

PALMER TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING
FEBRUARY 23, 2010

A general business meeting of the Palmer Township Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, February 23, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room of the Palmer Library with four Supervisors in attendance: Dave Colver, Mike Mitchell, Ann-Marie Panella and Bob Smith. Robert Lammi was absent. Also in attendance were the Township Manager, Public Services Director, Planning Director, Police Chief and Township Solicitor. Colin McEvoy from the Express Times represented the news media. Chairman Colver convened the meeting and led those present in the Pledge to the Flag.

2. APPROVAL OF DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS FEBURARY 1, FEBRUARY 8, AND FEBRUARY 23, 2010

INFORMATION

The report will be provided at the meeting.

DISCUSSION

On motion by Mitchell, seconded by Smith, and agreed by all, the Board approved the disbursement of funds for February 1, 2010.

On motion by Panella, seconded by Mitchell, and agreed by all, the Board approved the disbursement of funds for February 8, 2010.

On motion by Smith, seconded by Mitchell, and agreed by all, the Board approved the disbursement of funds for February 23, 2010.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JANUARY 26, 2010

DISCUSSION

On motion by Mitchell, seconded by Panella, and agreed by all, the Board approved the minutes of January 26, 2010.

4. PROPOSED ZONING AMENDMENT – GENERAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

INFORMATION

The Board needs to approve/disapprove consideration of a zoning amendment to permit retail stores in the general commercial district.

DISCUSSION

Planning Director Cyndie Carman said this was discussed years ago, prior to her joining the township, when the pharmacy was built at 25th Street and William Penn Highway. Carman said the current ordinance would allow a pharmacy and retail use if it was in an existing building

only, not new construction. Bruno said this change would have to go to the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission and the township Planning Commission for comment. Bruno asked if the township should also consider multiple retail uses on one property. Carman said more than one commercial business on a property is allowed in a building. Bruno said if the Board is okay with moving forward with this change he would need authorization to put together the ordinance change and then submit it to the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission for review and comment.

On motion by Mitchell, seconded by Panella, and agreed by all, the Board authorized the solicitor to write up the proposed zoning amendment to submit to the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission for review and comment.

5. POLICE PENSION FUND COST OF LIVING DISCUSSION

INFORMATION

The Police Pension Board is recommending a 1% COLA increase for police retirees. The Board needs to approve/disapprove the recommendation.

DISCUSSION

Supervisor Panella said this was discussed at our recent Police Pension Board meeting and she mentioned that there was a minor cost of living increase of 1.8%. Panella said she suggested the Police Pension Board make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to consider a 1% COLA increase to the current police retirees for 2010 and revisit it again next year. Colver said it is 1% of what. Anckaitis said it would be a 1% increase to their current pension amount. Anckaitis said he agrees with what Supervisor Panella said and this really has nothing to do with the item being discussed, but he wanted to make the Board aware that the non-uniform retirees have never received a COLA increase since he's been with the township.

On motion by Panella, seconded by Smith, and agreed by all, the Board approved a 1% COLA increase to current police retirees contingent upon a favorable actuarial evaluation for the increase.

6. POLICE PENSION ORDINANCE – ACT 51 OF 2009

INFORMATION

The Board needs to approve/disapprove advertising the ordinance.

DISCUSSION

Bruno said this change came from state enacted legislation that provides for a killed-in-service benefit that was previously in our local ordinance. Now that the state covers the benefit it can be removed from the township ordinance.

On motion by Mitchell, seconded by Panella, and agreed by all, the Board authorized the solicitor to advertise the police pension ordinance for future enactment.

7. POLICE PENSION RESOLUTION – ASSET SMOOTHINGINFORMATION

The Board needs to approve/disapprove the resolution adopting a smoothing method to determine the actuarial value of assets as part of the actuarial valuation for the police pension plan.

DISCUSSION

Anckaitis said this is from a recent law change that allows municipalities to use an asset smoothing method to determine their minimum municipal obligation to their pension plans. Anckaitis said it lessens the impact due to the lack of performance of the stock market. Anckaitis said Jeff Myers, our police pension actuary, recommended we adopt the resolution. Anckaitis said our non-uniform plan is not requiring a resolution be adopted by the township.

On motion by Mitchell, seconded by Smith, and agreed by all, the Board approved the resolution adopting the asset smoothing method to determine the actuarial value of assets as part of the actuarial valuation for the police pension plan.

8. DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS RESOLUTIONINFORMATION

The Board needs to approve/disapprove the destruction of records resolution.

DISCUSSION

On motion by Smith, seconded by Panella, and agreed by all, the Board approved the destruction of records resolution.

9. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR RESOLUTIONINFORMATION

The Board needs to approve/disapprove the resolution.

DISCUSSION

On motion by Panella, seconded by Smith, and agreed by all, the Board approved the appointment of auditor resolution.

10. JOSEPH I SECURITY RELEASEINFORMATION

The Board needs to approve/disapprove the security release.

DISCUSSION

On motion by Mitchell, seconded by Smith, and agreed by all, the Board approved the security release for Joseph I Limited Partnership in the amount of \$43,004.61.

11. STREET LIGHT RESOLUTION – VICTORIA SQUARE IVINFORMATION

Cyndie Carman will bring the Met-Ed resolution to the meeting. The Board needs to approve/disapprove the street light resolution.

DISCUSSION

On motion by Mitchell, seconded by Panella, and agreed by all, the Board approved the street light resolution for three streetlights in Victoria Square at the development parking lot, at the corner of lot 12, and in the cul-de-sac along Anthony Court.

12. STREET LIGHT RESOLUTION – ESTATES AT NORTHWOODINFORMATION

Cyndie Carman will bring the Met-Ed resolution to the meeting. The Board needs to approve/disapprove the street light resolution.

DISCUSSION

On motion by Panella, seconded by Smith, and agreed by all, the Board approved the street light resolution for two streetlights in the Estates at Northwood Development at the cul-de-sac between lots 9 and 10 and at the corner of lot 17.

13. PATHFINDER SIGN REQUESTINFORMATION

The Holiday Inn Express is requesting approval of additional pathfinder signs. The Board needs to approve/disapprove the request.

DISCUSSION

On motion by Mitchell, seconded by Smith, and agreed by all, the Board approved the request for two additional pathfinder signs for the Holiday Inn Express to be located at Route 248 prior to the Route 22 underpass bridge on the Burger King side, and a straight arrow at the junction of Northampton Street and Sales Street by Wachovia Bank.

14. TOWNSHIP ENGINEER CAPITAL PROJECTS UPDATEINFORMATION

The township engineer will update the Board on the status of capital projects.

DISCUSSION

Dillman said UGI has the Freemansburg Avenue area torn up right now and it is unrelated to the township project. Dillman said we met with all utility companies early on in our planning process and UGI said they were not going to do any upgrades in that area. Dillman said then when we held our preconstruction conference UGI said they would be replacing some gas lines in that area. Dillman said they were to be done by March 1st when Chrin is supposed to be ready to restart the project. UGI still has two weeks worth of work to complete without weather related stoppages. Dillman said Chrin will need at least 40 degree weather to begin their work again. Dillman said he received payment request #2 from Chrin on Friday and he should have it turned over to the township by the end of this week for payment for the storm sewer work.

Colver asked if there was any discussion regarding the tract of land at the community center. Anckaitis said we asked Howard Kutzler from Bethlehem Township about planting things in the detention basin and adding sitting walls. Anckaitis said Kutzler said it is our property, do what we want, since Bethlehem Township and Palmer have the same engineer there shouldn't be a problem. Anckaitis said Tom Adams and Scott Kistler met with Jamie Collins last week and reviewed a plan she has designed. Colver said when the design is done, run it by the Board so we know what is going to be done. Anckaitis said he recently saw a garden with pavers and grass growing in between them that creates a walking maze for children. Anckaitis said we will take a look at seeing if it is feasible to do something like this. Colver asked if it will be done this summer. Anckaitis said that is the plan. Dillman asked for a copy of the plan.

15. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

16. REPORTS

Solicitor

- Bruno had the conditional use letter for Woodridge Falls related to their conditional use application. On motion by Smith, seconded by Mitchell, and agreed by all, the Board authorized the Chairman to sign the conditional use letter.

Colver asked where the improvements agreement stands for Woodridge Falls. Dillman said awhile back we got a cost estimate from Steve Goffredo that was just under \$6 million. Dillman said when we put an estimate together we were just over \$6 million, we were within 1% of Goffredo's number. Dillman said the municipal planning code and township policy requires a signed, sealed estimate from the developers engineer and that just came in last Friday at \$2.6 million. Dillman said it doesn't appear to include everything that needs to be in it and was not in accordance with the township policy. Dillman said if we compare it to Phases I and II of the Villages of Mill Race that was also in the area of \$6 million. Dillman said he believes the developer will make some noise when they get the letter. Bruno said once he gets the cost approved by the township engineer's office he prepares the

agreement. Dillman said he would tell the solicitor to use what they have come up with which is within 1% of Goffredo's number. Bruno said he can go ahead and prepare the agreement on Dillman's recommendation tonight.

- Bruno said Cabot II the developer for Palmer North Industrial is ready to enter into their maintenance period as long as they provide their security. Bruno said he has a resolution to accept five deeds of dedication for the project. On motion by Mitchell, seconded by Panella, and agreed by all, the Board authorized the Chairman to sign the resolution.
- Bruno had the maintenance agreement for Cabot II, Palmer North Industrial, to enter into their 18-month maintenance period beginning February 23, 2010. On motion by Smith, seconded by Panella, and agreed by all, the Board authorized the Chairman to sign the maintenance agreement.
- Bruno had one real estate matter for executive session.

Manager

- Anckaitis said he gave the Board a memo recommending a one time lump sum stipend of \$1,500 for Brenda DeGerolamo for covering his six week absence from work. Anckaitis said she has a very heavy workload to begin with and he feels strongly that she should be compensated for taking on the additional tasks during his absence. On motion by Colver, seconded by Smith, and agreed by all, the Board approved the stipend.
- Anckaitis had four personnel items for executive session.

Public Services Director

- Adams said he sent out a volunteer request for the tree vitalization project scheduled for April.

Police Chief

- Fretz said he previously reported the department had received four computers that would allow the officers to complete reports in their vehicles. Fretz said they received an upgrade to their records management system and are now up and running. Anckaitis said we all see police cars parked and people perceive it as officers sitting there doing nothing. This new systems allows the officers to be out in the township and allows them to be closer for responding to calls rather than being in the station doing the reports.

Supervisors

- Smith said the AA has turned in the first group of coaches for background checks. It will be handled through a third party company.
- Colver said the new and improved community map was delivered. The map is totally funded by the advertisers in the map. Colver thanked the Business, Industrial and Professional group for doing this project.
- Colver asked for an update related to the police liability insurance coverage and asked if there is insurance coverage for the Board of Supervisors members. Anckaitis said a few years ago we upped the liability insurance from \$1 to \$4 million. Anckaitis said we are now going to increase it to \$6 million. Anckaitis said our rate would have

gone up significantly this year because we didn't receive a credit that we used to receive in the past. Anckaitis said the premium for 2010 will be \$48,199. That is an increase of \$1,600 from what it would have cost without increasing the limit amount. Anckaitis said he will have to talk to Lee Mearhoff about the individual insurance for board members.

- Panella said where the Route 33 overpass is on VanBuren Road there is no height restriction noted on the bridge. Panella said many truck drivers are concerned they won't make it under the bridge. Adams said he will talk to Penndot to see if they can get it posted.

On motion by Panella, seconded by Smith, and agreed by all, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m. with one real estate and four personnel items for executive session.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert G. Anckaitis
Township Manager