

FERGUSON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Regular Meeting

Monday, December 2, 2013

7:00pm

I. ATTENDANCE

The Board of Supervisors held its first regular meeting of the month on Monday, December 2, 2013 at the Ferguson Township Municipal Building. In attendance were:

Board:	George Pytel, Chairman	Staff:	Mark Kunkle, Township Manager
	Richard Mascolo, Vice Chair		David Pribulka, Assistant Manager
	William Keough		David Modricker, Public Works Director
	Drew Clemson		Erika Green, Planning & Zoning Director
	Elliott Killian		

Others in attendance included: Heather Bird, Recording Secretary; Sue Mascolo, Centre Region Parks and Recreation; Janet Whitaker and Steve Miller, Board members elect.

II. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Pytel called the Monday, December 2, 2013, regular meeting to order at 7:00pm.

III. CITIZENS INPUT

None.

IV. ABC REPORTS

1. Ms. Sue Mascolo, Centre Region Parks and Recreation

Ms. Mascolo stated that it has been a very successful year for the Centre Region Parks and Recreation Authority. The authority had 1500 people in attendance for the 67th annual Halloween costume parade, 900 visitors at the Harvest Festival at Millbrook Marsh, the two pools hosted 102,130 over the 100 day season. The pool fees covered all operating expenses and provided \$70,000 to offset the annual pool renewal loan program. The Hess softball complex hosted eight tournaments and a total of 712 games of softball this year, new tournaments are being solicited for 2014. The Authority appreciates that over the past two years the Township has shared the cost of a new roof and siding of the Tudek Park storage barn. Park operation has had a great year maintaining the 54 parks and 2 pools that they responsible for. The interview and selection process has begun for the Senior Center Supervisor and a parks caretaker. The 56 page Winter/Spring Activity Guide will be published on Sunday, December 8th. The Centre Region Parks and Recreation Authority staff is in the process of relocating the interim parks maintenance facility until a permanent facility is built at Whitehall Regional Park. Oak Hall Regional Park's Phase 1 Construction is going well, on budget and ahead of schedule. The park may open early in Fall 2014 as opposed to the scheduled Spring 2015 date. The staff is working on the new My Veterans My Heroes tribute tree program for the regional park, starting with Oak Hall Regional Park as well as applying for a state tree vitalized grant. The land development plan for the future Whitehall Road Regional Park has been submitted to the Township by the Authority. The Agency strategic plan and business plan are under way and a topic outline has been prepared for each plan. The strategic plan will identify the services by the Rec Authority to each participating municipality and the business plan will address the new issues including fund raising, priorities, scheduling and policies.

V. PUBLIC HEARING – RESOLUTIONS

1. **A PUBLIC HEARING ON A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF FERGUSON, CENTRE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA AUTHORIZING THE CHAIRMAN AND SECRETARY TO EXECUTE A LOCAL SERVICES TAX COLLECTION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TOWNSHIP OF FERGUSON AND THE BOROUGH OF STATE COLLEGE.**

Mr. Kunkle stated this is a three year agreement and provides for a 3% collection fee of the tax collected. The Borough has been collecting this tax under a variety of names over several years. This tax is a total of a \$52 tax collected at the rate of \$1 per week for employees who are working in the host municipality. The Township receives a monthly distribution of this tax. Although this is a 3% collection fee it will cost the Township less than in previous years because all of the County municipalities now utilizing the Borough to collect this tax. The tax was previously collected on a cost basis versus a percentage fee.

Mr. Killian made a motion to ADOPT Resolution #2013-33 authorizing the Chairman and Secretary to execute a Local Services Tax collection Agreement with the State College Borough. Mr. Keough seconded the motion.

ROLL-CALL VOTE: Mr. Clemson: YES; Mr. Killian: YES; Mr. Keough: YES; Mr. Mascolo: YES; Mr. Pytel: YES

VI. PUBLIC HEARINGS OTHER

1. **A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED 2014 FERGUSON TOWNSHIP BUDGET**

Mr. Kunkle stated that the 2014 Proposed Township Budget has been prepared by the staff and Board over the last several months. The Budget was distributed on November 4th and there were two Budget worksessions on November 19th and 20th. Changes have been made to the budget following these worksessions.

Some of the specific highlights of the 2014 budget: this is the seventh year in a row that the Township was able to operate without an increase in taxes. The last tax increase was in 2008. The General fund budget has a modest increase of 1.9% on expenditures and due to the completion of West Whitehall Road project there is a significant reduction in capital expenditures for 2014 with the non-fiduciary expenditures expected to be 23.5% less than in 2013.

There were a number of notable achievements under the 2013 budget that include completing an update and reformat of the strategic plan, improved our citizen engagement, implemented our e-newsletter and expanded our Constant Contact list. The Township also implemented new accounting software and selected a new IT service provider (Hinton & Associates) effective January 1st. The Township also advanced the use of the Cartegraph software, public works software. Due to Dave Pribulka's leadership, the Township completed a continuity of operations plan, which better prepared the Township for emergency interruption of Township facilities. The Township had a banner year in capital works projects, all completed within budget and on time and with quality control. In the Parks and Recreation area the Township has made progress in park improvements and future improvements with grant applications, expanded and updated park equipment at Autumnwood and Suburban Park and continue to replace the park name signs. In the Police we are the first department to have a CNG vehicle with the goal of two more and the Department is on track to receive accreditation in 2014.

What does the 2014 budget really look like? Excluding the Township fiduciary funds, pensions and Tom Tudek Memorial Park Trust Fund, the 2014 budget proposes \$11,230,900 in revenues

and \$12,762,421 in expenses. The budget proposes using fund balances in the amount of \$411,534 from the General Fund, \$5,270 from the Street Light Fund, \$6,550 from the Fire Hydrant Fund, \$289,319 from State Liquid Fuels Fund, \$17,465 from Ag Preservation Fund, \$930,909 from Capital Reserve Fund, \$63,910 from Regional Capital Projects Fund and \$50,909 from Park Improvements fund to balance the budget. All of these funds carry a very healthy balance and it is not unusual to use these funds to balance the budget. The Assigned Fund Balance, funds that can only be used for a specific purpose, is \$4,689,358 at the end of 2014 and our Un-Assigned Fund Balance, funds not designated and generally in the General Fund, at the end of 2014 will be a little over \$3 million.

The Township five year time horizon 2010-2014 shows that the revenues have flattened out for 2013-2014, partially due to a downturn in the economy. A comparative chart showing revenues from 2013 to 2014 budgets and to be relatively flat with a difference of \$430,000. If you take out operating transfers, funds being moved from the General Fund to other funds, the total increase in revenue including grant revenues was about \$1,139,000. A five year expenditure projection shows the Township is spending about \$12 million a year. Mr. Kunkle stated that in 2015 the Board will be giving direction to the reallocation of our distribution of operating transfers to the capital reserve and transportation improvements fund in order to smooth out the expenditures to avoid tax increases in that year and going forward. The significant difference of 2013 to 2014 budget is mainly due to the West Whitehall Road project. The project was a \$3.9 million project in construction alone.

In the area of the Centre Region Council of Government programs (COG), the budget includes expenditures that are beneficial to the Township to participate as a group and not provide independently. The Township has major contributions to the Schlow Centre Region Library, Alpha Fire Department and Centre Region Park and Recreation Programs. The Township is the largest contributor for local dollars to COG at 26.4% of total local contributions.

What is new in the 2014 budget? Personnel cost is one of the largest areas of budget changes, overall between wage increases and benefits the overall cost to the Township is \$167,678 for 2014. COG services as compared to last year there was a 3.24% increase overall or \$190,155 in total COG expenditures and the Township share of that increase was a little over \$53,000. In the capital projects area the Township is looking at about \$1.8 million in projects including Selders Circle, Rosemont Drive, Westerly Parkway, Vairo Boulevard, Deepwood Drive, East Park Hills Avenue, Abby Place, Marjorie May Street and Gateway Drive in the Townships microsurfacing program. The Selders Circle and Rosemont Drive will include a new structure, culvert or bridge. The budget includes equipment replacements and additions of \$477,000 and \$182,000 expenditure in buildings and grounds, which includes building a structure for the Centre Region Fire Program and will be paid back to the township through the Centre Region. The Townships debt service is a little over \$550,000 a year and will and will be debt free from the Township side in 2017 and in regional parks debt service is \$172,285 a year.

Beyond 2014, what are future year challenges? Funding for increased regional park maintenance for Oak Hall, Whitehall Road Regional parks and Hess Field will have an increase in maintenance costs and can anticipate seeing an increase in parks and recreation contributions to cover these increased costs. Funding for the second phase development of the three regional parks is also on the horizon. How will we balance our capital road street projects with the increase pressure on the General Fund. Finally, finding the funding for the development of West College Avenue Streetscape.

Mr. Mascolo made a motion to APPROVE the 2014 Proposed Budget with any additional changes for final adoption on Monday, December 9, 2013. Mr. Killian seconded the motion.

The motion passes unanimously.

VII. COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD

-Mr. Keough received a couple calls in relation to concerns about the COG budget, not our contribution but their overall budget.

-Mr. Pytel received half a dozen calls about appreciation for both portions of Whitehall Road being finished.

VIII. ACTION ITEMS

1. DISCUSSION OF REVISED REGIONAL GROWTH BOUNDARY / SEWER SERVICE AREA IMPLEMENTATION AGREEMENT

Mr. Kunkle stated this is about the implementation agreement. Most of the board members were present at the November 25th COG general forum meeting and most members were in agreement that this agreement was ready for adoption on Dec 17th. One previous question was when the development agreement was adopted about the term and when the clock would stop? The time starts when the building permit is issued for the project and the project must be completed in a certain number of years.

Mr. Keough has one concern that the agreement does not have a bail out clause to address to a major employer outside the regional growth boundary, He does not feel that the agreement should be permanent and not change when a business relocation occurs.

Mr. Pytel stated that the agreement can be changed if 5 of 6 municipalities agree.

Mr. Mascolo stated that it does not address commercial at all but only residential.

The Board has no objections to forwarding this to Centre Region Council of Governments for final adoption.

2. CONSIDER APPROVING A 2014 FIRE HYDRANT EXONERATION FOR PROPERTY OWNERS IN THE ROCK SPRINGS WATER COMPANY SERVICE AREA

Mr. Kunkle stated that Board members recalled the discussion regards to the function of the 28 fire hydrants in the Rock Springs Water Company service area. Based on a random sample of these fire hydrants none of the hydrants meet current standards for water flow and pressure. Mr. Kunkle suggested it would be inappropriate to require property owners to pay for the maintenance of these hydrants if they are not going to receive fire protection from them. Letters to the affected homeowners have been prepared and will be mailed waiting the approval from the Board.

Mr. Killian made a motion to APPROVE the 2014 Fire Hydrant Assessment Exoneration list dated November 26, 2013 for affected property owners in the Rock Springs Water Company service area. Mr. Mascolo seconded.

Mr. Keough asked about further discussion with the Rock Springs Water Company.

Mr. Kunkle stated that a letter was sent to the Rock Springs Water Company informing them of this action and requested they test the remaining fire hydrants on their system but at this time has not heard from them.

The motion passed unanimously.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Killian made a motion to APPROVE the Consent Agenda including Surety Reductions for Hunter's Chase Phase 9 \$33,712, The Landings Phase 1A \$130,289, Saybrook Phase 9A \$16,747 and Saybrook Phase 9B \$34,380 and a Surety Release for Saybrook Phase 8 \$4,940.

Mr. Keough seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously. (Note: Mr. Mascolo was not present at the time vote was taken)

V. REPORTS

1. Manager

Mr. Kunkle stated that the Board has been provided a chart showing the current vacancies for the Authorities, Boards and Commissions and those members requesting re-appointment. These appointments will be made at the January 6th Organizational Meeting. All of the appointments are subject to Board approval.

The second item with Mr. Kunkle's report is a copy of the recently adopted transportation funding bill, House Bill 1060 and staff is currently reviewing this for the impact this has on the Township.

2. Public Works Director

Mr. Modricker stated that as mentioned prior, West Whitehall Road is substantially complete with the final inspection remaining. Any work to be done will be done under flag control. Some tree trimming occurred throughout the Township. The roof replacement for the salt shed was rebid with bids due tomorrow. Engineering section continues with plan reviews and prep for next year.

3. Planning & Zoning Director

Ms. Green stated that there was not a planning commission meeting last week due to the holiday. The last meeting of the current year will be tomorrow night. The zoning hearing board saw five variance requests at its November 19th meeting. The permit activity for November is included.

4. COG Committee Reports

1. Transportation & Land Use

Mr. Kunkle stated that the major reports dealt with economic development and a report on the status of the first year of the Centre Region Economic Development assessment update. Jim May noted a number of the accomplishments but noted that they have a long way to go primarily in developing a unified point of contact of potential employers moving to the region with this to be determined in 2014. Tom Zilla talked about the transportation funding bill which included all modes of transportation. There is some dedicated money in transportation enhancement area for streetscape, bicycle safety, pedestrian improvements. The Township should have some projects that will qualify for this money.

VI. MINUTES

Mr. Mascolo made a motion to APPROVE the November 18, 2013 Board of Supervisors Minutes with one change listed below. Mr. Killian seconded the motion.

Ferguson Township Board of Supervisors

Monday, December 2, 2013

Page 6

- Page 9, Item 4, Parks Capital Committee - should read Oak Hall College Township Water Authority Well Agreement

The motion passed unanimously.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Clemson made a motion to ADJOURN the meeting. Mr. Mascolo seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

With no further business to come before the Board of Supervisors, Mr. Pytel adjourned the regular meeting at 8:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Kunkle, Township Manager
For the Board of Supervisors

Date approved by the Board: 01/06/14