



TOWNSHIP OF SPRING

BERKS COUNTY, PA

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BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING MINUTES NOVEMBER 22nd, 2021

OPENING OF MEETING: A regular business meeting of the Board of Supervisors was called to order by Chairperson Stuck at 7:10 p.m. on Monday, November 22nd, 2021 in the Public Meeting Room of the Township of Spring Administration Building, located at 2850 Windmill Road, Spring Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania.

Upon roll call, Supervisors Stuck, Kocher, Myer and Ulrich were present. Ms. Smith attended via teleconference. Also present were: John Groller, Judy Houck, Mary Burkholder, Jen Bensinger, Jim Moll, Deputy Chief Powell, Dan Becker-Esquire, Aaron Wozniak, Fire Chief Hackman, Tony Tucci, Jay Vaughan, and Santiago Serrano. The following individuals attended the meeting via teleconference: Paul Darrah, Mike Wertz and Jesse Royer.

OPEN TO THE FLOOR:

Tony Tucci, Western Berks Ambulance Association was present to answer any questions.

Mr. Stuck stated the Board would like to discuss the \$5.00 increase instituted by the Western Berks Ambulance Association (WBAA) for every household.

Mr. Ulrich, who served on the WBAA Committee from 2008 through 2011, questioned whether the rest of the thirteen (13) municipalities contribute their fair share to the WBAA. Mr. Tucci reported they have seven (7) municipalities contributing in kind. The “big” five (5) close to the Township are West Reading, Sinking Spring, South Heidelberg, Lower Heidelberg, and Wernersville, who also voted for the increase. All municipalities would be paying \$35.00 per household. Mr. Tucci explained insurance companies are only paying an initial payment of approximately \$600.00 of a claim. If the consumer re-submits the claim, the WBAA can recover the additional \$300.00-\$400.00. If the consumer does not want to re-submit, it will get written off the membership.

Mr. Stuck reported issues he recently had with the process and not receiving a call back in a timely fashion to address his questions and concerns. Mr. Tucci stated that he would look into it and address Mr. Stuck’s concerns. Mr. Tucci said the WBAA had lost approximately \$145,000.00 this year, with people keeping their insurance checks for services. Mr. Tucci stated that most of the WBAA staff work from home. Bids will come in on December 6th, 2021, to rehabilitate their building that was damaged by fire. The WBAA hopes to be operating out of its building by May 2022.

OPEN TO THE FLOOR: (Continued)

Tony Tucci, Western Berks Ambulance Association *(Continued)*

Mr. Stuck questioned if Robesonia was contributing to the WBAA. Mr. Tucci said that Robesonia donates approximately \$4,000.00, and they receive about \$25,000.00 from Wyomissing. Mr. Stuck questioned if WBAA accepts insurance as payment of services in Robesonia and Wyomissing. Mr. Tucci said they do if they have a membership; however, they are at a higher rate. Mr. Tucci reported on the issues of disparity of funding with emergency services. Out of 45 municipalities reporting to the County, data shows police protection funding at approximately \$45,000,000.00, fire protection at \$15,000,000.00, and emergency services funding is just under \$1,000,000.00. Mr. Tucci stated if things do not change, service will continue to go downhill. Long offload times to offload patients at hospitals have also become an issue. Mr. Stuck questioned if WBAA would be purchasing the Lower Heidelberg Property. Mr. Tucci said the WBAA would not be purchasing the building; they will be leasing it for \$1.00 to have an additional station to assist with response time.

Santiago Serrano-Constituent Advocate -Representative Chrissy Houlahan

Mr. Serrano highlighted the Committees and Caucuses Representative Houlahan works with and provided a list of services offered. Representative Houlahan has offices in Washington DC, West Chester and Reading, PA.

ACTION ITEMS FOR APPROVAL: All items requiring action by the Board are listed below. Comments and discussion points are listed below the corresponding item.

1. Meeting Minutes – Regular Business Meeting – November 8th, 2021
2. Bills for Approval –
 1. **General Fund - \$242,760.45**
 2. **Street Lighting Tax Fund - \$25,292.40**
 3. **Fire Hydrant Tax Fund - \$8,520.49**
 4. **Refuse Tax Fund - \$65,092.56**
 5. **Park Capital Outlay Fund- \$4,600.00**
 6. **Sewer District #3 Fund - \$306,111.32**
 7. **Fire Protection Fund – \$50,283.58**
3. Wilson School District Waiver Requests-

Mr. Moll reported that Wilson School District had requested waivers on Land Development Plans to expand the existing high school building and improve the athletic facilities. Mr. Moll presented the exhibits on the northern portion of the district's main campus. The Planning Commission has recommended approval for two (2) waivers.

 - 1) Waive the Preliminary Plan Process and allow this to be a single-phase project. The submitted plan would be reviewed as a Final Plan to ensure it meets requirements for both stages in one process.
 - 2) The waiver of the requirement to provide additional survey information within 100 feet of the perimeters of the tract. The School District is asking the Township to waive that requirement.

ACTION ITEMS FOR APPROVAL: (Continued)

3. Wilson School District Waiver Requests *(Continued)*

The Board discussed and expressed their concerns involving the removal of existing parking, noting planned expansion to the auditorium and how busy the area is when many sporting events are going on at the same time. The Board expressed concerns about the capability of buses to turn around, how people will get from the main parking lot to the football field, and stormwater runoff. Mr. Moll stated the Planning Commission would be reviewing the parking issue and said there are stormwater designs for the turf fields. Mr. Moll reported the Planning Commission (PC) would review the proposed plan at the PC Meeting on December 2nd, 2021.

Mr. Becker reported the Planning Commission would review all of the details and questions the Board has whether the plan is approved as a single-phase plan or a two (2) stage plan, and the plan will come back to the Board of Supervisors for final approval. Mr. Moll reported the Preliminary Plans are currently under review with the Fire Department. Mr. Becker explained that the idea is not to get Preliminary Plan approval until all items are addressed, except for third-party types of issues, typically PennDOT, DEP, sewer, and water.

The plan would still have the same kind of contingencies for third-party matters. Mr. Becker noted the request saves the school district some expense with professional reviews and saves taxpayers money and time.

Mr. Moll reported the Township has so much data from the surrounding neighborhood he does not believe the Township needs additional information to authorize approval of the second waiver request that would require additional survey information.

4. 2022 Pavilion Capacities-

Ms. Houck reported that the Parks and Recreation Board recommends that the Board of Supervisors removes the capacity restrictions currently on pavilion reservations for the 2022 season; unless the public health situation changes and the Township is required to restrict the number of people gathered in a public facility. The Township COVID regulations have limited the pavilion capacities to 75%. The Township has no way of enforcing this restriction and has not reduced fees based on the limited 75% capacity. The Parks and Recreation Department will begin accepting reservations for the 2022 season on Tuesday, January 18th, 2022.

Mr. Stuck asked if this request would roll into the Township offering a full capacity playground program next year. Ms. Houck stated that it would be up to the Supervisors for approval.

5. Vehicle Sale Agreement-Western Berks Ambulance Association-

Mr. Groller reported the Western Berks Ambulance had requested authorization to purchase two (2) 2015 Ford Explorer Police Vehicles for a total of \$15,000.00.

6. 2022 Preliminary Budget-Tabled

ACTION ITEMS FOR APPROVAL: (Continued)

7. Police Chief Promotion-

Mr. Groller reported effective December 1st, 2021, the current Chief of Police, Bryan Ross, will be stepping down in his role of Chief of Police with an effective retirement date of January 5th, 2022. Effective December 1st, 2021, the current Deputy Chief of Police, Steve Powell, will officially be promoted into the role of Chief of Police for the Township of Spring Police Department. The formal ceremony will be at the next Board of Supervisors meeting.

Motion to approve Action Items # 1-5, and 7 was made by Mr. Kocher, seconded by Mr. Myer. (Item # 6 was tabled) Upon roll call, Ms. Smith abstained from voting on Payment #0007817, Mr. Stuck abstained from voting on Payment # 105160. All Supervisors present voted affirmatively. MOTION CARRIED

TOWNSHIP DIRECTORS

A. Zoning/Building Codes Department -No Report

B. Parks and Recreation Department-

- 1) Ms. Houck submitted a written monthly report for October. Ms. Houck stated the Parks and Recreation Department had started a partnership with Helping Harvest. The Department will be collecting non-perishable food items at all their programs and events and take the items collected to Helping Harvest every month. The Department's advertising of their programs will incorporate their partnership with Helping Harvest. Mr. Stuck noted for the record that the partnership is a great idea.
- 2) Summer Playground Program Funding- Ms. Houck reported that the Parks and Recreation Board had discussed the Summer Playground Program for 2022 at their last two (2) meetings. The Parks and Recreation Board discussed participant ages, the number of kids permitted to attend and is now ready to determine the registration fee for 2022. Ms. Houck reported historically that the Board of Supervisors has agreed to cover 25% of the program's cost. The Parks and Recreation Board needs to know if the Township is willing to continue to cover 25% or what percentage the Township would like to cover if any. The Parks and Recreation Board is requesting that the Board of Supervisors consider the matter and, if possible, provide a response at the next Board of Supervisors meeting. At the Parks and Recreation Board Meeting in December, the Board will be working on their final plan to make a final decision in January to determine if the program will be held in 2022, what it will look like, and begin to advertise.

Mr. Ulrich asked if the Township continued to fund 25% of the program's cost if it would result in a substantial increase to the Township. Ms. Houck said yes, it would as the proposal is to start with thirty (30) children per site, noting one of the Parks and Recreation Board's biggest concern is if they will have enough staff to run the programs. The plan includes programs at the same six (6) sites used previously, located at Breneman Park, Colony Park, Cornwall Terrace Park, Drexelwood Park, LenOak Park, and Red Caboose Park. There would be three (3) leaders per site. If they can recruit enough staff, they could increase the number of children at these sites. If the Township funds 25% of the program costs, the per child cost would result in a \$284.00 registration fee. The previous registration fee was \$115.00. Ms. Houck reported on other municipalities' registration fees and staffing issues they experienced this past summer.

TOWNSHIP DIRECTORS: (Continued)

B. Parks and Recreation Department (Continued)

2) Summer Playground Program Funding (Continued)

Staff who worked in 2019 were contacted to see if they would be interested in returning, and to date, there has not been a good response from former employees about returning to work. Ms. Houck stated the Parks and Recreation Department would start advertising for staff as soon as they know if they will have a Summer Playground Program.

Mr. Kocher stated the Township may not have always had to cover the complete 25% of the program's cost, although the Township has always been willing to. Ms. Houck stated there was a time when the Township was spending considerably more than the 25%, that is when the 25% came about, noting the last rate increase was in 2017. The Parks and Recreation Department is initiating a resident registration date. Six weeks later, non-residents will be permitted to register if space is still available. Since they are limiting these programs so much, the Department feels they want to give Township residents the best opportunity to register their children. Ms. Smith asked if field trips would be part of the Summer Playground Program. Ms. Houck reported they would not be having field trips because of bussing, hiring drivers, etc. The program would include hiring presenters and entertainers to come to the sites, as done previously.

Mr. Stuck questioned if the \$284.00 registration fee was per child or if the cost would be less for each additional child in a family. Ms. Houck reported the cost to the Township is \$284.00 per child. Ms. Houck said to break it down; it comes to \$1.62 an hour. Ms. Houck explained the scenario of hourly rates for playground leaders and how salary is based on experience. Mr. Myer stated in his opinion; the \$284.00 rate was too much of a cost increase.

Ms. Smith asked Ms. Houck to forward the Summer Playground Proposal to the Board for their review. Mr. Stuck requested Ms. Houck work with Ms. Reardon to advertise for staff.

- C. Engineering/Planning Department-** Mr. Moll reported the Township received a request from South Heidelberg Township to amend the existing Sanitary Sewer Agreement. Mr. Moll reviewed the details in the agreement and the proposed request from South Heidelberg Township and the developer to change a portion located in the "Future Area" to send sewage flow to Sinking Spring's WWTP instead of the Township, as noted in the agreement. Mr. Moll displayed exhibits to highlight the districts in the current agreement. The future area South Heidelberg Township is interested in changing is farmland on a 105-acre property. The proposal is to develop a warehouse on the site. The developer is expecting 12,500 gallons per day of sewage flow, which equates to 53 EDUs. They essentially want to move that area from the future district and move it to flow to the Sinking Spring WWTP. Mr. Moll reported the Infrastructure Committee reviewed the proposal at their public meeting on November 16th, 2021. The Committee indicated they needed additional information, including analysis from Entech Engineering, before making a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Stuck questioned Mr. Moll if a pump station would be necessary to get the sewage from the proposed site to the Township's WWTP. Mr. Moll said it is his understanding that a pump station would be required.

TOWNSHIP DIRECTORS: (Continued)

C. Engineering/Planning Department (Continued)

Mr. Stuck asked if a pump station would be necessary if the sewage would go to Sinking Spring's WWTP. Mr. Moll stated South Heidelberg's sewer could go to Sinking Spring via gravity lines through a recently built development near Sinking Spring's WWTP; therefore, a pump station would not be required. Mr. Ulrich asked if Sinking Spring had approved the request. Mr. Moll stated that the Township does not know if Sinking Spring was contacted or agreed to the request. Mr. Stuck questioned if all the areas had been under consideration when the Township did its sewer expansion, and Mr. Darrah confirmed they were. The Board of Supervisors discussed their concern that the Township may not see any of the flows in the future district when the site is developed. Mr. Stuck questioned the Township agreeing to spend money for a project outside of our Township, considering the Township spent \$13,000,000.00 on sewer upgrades. Mr. Vaughn stated that to the best of his recollection, 365,000 gallons a day is what was listed in the agreement when the Township was initially approached by South Heidelberg. The Township included this figure when they planned the expansion of Plant #3.

Motion to inform South Heidelberg Township that the Board of Supervisors rejected the request to release the requested sewer flow from the Township was made by Mr. Myer, seconded by Mr. Kocher. Upon roll call, all Supervisors present voted affirmatively. MOTION CARRIED

D. Finance Department

The Finance Department submitted the General Comparative Income Statement for October. The 2021 revenues include half of ARP funding received and the inter-fund transfers completed before December 2021; in previous years, the Finance Committee made the transfers in December. Mr. Groller reported adjusted revenues for comparative purposes is \$13,216,559.00 vs. \$12,267,366.00. Revenues are approximately \$1,000,000,00 higher than in 2020. Expenses were \$15,527,020.00 as of October 31st, 2021, less transfers of \$3,545,500.00 for a total of \$11,981,520.00 vs. \$10,806,963,00. Total expenses are \$1,174,557.00 higher, approximately 10.9% higher than 2020.

E. Human Resources -No Report

F. Public Works-No Report

PUBLIC SAFETY

A. Police Department- Monthly report submitted for October.

Deputy Chief Powell reported that on Saturday, November 20th, 2021 the Police Department honorarily swore in Ryder Knechtle, the young child suffering from a severe illness at the Reading Royals Hockey Game. The Department also added him as a "Special Officer" on the Department's website.

B. Township of Spring Fire Rescue Service-No Report

C. West Side EMA-No Report

SOLICITOR – County Grant Update

Mr. Groller reported the County would distribute additional ARP funding. Mr. Becker is participating in some of the meetings. Mr. Becker said that the County received its share of the ARP money and is allocating it to municipalities. One-pot goes to Sewer, Water and Infrastructure Improvements. Mr. Moll has started working on an application to see if the Township is eligible for the Wyomissing Interceptor Project grant funding.

OLD BUSINESS: No Report

NEW BUSINESS: No Report

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. An Executive Session was held prior to this meeting on matters of personnel and potential litigation.
2. The Meeting is recessed until Thursday, December 2nd at 6:00 p.m.

Chairperson Stuck recessed the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

CONTINUATION OF THE NOVEMBER 22ND, 2021 MEETING ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2ND, 2021

OPENING OF MEETING: The reconvened meeting of the Board of Supervisors from Monday, November 22nd, 2021 was called to order by Chairperson Stuck at 6:24 p.m. on December 2nd, 2021 in the Public Meeting Room of the Township of Spring Administration Building, located at 2850 Windmill Road, Spring Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania.

Upon roll call, Supervisors Stuck, Kocher, Myer, Smith and Ulrich were present. Also present were: John Groller, Judy Houck, Mary Burkholder, Jen Bensinger, Chief Powell, Dan Becker-Esquire, Al Kreider and Karen Krater. Paul Darrah attended the meeting via teleconference.

OPEN TO THE FLOOR: None

ACTION ITEMS FOR APPROVAL: All items requiring action by the Board are listed below. Comments and discussion points are listed below the corresponding item.

Motion to amend the agenda from the reconvened meeting of November 22nd, 2021 to add Action Items# 8- The Township Manager Employment Agreement and # 9 – The Chief of Police Employment Agreement, was made by Mr. Myer, seconded by Mr. Ulrich. Upon roll call, all Supervisors voted unanimously. MOTION CARRIED.

6. 2022 Preliminary Budget Approval (*Tabled from the November 22nd, 2021 Meeting*)

The Finance Committee is requesting that the Board of Supervisors accept the 2022 Preliminary Budget in the amount of \$34,802,350.00. The budget will be available for public inspection at the Township Administrative Building. Mr. Groller reported the preliminary budget is \$4,400,000.00 higher than the 2021 Budget, which represents an increase of approximately 14.6% over last year's adopted budget. The significant increase is largely due to the planned Wyomissing Interceptor Project, which has an estimated budget of \$3,900,000.00.

ACTION ITEMS FOR APPROVAL:(Continued)

6. 2022 Preliminary Budget Approval *(Continued-Tabled from the November 22nd, 2021 Meeting)*
Operational expenses in the 2022 proposed budget increased \$1,050,000.00, approximately 4.5% overall. In the General Fund, the 2022 proposed budget is presented at \$18,121,488,00, approximately 14.5% higher than last year's adopted budget. A large portion of the increase is due to the transaction recording of the second payment of the ARP Funds, which is \$1,447,500,00. The 2022 Preliminary Budget proposes to keep all real estate and user fees at the same rates as in 2021. Consideration for the final adoption of the 2022 budget is scheduled for the Board of Supervisors Meeting on December 28th, 2021.

Mr. Myer stated that the projected opening cash balance for 2022 is \$5,053,000,00 and questioned if this reflects moving the first ARP payment the Township received. Mr. Groller reported that it does and that money is in the Township's General Fund, following DCD's recommendation on what fund to post the revenue. The Board of Supervisors has elected to utilize that money for sewer projects. Mr. Groller stated that the funds will be transferred into the sewer fund during the 2021 calendar year. Mr. Myer questioned if the \$1,447,500.00 is the 2nd ARP Payment. Mr. Groller stated that it is and that it is scheduled for an interfund transfer into the sewer fund. Mr. Myer questioned if the Board of Supervisors is required to vote and take official action to transfer funds from one account to another. Mr. Groller stated it would require official action, and the Board of Supervisors will receive a budget amendment for approval before the end of the year. Mr. Myer indicated his concern with the Finance Committee taking road project funds out of the Capital Fund instead of the General Fund, as was the procedure previously, and suggested he would like to see it done that way in the future.

Mr. Stuck questioned the Township's practice of carrying Capital Projects over for years. Since 2018 the Township has been carrying over garage parking lot funds. Mr. Darrah reported that the funds were in the budget before he came to the Township and stated the Public Works Department is looking into the possibility of expanding the garage as currently there is a lot of equipment sitting outside. Mr. Stuck questioned carrying since 2011 signs in the Capital Budget Fund and asked when it would be complete. Mr. Groller and Ms. Houck reported \$5,000.00 a year is carried over for easements. Ms. Houck stated the signage funds are carried over so that when the Parks and Recreation Board needed to replace or purchase signs, the funds were available. Mr. Stuck said he would like the Finance Committee to make a goal for the 1st quarter of 2022 to review what needs to be purchased for signage, and in future years, to add a line item in the Parks and Recreation Budget for signage replacement when required.

Mr. Kocher questioned the increase in police, police overtime, and street maintenance expenditures. Mr. Groller reported a fixed fee is used to budget overtime by the number of employees. Mr. Groller said that quite a bit of overtime paid to the Police Department is eligible for reimbursement and explained the various calculations used to list projected overtime in the budget.

Mr. Groller addressed Mr. Kocher's question on the increased street maintenance expenditures. Mr. Groller explained the estimated additional cost is to cover the cost of a part-time employee. Mr. Groller presented wage calculations, pension allocation, health insurance and explained the various scenarios in estimating those calculations. Mr. Kocher requested that the Finance Committee prepare an analysis of the last several years to show outsourcing costs vs. savings of work done in-house.

ACTION ITEMS FOR APPROVAL*(Continued)*

6. 2022 Preliminary Budget Approval *(Continued-Tabled from the November 22nd, 2021 Meeting)*
Ms. Smith asked if the Township could lower the overtime paid to the fire department. Mr. Groller explained any changes to the fire department personnel would require a contract change.
8. Township Manager/Director of Finance Employment Agreement
The Board of Supervisors received a copy of the Township Manager/Director of Finance Employment Agreement prepared by the Township's HR Consultant.
9. Chief of Police Agreement
The Board of Supervisors received a copy of the Chief of Police's Employment Agreement prepared by the Township's HR Consultant.

Motion to approve Action Items #6, #8 and #9 was made by Mr. Myer, seconded by Mr. Kocher. Upon roll call, all Supervisors present voted affirmatively. MOTION CARRIED.

Chief Powell distributed a staffing summary he created to the Board of Supervisors for their review. Chief Powell reported the District Attorney's Office would reimburse \$19,000.00 of the cost of replacement body cameras as well as a one(1) year warranty.

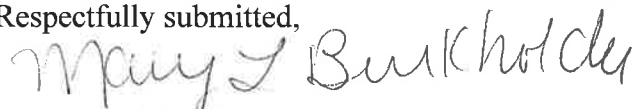
ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. An Executive Session was held prior to this meeting on matters of personnel.
2. Next meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, December 13th, 2021.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, Chairperson Stuck adjourned the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary L Burkholder
Township of Spring Secretary