

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

The Board of Commissioners of Springfield Township met in regular monthly meeting on Wednesday evening, September 14, 2022, at 7:30 PM at the Springfield Township Building for the purpose of transacting the general business of the Township. The meeting was also offered in a live streaming feature. Mr. Graham announced that the video would be made available on the Township's website beginning Thursday, September 15, 2022. All members of the Board were present, with the exception of Commissioner Maxwell. Mr. Cobb joined the meeting at 7:38 PM. Mr. Graham presided.

Mr. Graham asked everyone to join the Board of Commissioners in a moment of silent reflection honoring the service men and women who have placed themselves in harm's way in order to help preserve our safety at home and abroad.

Mr. Graham led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Graham announced that Mr. Maxwell would not be in attendance at this evening's meeting due to an illness.

Motion (Lee-Wilson) vote 5-0, 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. Graham announced that the Board of Commissioners conducted an executive session as part of their September 12, 2022 workshop meeting to discuss one personnel/litigation matter.

Mr. Graham invited Police Chief Michael Pitkow and Upper Dublin Magisterial District Justice Patricia Zaffarano to the front of the room. Chief Pitkow summarized the hiring process for police officers, and introduced Michael Porrini, Jr. and Tyler Donnelly, two new police officers in the Springfield Township Police Department. Chief Pitkow provided a brief background of the new officers. District Justice Zaffarano administered the oath of office to Patrol Officers Donnelly and Porrini.

Mr. Graham commented how grateful and blessed the Township is to have the new officers join the Police force.

Mr. Graham opened the meeting to public comment.

Cecelia Dougherty, Erdenheim, announced that there is a new Springfield Tree Tenders Group. Ms. Dougherty summarized the tree planting projects planned by the volunteer group for the Fall of 2022 during which time 10 trees will be planted throughout the Township. Mr. Lee inquired where the trees would be planted and was informed that the trees would be

planted on private properties in residential neighborhoods. Ms. Dougherty indicated the Tree Tenders group is looking for volunteers of all ages.

Richard Metz, Erdenheim, addressed the Board with regard to the plastic bag survey and proposed ordinance to ban single use plastic bags. Specifically, he addressed three major points that came out of the survey: (1) affordability of reusable bags – Mr. Metz said he is looking into options for making reusable bags available to residents free of charge, (2) do reusable bags actually contain more plastics than the single use bags – Mr. Metz informed all that one reusable bag is equal to 1,000 single use bags, (3) why is an ordinance necessary vs. a resolution – Mr. Metz suggested that an ordinance is law and a resolution alone does not change societal behavior.

Sherry Cryder, Oreland, representing the Wyncote Audubon Society, read a statement regarding the number and variety of mature trees that are believed to exist on the Harston Woods property. She explained the importance of these trees to the birds, wildlife and environment. Ms. Cryder concluded her remarks by suggesting that the friendly condemnation is a great start to save the property and keep it natural.

Kim Crowder, Flourtown, addressed the Board with regard to the possible development of the property at 380-402 Haws Lane. Ms. Crowder asked the Board to consider adding additional stormwater management controls as part of any development proposal.

Mr. Graham, Chairman of the Cultural Resources Committee, had no report.

Mr. Standish, Chairman of the Community Development Committee, had no report.

Mr. Standish reported on behalf of Mr. Maxwell, Chairman of the Public Works and Facilities Committee:

Motion (Standish-Cobb) vote 6-0, to authorize the sale of various used vehicles and equipment via the Municibid on-line public auction site. Vehicles and equipment to be sold are as follows: 2016 Ford Explorer, 2012 Chevrolet Tahoe, 2013 Chevrolet Tahoe, and three office copiers.

Mr. Standish announced that on Thursday, September 8, 2022, Springfield Township received bids on behalf of six municipalities in eastern Montgomery County for direct-haul waste disposal services for the year 2023 and future years. Springfield Township received bids from Covanta, Inc. and Waste Management, Inc. The low bid was received from Covanta in the amount of \$75.24 per ton beginning in 2023. The Waste Management bid was in the amount of \$91.75 per ton.

Motion (Standish-Ratsavong) vote 6-0, to award a five-year contract to Covanta Sustainable Solutions, Inc. for direct haul waste disposal services in the amount of \$75.24

per ton beginning January 1, 2023. The final terms of the award shall be subject to the execution of a contract with Covanta in a form satisfactory to the Township Solicitor.

Mr. Standish announced that on Thursday, August 18, 2022, Springfield Township received bids for the Cisco Park Bridge and Gabion Repair project. Mr. Standish described the scope of work for the project. Two bids were received as follows: (1) Ply Mar Construction Company, Inc., \$79,850, and (2) Bill Anskis Company, Inc., \$213,200.

Motion (Standish-Lee) vote 6-0, to award a contract to Ply Mar Construction Company, Inc. of Plymouth Township, PA for their low bid price of \$79,850. 100% of the cost of the work will be paid utilizing a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation grant for damages that were sustained during Hurricane Ida in September 2021.

Commissioner Wilson clarified that only a portion of the collapsed gabions would be repaired as part of the subject award. Mr. Taylor confirmed that was true and that staff continues to work with FEMA to obtain additional funding to repair the balance of the gabions.

Mr. Standish announced that the Board is creating two alternate member positions on the Springfield Township Shade Tree Commission. The alternate members will be utilized to assist the commission with public education and outreach activities, and when necessary, to achieve a quorum in the event that one or more regular members of the commission are unable to attend a meeting. Interested residents were encouraged to send a letter of interest or resume no later than October 3, 2022 to the attention of Michael Taylor, Township Manager.

Motion (Standish-Ratsavong) vote 6-0, to adopt Resolution No. 1574, a resolution authorizing a grant application to be submitted to the PECO Green Region grant program in an amount up to \$10,000. The purpose of the grant is to conduct a Township-wide tree canopy enhancement project.

Motion (Standish-Wilson) to adopt Resolution No. 1575, a resolution authorizing the condemnation of a portion of a certain parcel of land located at 380 Haws Lane, Erdenheim, Springfield Township, PA, also known as a portion of Montgomery County Tax Map Parcel Number 52-00-08452-00-9, for the purpose of establishing a public park and recreation area. The area to be acquired measures 2.7598 acres and does not include the portion of the property that is presently encumbered with three buildings containing residential uses, several accessory buildings and related improvements that are of no beneficial value to a public park, and will be an additional cost to remove or maintain. The Board further authorized the Township Solicitor to file and prepare the appropriate documents in order to accomplish the acquisition through the Township's power of eminent domain and the filing of a declaration of taking in fee simple at consideration or

compensation not to exceed \$1,050,000, and the Township Manager shall be authorized to execute any documents necessary to effectuate same.

Commissioner Lee opined that he would like to defer formal action on Resolution No. 1575 until the October meeting in order to provide additional opportunity for public comment. He noted the benefits of the partial friendly condemnation and believes it could be a good outcome but also believes it would be good governance to defer action at this time.

Motion (Lee-Cobb) to table action on Resolution No. 1575 to the October meeting of the Board of Commissioners.

Mr. Standish noted that if the resolution does not pass, the owner intends to file a Land Development Plan for a behavioral health facility which would complicate the matter and would most likely result in additional cost to the Township.

Ms. Ratsavong noted that it is community advocacy to preserve the property that has led the Board to this point. There have been many conversations among the commissioners and the residents. She believes that maintaining a residential feel vs. an institutional feel is important to the neighbors. Furthermore, she appreciates the desire to allow more time for public comment but suggested that there is a narrow opportunity in time to preserve the property and the Board should seize that opportunity.

Mr. Wilson indicated he has checked his emails on the subject and noted those emails go back for approximately 3 years. He indicated that he believes the community understands the true harm if an institutional use is placed on the parcel. Mr. Wilson stated he is not in favor of deferring a vote.

Mr. Cobb noted he is not in favor of the initial motion. He feels there are better opportunities within the Township for open space acquisition. He opined that an expenditure on this property will limit the Board's ability to acquire those properties, and that this acquisition has the potential to negatively impact senior members of the community. He noted his belief that the debate has been a healthy one and that regardless of how the commissioners vote on this issue, they all want what is best for the community.

Mr. Graham stated that the entire debate arose as a result of residents speaking out to avoid an institutional use on the property. He suggested that social media comments heightened the false narrative that the Board was not doing their due diligence or listening to the residents. Mr. Graham opined that in every negotiation no party walks away with exactly what they want, and that both sides need to make compromises in order to get to a solution. He believes that the current proposal is one that both the developer, residents and Township can live with.

Vote on motion to table: 2-4; Graham, Standish, Wilson, and Ratsavong opposed.
Motion to table did not carry.

Mr. Lee reiterated his comments explaining why he is voting the way he is.

Vote on the original motion to adopt Resolution No. 1575: 4-2; Cobb, Lee opposed.
Motion carried.

Mr. Wilson, Chairman of Environmental Resources Committee, reported:

Mr. Wilson announced that during the month of August 2022, Springfield Township residents recycled 170.5 tons of material with a householder participation rate of 66.6%. The net cost for the month was \$22,677.94.

Mr. Cobb, Chairman of Administrative, Fiscal Affairs and Zoning Committee, reported:

Motion (Cobb-Wilson) vote 6-0 to approve the August check reconciliation in the amount of \$507,540.99, and the September bill listing in the amount of \$621,250.86.

Mr. Cobb announced the 2023 budget meeting schedule as follows:

<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>
Meetings with Support Agencies	9/21/2022	7:00 PM
Budget Workshop	10/19/2022	7:00 PM
Budget Presentation	11/9/2022	7:30 PM
Budget Hearing	12/14/2022	7:30 PM
Budget Adoption	12/14/2022	7:30 PM

All meetings will be held at the Springfield Township Building, 1510 Paper Mill Road, Wyndmoor PA 19038.

Mr. Cobb explained that the Board of Commissioners has a statutory obligation to adopt a resolution setting forth the minimum municipal obligations to properly fund the Township's employee pension plans, and to incorporate the minimum municipal obligations into the succeeding year Township budget.

Motion (Cobb-Lee) vote 6-0, to adopt Resolution No. 1576, a resolution establishing the 2023 pension fund minimum municipal obligations for the three defined benefit and one defined contribution pension plans.

Mr. Cobb announced that Act 57 of 2022 amends the Pennsylvania Local Tax Collection Law by waiving interest, fees and penalties in excess of the face amount of the real estate tax when a new owner of real property or a mobile home fails to pay their taxes in a timely manner, and attests that a tax bill was not received. In such instances, the new owner must file a waiver request with the local Tax Collector within 12 months of such purchase.

Motion (Cobb-Wilson) vote 6-0, to adopt Resolution No. 1577, a resolution requiring a waiver of additional charges for nonpayment of real estate tax when a taxpayer has purchased real estate or transferred title to a mobile home and has not received a tax bill within 12 months of purchase or transfer.

Mr. Wilson commented that the Board's actions with regard to Resolution No. 1577 are directly related to an Act of the State Legislature, and only pertain to new purchases.

Mr. Cobb announced that the Springfield Township Zoning Hearing Board will meet on Monday, September 26 and Monday, October 3, 2022 at 7:00 PM at the Springfield Township Building.

Mr. Cobb read into the record the Zoning Hearing Board agendas for the two meetings, and announced that copies of all applications are on file in the Code Enforcement Office and may be viewed during normal business hours.

Mr. Lee, Chairman of the Public Safety Committee, reported:

Motion (Lee-Cobb) vote 6-0, to authorize the appropriate Township officials to execute an employment contract with the Springfield Township Police Benevolent Association, or the appropriate entity representing the rank and file officers of the Township, for the years 2023 – 2026. The amendments to the existing contract are wage adjustments, vacation leave, compensation for extra duties, and contractual terms related to the use of administrative leave, paid holidays and age limitations for post-retirement healthcare benefits.

On behalf of the Board of Commissioners, Mr. Lee thanked the members of the bargaining committee for their involvement in the collective bargaining process, and for their willingness to work with the Township to bring a negotiated contract to conclusion.

Mr. Cobb wished to commend the PBA and township administration for coming to terms on a new contract and noted that this is the first time in 16 years that it did not have to go to arbitration.

Ms. Ratsavong, Chairwoman of Parks and Recreational Resources Committee, reported:

Ms. Ratsavong announced that the Springfield Township Community Day celebration will take place on Sunday, October 2, 2022, from 10 AM to 1 PM at Cisco Park in Erdenheim, and will be preceded by the Erdenheim Civic Association 5K Race and Fun Run, beginning at 9 AM. Food, entertainment, fishing, fire and ambulance equipment displays, and a petting zoo will be provided free of charge. Community Day is made possible via the generous support of our business community and various community volunteers.

Ms. Ratsavong announced that there presently exists a vacancy as a member of the Springfield Township Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee. Ms. Ratsavong outlined the duties and responsibilities of the parks and recreation advisory committee. Interested residents were encouraged to send a letter of interest or resume no later than October 3, 2022 to the attention of Michael Taylor, Township Manager.

Ms. Ratsavong announced that it is the intention of the Board of Commissioners to create an ad hoc steering committee to be known as the recreation center advisory committee. The purpose of the committee is to assist the Township with the creation of a Master Plan for the future use of the recreation center, and to provide technical advice and recommendations on the selection of an architect. Residents who are interested in serving as a member of the ad hoc committee were encouraged to send a letter of interest or resume no later than October 3, 2022 to the attention of Michael Taylor, Township Manager.

Mr. Wilson asked for a clarification as to how many vacancies actually exist on the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee. Mr. Taylor stated there is one vacancy.

Mr. Graham opened the meeting to public comment. No public comment was received.

Mr. Graham wished to mention that the Enfield/Erdenheim Parents Association is selling bricks from the old Enfield School as a fundraiser for the School District. Mr. Graham provided instructions on how to purchase a brick.

Ms. Ratsavong asked about the availability of the plan for the condemned portion of the Haws Lane property at 380-402 Haws Lane. Messrs. Taylor and Garrity stated the plan is available at the Township Building for anyone to view.

Mr. Cobb noted that on September 15, the new Trails Committee will be reviewing a summary of the information received from the public survey on township-wide trails. An in-person open house meeting of the Trails Committee will be held at the Springfield Township Library on September 29 at 7:00 PM to receive public comment. Mr. Graham inquired if there were any students of color on the Trails Committee. Mr. Ford responded that the School District has recommended two students to be on the committee; however, there has been only one in-person meeting of the Committee which took place in the summer and the students did not attend since they were on summer recess.

Motion (Graham-Lee) vote 6-0 to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Taylor
Township Manager/Secretary

