

**MINUTES OF MEETING
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP**

The Board of Commissioners of Springfield Township met in regular monthly meeting on Wednesday evening, July 13, 2011 at 8:00 PM in the Springfield Township Building for the purpose of transacting the general business of the Township. All members of the Board were present, with the exception of Ms. Peirce. Mr. Harbison presided.

Mr. Harbison asked everyone to join the Board of Commissioners in a moment of silence honoring the service men and women who have placed themselves in harm's way in order to help preserve our safety.

Mr. Harbison led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion (Schaum-Heller) carried unanimously dispensing with the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting and approving same as written and recorded in the official minute book of the Township.

Mr. Harbison noted that Commissioner Peirce was not in attendance at the meeting due to a business obligation.

Mr. Harbison also recognized the presence of past Commissioner Jane Roberts in the audience.

Correspondence

Mr. Harbison read into the record a letter to the Board of Commissioners dated June 21, 2011 from Dr. Jim A. Farrell, Pastor of the Oreland Evangelical Presbyterian Church. Mr. Harbison noted that the letter was supported by 119 of the church members. In summary, the letter noted an earlier comment by Mr. Harbison that the rights of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community are in conflict with some church teachings, but that the conflicting rights both deserved respect. The Pastor acknowledged the conflict of sexual ethics between the LGBT community and the church, but opined that both positions cannot be true. He took exception to the Township providing equal standing for the creative intention of God, and the progressive wishes of society. The Pastor suggested that the draft Human Relations Commission ordinance was not good law, not good sexual ethics and not good parenting.

Mr. Harbison commented that he felt awkward reading the letter as he was called out as a bad parent, stating that he teaches his children to be tolerant of all individuals and if that was indeed bad parenting, so be it.

Mr. Harbison called on the Friends of Historic Bethlehem Pike to make a presentation on the efforts of the Friends to support the Black Horse Inn project.

Maryanne Griffin, of the Friends of Historic Bethlehem Pike, addressed the Board of Commissioners and presented a written report that she reviewed for the Board. The report highlighted activities of the Friends, including a Bethlehem Pike clean-up which is held quarterly, a presentation of their “Acorn Award”, their cooperative efforts with the Springfield Township Historical Society for fundraising for the Black Horse Inn, and maintaining an active role in general matters pertaining to Bethlehem Pike.

Debi Riggs Shaw, 925 E. Southampton Avenue, provided a written letter to the Board of Commissioners and read the letter aloud. In summary, the points made by Ms. Shaw included: (1) that being a lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender is not by choice, but is an underlying sexual orientation, (2) that being gay or bisexual is more than sexuality, (3) that maintaining a faith and particular creed does not necessarily serve as a license to legislatively condemn those one disagrees with, (4) there are currently no state or federal protections provided for sexual orientation or gender identify, and (5) there is a growing effort to provide these protections in individual communities.

Marie Kiessling, 507 Lorraine Avenue, stated her position that it is appropriate to defend the rights of individuals, however, the existing draft ordinance appears to be dividing the community while doing so. She noted that at past meetings of the Board of Commissioners, gay and lesbian members of the community indicated that they had not experienced discrimination in Springfield Township. Ms. Kiessling expressed her distress and confusion as to the need for the ordinance and the fact that it is tearing the community apart. She noted that she is a member of the Oreland Presbyterian Church but was not aware of the letter from the Pastor, or the dissemination among the congregation.

Howard Supplee, 105 Orlemann Avenue, expressed his ongoing concern for the detention basins at the Tank Car property on Walnut Avenue, and the PennDOT detention basin on Pennsylvania Avenue near Camp Hill Road. Mr. Berger indicated that the Montgomery County Health Department had visited both locations and agreed to the need to retain the water and has placed these basins on their list to be treated for mosquitoes. Mr. Supplee also noted that he believed some of the pine trees planted on the Tank Car property as a buffer are dying.

Erin Agnew, Hawthorne Lane, addressed the Board of Commissioners on the municipal campus renovation project. She expressed her understanding that the cost estimate was approximately \$17 million, and asked if the Commissioners understood the cost to the taxpayers for this project. Mr. Harbison indicated the Township had done some preliminary review of those costs. Ms. Agnew restated the interest of the local neighbors to be included in any committees created to review and manage the project. Ms. Agnew also suggested that the Commissioners begin communications with the Township as a whole to alert residents beyond the immediate neighborhood as to the consideration for this project.

Gail Schlosser, a Cheltenham Township resident, suggested that the Board of Commissioners become familiar with House Bill 1489 which would require a separation

between commercial banking and investment banking. It is her belief that such legislation is appropriate given the banking crisis of the immediate past.

Rob Coop, of Beech Lane, discussed the balance between an anti-discrimination law and maintaining religious freedoms. He surmised that similar discussions took place when discrimination laws were considered to protect women and other existing protected groups. He noted that in the past, the civil rights stance prevailed when balancing between religious freedom and civil rights. In conclusion, he stated that it was his belief that there is a need for a Human Relations/Anti-Discrimination ordinance. Mr. Dailey asked Mr. Coop whether it might be appropriate to consider a religious exemption to the anti-discrimination ordinance. Mr. Coop suggested that there probably is precedence in this regard and is not necessarily opposed to the religious exemption with regard to employment issues but felt the church should comply with the ordinance in matters of public accommodations.

Al Barron, of Wyndmoor, opined that government should only get involved when constituents have an issue requiring assistance. Mr. Barron, referring to the draft Human Relations/Anti-discrimination ordinance, noted that the ordinance states that discriminatory practices were well known and documented. He inquired where the documentation could be found. Mr. Heller indicated that the information is available on his website. Mr. Barron asked if the documented discrimination studies took place in Springfield. Mr. Heller indicated that the information he has available relates to national studies. Mr. Heller noted that discrimination as discussed this evening was not a crime, and therefore, this information would not be available in Springfield anyway. Mr. Barron suggested that the policing of discriminatory practices does not fall under the police powers of the Township. Mr. Kilkenny explained the concept of police powers and health, safety and welfare being included as a police power. Mr. Barron suggested that the section related to penalties be clarified in the event the Township is only providing a mediation service, and will not necessarily be assessing the penalties. The Board agreed and indicated that that matter was to be clarified. In conclusion, Mr. Barron suggested that the Township has other matters to address and that this matter may not be a priority.

John Agnew, 8812 Hawthorne Lane, asked that a Hawthorne Lane neighbor be placed on the municipal campus renovation committee when such a committee is established.

Lori Jenkins, 29 West Mill Road, suggested that it is not necessary to document acts of discrimination in Springfield Township in order to recognize that it exists and that those involved require protection. She believes that some individuals who may have been discriminated against remain silent for fear of a reaction from those involved. To the extent the anti-discrimination ordinance is passed, future acts of discrimination in Springfield Township would be documented.

Casey Arlen, Hawthorne Lane, suggested that in addition to an individual member of the Hawthorne Lane neighborhood being placed on the municipal campus renovation committee, an alternate person be identified to represent the neighborhood as well.

Debi Riggins Shaw, Southampton Avenue, readdressed the Board of Commissioners noting that the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission Act specifically states that it is within the police powers of the Commonwealth to address discrimination.

Mr. Harbison, Chairman of Internal Affairs and Environmental Resources Committees, reported:

Motion (Harbison-Schaum) carried unanimously to approve the June check reconciliation in the amount of \$657,378.35 and the July bill listing in the amount of \$598,680.06.

Mr. Harbison announced that during the month of June, Springfield Township residents recycled 253.5 tons of materials with a householder participation rate of 77%. The net cost for the month was \$1,286.70. Mr. Harbison also noted that the Township recently received payment from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in the amount of \$113,536 in conjunction with a recycling performance grant. The grant funds are predicated on the residential recycling program and therefore, the Mr. Harbison, on behalf of the Board of Commissioners, commended each household for their participation in the program.

Mr. Harbison stated that the Commissioners conducted a public hearing on June 8, 2011 to accept comments on a draft Human Relations Commission and Anti-Discrimination Ordinance. While it was originally anticipated that the Commissioners might conduct a vote on the proposal at the July business meeting, the Board has continued the discussion on the ordinance, and anticipates that a vote may take place on the proposed ordinance as a part of the regularly scheduled business meeting on September 14, 2011.

Motion (Harbison-Schaum) carried unanimously to adopt Resolution No. 1255, a resolution authorizing the disposal of specified Township records as set forth in the Pennsylvania Municipal Records Manual. The records to be disposed of are cited in the Resolution and total approximately 6 cubic feet of material.

Mr. Schaum, Chairman of Public Safety Committee, reported:

Motion (Schaum-Gillies) carried unanimously to appoint Jennifer Ponce, of Flourtown Avenue, and Susan Yeager, of Willow Grove Avenue, to fill two unexpired terms of service as members of the Springfield Township Shade Tree Commission. The terms of service shall expire July 13, 2012, and July 13, 2013, respectively. Additionally, Thomas Pryzblinski was reappointed to a new three

year term of service as a member of the Springfield Township Shade Tree Commission. The new term of service shall expire July 13, 2014.

Motion (Schaum-Dailey) carried unanimously to enact Ordinance No. 913, an ordinance amending Section 34-2.1 of the Springfield Township Code to provide for inter-department response among and between the fire departments located within Springfield Township. Mr. Schaum explained the purpose of this ordinance was to provide additional manpower to dispatched fire companies within the Township and to assure the firefighters that they will be provided workers compensation insurance while providing the assistance.

Motion (Schaum-Gillies) carried unanimously adopt Resolution No. 1256, a resolution authorizing the Township to lease new police radios and related user hardware for use by the Springfield Township Police Department. The Township would agree to pay the cost of the equipment over a period of ten years with an interest rate of 4% per year. Mr. Schaum explained that the lease would be through Montgomery County, and that the County is in the process of considering upgrading its existing communications system.

Mr. Gillies, Chairman of Library Committee, reported:

Mr. Gillies reported on several library programs being conducted over the Summer months. Mr. Gillies announced that the Tuesday night family programs and Thursday afternoon camp programs of the Summer reading club have been very well attended. He noted that there was a demonstration from a local robot club. A safari program is scheduled for later in July, as well as a presentation by a professional story teller. In early September, the American Red Cross will set up their mobile blood drive bus in the parking lot. Residents are encouraged to help meet the goal of 30 units of blood by attending the blood drive on September 9, from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM. The American Red Cross is particularly interested in individuals with type O blood, which is the universal donor blood type.

Motion (Gillies-Heller) carried unanimously that the Board of Commissioners establish a policy for the use of mass email distribution systems consistent with the recommendation from the Springfield Township website enhancement committee. Mr. Gillies reviewed the key features of the policy and outlined the presently approved media for blogging, email distributions, and internal committee discussions.

Mr. Standish, Chairman of Public Works and Facilities Committee, reported:

Mr. Standish announced that the Board of Commissioners is continuing discussions on renovations to the municipal facilities at Paper Mill Road and Hawthorn

Lane. An RFP for architectural services was issued several months ago, and ten architectural firms responded. The Commissioners received presentations from six firms last month, and a short list of three firms has been established. Those firms include Lederach Architects, Vitetta, and Levy DiCarlo Architects. Mr. Standish announced that arrangements are being made to once again meet with these three firms in late September, with the anticipation that an architectural firm might be selected subsequent to that meeting. Related, the Commissioners would like to create a municipal campus advisory committee that might consist of members of the Board of Commissioners, Township staff, immediate neighbors of the campus and other interested residents. Residents interested in participating on the committee should send a letter of interest or resume to the Township Manager at the Township Building, or send an e-mail through the Township website.

Mr. Dailey, Chairman of Zoning Committee, reported:

Mr. Dailey announced that the Zoning Hearing Board would next meet on Monday evening, July 18, 2011 at 7:00 PM in the Springfield Township Building. Mr. Dailey summarized the Zoning Hearing Board agenda.

Motion (Dailey-Schaum) carried unanimously to amend Section 107-35, Schedule XII, Special Purpose Parking Zones, by establishing a handicapped parking space on the south side of Hemlock Road, Flourtown, from a point 300 feet east of its intersection with Sycamore Lane to a point 22 feet easterly thereof.

Mr. Dailey announced that on September 8, 2011, at 7:30 PM, the Board of Commissioners will conduct a public meeting to present a zoning validity challenge that the Township is facing related to the installation of billboards in the Township. Given the anticipated interest in this subject, the meeting will be held offsite but the exact location is not known at this time. No action will be taken by the Board of Commissioners at the September 8 meeting, but the Board does wish to provide information on the challenge to the residents and receive comments. Mr. Dailey clarified that the applicant for the billboard zoning validity challenge will be presenting the challenge and the alternate locations he has been considering. The Township is not necessarily sponsoring the meeting, but is interested in providing the information to residents.

Mr. Heller, Chairman of Community Development Committee, reported:

Motion (Heller-Schaum) carried unanimously to adopt Resolution No. 1257, a resolution amending a condition of land development plan approval for the Flourtown Shopping Center.

Mr. Harbison clarified that several years ago the Township approved a land development plan for the Flourtown Shopping Center which included a Home Depot Store. Home Depot subsequently pulled out of the project and the owners of the shopping center are interested in building the project with the same footprint as on the plan, but did not want to build the project with a Home Depot façade. The new façade, which will be reviewed by the Board of Commissioners, will match with the façade of the existing shopping center.

Motion (Heller-Gillies) carried unanimously to enact Ordinance No. 912, an ordinance that will permit the use of private property and portions of the public sidewalk adjacent to an eating establishment to be used for exterior seating areas for individuals to enjoy the same products and services available within the primary establishment on the premises.

Mr. Harbison explained that this ordinance will provide an opportunity for the smaller restaurants to provide a couple of tables adjacent to their existing facility without the need to comply with the standard parking requirements.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald E. Berger, Jr.
Secretary

DEB:cmt