

The stated meeting of the Public Affairs Committee of the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Abington was held on Wednesday, October 28, 2015 at the Township Administration Building, Abington, PA., with Commissioner Spiegelman presiding.

CALL TO ORDER: 9:16 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present: Commissioners SPIEGELMAN, SCHREIBER, SANCHEZ, JONES

Excused: FARREN

Township Manager LEFEVRE

Township Solicitor CLARKE

Director of Parks and Recreation WENDELL

Community Director STROTHER

Also Present: Commissioners LUKER, KLINE, BOWMAN, KALINOSKI, ZAPPONE, DiPLACIDO, MYERS, GILLESPIE

MINUTES: Commissioner Spiegelman made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Jones to approve the minutes of the September 30, 2015 Public Affairs Committee Meeting.

MOTION was ADOPTED 4-0.

Introduction of Ranger Corporal Sean Blake:

Mr. Wendell introduced Ranger Corporal Sean Blake to the Board. Sean is our recently promoted Ranger Corporal and he has been working for the Township since late 2013. Ranger Sergeant DeStephano recommended promoting Sean to Corporal.

Parks and Recreation Report:

Mr. Wendell reported that recently, Briar Bush Nature Center received a \$2,500 grant for programs for children with autism. Also, the Institute of Museum and Library Services awarded Friends of Briar Bush with a grant in the amount \$23,700 for planting new exhibits inside the Bird Observatory.

Resolution No. 15-035 for PECO Green Region Grant for Jackson Park

Commissioner Spiegelman made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Sanchez to approve Resolution No. 15-035, which authorizes the Bureau of Parks and Recreation to make application to the Natural Lands Trust for the 2016 PECO Green Region Grant in the amount of \$10,000. The funding will be used for the establishment of meadows in Jackson Park.

Commissioner Spiegelman called on Mr. Wendell.

Mr. Wendell explained that this is our second attempt applying for a PECO Green Region Grant, which is very competitive. The Jackson family generously donated \$25,000 for improvements to the park.

Commissioner Spiegelman asked for the match of this grant.

Mr. Wendell replied 1:1.

Commissioner Spiegelman asked for any comments from Commissioners.

Commissioner Kline questioned the match to the grant.

Mr. Wendell replied the grants are up to \$10,000 and the Township has to match it with the same amount.

Commissioner Spiegelman asked for any public comments. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 4-0.

Repair of Elevator No. 3 in Alverthorpe Manor

Commissioner Spiegelman made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Schreiber to approve an expenditure of \$9,797.00 from the Contingency Account No. 01-01-002-5299 for the repair and return of service of elevator No. 3 in Alverthorpe Manor.

Mr. Wendell replied this elevator is the one that provides ADA accessibility to the park office and there are a number of people who use it as they cannot make it up the spiral staircase.

Commissioner Spiegelman asked for any comments from Commissioners. There were none.

Commissioner Spiegelman asked for any public comments.

Lora Lehmann, 1431 Bryant Lane, questioned whether disabled people can use the other elevators.

Mr. Wendell replied no. They are crate elevators and do not service the part of the building that Parks and Recreation is responsible for.

Raymond Bell, 2076 Parkview Avenue, asked about the terms and conditions of the contract with Otis Elevator Company and questioned whether the contract was governed by Pennsylvania law or New Jersey law. Also, there is a typo in the contract where the word "service" is spelled incorrectly.

Mr. Wendell replied Otis is located in Pennsylvania and the maintenance contract is for lubricating the moving parts of the elevator. The service work will be done through another contract.

Solicitor Clarke added that the Otis service and repair order is governed by the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania where the contract was made.

Commissioner Kline commented that if the contract for repair work is approved by the Board, it will be reviewed by Township Solicitor.

Solicitor Clarke noted that it is a standard contract and governed by Pennsylvania law.

MOTION was ADOPTED 4-0.

Resolution No. 15-037 – Substantial Amendment to Community Development Block Grant Budgets

Commissioner Spiegelman made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Jones to adopt Resolution No. 15-037 approving the Substantial Amendment to Abington Township's Community Development Block Grant Budgets for FY's 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015.

Commissioner Spiegelman called on Mr. Strother.

Mr. Strother explained that this is a resolution amending the CDBG that will be before the full Board of Commissioners at its meeting on November 12th and it was properly advertised as prescribed by law.

Commissioner Spiegelman asked for any comments from Commissioners. There were none.

Commissioner Spiegelman asked for any public comments.

Lora Lehmann, 1431 Bryant Lane, expressed concern that the advertisement did not include public speaking time and also she feels “monies are easily moved around.”

MOTION was ADOPTED 4-0.

Memorandum of Understanding for the Crest Manor Housing Project

Commissioner Spiegelman made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Schreiber to approve the Township of Abington executing a Memorandum of Understanding with other cooperating governmental agencies for the proposed Crest Manor Housing Development. The Township will serve as the lead agency and will coordinate all project reviews for the completion and compliance with an Environmental Review.

Commissioner Spiegelman asked for any comments from Commissioners.

Commissioner Kline asked for further explanation on this item.

Mr. Strother explained that Crest Manor Housing project that the Board approved involves multiple government agencies, and two of the agencies provide Federal funds; however, before the release of those funds, an environmental review needs to be done.

An environmental review is the process of reviewing a project and its potential environmental impacts to determine whether it meets Federal, State and local environmental standards. The environmental review process is required by HUD-assisted projects to ensure that the proposed project does not negatively impact the surrounding environment and that the property site will not have an adverse environmental or health effect on end-users.

Commissioner Kline asked is there funds available for compensation of Mr. Strother’s time for coordinating this matter?

Mr. Strother replied yes, from the annual budget of the CDBG.

Commissioner Jones questioned whether this project is causing an excessive of time for Mr. Strother.

Mr. Strother replied no.

Commissioner Myers asked who prepared this MOU?

Mr. Strother replied it was received from HUD with input from the MCHA (Montgomery County Housing Authority) and PHFA, which are the financing agency as well as the developer.

Commissioner Myers questioned whether Township Solicitor reviewed it as well?

Solicitor Clarke replied staff from his office reviewed it and it is fine as presented.

Commissioner Spiegelman asked for any public comments.

Lora Lehmann, 1431 Bryant Lane, asked will DEP review this as well?

Mr. Strother replied yes, they are part of the application.

MOTION was ADOPTED 4-0.

Resolution No. 15-040- Economic Development Multimodal Transportation Fund Program

Commissioner Spiegelman made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Sanchez to adopt Resolution No. 15-040 approving Abington Township to submit an application to PennDOT for the Multimodal Transportation Fund Program. The grant submission will support the Old York Road/Susquehanna Road project.

Commissioner Spiegelman called on Township Manager.

Manager LeFevre explained that this is the same grant application that the Township previously submitted to DCED, which is still pending, and we hoped to hear back in early November, but because of State budget complexities, the Township will not receive any feedback until sometime early next year.

Since the grant application for DCED has passed, PennDOT now has a second round of funding for the same criteria, so the proposal is to submit the same grant application to PennDOT for additional consideration in the event we are not successful for the first round of funding. This is a second chance through the PennDOT process, and we are not looking for any commitment from the Township in terms of a matching portion.

Commissioner Spiegelman asked for any comments from Commissioners. There were none.

Commissioner Spiegelman asked for any public comments. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 4-0.

Commissioner Spiegelman asked for any general comments relating to Public Affairs.

Lora Lehmann, 1431 Bryant Lane, expressed concern that she feels there should be an option to make corrections to comments that she makes after she sits down.

Rita Stevens, 115 Stanley Avenue, commented that the Shade Tree Commission will be planting \$10,000 (wholesale value) worth of trees in the next three weeks in which the funds came from grants. The trees will be planted in the Roslyn area, Grove Park, the economic zones, residential areas as well as the parking area around Keswick Village. She invited everyone to join them on November 7th, 12th and 14th, which is posted on Shade Tree Commission's website.

Raymond Bell, 2076 Parkview Avenue, commented that in his observance of the budget process, he commended Commissioner Kline for doing a nice job. He commended Commissioner Myers for her energy and synergy for the PAL event. He thanked Mr. Strother for being accessible and answering his questions. The police work 24/7 and he feels safe in this Township morning, noon and night, and he thanked them for their dedication. He also thanked the Second Alarmers for saving his life twice in the past year, and the Fire Department for their dedication as well.

ADJOURNMENT: 9:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael LeFevre, Township Manager

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