
MINUTES
MAY 9, 2022
Regular Public Meeting

Board of Commissioners

Township of Whitehall

A. CALL TO ORDER

- 1) The regular Public Meeting of the Whitehall Township Board of Commissioners was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, May 9, 2022 held at the Coplay Whitehall Sewer Authority, with the following in attendance:

COMMISSIONERS

Joseph J. Marx, Jr., President
Philip J. Ginder, Vice President
Thomas Slonaker, Secretary
Jeffrey J. Warren
Charles G. Fisher
Randy Atiyeh
Andy Roman

TOWNSHIP PERSONNEL

Michael P. Harakal, Jr., Mayor
John D. Meyers, Deputy Mayor
John F. Gross, Esq.,
Township Solicitor
Michael Marks, Police Chief
Frank Clark, Engineer, KCE
Lee Rackus, PZ&D
Tina J. Koren, Tax Collector
Larissa Bruder, Executive Secretary

President MARX read the statement on fair housing as required.

The meeting was formally opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and a moment of silence will follow to honor our men and women in uniform and our first responders and the people of Ukraine. President MARX stated that he and the Board were grateful that Officers Sell & Badoya were unharmed in the shooting that took place in the early morning hours.

President MARX noted that an Executive Session was held on May 2, 2022 at the Coplay Whitehall Sewer Authority regarding the sale or purchase of real estate.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner WARREN moved, seconded by Commissioner FISHER to approve the Minutes of the following meeting:

Regular Public Meeting – April 11, 2022

Seven Commissioners were present and voted “yes”. Motion carried.

B. COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

Since there was a large number of audience members present to give comment on the LVHN proposal, It was decided that they could do so at this time.

Graham SIMMONS, Ed DOUGHERTY and Dan QUAY, all affiliated with the LVHN proposal gave an overview of the proposal which is a health care overlay district on property located on MacArthur Road, located across from the Municipal Building Complex that is now currently zoned residential. The project presently includes a hospital, a medical office building and a behavioral health hospital. The hospital would be a two-story building with 24 beds – generally considered a “community hospital”. This proposal would provide close convenient care, instead of 20-25 minute drive to LVHN Cedar Crest or LVHN Muhlenberg. It was also noted that if the first three buildings are successful, further development is planned.

Bob MATEFF, Chief Executive Officer of Cetronia Ambulance Corps advised that there are 7,000 calls in Whitehall each year and believes the addition of this hospital would benefit patients as they would could get care they need faster and ambulance drivers would be able assist more patients.

Tim GILBERT, Ed REICHARD and Dale WEHR, residents of Fellowship Community, as well as Laura LONG, Vice President of Independent Living at Fellowship Community, voiced support for the hospital.

Karen POSHEFKO also a resident at Fellowship Community stated that she was “on the fence” about the proposal. Her concerns are preserving open space, infrastructure costs and the increase in traffic.

Bill RAVEN, member of Whitehall Chamber of Commerce voiced his support and submitted a letter advising the same from the Chamber.

Rob PILIGIAN of 415 Oakwood Drive, Whitehall asked the status of Audit for the outgoing Treasurer and also asked the status of the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission seat. Deputy Mayor MEYERS indicated that the firm conducting the Audit will most likely get started end of May to early June. President MARX advised that Mayor HAKAKAL will not be reappointed to LVPC and that seat was given to North Whitehall. He had a conversation with Lehigh County Executive, Philip Armstrong in which he stated that there is an open citizen seat, which Commissioner GINDER has kindly volunteered to be considered. The County will vote at their next meeting on Commissioner GINDER’s appointment.

Diane LARIAR and Al EDELMEN of Minsi Trails council stated that there has been an increasing decline in members for scouting and asked the Board to help with any ideas on how to increase membership.

C. PUBLIC HEARING AND VOTING ON RESOLUTIONS

1. BILL NO. 10-2022
TITLE: AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF PROPOSALS FOR CONSTRUCTION INSPECTION SERVICES PER REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS 22-01, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 3.20 IN THE HOME RULE CHARTER WHICH REQUIRES AUTHORIZATION OF ACQUISITIONS IN EXCESS OF \$25,000 BY ORDINANCE. (DEVELOPMENT)

President MARX read Bill No. 10-2022 to the Board.

Commissioner GINDER moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner ROMAN.

Seven Commissioners were present and voting “yes”. Bill No. 10-2022 was approved.

2. BILL NO. 14-2022

TITLE: AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF A PROPOSAL FOR PAVEMENT PRESERVATION WORK, BID 2022-05 FOR THE PUBLIC WORKS BUREAU, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 3.20 IN THE HOME RULE CHARTER WHICH REQUIRES AUTHORIZATION OF ACQUISITIONS IN EXCESS OF \$25,000 BY ORDINANCE. (PUBLIC WORKS)

President MARX read Bill No. 14-2022 to the Board.

Commissioner FISHER moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner ATIYEH.

Seven Commissioners were present and voting “yes”. Bill No. 14-2022 was approved.

3. BILL NO. 15-2022

TITLE: AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF A PROPOSAL FOR PURCHASE OF TWO HURST HP EXTRACTION TOOLS FOR THE FIRE DEPARTMENT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 3.20 IN THE HOME RULE CHARTER WHICH REQUIRES AUTHORIZATION OF ACQUISITIONS IN EXCESS OF \$25,000 BY ORDINANCE. (PUBLIC WORKS)

President MARX read Bill No. 15-2022 to the Board.

Commissioner WARREN moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner ROMAN.

Seven Commissioners were present and voting “yes”. Bill No. 15-2022 was approved.

4. BILL NO. 16-2022 (FIRST HEARING)

TITLE: AN ORDINANCE OF WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP, LEHIGH COUNTY, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, ELECTING TO AMEND ITS NON-UNIFORM PENSION PLAN ADMINISTERED BY THE PENNSYLVANIA MUNICIPAL RETIREMENT SYSTEM PURSUANT TO ARTICLE IV OF THE PENNSYLVANIA MUNICIPAL RETIREMENT LAW; AGREEING TO BE BOUND BY ALL PROVISIONS OF THE PENNSYLVANIA MUNICIPAL RETIREMENT LAW AS AMENDED AND AS APPLICABLE TO MEMBER MUNICIPALITIES. IT IS HEREBY ORDAINED BY WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP, LEHIGH COUNTY.

President MARX read Bill No. 16-2022 to the Board.

5. BILL NO. 17-2022

TITLE: AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF A PROPOSAL FOR PURCHASE OF ONE (1) 2023 DODGE CHARGER VEHICLE AND TWO (2) DODGE DURANGO VEHICLES FOR THE POLICE PATROL DIVISION, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 3.20 IN THE HOME RULE CHARTER WHICH REQUIRES AUTHORIZATION OF ACQUISITIONS IN EXCESS OF \$25,000 BY ORDINANCE. (POLICE)

President MARX read Bill No. 17-2022 to the Board.

Commissioner FISHER moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner ATIYEH.

Seven Commissioners were present and voting “yes”. Bill No. 15-2022 was approved.

D. PUBLIC HEARING AND VOTING ON RESOLUTIONS

1. RESOLUTION NO. 3202

TITLE: A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PROPER TOWNSHIP OFFICIALS TO APPROVE TD BANK AS THE APPROVED DEPOSITORY AND BANKING INSTITUTION FOR TOWNSHIP FUNDS (ADMIN).

President MARX read Resolution No. 3202 to the Board.

Commissioner GINDER moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner SLONAKER.

Seven Commissioners were present and voting “yes”. Resolution No. 3202 was approved.

OTHER

1. MOTION - to approve the release of escrow for completed and withdrawn projects, per Deputy Mayor MEYERS memo Dated May 5, 2022.

Seven Commissioners were present and voting “yes”. Motion carried.

2. DISCUSSION ITEM: LVHN Zoning Amendment

Commissioner GINDER, who is Chairman of the Legal & Legislative Committee stated that at the April L&L Meeting and after months of reviewing this request, the committee made a unanimous motion to deny sending the zoning overlay to the Planning Commission. At this time, President MARX called for a motion to send the request to the Planning Commission, but no motion was made. There was general discussion between

the Township's Attorney Jack GROSS and LVHN Associates as to how they can move forward from here.

F. REPORTS OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Commissioner ATIYEH commended the Police Department in the handling of the early morning shooting. He suggested that some type of community event be held for recruiting of any organizations that are in need.

Commissioner ROMAN announced that with the upcoming election 2 weeks away, Whitehall Township now has a drop box.

Commissioner WARREN noted he was glad to see a drop off box was available at the Township Building. He commented on the Whitehall Coplay Middle School Heritage Night. The kids did a great job presenting their heritage and community organizations were present. He also added Whitehall landed the Chestnut Street Trailhead Grant for \$320,000 for the trailhead expansion. Lastly, he suggested adding two alternates to the IRT Committee.

Commissioner FISHER stated the EAC had a very successful cleanup along Jordan Creek. Civil War Weekend was back since 2019 and the turnout was great. Bird boxes are progressing in the Parkway. The Recycling Event took place over the rainy weekend and there was a good turnout early in the day.

Commissioner SLONAKER asked for an update on the extension of the turnlane in front of WAWA. Mr. CLARK noted that he has been checking with PennDOT and they have not forwarded a time frame. Also addressed was an update on the Mechanicsville Road sidewalks which is with PennDOT R/W Dept. being reviewed.

Commissioner GINDER asked that a list of Park & Playground Officers and their financials be supplied to the Board, as well as list of our Township Police Officers, Volunteer Fire Fighters and their assigned stations and Fireman's Relief Officers. He verified with Jack MEYERS that the Firefighters Tax Refund program is up and running.

President MARX noted that work is being done at the Memorials in the Township for the events for Memorial Day. He also advised that Student Government Day is back and will be held on Wednesday June 1st. He asked for any board member that is available to be present for the mock Board meeting that will be held with the students that day. President MARX asked the Mayor to refrain from commenting on legislative matters.

Mayor HAKAKAL stated that he met with area Police Chief's and local legislators regarding the dirt bike issue that has been plaguing area communities. The Police Department is evaluating the ABLE program (Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement) which gives officers the tools and skills they need to perform an intervention. He has been involved with interviews being held for open positions in Tax and Administrative offices. He has also been working with the Whitehall Chamber and Tony Cocca preparing for the Heritage Day Festival on June 25th.

Treasurer KOREN advised that she submitted the monthly report which was more extensive as she

wanted to show the Board how many companies are not paying taxes. She received a \$50,000 check from GH Harris. There was a person hired for the vacant position, so they are now fully staffed and should be caught up on mail very soon. She is working on a program for businesses that are not paying their taxes as well as finding a better system for residents to obtain moving permits.

G. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION – Commissioner GINDER moved, seconded by Commissioner ATIYEH to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m.