

**MINUTES  
COLLIER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**REGULAR VIRTUAL MEETING**

**November 23, 2020**

**7:00 P.M.**

**I. CALL TO ORDER:** President Williams-Zabicki called the meeting of the Board of Commissioners to order at 7:00 P.M. This meeting was held virtual due to the COVID-19 (aka CoronaVirus) Regulations.

**A. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**B. ROLL CALL:**

**BOARD**

Dan Styche – Present  
Debra Zymroz – Present  
Rick Ruffennach – Present  
Wayne Chiurazzi, Esq. – Present  
Dawn Williams-Zabicki – Present

**STAFF**

Chuck Means, Solicitor - Present  
Shawn Wingrove, Engineer - Present  
Craig Campbell, Police Chief – Present  
Robert Caun, Planning Director – Present  
Jeff Hinds, Finance Director – Present  
Tom Plietz – Bldg/Fire Codes – Present  
Bob Palmosina, PW Director – Present  
Jim Nordquest, NIRA Engineers - Present  
Kyle Thauvette, Twp. Manager - Present  
Valerie Salla, Twp. Secretary – Present

**C. EXECUTIVE SESSION** – No Meeting held.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**A.** October 12, 2020 – Board of Commissioners Workshop Meeting

*Motion was made by Commissioner Zymroz, seconded by Commissioner Styche, to approve the minutes as stated above. By unanimous vote, the motion passed.*

**B.** October 26, 2020 – Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting

*Motion was made by Commissioner Styche, seconded by Commissioner Ruffennach, to approve the minutes as stated above. By unanimous vote, the motion passed.*

**III. REPORTS OF OFFICIALS AND COMMITTEES:**

**A. Solicitor:** Solicitor Means submitted a written report prior to the meeting and would be happy to answer any questions the Board may have.

Mr. Means added Governor Wolf may extend the emergency and the Township will still be able to hold virtual meetings.

There were no questions or comments.

- B. Engineer:** Mr. Wingrove submitted a written report prior to the meeting and would be happy to answer any questions the Board may have. He added the road paving contract finished last week.

There were no questions or comments.

- C. Manager's:** Mr. Thauvette submitted a written report and added the following:

1. Road Paving Contract. He thanked Youngblood Paving for the great job paving the roads.
2. Noblestown Road Work. Guide Rails are being installed.
3. Traffic Signal at Steen Road and Washington Pike. The signal is now flashing yellow. Collier Township was a monetary partner in helping to make that intersection function and work the way it is today.
4. Traffic Signal Multi-governmental Grant. Traffic light sinking project along Washington Pike (Route 50) was received. We will be working with Heidelberg and Scott Township to sink up the traffic signals from Carothers Avenue in Heidelberg all the way up to Interstate 79. In 2021, we will be applying for another grant to sink up the traffic lights from Interstate 79 down into Bridgeville Borough.

Commissioner Chiurazzi stated that he knows Forsythe Road is a State Road but they need to be notified that it is caving in again. The guide rails off of Cluxton and Dorrington roads are in in deplorable condition and a hazard. Drainage from the parkway is draining down on this road causing erosion. Mr. Pamosina has been out to see this area.

Mr. Thauvette stated the area by the railroads tracks on Cluxton is a State owned road. The Township only owns the section that goes up and dead ends.

Commissioner Chiurazzi stated we need to video the drainage coming down the hill and send this to the State so they can make repairs in this area.

There were no other questions or comments.

- D. Building/Codes:** Mr. Plietz submitted a written report prior to the meeting and highlighted the following:

1. Signs. Mr. Durisko has been picking up signs (political, marketing, selling) through the Township that do not have permits.
2. Parked Cars. Some located on properties and some on the streets have been addressed by the codes department.
3. Business Shut Down. An illegal business was shut down on Lane Road. They were operating a mechanical shop in a garage that was not suited or zoned for mechanical work. It took a year going through the Court system to finally get the business shut down and evicted out of that property.

4. Building Permits. Permits have been remaining consistent for the last 3 years for new construction. There were no questions or comments.

**E. COG:** Commissioner Ruffennach reported the following:

1. Meeting. The COG met on November 19<sup>th</sup>. The Budget looks good and will be passed at the December meeting. The COG dues for members will remain the same as last year.
2. Vactor Truck. Rental fees will stay the same for 2021 and the schedule is open. The revenue was down by \$37,000 due to COVID19 and McKeesport bought their own vactor truck and the members feel that also contributed to this.
3. December Meeting. The December meeting will be virtual on December 19<sup>th</sup>.

There were no questions or comments.

**F. Finance:** Mr. Hinds submitted a written report prior to the meeting and highlighted the following:

1. Sewer Department Budget 2021. Is on the agenda for approval to advertise so it can be approved at the December meeting along with the General Fund and Capital Fund Budgets for 2021.
2. Sewer Department Billing. Mr. Hinds and Mr. Thauvette reviewed how the sewer department billing is handle which is currently by Diversified Technologies. Based on the analyst and talking to Jordan Tax Services, if we move the billing over to Jordan Tax Service, the Township will see a savings of between \$11,000.00 and \$19,000.00. We would like the Boards approval to move the billing over to Jordan Tax Service and plan on having it up and running for the residents billing in January. The savings is due to people switching to online electronic billing and saving on postage.
3. Sewer Budget 2021. Commissioner Williams-Zabicki asked for an explanation on the increase of operating expenses. Is this due to added billing for Neville Park?

Mr. Hinds explained currently the Township bills 200 residents in the Neville Park area. These accounts will be transferred over to the sewer department billing effective January 2, 2021. The increase in rates is due to Alcosan's plan of raising their rates over the past 4 years. This is the 4<sup>th</sup> year and the increase is 7%.

Commissioner Williams-Zabicki stated the increase in sewer rates is because of Alcosan and not because Collier Township took over all of the sewers.

Commissioner Williams-Zabicki questioned the Contracted Services Administration line item of \$500,000.00.

Mr. Hinds explained this is the amount being paid from the sewer fund to the general fund to reimburse the general fund for his time, Mr. Thauvette's time, Mr. Palmosina's time, the Public Works Department time and Mr. Durisko will be doing a lot of the 811 calls.

There were no questions or comments.

**G. Parks and Recreation:** Mr. Thauvette submitted a written report prior to the meeting and adding the following:

1. Comp Plan. We are nearing the end of the open space comp plan. He has seen a draft of the executive summary and once it is complete, Heather Cuyler of Pashek MTR will be coming in to make a formal presentation.
2. Light Up Celebration. Is scheduled for December 4<sup>th</sup>. However with the new COVID-19 orders released today by Governor Wolfe, we are to limit exposure and limit gathers. We still would like to offer some type of holiday activity to our residents. We originally scheduled fireworks and for groups and organizations to decorate and light up trees. The plan is to move forward with these. We are evaluating how to do this safely. Home Depot donated 20 live cut trees to Collier Township to use for this. Mr. Thauvette thanked Home Depot for the donation.

Commissioner Zymroz questioned how the boy scouts and girl scouts troops will be kept safe on limiting them being together to decorate the trees.

Mr. Thauvette stated the trees will be available to start decorating on Tuesday, December 1<sup>st</sup>. Groups will be coming to decorate their trees throughout the week.

Commissioner Chiurazzi expressed his concerns about having a gathering of people for this event.

Commissioner Williams-Zabicki stated she is less comfortable with gathering people for the fireworks and a little more comfortable if we are just doing a drive through to see the trees where people must stay in their cars.

Commissioner Styche questioned when the Board will make a decision when the residents can view the fireworks.

Mr. Thauvette stated it sounded to him that it would be a decision the Administration would make and asked for Commissioner Styche's opinion.

Commissioner Styche questioned where the fireworks can be seen from.

Mr. Thauvette stated we are located in one of the highest spots in the County. They will put them off from the back soccer field. A majority of residents should be able to see them if they don't have a lot of tree cover. The last time we had fireworks, people in Robinson said they could see them.

Commissioner Styche stated there should be a motion that we do a drive through on the trees and maybe and not have the ability to have people in the park to see the fireworks live.

A discussion took place on what should be done regarding the fireworks, having Santa and possibly cancel the fireworks.

*A motion was made by Commissioner Styche, seconded by Commissioner Chiurazzi to cancel the fireworks for the Light Up Celebration. By a unanimous vote, the motion passed.*

Commissioner Styche stated hopefully in July 2021 COVID19 will be over and we can have the fireworks.

Commissioner Zymroz questioned if we will still be doing decorating the trees.

Mr. Thauvette stated we felt we can still decorate the trees but not have an official lighting of the trees. The groups can come out on their own to decorate.

Commissioner Styche questioned if Mr. Thauvette or Mr. Shazer will be coordinating with the groups on days and times they can come out so there is not a large gathering and be able to social distance.

Commissioner Chiurazzi stated he was against this also and was against prompting groups of any size getting together.

Commissioner Zymroz stated it depends on the size of the groups and who they are. She questioned how many people are there going to be.

Mr. Thauvette stated there are a couple of families, the Rotary Club, Northeast Paving, and Girl Scouts. The trees will be placed far enough apart for social distancing.

Commissioner Zymroz stated to have them come at different times.

3. Parks and Recreation Director. This position has been advertised and is currently accepting applications and resumes. They can be completed online through the Township website and in the parks and recreations local chapters and state chapters. It has also been advertised at the local government academy.

Commissioner Williams-Zabicki thanked Ms. Barry for the excellent job and all her hard work she did as the Parks Director for Collier Township. She asked that if anyone knows of anyone looking for a job with experience in a Parks Director role, to apply if interested.

Commissioner Styche stated that Rob Shazer is our acting Parks Director at this time and questioned if Mr. Shazer was back working full time or still part time.

Mr. Thauvette stated he did recently have surgery on his shoulder so the only time he is “not there” is when he is doing physical therapy. He is there for 8 hours a day for most of those days.

There were no other questions or comments.

**H. Planning/Development/Zoning:** Mr. Caun submitted a written report prior the meeting and added the following:

1. The Planning Commission met last week with Collier Land and Coal. There was a public hearing this evening for the rezoning of R-1 to R-2 and this is on the agenda for approval.
2. Maronda Homes. Plans for a development called Creekside Meadows of 50 single family homes at the corner of Steen Hollow Road and Thoms Run Road. They will need to obtain some variances and are schedule to go before the Zoning Hearing Board

on December 15<sup>th</sup> and then back to the Planning Commission on December 17<sup>th</sup> to continue discussion on the development.

3. AT & T. Will be at the December 15<sup>th</sup> Zoning Hearing Board requesting to mount some cellular antennas at the Great Southern Shopping Center. We have a 5 foot height restriction on antennas and they want a 6 ½ foot antenna.

Commissioner Styche questioned if there was a motion to change the R-2 zoning in the Township and we also want to change the definition of our R-2 zoning in the Township.

Mr. Caun stated there is a motion on the agenda for the McHugh Residential Estates property to change from R-1 to R-2 zoning. The R-2 zoning as it relates to Conservation Subdivision currently allows the construction of tri-flex and four flex. The Planning Commission has recommended removing the ability to build tri-flex and four flex from the R-2 zoning district and to only allow single family and two-family dwellings.

Commissioner Styche stated he understands there are only a couple of R-2 districts in the Township and that would not affect them if we make this change because they are not suitable for tri- flex or quads.

Mr. Caun stated when we looked at the available land in the Township and the R-2 districts, there were only two (2) larger parcels that would not be conducive to multi-family and the rest of the R-2 district was developed already. Mr. Caun felt that Commissioner Styche's statement was correct.

Commissioner Williams-Zabicki stated she was concerned with the end of Mr. Caun's report and wanted to discuss it.

Mr. Caun stated the Board should read that section and being that it is legal, we should stick to the advice of Solicitor Means and discuss it later.

Commissioner Williams-Zabicki stated they will discuss it at the next executive session.

There are no other questions or comments.

- I. **Public Safety – Fire:** A written report was submitted prior to the meeting. Chief Troy Riddle of Kirwan Heights VFD was available to answer any questions.

There were no questions or comments.

- J. **Public Safety – Police:** Chief Campbell submitted a written report prior to the meeting and added the following:

1. Halloween. Everything went well. The Police Association gave out over 500 pieces of candy.
2. Election Day. There were not problems at the polls.
3. Department Man Hours. We were experiencing some man hour issues but have since worked themselves out and will back to full hours by November 26<sup>th</sup>.

There were no other questions or comments.

**K. Public Works:** Mr. Palmosina submitted a written report prior to the meeting and highlighted the following:

1. Leaf Program. Is currently going well and the last day will be on Monday, November 30<sup>th</sup>.
2. Winter. We have gotten all the trucks ready for winter except for the leaf vac truck which will be done once leaf pick up is over.
3. Last Year's Salt. The 732 ton of salt from last year will be arriving tomorrow.

Commissioner Zymroz questioned where the additional salt is being stored.

Mr. Palmosina stated in the old salt bins and they will be tarped.

4. Department Health. The guys have been working from different sites and everyone remains good and healthy.
5. Cluxton Road. Mr. Palmosina did notify the State about the guide rails but will follow up again with the State tomorrow.

There were no other questions or comments.

**L. Sewer Department.** Mr. Jim Nordquest submitted a report prior to the meeting and would be happy to answer any questions the Board may have.

There were no other questions or comments.

*Motion was made by Commissioner Styche, seconded by Commissioner Williams-Zabicki, to approve the reports as stated above. By unanimous vote, the motion passed.*

#### **IV. Request by Craig Cozza of Gregg Station L.P. to receive conditional Sewer tap applications for lots 53 through 63 in the Sunrise Junction Plan of Lots.**

Mr. Thauvette stated the Developer would like to sell these lots of 53 through 63 to Ryan Homes to get the building underway. Normally we would wait until the Developer has all the infrastructure and sewer lines are completed as well as the roads and inspected before the tap allocation being granted. They are requesting the Township approve the tap in's conditionally so they can start selling and building on those lots prior to the sewer line being installed.

Mr. Andy Hutchinson of the Sunrise Junction Plan of Lots informed the Board they installed the sewer project in two (2) different parts. One part that is installed is just getting ready to be accepted and they will be camering the sewers on Wednesday and we will have to post our financial security and they will all be accepted. This will open up the building permits for lots 1 through 13. We are currently installing the sewers that will service lots 53 through 63. There will be a small overlap of construction and most of this request is administratively because Ryan Homes will be able to pursue and get their building permits. The purchase of the lots would be the end of December or early January and start construction in the month of January. We should be ready to have the sewers formally accepted by the Commissioners meeting in January. We are asking for granting of the conditional taps to allow them to continue their administrative process to receive

building permits, purchase the lots and possibly start construction.

Commissioner Williams-Zabicki questioned what the Township needs to know and to consider for the building permits and would like to get the Solicitor's thoughts.

Mr. Hutchinson stated they have all their financial securities in place. Mr. Cozza does have a conditional tap in that protects the municipality and sewer department. We would be willing to do this again on these lots.

Solicitor Means informed the Board this is not an uncommon request. He reviewed this with Mr. Thauvette and Mr. Caun and prepared a draft of a conditional letter and this is similar to what was approved for the model home.

Solicitor Means then read the draft letter with conditions.

Commissioner Styche questioned if this has ever been done in the Township before.

Solicitor Means stated the Board just did this for the model home.

Commissioner Styche stated has it been done anywhere other than this model home.

Mr. Thauvette stated this would be the first time this Board would be doing this and could not speak for the Municipal Authority Board.

Commissioner Ruffennach questioned if this has been done in the past.

Mr. Nordquest stated yes, it was done in the past.

Commissioner Styche questioned if this would establish precedence with other developments and is this something the Board wants to do.

Solicitor Means if the Board decides to approve it, you will only enter into the agreement when you are satisfied the conditions are appropriate and that you are holding all of the bond.

Mr. Caun stated we are holding the entire bond.

Solicitor Means stated this does not require the Board to do this for future developments and the Board would be looking to see what the circumstances are. Holding the bond is a major requirement.

Commissioner Styche questioned if the Board has to vote on this tonight.

Solicitor Means stated no.

Commissioner Styche stated he would like to wait until the next meeting to vote.

Commissioner Chiurazzi stated he would like to see this done with every development. This is with the condition of them selling 10 lots right now. It is very important for development. There are four (4) conditions we have placed on them and hoped the



Developer would agree to the conditions and also does not want to delay the vote.

Mr. Hutchinson stated they would agree to the conditions and asked for consideration on a vote tonight based off of a lot of the discussion has been with COVID-19. We have been very successful with preliminary sells. Ryan Homes wants to build and we want to strike when the iron is hot. There have been a third of the lots already sold in this community and we would like to get off on a good start. There is a lot of activity in the community with construction through the winter and this will be a benefit for us. The agreement will protect the Board.

Solicitor Means questioned if there are any issues with tap validation, with DEP or any interim tap.

Mr. Wingrove stated no but that could always change. The Board has to protect themselves from these issues and they cannot get an occupancy permit until everything is lined up.

Commissioner Williams-Zabicki stated she agreed that the conditions will cover the Township, the future residents and we got the bond.

*Motion was made by Commissioner Ruffennach, seconded by Commissioner Chiurazzi, to forward the letter of conditions stated by Solicitor Means to Gregg Station L.P., regarding the conditional sewer tap applications for lots 53 through 63 in the Sunrise Junction Plan of Lots. By a 4 to 1 vote the motion passed. Commissioner Styche was opposed.*

**V. Public Comment/Comment on New Business Items:**

3-minute duration to each signed up participant. Please sign in to talk and state subject.

Mr. Thauvette stated there were no public comments.

**VI. New Business:**

1. Consider action on Ordinance # 716; An Ordinance of the Township of Collier amending the Township Zoning Ordinance by (1) rezoning all of those parcels comprising the McHugh Residential Estates Plan of Lots recorded in the Allegheny County Department of Real Estate at plan book volume 264, page 169, located in the vicinity of the intersection of Noblestown Road and Nike Site Road and consisting of approximately 58 acres, from R-1 to R-2; (2) revising section 27-602.1.a.2 to limit housing types in conservation subdivisions in the R-2 district to Single-Family and Two-Family Dwellings; (3) revising section 2012.1.d to cross reference section 27-2009.1 instead of section 1608.a; and (4) revising table 27-20-9 to delete the reference therein to “triplex, fourplex” within the R-2 Zoning District.

*Motion was made by Commissioner Williams-Zabicki, seconded by Commissioner Ruffennach, to adopt Ordinance #716 as stated above. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.*

2. Consider action to enter into a Developers Agreement with Steen Road Partners for the construction of a Sit-Down Restaurant at 1273 Washington Pike. This land development plan received final approval on November 25, 2019 conditioned on the satisfaction of the Township Engineer and also the Township Solicitor.

*Motion was made by Commissioner Williams-Zabicki, seconded by Commissioner Zymroz, to enter into a Developers Agreement with Steen Road Partners as stated above. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.*

3. Consider action on Concurring Resolutions 112320-01; A Concurring Resolution to designate an official to perform the required duties between the applicant and the Department of Economic Development and to comply with all other provisions of the CDBG application.

Commissioner Williams-Zabicki questioned if the designated official is Mr. Thauvette.

Mr. Thauvette stated yes.

*Motion was made by Commissioner Styche, seconded by Commissioner Ruffennach to approve Resolution 112320-01 and have Mr. Kyle Thauvette as the designated official to perform the required duties as stated above. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.*

4. Consider action on Resolution 112320-02; A Resolution authorizing the filing of a CDBG application with the Allegheny County Department of Economic Development for Demolitions, Slums & Blight.

*Motion was made by Commissioner Styche, seconded by Commissioner Zymroz to approve Resolution 112320-02 and have Mr. Kyle Thauvette as the designated official to perform the required duties as stated above. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.*

5. Consider action to advertise the 2021 Sewer Department Budget.

*Motion was made by Commissioner Ruffennach, seconded by Commissioner Williams-Zabicki, to advertise the 2021 Sewer Department Budget. By unanimous vote, the motion carried.*

## **VII. Other Business:**

Commissioner Williams-Zabicki stated she has been honored to be a Collier Township Commissioner and that she will be resigning as of December 31, 2020. She will be relocating to Charlotte, NC where her husband is employed. She enjoyed working with everyone and thanked everyone and appreciates the work that everyone has all done.

Commissioner Chiurazzi thanked Commissioner Williams-Zabicki for all the time and effort she has put in. She is an amazing President and a great Commissioner. The Township is losing a powerhouse in you and we are all grateful and better having you. We appreciate you and wish the best to you in Charlotte. He thanked her for your dedication and time with us.

Commissioner Zymroz seconded what Commissioner said and thanked Commissioner Williams-Zabicki again.

Commissioner Styche stated it has been a pleasure serving with Commissioner Williams-Zabicki. It was good sitting up here with you and wishes you were here right now. He hopes she enjoys her stay down there and it has really been a pleasure.

**VIII. Account Transfer:**

- Approval of the transfer of \$64,076.37 from the Capital Savings Account to the Capital Fund Checking Account.

*Motion was made by Commissioner Styche, seconded by Commissioner Williams-Zabicki, to approve the transfer as stated above. By unanimous vote, the motion passed.*

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

Invoices paid and checks written from November 10, 2020 to November 22, 2020 in the amount of \$140,885.20.

Bills requested for payment for November 23, 2020 in the amount of \$45,557.83.

*Motion was made by Commissioner Ruffennach, seconded by Commissioner Styche, to approve the General Fund Account items as stated above. By unanimous vote, the motion passed.*

**X. Approval of Capital Investment Account Items:**

- Bills requested for payment for November 23, 2020 in the amount of \$64,076.37.

*Motion was made by Commissioner Williams-Zabicki, seconded by Commissioner Ruffennach, to approve the Capital Fund Account items as stated above. By unanimous vote, the motion passed.*

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

- Invoices paid and checks written from November 10, 2020 to November 22, 2020 in the amount of \$2,647.30.

*Motion was made by Commissioner Ruffennach, seconded by Commissioner Williams-Zabicki, and carried, to approve the Sewer Account items as stated above. By unanimous vote, the motion passed.*

**XII. Adjourn**

*Motion was made by Commissioner Zymroz, seconded by Commissioner Williams-Zabicki, to adjourn the meeting at 8:10p.m. By unanimous vote, the motion passed.*

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Dawn Williams-Zabicki – President  
Board of Commissioners

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Valerie A. Salla  
Township Secretary