

**CUMRU TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING APRIL 18, 2023**

The Regular Meeting of the Cumru Township Board of Commissioners was called to order by President Ruth A. O'Leary at 7:00 p.m. Other Commissioners in attendance were Vice President David J. Batdorf, Sam Kalbach William B. Miller and Lisha Rowe. Also attending were Solicitor Michael A. Setley, Chief of Police Madison Winchester, Superintendent of Public Works Robert McNichols, Jr., Asst. Superintendent of Public Works Michael Yost, Jr., Business/Personnel Administrator Peggy A. Carpenter, Manager/Secretary Jeanne E. Johnston, Special Projects/Asst. Secretary Patricia A. Wylezik-Pfeiffer, and Joseph P. Rogosky of Great Valley Consultants. Fire Chief James Beane arrived late with prior notification.

NOTICE:

Public comment will be accepted in person. Please include your first name, last name and address for all comments. Any comments without a name or address will not be considered. To accommodate as many people as possible, we request that each person's comments be limited to 3 minutes. The meeting comment period is limited to a total of 60 minutes. This time period may be extended at the discretion of the Commissioners. While public comments will be given due consideration, immediate responses will be done at the discretion of the Commissioners.

PRESENTATIONS

Sgt. Matthew Blatt – Swearing-in

Chief Winchester introduced Matthew Blatt and said a few words to honor him regarding his police career and his service to Cumru Township. Matthew Blatt was sworn into his new position as Sergeant in the Cumru Township Police Department by Ms. Johnston.

Scott Brady – Service to the Township

On behalf of the Board of Commissioners and the Township of Cumru, Ms. Johnston presented Scott Brady with a Certificate of Appreciation for his many years of service to the residents of Cumru Township and Berks County. He is the Treasurer of the Cumru Twp Volunteer Fire Fighters Association, which he had joined when he was 16 years old. In 2007, Mr. Brady became the career Fire Chief and the Emergency Management Coordinator for Cumru Township. He retired as the Fire Chief in 2016. Since then, he continued as EMC until resigning that position last month.

PUBLIC

Attendance: Debbie Butler, Russell Butler, Brian Whitfield, Cheryl Sullivan, Brooke Blatt, Donna Blatt, Debbie Naugle, Denise Grube, John Grube, Jennifer Stufflet, Andrew Stufflet, Sheldon Meyer, Sue McCoy, Dave McCoy, and Perry Haas .

Debbie and Russell Butler of 7 White Pine Gulch re: trash bill

Mrs. Butler questioned the recent refuse bills and the rate structure associated with the refuse fee. One question was about mortgage escrow for the trash bill. Mr. Setley stated that there is no escrow for a fee, such as the trash bill; a mortgage escrow is for property taxes, although

some mortgage companies have been using the escrow to pay for both. Mrs. O'Leary and Mr. Miller pointed out that now only property taxes are reflected on the tax bill, as the fees have been removed and are now billed separately.

Ms. Johnston explained the rates for Cumru Township: \$255 for a household with one adult and \$275 for a household with 2 or more adults. Similar to sanitary sewer rates, different municipalities bill for refuse and recycling in various ways. The rate structure in Cumru has been used for many years, but she encouraged the Board of Commissioners to consider any changes for the 2024 budget.

The most consumption-oriented option would be to charge per bag, funded by the purchase of special trash bags. However, that would require an extensive rate study. Most municipalities in the area charge a flat rate.

Mrs. Butler asked why a letter wasn't sent out to inform the residents. Mr. Miller replied that letters could have been sent but that most people don't read them. Ms. Johnston stated that the feedback received last time letters were sent out about a significant rate revision were numerous complaints about why the Township wasted money on mailings when that money could have been used to offset the increased cost of the service.

Mr. Setley stated that this is not a new fee and that it was just a separate bill for the existing service.

Ms. Johnston explained that currently Cumru Township has one of the lowest refuse fees, but that could change significantly in 2024 since Cumru must bid a new hauling contract after this year.

AMBULANCE SERVICE

A.) Monthly Report – March 2023

Anthony Martin reported that TowerDirect responded to 222 calls in March with an average response time of 6 minutes and 22 seconds. He stated that everyone was very proud of the combined effort of all of the emergency staff from all of the area services during the Palmer explosion.

Mr. Kalbach asked about a call involving a Township employee that resulted in an extended arrival time. Mr. Martin responded that there had been some confusion which resulted in 2 units arriving at one location and another unit being called back after it had been dispatched. He stated that this issue has been addressed and corrected.

APPROVE MINUTES

ON MOTION OF MR. BATDORF, SECOND OF MS. ROWE, A UNANIMOUS VOTE APPROVING THE MINUTES OF 3/21/23 – REGULAR MEETING AS SUBMITTED.

TREASURER

A.) Monthly Report – March 2023

No one had any questions for Mrs. Carpenter.

TAX COLLECTOR

A) March 2023 Report

1) Year 2023 Real Estate

Balance collectable beginning of month – \$6,624,103.58

Cash collected – \$1,389,601.91

Balance collectable end of month – \$5,233,799.96

2) Year 2022 Interim Real Estate

Balance collectable beginning of month – \$471.28

Cash collected – \$27.04

Balance collectable end of month - \$444.24

3) Year 2021 Interim Real Estate

Balance collectable beginning of month – \$140.16

Cash collected – 0

Balance collectable end of month - \$140.16

4) Year 2022 Per Capita

Balance collectable beginning of month - \$760.00

Cash collected - \$60.00

Exonerations - \$10.00

Balance collectable end of the month - \$690.00

CONSENT AGENDA

SPRING TOWNSHIP LETTER OF SUPPORT

ACTION:

AUTHORIZED ADMINISTRATION TO WRITE A LETTER OF SUPPORT TO SPRING TOWNSHIP TO BE INCLUDED IN A GRANT APPLICATION TO DEVELOP A MASTER PLAN FOR KLINE'S CREEK PARK.

Ms. Johnston explained the planning grant application was for an area adjacent to a structure called the Kuser Dam, which is partially located in Cumru Township.

CITY OF READING LETTER OF SUPPORT

1) Letter from City of Reading, dated 03/30/2023

ACTION:

AUTHORIZED ADMINISTRATION TO WRITE A LETTER OF SUPPORT TO THE CITY OF READING TO BE INCLUDED IN A GRANT APPLICATION FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS.

Ms. Johnston explained that the City of Reading meets the demographic requirements for the grant.

MUNICIPAL RECORDS MANUAL

ACTION:

ADOPTED A RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE MUNICIPAL RECORDS SCHEDULE INCLUDED IN THE MUNICIPAL RECORDS MANUAL AS AMENDED ON MARCH 28, 2019.

MUSEUM RD. NO PARKING ORDINANCE

1) Ordinance advertised 04/04/2023

ACTION:

ADOPTED THE NO PARKING ORDINANCE FOR MUSEUM ROAD IN CUMRU TOWNSHIP.

PENNDOT ACQUISITION OF RIGHT-OF-WAY (ROW)

2) Letter from PennDOT, dated 03/30/2023

ACTION:

ACCEPTED THE PENNDOT JUST COMPENSATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$6,900.00 OFFERED FOR CUMRU TOWNSHIP RIGHT-OF-WAY AS PART OF THE PENN Wyn BRIDGE REPAIR PROJECT.

SURPLUS PROPERTY AUCTION

ACTION:

AUTHORIZED ADVERTISEMENT ON MUNICIBID FOR SALE OF JOHN DEERE FLAIL MOWER AND 2016 FORD FUSION.

PLANS

2023 – 01 KRAMER SUBDIVISION -CEDAR TOP RD.

EXPIRATION DATE – 5/07/2023

(Final Minor) Owners: Donna L. & Jon G. Kramer; Agent: John W. Hoffert, P.L.S.,LTD.; Location: 1166 Cedar Top Rd; Parcel ID# 39-530513148778; Plan no. D-23-04; Proposal Summary: Subdivision of parcel into 2 lots: Existing and proposed residue use – single family dwelling with on-lot water and sewer; Proposed Lot 1 use - single family dwelling with public water and sewer.

- a) Revised Final Minor Subdivision Plans from John W. Hoffert P.L.S., dated 02/22/23
- b) Memo-Board of Commissioners Waiver Decisions, dated 03/27/23
- c) Review Letter from GVC, dated 3/29/23
- d) Sewer Review by Atlas, dated 3/31/23

ACTION:

GRANTED PRELIMINARY/FINAL APPROVAL TO THE KRAMER SUBDIVISION-CEDAR TOP RD. CONDITIONED ON RECEIVING DEP APPROVAL OF THE SEWAGE PLANNING MODULES AND PAYMENT OF A FEE IN LIEU OF OPEN SPACE, PAYMENT OF TRAFFIC IMPACTS FEES, PAYMENT OF ANY OUTSTANDING INVOICES, AND SEALS/SIGNATURES ON THE DRAWING.

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

ON MOTION OF MR. MILLER, SECOND OF MR. KALBACH, A UNANIMOUS VOTE TO APPROVE THE ACTIONS STATED IN THE CONSENT AGENDA.

DEPARTMENTS

Police Department

A.) Monthly Report – March 2023

Chief Winchester requested that the Board amend the agenda to be able to consider the Northumberland Regional Police Traffic Services grant agreement.

ON MOTION OF MR. MILLER, SECOND OF MS. ROWE, A UNANIMOUS VOTE AUTHORIZING AN AMENDMENT TO THE AGENDA TO CONSIDER THE NORTHUMBERLAND REGIONAL POLICE TRAFFIC SERVICES GRANT AGREEMENT.

B) Northumberland Regional Police Traffic Services Grant

Chief Winchester informed the Board that Cumru Twp has participated in this program before. It allows for reimbursement of certain costs for details provided by the CTPD.

ON MOTION OF MR. MILLER, SECOND OF MR. KALBACH, A UNANIMOUS VOTE TO AUTHORIZE EXECUTION OF THE NORTHUMBERLAND REGIONAL POLICE TRAFFIC SERVICES GRANT AGREEMENT.

Chief Winchester reported that the 2 officers attending the Police Academy are set to graduate in July 2023.

Mr. Miller thanked the Cumru Township Police Department for all the assistance during a recent personal family matter.

Fire Department

A.) Monthly Report – March 2023

B.) Fire Station Phase 1 – pipeline grant update

- 1) \$238,115 received for water line construction

Ms. Johnston reported that the Township received reimbursement for \$238,115.00 for the construction of the water line to the Township campus. These funds came from Mariner Pipeline settlement money.

C.) Berks County Burn Ban

A burning ban was in effect for 30 days beginning April 16, 2023. The burn ban is for everyone, even people who have a permit to allow outdoor burning. Chief Beane contacted all the burn permit holders in Cumru Township to inform them of the ban.

D.) Palmer Candy Factory Explosion in West Reading

Chief Beane arrived later to the meeting because he was attending an event at West Reading to recognize all the people who responded to the Palmer explosion. He received and read commendations for the Cumru Township Fire Department and the Cumru Township Police Department, including Fire Police, from West Reading Borough.

Administration

A.) Codes Department – March 2023

- Building Permits Issued- 10
- Use Permits Issued - 3
- Zoning Permits Issued- 7
- Notices of Violations- 14
- Citations issued- 0
- Zoning Hearing Board Hearings – 0
- Violations complied- 14
- Phone calls from contractors, realtors & public approximately- 178
- Properties condemned – 0
- Permit Inspections Done – 30
- Inspections with the Fire Department – 0
- Training Seminars attended – 1

B.) Insurance Renewal 2023-2024 – ratify binding of coverage

Ms. Johnston requested that the Board ratify the binding of insurance coverages.

ON MOTION OF MR. KALBACH, SECOND OF MR. BATDORF, A UNANIMOUS VOTE TO RATIFY THE BINDING OF COVERAGES FOR 2023-2024 INSURANCE RENEWAL.

C.) Emergency Management Coordinator – nominate

Ms. Johnston explained that the Township nominates someone to the EMC position before the nomination goes to the Governor for approval. Ms. Johnston recommended that the Board nominate Patricia Wylezik-Pfeiffer to fill the Emergency Management Coordinator vacancy due to Scott Brady's resignation. Ms. Wylezik-Pfeiffer is required to undertake extensive training for this role.

ON MOTION OF MR. KALBACH, SECOND OF MS. ROWE, A UNANIMOUS VOTE TO NOMINATE PATRICIA WYLEZIK-PFEIFFER FOR THE POSITION OF CUMRU TOWNSHIP EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR.

D.) Refuse and Recycling Bid Specifications – considerations

Ms. Johnston explained that July is when the Township will be advertising for the new refuse and recycling hauling contract. It has been 5 years since the contract was last bid, 3 base years and 3 optional extension years. Special considerations for Flying Hills for trash pick-up create challenges for haulers. For example, some units have steps, closets, or gates, rather than curbside pickup. The Board determined not to change the method by which trash is collected.

Sheldon Meyer, a resident of Medinah Dr. in Flying Hills, stated that he has had issues with his trash removal. He was told to call the Township office so any issues could be documented.

Although not directly related to the bid specifications, Ms. Johnston requested that the Board begin to think about the refuse fee rate structure for next year.

E.) Wyomissing Creek Watershed Coalition (WCWC)

1) Community Project Funding Grant Application – forwarded to Appropriations Committee

Ms. Johnston reported that the grant application for the first WCWC joint project has been forwarded to the US House of Representatives Appropriations Committee for further consideration. The grant application is for \$315,000 which will be used for sediment

reduction due to erosion along the Wyomissing Creek in the Highbrooke area of Mohnton Borough, but flowing directing into Cumru Township. Eight municipalities are involved.

2) Annual allocation payment in the amount of \$50,000

Ms. Johnston requested that the Board authorize the annual allocation payment to the WCWC in the amount of \$50,000. This funding goes to engineering for the projects identified in the Pollution Reduction Plan for the Wyomissing Creek, such as the Highbrooke project described in item (1) above.

ON MOTION OF MR. MILLER, SECOND OF MR. BATDORF, A UNANIMOUS VOTE TO AUTHORIZE THE ANNUAL ALLOCATION PAYMENT OF \$50,000 TO THE WYOMISSING CREEK WATERSHED COALITION.

F.) Blighted Property Committee – proposed applications

- 1) 501 Governor Dr.
- 2) 1853 Old Lancaster Pike

Ms. Johnston explained that both of these properties were damaged by fire. There is a fire escrow for 501 Governor Drive. The Codes department is recommending that these properties be submitted to the Blighted Properties Committee. Ms. Johnston stated that the Blighted Properties Committee has been very useful for addressing other properties in the Township. Mr. Setley explained that the Blighted property committee has been able to move the process along much faster than the Township alone. The Board of Commissioners agreed that Township Administration should submit these properties to the Blighted Property Committee.

G.) Host Fee Revenue – update

Ms. Johnston explained that the DEP strictly controls the capacity of landfills. Western Berks Landfill will be at capacity in October 2023 and will close. The host fees for the past quarter were lower than expected, which is likely a reflection of nearing capacity.

H.) Refund Policy

Ms. Johnston explained that the Township received a request from a relative of an elderly resident for a refund due to paying the 2-adult refuse rate for the past 20 years. The standard policy is a 3-year refund period, which is consistent with the Township's ability to claw back unpaid fees. Mr. Setley stated that the Township can only go back 3 years to recoup taxes. Ms. Johnston asked the Board members if they wished to change the refund policy or keep it the same. The Board agreed to keep the policy the same at a maximum refund of 3 years.

I.) TASA Grant – update

Ms. Johnston reported that the updated projected cost for the flood mitigation project for Museum Rd. is approximately \$1.6 million. The scope of the project includes under parking stormwater retention and an open detention basin. Some of the items listed in the projected cost will not be eligible for TASA funding.

Public Works

A.) Mowing Bid 2023

- 1) Specifications package
- 2) One bid received from Sottosanti Lawn Care for \$32,060

Mr. McNichols explained and recommended accepting the bid. Ms. Johnston recommended adding conditions to the motion to award the bid subject to input by the solicitor on the insurance and bonding.

ON MOTION OF MR. KALBACH, SECOND OF MR. BATDORF, A UNANIMOUS VOTE TO AWARD THE MOWING BID TO SOTTOSANTI LAWN CARE SUBJECT TO REVIEW AND APPROVAL BY THE SOLICITOR.

B.) Sewer Capital Project for 2023

The Cedar Top Rd. sewer project for 2023 has a projected cost of \$1.6 million due to the length of the project, and involvement of utilities and stormwater. The road will be reconstructed from Welsh Rd. west to Pennwyn Place. The Township had applied for a grant but was unsuccessful. There was discussion about possibly dividing the project into phases. It was recommended to move forward with the project due to the condition of the road. Other grant opportunities will be pursued as they become available.

ON MOTION OF MR. MILLER, SECOND OF MR. BATDORF, A UNANIMOUS VOTE TO MOVE FORWARD WITH THE CEDAR TOP RD. SEWER MAIN REPLACEMENT PROJECT.

Engineer

A.) Traffic Signal Asset Management System - quote

Mr. Rogosky reported that he had received a quote from Traffic Planning and Design for \$6,275.00. The proposal is for 12 signalized intersections. He recommended that the Board award the contract.

ON MOTION OF MR. KALBACH, SECOND OF MR. MILLER, A UNANIMOUS VOTE TO AWARD THE TRAFFIC SIGNAL ASSET MANAGEMENT SYSTEM CONTRACT TO TRAFFIC PLANNING AND DESIGN FOR \$6,275.00.

Solicitor

A.) Zoning Ordinance Amendment

1) Letters to the Cumru Township and Berks County Planning Commissions

Mr. Setley reported that the advertisements were done and all the notices were prepared.

PAYMENTS OF BILLS

ON MOTION OF MR. BATDORF, SECOND OF MR. KALBACH, A UNANIMOUS VOTE APPROVING THE PAYMENT OF BILLS DATED 3/24/23, 3/31/23, 4/03/23 - PLGIT, 4/03/23, 4/06/23, 4/06/23 - ADDITIONAL, 4/14/23 AND 4/18/23 - ACH.

CORRESPONDENCE

A.) DEP letter on PA Safe Drinking Water (SDW) Regulations-new testing requirements

B.) PennDOT -Preliminary design for bridge replacement of Alleghenyville Rd. over I-176 in Robeson Twp.

C.) BCCD memo about Mosquito-borne Disease Control Program for Berks County.

- D.) Downstream notification from Buckeye Terminals, LLC.
- E.) Notice for Kenhorst ZHB – special exception for existing dog kennel business at Kenhorst Plaza

COMMISSIONERS

A.) Executive Session

- 8:30 p.m. – The Board met in executive session to discuss 1 matter of real estate.
- 8:45 p.m. – The executive session ended. 1 matter of real estate had been discussed.

B.) Reminders:

1) Zoning Hearing Board

- March 28, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. at the Township Building – regular meeting
- April 24, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. at the Gov. Mifflin Intermediate School Cafeteria – zoning map appeal
- April 25, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. at Township Building – regular meeting
- April 26, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. at Cumru Elementary School Cafeteria- zoning map appeal

2) Board of Commissioners meetings for April and May 2023

- 4/18/2023 at 7:00 p.m. – Regular Meeting
- 5/17/2023 at 6:00 p.m. - Public Hearing for Zoning Text Amendment
- 5/17/2023 at 7:00 p.m. – Regular Meeting (*Date change due to Election Day)
- 5/30/2023 at 7:00 p.m. – 5Th Tuesday Meeting

3) Planning Commission - 4/03/2023 at 6:00 p.m.

4) Municipal Authority - 4/13/2023 at 8:30 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

ON MOTION OF MR. BATDORF, SECOND OF MR. MILLER, A UNANIMOUS VOTE TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:46 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Jeanne E. Johnston
Manager/Secretary