work makes Whitemarsh Township one of only 27 Premier Accredited agencies in the state of Pennsylvania and one of 149 accredited police department in Pennsylvania.

-During her time in patrol, Amanda served as a Field Training Officer, helping to teach and guide new officers through the early years of their career. This is a skill that Amanda has continued to utilize as she has risen through the ranks of our department.

- Amanda was promoted to the rank of Corporal in 2012 and was promoted to the rank of Sergeant in 2016. Amanda currently serves as the patrol supervisor for A Squad.

- Amanda was born and raised in Ambler Borough before moving to the Collegetown area to raise her family. Amanda is joined tonight by her husband Jay and their three sons, J.J, Brandon, and Nolan. Jay is a Captain with the Upper Merion Police Department. Also in attendance are Amanda's parents, Carolyn and James O'Neill.

- Amanda is a graduate of Wissahickon High School and the Delaware Valley College, where she earned a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice Administration. While working here at Whitemarsh, Amanda earned her Master's degree in Criminal Justice Administration from St, Joe's University.

- Amanda has completed Penn State's Police Supervisory In-Service Training and the Federal Bureau of Investigations' Law Enforcement Executive Development Trilogy Program and Internal Affairs Investigation Training

- Lt. Johnson has been assigned as the Administrative Division Commander, overseeing the Detective Division, the Traffic Safety Unit, and our Communications Division.

Mark Williams

- Sgt. Williams is a 19-year veteran of the police department having served his entire career in the patrol division.
- Sgt Williams grew up in nearby Oreland and is a graduate of Bishop McDevitt High School. After high school he attended West Chester University and graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice in 2001.
- He served with the Montgomery County Sheriff's Department from 2001 until 2004 when he was hired by Whitemarsh Township.
- Throughout his tenure with our department, Sgt Williams has served as a Field Training Officer and a Taser & De-escalation Techniques instructor.
- He is also a member of the Montgomery County Drug Task Force and is certified as a Crisis Negotiator by the FBI.

- Over the course of his career, he has achieved numerous Unit Citations, Commendations for Exceptional Service, and Life Saving Awards.
- Sgt Williams was promoted to the rank of Corporal in 2016 and has attended numerous supervisory trainings through Montgomery County, Penn State Justice, and Safety Institute, and he has recently completed the FBI-LEEDA Trilogy of leadership courses.
- Sgt. Williams holds a Master's Degree in Organizational Leadership from Saint Joseph's University where he was accepted into the Alpha Epsilon Lambda Honor Society after completing his coursework with a cumulative 4.0 grade point average and displaying excellence in service and leadership to the graduate studies program.
- Currently, Sgt. Williams is a third-year doctoral student in the department of Public Policy and Administration at West Chester University.
- Sgt. Williams is also employed by Temple University Police Academy where he serves as an adjunct instructor specializing in Drug Laws and Drug Identification.
- Sgt. Williams currently resides in Limerick Township with his wife Tracey, his son Chase, and his daughter Camryn who are here tonight. He is also accompanied tonight by his parents Jim & Anna Williams. Jim Williams is a retired Detective from The Springfield Township Police Department.

Michael Hannon

- Cpl. Hannon is a 15-year veteran of the police department, currently serving in the patrol division.
- Cpl. Hannon grew up in the Roxborough section of Philadelphia and is a graduate of Archbishop Kennedy High School in Conshohocken.
- Cpl. Hannon attended Philadelphia College of Textiles & Sciences where he received a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting.
- Prior to being hired by Whitemarsh Township, Cpl. Hannon served with the Philadelphia Police Department for eleven years from 1997 to 2008.
- While in Philadelphia he worked as a plain clothes officer in the 39th District and as bike patrol officer in the 3rd District assigned to South Street.
- Aside from his patrol duties, Cpl. Hannon serves Whitemarsh Township as a member of the motorcycle unit and bicycle unit.
- He is also assigned to the Montgomery County Major Incident Response Team and the Montgomery County Motor Unit.
- As a member of our department, Cpl. Hannon has received multiple Unit Citations, and a Commendation for Exceptional Service.
- Cpl. Hannon currently resides in Worcester Township with his wife Melanie, and his sons Chase and Jake. Cpl. Hannon is accompanied tonight by his wife Melanie and his son Chase who will soon be leaving to play junior hockey for the Aberdeen Wings in South Dakota. His son Jake could not be here tonight as he is currently attending Montana State University.

Township Manager Mellor introduced Fire Marshal/Emergency Management Coordinator Andrew Thomas

- Andrew came to the Township in June from Plymouth Township where he served as Fire Inspector and Deputy Fire Marshal. In addition, he worked as part of the emergency management staff and a police dispatcher.
- Previously, Andrew worked as a part-time police dispatcher for the Township from 2016-2020.
- He has been a volunteer for 20 years, serving as a Captain with Plymouth Fire Company, and a firefighter for several other departments over the years.
- A longtime public servant, Andrew brings a passion for public safety to Whitemarsh along with great communication skills and a keen eye for details. He is a graduate of Roman Catholic High School and Savannah College of Art and Design.
- It didn't take long for Andrew to get tossed into an emergency. He was a key part of the response to the train derailment earlier this month.

- Andrew is a resident of Plymouth Township, where he lives with his wife, Karlie and son, Grayson. In his spare time, Andrew enjoys being with his family down the shore and fishing.

Supervisor Toll announced:

- We had another successful 4th of July Parade last week! Hundreds of people came out to celebrate our Independence! Thanks to all the staff and volunteers that made the event so special.
- Road Closures continue throughout Whitemarsh Township, please be patient while these much-needed improvements are being performed:
 1. Eastbound Lane of Skippack Pike between Butler and Sheaff Lane will be closed and detoured for 3 weeks starting Thursday, August 24, through Thursday, September 14, 2023. During the closure, passenger vehicles will be directed to use Butler Pike, Morris Road, Lafayette Avenue, and Route 73 (Skippack Pike).
 2. Westbound Lane of Ridge Pike will be limited in late August as the Ridge Pike Improvement Project switches direction on the County's project;
 3. A section of Barren Hill Road at Ridge Pike will be closed later this month as part of the Ridge Pike Improvement Project as well;
 4. The Township Road Program has begun and will continue through September on 12 Township owned roadways.
 5. Aqua continues replacing a water main on Joshua Road between Ridge Pike and Cedar Grove Lane. Lane restrictions are scheduled for 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM through September.
- On Wednesday, August 16, 2023 at Miles Park, our "Movies in the Park" series continues with the production of "DC League of Super Pets". Streetside BBQ and Conshohocken Brewing will be available for sale. All movies begin at dusk. This is our final movie of the year, come out and enjoy the fun!
- State Representative Mary Jo Daley has scheduled hours at the Township Building on the Third Wednesday of every month from 10:00 am to 12 Noon for all residents of the Township.
- School will be back in session soon, please be alert for school buses, pedestrians, motorists, and bicycles while driving through town.
- This will be our last meeting before the Labor Day Weekend- please enjoy and be safe while celebrating.
- September 30th will be the annual tree giveaway. Please register on the Township website for your free tree and species.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. CU #02-23, 505A-507 Germantown Pike Associates, LLC/507 Germantown Pike Multifamily Conversion from Office Use to 6 Apartments

On a motion by Supervisor Manuele, seconded by Supervisor Toll (Vote 4-0) the Board of Supervisors opened the public hearing for CU #02-23, 505A-507 Germantown Pike Associates, LLC/507 Germantown Pike Multifamily Conversion from Office Use to 6 Apartments.

A court reporter was present, and the notes of testimony are available for review at the Township Building. The following individuals presented information/testimony/comments/questions at the Public Hearing:

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Sean Kilkenny, Township Solicitor
 Joshua B. Reibstein, Attorney for the Applicant
 Spencer Yablon, Applicant

On a motion by Supervisor Nester, seconded by Supervisor Toll (Vote 4-0) the Board of Supervisors closed the public hearing.

MOTIONS

1. CU #02-23, 505A-507 Germantown Pike Associates, LLC/507 Germantown Pike

On a motion by Supervisor Manuele, seconded by Supervisor Toll (Vote 4-0) the Board of Supervisors approve Conditional Use CU #02-23, 505A-507 Germantown Pike Associates, LLC/507 Germantown Pike Multifamily Conversion from Office Use to 6 Apartments in the VC-1 Village Commercial District.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. July 13, 2023

On a motion by Supervisor Toll, seconded by Supervisor Nester (Vote 4-0) the Board of Supervisors adopted the meeting minutes from July 13, 2023.

BOARD PUBLIC DISCUSSION

1. SLD #03-23; MileOne Fort Washington, LLC (BMW)/500-512 Pennsylvania Avenue; Preliminary Minor Subdivision

Mr. Guttenplan explained SLD #03-23; MileOne Fort Washington, LLC/500-512 Pennsylvania Avenue; Preliminary Minor Subdivision Application also known as the BMW Dealership. The proposal is to consolidate the five parcels bearing the addresses of 500, 506, 510 and 512 Pennsylvania Avenue into one parcel, remove two existing buildings, and construct a multi-story addition to the rear of the current sales building. All activities of the dealership (sales, service, parts, inventory) would occur in the new building and on the consolidated site. Associated improvements are also proposed, including stormwater management and modifications to the access into the site. The main access/egress would occur at a driveway aligned with Commerce Drive in Upper Dublin (where there is a traffic signal) and a new right-in/right-out driveway would be located further east along the dealership frontage. These two access points will replace the existing five accesses into the existing properties associated with the dealership. In addition, at the request of Montgomery County, the applicant has agreed to provide an easement along the back edge of the property for the Cross County Trail; this section is needed to allow a crossing of the SEPTA right-of-way and to provide a connection to the existing portion of the trail on the adjacent Holiday Inn property.

John Ianozzi, Esq., attorney for the applicant expressed his excitement for the project in keeping this business and jobs in the community. He introduced John Penny with Penny Design Group and he reviewed the urban design of the new BMW Dealership. He recognized the site is in the floodplain but the multistory building would be above the floodplain thus reducing the loss of inventory that has occurred in the past.

CONSIDER ACTION ITEMS

Ordinances

1. Ordinance Amendment - Chapter 52 Fireworks

Mr. Mellor stated the amendment will require fireworks permits submitted 45 days in advance and approved 30 days in advance to provide fire companies enough time to have volunteers available to man the standby units required under the ordinance. Also, 8 Holidays defined as July 3 and 4, December 31, January 1st, Memorial Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas would require the applicant to pay a standby fee of \$2,500 per event. Finally, the fee schedule will be amended later in the meeting to increase the firework standby fee for all other dates from \$300.00 to \$500.00. This was recommended by the Emergency Service Board at their July meeting.

On a motion by Supervisor Toll, seconded by Supervisor Manuele (Vote 4-0) the Board of Supervisors adopted **Ordinance #1030** to amendment Chapter 52 Fireworks Ordinance.

Resolutions

1. SLD #03-23; MileOne Fort Washington, LLC (BMW)/500-512 Pennsylvania Avenue; Preliminary Minor Subdivision

On a motion by Supervisor Manuele, seconded by Supervisor Nester (Vote 4-0) the Board of Supervisors adopted **Resolution #2023-19** granting conditional preliminary minor subdivision approval for SLD #03-23; MileOne Fort Washington, LLC (BMW)/500-512 Pennsylvania Avenue.

2. Fireworks Fee

Mr. Mellor explained the increase in the standby fee for a firework display from \$300.00 to \$500.00 and the new standby fee for 8 holidays, July 3 and 4, December 31, January 1st, Memorial Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas, at \$2,500 per event.

On a motion by Supervisor Toll, seconded by Supervisor Manuele (Vote 4-0) the Board of Supervisors adopted **Resolution #2023-20** amending the fee schedule to increase standby fees for firework events.

MOTIONS

1. Authorization for Public Auction Sale of Township Vehicles and Equipment

Mr. Mellor explained the Township sells vehicles and equipment on a yearly basis as we obtain new items or retire older ones. We have used the public auction site GovDeals to sell these items.

On a motion by Supervisor Manuele, seconded by Supervisor Nester (Vote 4-0) the Board of Supervisors approved the list of vehicles and equipment to be sold in 2023.

2. Board/Commission Resignation; James Mahoney – Open Space Commission

Mr. Mellor explained Mr. Mahoney submitted his resignation from the Open Space Commission in writing. While he enjoyed his appointment to the Open Space Commission other live events caused his attention elsewhere.

On a motion by Supervisor Toll, seconded by Supervisor Manuele (Vote 4-0) the Board of Supervisors accepted James Mahoney's resignation from the Open Space Commission and thanked him for his volunteer service to Whitemarsh Township.

3. Escrow Release #6 - River Place/901 Washington Street

On a motion by Supervisor Manuele, seconded by Supervisor Nester (Vote 4-0) the Board of Supervisors authorized the escrow release #6 for River Place/901 Washington Street in the amount of \$96,089.24.

4. July 2023 Expenditures and Payroll and Pension Plan Paid Costs

On a motion by Supervisor Toll, seconded by Supervisor Manuele (Vote 4-0) the Board of Supervisors approved expenditures totaling \$1,334,413.48; and payroll totaling \$706,657.95; and pension paid costs totaling \$3,769.56 for July 2023.

5. Certificates of Appropriateness

111 Black Walnut Lane – Installation of a Fence

Mr. Guttenplan explained this application is for the installation of a 4-foot high post and rail fence (with metal grid along the side and rear lot lines) to enclose the rear yard of the home at this location. It was reviewed by HARB because the two sections of the fence extending from the side lot lines back to the house, are visible from the public street. HARB members present had no issue with this proposal and voted unanimously to recommend issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness.

On a motion by Supervisor Manuele, seconded by Supervisor Nester (Vote 4-0) the Board of Supervisors approved the Certificate of Appropriateness for a new fence at 111 Black Walnut Lane.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

None.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

None

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chair McCusker announced the Board of Supervisors held an Executive Session prior to the meeting to discuss personnel.

ADJOURNMENT

On a Motion by Supervisor Toll, seconded by Supervisor Manuele the meeting for August 10, 2023 was adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Richard L. Mellor, Jr.
Township Manager