

**MINUTES  
COLLIER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**WORKSHOP MEETING**

**August 9, 2021**

**7:00 P.M.**

- I. CALL TO ORDER:** Commissioner Chiurazzi called the workshop meeting of the Board of Commissioners to order at 7:00 P.M.

**A. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**B. ROLL CALL:**

**BOARD**

Mary Ann Cupples – Present  
Daniel Styche – Present  
Debra Zymroz –Present  
Rick Ruffennach – Present  
Wayne Chiurazzi, Esq.– Present

**STAFF**

Chuck Means, Solicitor – Absent  
Kevin Brett, Engineer – Absent  
Craig Campbell, Police Chief – Absent  
Bob Caun, Planning Director – Absent  
Jeff Hinds, Finance Director – Absent  
Tom Plietz – Bldg/Fire Codes – Absent  
Bob Palmosina, PW Director – Absent  
Josh Werner, Parks Director – Absent  
Kyle Thauvette, Twp. Manager – Present  
Valerie Salla, Twp. Secretary – Present

- C. EXECUTIVE SESSION:** Was held prior to the meeting to discuss legal and personnel issues.

**D. PROCLAMATION:** Justin Frambes.

Mr. Thauvette read the Proclamation to Justin Frambes. Mr. Frambes was given the Proclamation for Everesting which is an activity that cyclists ascend and descend a given hill multiple times, in order to have cumulatively climbed 8,848 meters which is equivalent to 29,029 feet. He rode his bike up and down Nike Site Road 106 times in 14 hours and 51 minutes. By doing this, he was even able to raise over \$3,000 for the local food bank.

**II. Board Discussion for Committees**

**A. Administrative/Public Affairs**

Commissioner Zymroz reported the following:

1. *Raccoon Rabies* baiting is underway. The Allegheny County Health Department and the U.S. Department of Agricultural and Wildlife Services has started their 20<sup>th</sup> annual raccoon rabies baiting program. Crews will distribute more than 300,000 baits throughout Allegheny County. Baits will be spread by hand on August 2, 2021, through August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Bait will also be spread by aircraft including helicopters. Residents may see aircraft moving slowly over areas multiple times for short period of times. This could be alarming to some residents

that are unaware of this program and we ask for the public to help getting the word out about this program.

2. *Manager's Coffee Hour.* Will be held on Tuesday, September 7, 2021 at 9:30a.m. at the Community Center.

There were no questions or comments.

## **B. Building/Codes**

Commissioner Cupples reported the following:

1. *Building Permits.* Has slowed down for Residential homes.
2. *Amalfi Ridge.* Maronda's new plan of homes are almost ready for lot sales. This will increase the building permits for residential homes.
3. *Sunrise Junction.* A new homeowner has taken occupancy.
4. *Commercial Building Permits.* Mr. Plietz has been contacted by the PA Department of Labor and Industry to conduct an audit on the commercial building permits for the years 2017 through present. They will be checking to see that the permits are in compliance with accessibility.

There were no questions or comments.

## **C. Finance**

Commissioner Styche reported the following:

1. *Federal Government Money.* On July 14, 2021 the Township received its' first check from the American Recovery Act Funding in the amount of \$430,033.00. This item was unbudgeted in the fiscal year 2021. This money was placed in a separate checking account in case of an audit and to ensure that the use is in accordance with specified purposes. We are still waiting to hear from the Federal Government on what we can use this money on. It is predicted that we can use the money for infrastructure, tourism, law enforcement and things like that but a definite use has not been given yet.

Mr. Thauvette added the Township needs to be careful on what we spend this money on and will require additional auditing to make sure that the expenditures of that money do not result in the Township having to pay back what is spent outside of the requirements. We do know that the money can be spent to offset any budget deficits from the calendar year 2020. Infrastructure work like water, sewer and broadband does look like this money can be used for.

Commissioner Chiurazzi questioned if this is the first payment and do we have over \$860,000.00 of loss.

Mr. Thauvette stated yes, this is the first payment and the second payment will come in 2022 and we do not have over \$860,000.00 in loss.

Commissioner Chiurazzi stated we will need to make sure and spend it the way we need to, so it does not have to be paid back.

2. *PA Department of Transportation Check.* The Township received a check in the amount of \$10, 252.00 to cover supplemental expenses for the year 2020/2021 winter maintenance. This amount was unbudgeted for the fiscal year 2021 because the supplemental payments over the past two (2) years were \$1,200.00 and \$3,700.00.
3. *2020 Finance Report.* The Township was notified this report was accepted by the DCED.
4. *Earned Income Tax receipts.* Are consistent with the first two (2) periods as 2020. The 2021 real estate and emergency services tax bills have been mailed to all residents by Jordan Tax Services.
5. *Jordan Tax Services.* Will be at the Township building on August 26, 2021 from 9:00AM to 12 noon and also on August 31, 2021 from 1:30 PM to 4:30PM to collect tax payments in person.

There were no questions or comments.

#### **D. Parks & Recreation**

Commissioner Styche reported the following:

1. *Electronic Sign.* Is moving forward and we plan to have a ribbon cutting ceremony for it at the Community Center.
2. *Pickleball Court at Webb Park.* The fencing is complete and we are waiting on the resurfacing.

Mr. Thauvette stated the resurfacing is scheduled for the week August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021.

3. *Collierfest.* Will be held on September 24<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. and September 25<sup>th</sup> from 4:00 p.m. till the end of fireworks. Bike night is on September 24<sup>th</sup> and fireworks are on the 25<sup>th</sup>.
4. *Friends of Collier Parks and Recreation.* This group raises money for Parks and Recreation. They are currently having a fundraiser selling mum plants and the information can be found on the Township website. There will also be a 50/50 raffle at Concerts in the Park. The friends donated \$10,000.00 towards the purchase of the electronic sign for Collier Park.

Commissioner Styche stated since we are talking about Parks and Recreation and there had been some discussion about putting another multipurpose building at Collier Park, he made a motion to authorize Lennon, Smith, Souleret to do preliminary work on a new building for design and cost estimate.

Commissioner Chiurazzi stated we need to table this because the Board needs to discuss this further and to place this on the next meetings agenda.

Commissioner Styche stated we are trying to develop the area of the Public Works stockyard by putting a roadway through it and parking for the trail, restrooms and also water for the dog park. We also need to install a sanitary sewer line there.

Commissioner Styche made a motion to have Lennon, Smith, Souleret to get pricing for the stockyard project so we can get it started.

Commissioner Chiurazzi stated we need to table this because the Board needs to discuss this further and to place this on the next meetings agenda.

Mr. Thauvette stated he placed both of those items on the next meetings agenda and informed the Board on the following:

1. *Sanitary sewer line.* We have applied for grants and have been unsuccessful obtaining them for this and to do some improvements to the trail around the dog park. One of the grants was for an access/entry way to the trail and dog park and the other was for a sewer line to be run so the Public Works building at the stock yard could have a restroom and for future development.

Commissioner Styche added the following:

2. *Additional Building at Collier Park.* The current community center does not have the venue to have larger events there. Part of the plan is to put an amphitheater in that has an exterior wall can open up and have the amphitheater as an outside use.

Commissioner Zymroz added we could have tournaments like basketball at this building and leave the current building for members to be used as more of a community center and the new building would be the recreation center.

Commissioners Styche and Zymroz both stated this would give use more use of the land at Collier Park.

There were no other questions or comments.

#### **E. Planning and Land Use Development**

Commissioner Cupples reported the following:

1. *Zoning Hearing Board.* Will meet on Tuesday, August 17<sup>th</sup> to hear request from the Pittsburgh Bottleshop at Collier Towne Square. They want to convert 5 existing parking spaces into outdoor seating dining. The center will be deficient in the required number of parking spaces. The Ordinance requires the dedication of recreation open space. The Bottleshop is requesting a modification from the Planning Commission and the Board of Commissioners to allow the recreation open space in an area that does not meet the Ordinance.

For Planning Commission: Meet on

1. *Pittsburgh Bottleshop* land development.
2. *Creekside Meadows.* This is a Maronda Home plan consisting of 49 single family home dwellings at the corner of Steen Hollow Road and Thoms Run Road.
3. *Star Bucks* Land development in the Chartiers Valley Shopping Center location directly across from Smoothing King

There are no other questions or comments.

#### **F. Public Safety**

Commissioner Ruffennach complimented all three (3) fire departments. Between by-law meetings, chief meetings, training and fire calls. He hopes that whoever takes over his position as Commissioner will stay in touch with the fire departments when he is gone. The Commissioners have to stay involved with the fire

departments 100% of the time.

The COG found a home for the vactor truck and will be starting their meetings back up in September.

Chief Wauthier of the Presto VFD was in attendance to give a presentation to the Board of Commissioners.

There were no questions or comments.

#### **G. Public Works**

Commissioner Zymroz reported the following:

1. *Clean Up.* Cleaning up of all the Public Works garages and stock yard to get ready for inspection.
2. *Salt Bins.* Re-stocking of salt bins.
3. *Rock the Quarry.* Prep work started.
4. *Pickleball Court.* Asphalt walkway was installed.
5. *Discovery Trail.* Cut back of entire trail.

There were no questions or comments.

#### **H. Sewer Department**

Commissioner Styche reported the following:

1. *Grease Trap Inspections.* There are two (2) outstanding grease trap inspections that are waiting for compliance. Citations will be issued soon.
2. *Sewer Inspections.* There were 29 sewer inspections done by the codes department in the month of July.
3. *Website.* Updates are being done to help provide information to the residents.

Commissioner Ruffennach questioned if there are any scheduling of sewers being cleaned or are there any new sewer projects in the works.

Mr. Thauvette stated there are no new sewer projects in the works and we are probably looking at 2022 to get some underway. Lennon, Smith, Souleret suggested getting a full calendar year in before starting to look at new projects. Lennon, Smith, Souleret is putting together a schedule for sewer cleanings. We should have a bid proposal for the sewer cleanings on the agenda in September.

There were no other questions or comments.

#### **I. Township Manager / Township Business**

Mr. Thauvette reported the following:

1. *Officials Meeting.* There was a meeting held with Representative Ortity and Senator Robinson to discuss the probability of getting an entrance/exit off of Noblestown Road onto West Noblestown Road by the concrete plant. One of the issues was the amount of heavy truck traffic on Margaret Street which is a narrow and weight restricted street. The Concrete Company does have a bond on the street to due repairs, but this is not a long-term solution. The Officials advised the

Township to come up with a project scope and cost estimate plan. The Board would need to make a motion for this authorization.

*A motion was made by Commissioner Styche, seconded by Commissioner Cupples, to authorize Lennon, Smith, Souleret to plan a project scope of work and cost estimate for and entrance/exit road from Noblestown Road onto West Noblestown Road. By unanimous vote the motion passed.*

2. *Prestley Street.* Discussion on being one way street.

Commissioner Styche stated one way would be better served going up the street because of the business at the lower end. The residents are concerned about safety issues.

Mr. Thauvette stated the engineers would need to do a traffic study to determine if it is feasible to make the street one way.

Commissioner Ruffennach asked all three (3) fire chiefs that were in attendance what direction would be better making Prestley Street one way.

All three (3) Chiefs stated up.

*A motion was made by Commissioner Styche, seconded by Commissioner Zymroz to authorize Lennon, Smith, Souleret to do a traffic study on Prestley Street to see if it can be made one way traffic. By unanimous vote the motion passed.*

3. *MS4 Inspection.* Will be on August 26, 2021. DEP will be doing their 5-year inspections in the Township. Everyone has done a great job getting ready for the inspections and we anticipate good marks.

4. *Manager's Coffee Hour.* Will be on Tuesday, September 7<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 a.m. due to the Labor Day Holiday being on Monday.

There were no other questions or comments.

**III. PRESENTATION:** Presto VFD Chief Dan Wauthier.

Chief Wauthier was authorized by all three (3) fire departments to speak on their behalf. He first thanked the Board for clearing up the distribution of funds issue they had. He then presented the Board with statistics on the fire departments calls for daylight and evening. He went over the recommendations that were given from the fire study that was done previously in 2019 with the DCED grant and how the fire departments are following those recommendations.

Chief Wauthier explained the following:

- Differences in the types of calls the departments receive and how they help each other with calls.
- Bylaws

- Exhaust systems
- Cleaning of Equipment after calls to remove cancer causing materials and fumes.
- Annual Medical Evaluations. This is blood tests and cancer screenings are expensive.
- Training hours that must be done.
- Township standardization.
- Operational consolidation and how it will cost the Township more money. Not save money.
- Duty Shift Program. The departments want to implement this program throughout the Township. Since October 2018, Presto VFD has been paying a person to stay at the station Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. This person has set things to do everyday like checking trucks and equipment. This person is finding issues on the trucks before they are found out during a fire call and having them repaired. The turn out on calls are quicker. The six (6) hour shift of 10a.m. to 4p.m. was picked because that is what we can afford to pay 100% out of our funds. Thirty-five percent (35%) of fire calls are during this daylight time period.

Chief Wauthier asked to Board to fund the fire departments in 2022, two (2) duty shifts. They are not asking the Board to hire someone. They are asking for two (2) or three (3) firefighters in a station from 8a.m. to 4p.m., Monday through Friday to answer calls and do work that needs to get done. An example would be on a Monday, there may be one person from Presto and one person Kirwan and one from Rennerdale. Tuesday there might be a person from Presto or Bridgeville or Carnegie. The firefighter can be from wherever as long as they meet the minimum criteria. For two (2) firefighters the cost would be \$80,000.00. The Workers' Compensation would be covered by the fire department and not the Township. The total estimated cost for two (2) would be \$90,000 and for three (3) it would be \$131,000 a year. This is for 50 weeks due to ten (10) holidays and people being off for the holidays and will have enough staffing. Presto VFD already has a payroll system set up with their current Duty Shift person. If this gets approved, the firefighters would start their day at the Presto VFD to clock in and clock out at the Presto VFD station so all the paperwork stays at the Presto VFD station. These firefighters will be rotated throughout all three (3) fire stations. The other reason for starting them at the Presto VFD is that Presto has two (2) squad vehicles and the person can drive a Township vehicle to the other station for a call. Collier Township firefighters will be given preference to this program and they have to be an interior fire fighter. By doing these shifts it will guarantee someone will always be at the station. This will also help the departments with the ISO (Insurance Services Organization) rating and how a fireman is counted for answering calls. One of the benefits if this is approved is that Presto VFD will continue to fund the current duty shift firefighter with Presto's own funds. Chief Wauthier thanked the Board for implementing the Emergency Service Fee which is helping us out. All three (3) fire departments agreed we did not want to come to you asking for more money and agreed that this is a viable and the way of the future because volunteer rates are declining across the country and more places are going to paid fire departments. This is the first easy step and would like the Board to consider this.

Chief Wauthier then gave a brief background of himself and has been a firefighter since 1976.

Commissioner Ruffennach stated he has been a firefighter since 1981 and has only known Presto VFD to have two (2) Chiefs and one of them is Chief Wauthier. The hours are endless that these volunteers do.

Commissioner Zymroz stated she didn't know anything about the firefighters until her kids joined and she commended the fireman. She feels people need to know more about what the volunteer firefighters do and not assume that they will always be there. It is volunteers leaving their families to go on fire and ambulance calls.

Chief Wauthier stated we need the Board's help to protect the residents and that is why we are looking at Duty Shifts for the daytime and we hope the Board will give us consideration on this.

Commissioner Chiurazzi stated he hears what the Fire Departments are asking for and commented what would the Township do without the fire departments and what would it cost. It would cost millions of dollars in tax increases.

Chief Wauthier stated in the State of Pennsylvania, you do not have to provide Police protection but are required by law to provide Fire and EMS to the residents.

Commissioner Zymroz stated we do not want to lose the EMS either.

Chief Riddle stated he is at the station during the day and believes it helps with answering EMS calls faster.

A discussion took place on having citizen awareness.

The Board thanked Chief Wauthier for a great presentation.

#### **IV. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NEW BUSINESS ITEMS:**

**Tim Young** of 520 Azalea Lane, Bridgeville, PA (Neville Park -Collier Gardens) approached the Board thanking the past and present Commissioners and past and present members of his HOA Board. Everyone is aware that everything is not completed in this plan of homes. However, since he was a Commissioner back in 2010 there have been a lot of things completed because the Commissioners and the HOA have worked together. When the Developer does do work, it is usually excellent. In 2013, there was a storm that brought a lot of water down behind their homes and that was eventually taken care of. Mr. Young thanked the Developer for the things he has done. The HOA is going through a transfer right now and there are three (3) areas that have not been completed. The roads, the property with the clubhouse and the smokestack. Mr. Young has heard things like the Developer can do it or the Developer will do it. Nothing is ever completed until it is 100% done. He wanted the Commissioners to be aware that the HOA is working on getting the Developer to complete things and he hopes things will work its way out.

Commissioner Chiurazzi stated the Commissioners remember and hope things work out also.

**Kay Downey-Clarke** of 2520 Hilltop Road approached the Board to thank all of the Fire and EMS as well as the Commissioners for all their help and support with Rock the Quarry. She informed the Board that the Panhandle Trail Committee supports the Commissioners with the infrastructure for the sewer and water lines for the dog park and other amenities to the trail and if the trail committee can help with grants, etc., to let them know.

Virtual comments were from:

**Carl Stone** of Custom Amusements.

**Subject:** Re: Game Machine Permits Waiver

*Dear Kyle and Commissioners of Collier Township,*

*I am mailing the attached letter today, per Kyle's request, to be presented and discussed at your next meeting on 8/9/21, but in case the mail does not get it to you in time, please use the attached letter. We are imploring Collier to give us a break on the mechanical device fees for this year as the theater in Bridgeville only opened 6/15/21, and was closed since 3/15/20 and we had paid 2020 in full. We feel your budgets could have been reflective of the pandemic and special situations such as the theaters never opening but restaurants and other 'essential' places were allowed to open. As stated in our letter, every single other borough and township has either waived 2021 or reduced to 1/2 our mechanical device fees due to the pandemic. Please consider and grant this request for us. Thank you--Carl Stone*

Commissioner Styche stated the Board did make a condition that if they paid the full amount in 2021 and 2020, they would get a discount in 2022.

Mr. Thauvette stated since we already budgeted for revenue in 2021, we could offer that in the 2022 budget.

Commissioner Chiurazzi stated we may want to revisit this and as long as we can target money that we would have already received. We should be very kind to these businesses. We are thankful they are here and replying on us. This is a loss of revenue to the Township and the Federal money the Township receives can apply to this. We are creating our deficit, but it is the right thing to do. Commissioner Chiurazzi asked Mr. Thauvette to look into this.

**Jeffrey Vermeire** of 257 Sunrise Drive

**Subject:** Re: public comment for tonight

Why weren't my comments read at the last meeting? I submitted them before the deadline. I watched the video of the meeting and at no point were my comments read. I would like an answer to this.

Jeff Vermeire

Mr. Thauvette stated Mr. Vermeire's comments were read at the 6:00 p.m. Public Hearing which took place prior to this meeting. A public hearing has no requirement or advertisement of it being held virtually. The Public Hearing was recorded.

Commissioner Chiurazzi stated Mr. Vermeire can get the minutes for that meeting.

**V. NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Consider action to hire Liz Peropat for front desk work at the Community Center for \$9.00/hr effective August 9, 2021.

*A motion was made by Commissioner Styche, seconded by Commissioner Chiurazzi, to hire Liz Peropat as stated above. By a unanimous vote, the motion passed.*

**VI. Account Transfer(s):**

- Approval of the transfer of \$22,500.00 from the General Fund Account to the Capital Fund Checking Account.

*Motion was made by Commissioner Cupples, seconded by Commissioner Ruffennach, to approve the Account Transfer as stated above. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.*

**VII. Approval of General Fund Operating Account items:**

- Invoices paid and checks written July 27, 2021 to August 8, 2021 in the amount of \$365,061.85.
- Bills requested for payment for August 9, 2021 in the amount of \$122,601.86.

*Motion was made by Commissioner Zymroz, seconded by Commissioner Cupples, to approve the General Fund Operating Account items as stated above. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.*

**VIII. Approval of Capital Investment Account items:**

- Invoices paid and checks written from July 27, 2021 to August 8, 2021 in the amount of \$20.70.
- Bills requested for payment for August 9, 2021 in the amount of \$22,178.29.

*Motion was made by Commissioner Cupples, seconded by Commissioner Zymroz, to approve the Capital Investment Account items as stated above. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.*

**IX. Approval of Sewer Account items:**

- Invoices paid and checks written from July 27, 2021 to August 8, 2021 in the amount of \$593,790.09.

*Motion was made by Commissioner Styche, seconded by Commissioner Cupples, to approve the Sewer Fund Account items as stated above. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.*

**X. ADJOURNMENT:**

*Motion was made by Commissioner Styche; seconded by Commissioner Cupples; to adjourn the workshop meeting at 8:25 p.m. By unanimous vote of the Board the motion passed.*

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Wayne M. Chiurazzi, President  
Board of Commissioners

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Valerie A. Salla  
Township Secretary