

Schuylkill Township, Chester County
Board of Supervisors Public Work Session
Thursday February 20, 2020 6:30 p.m.

The Schuylkill Township Board of Supervisors held their public work session on Thursday, February 20, 2020. This is an informal meeting to discuss township related business with the public without making any motions or voting on any discussed items. The work session was called to order at 6:35 p.m. by Board Chair Martha Majewski.

The work session agenda is discussions on the relocation of the polling location for Precinct 556 , a proposed tree ordinance update, park, recreation and open space plan update, the Devault Trail Activation Study Zoning Hearings updates, engineering firms, township projects and goals,, a Traffic Impact Fee Advisory Committee update, and the March 2020 Phoenixville Country Club event. In attendance were Supervisors Mark Donovan, Susan Guerette, Martha Majewski, and Fred Parry. Also attending were Township Manager, E.J. Mentry and Township Secretary, Madeline Harbison. Supervisor Bob Cooney was absent.

Proposed Polling Location Change – Mr. Mentry advised the Board that the polling location would not be changed for this election due to concerns raised by various parties. Instead, the Township will pay for additional police coverage for traffic control at both the Primary and General Elections. Supervisor Guerette questioned what had precipitated the proposed change; that she had heard the Township lodged complaints with the County’s Voter Services. Mr. Mentry responded that the Township had provided feedback to the County regarding its concerns about voters’ safety because of inadequate space, parking and otherwise, and first responders’ egress/ingress to the police station. It was suggested that the polling location be moved to the church across the street; Mr. Mentry said that would require redrawing the precinct as it is currently outside Precinct 556. The Board requested that this avenue be investigated.

Proposed Tree Ordinance – Supervisor Guerette updated the Board on her progress with the ordinance and discussed the various edits made to the ordinance. Several definitions were found to be inadequate; Supervisor Donovan will provide a “drip line” definition and distance requirements will be further discussed with Steve Kunz of the EAC. The Board discussed how the ordinance compliance would be monitored; it will be part of the permitting process, but some community monitoring will be needed. Various aspects of Tree Replacement Standards were discussed: definitions of specimen vs. heritage trees, timing on replacement requirements and a tree replacement table. Mr. Michael Bauer of the Township Planning Commission offered his assistance to Supervisor Guerette on the tree ordinance draft.

Parks, Recreation and Open Space Update – Nothing to report.

Devault Trail Activation Study - Mr. Mentry told the Board that a grant was being sought from the Transportation Management Association of Chester County for the next phase of the Devault Trail project. An Activation Study steering committee being created to oversee this phase and it has been requested that a representative from Schuylkill Township be part of this committee. Mr. Mentry said he would be willing to serve; Supervisor Majewski also expressed interest in representing Schuylkill Township on the committee.

Zoning Hearing Board– Mr. Mentry discussed the two upcoming hearings; one for 1675 Highpointe Lane seeing a variance for an extension on an existing non-conforming lot and the second for a rear yard setback variance at 350 Drummers Lane.

Engineering Firms - Mr. Mentry informed the Board that reference checks were being made and asked if the Board was interested in a second round of interviews. It was the consensus of the Board that there was no need for more interviews and instructed the Township Manager to continue the reference checks and to report back to the Board once completed. Supervisor Parry stated that Gilmore & Associates has been the Township Engineer for 24 years; serving in an effective and cost-effective manner; and it is his opinion that serious consideration should be given to retaining the firm.

2020 Projects and Goals – Mr. Mentry reviewed a draft list of projects and goals for 2020 in the areas of township administration, land development, ordinances, and capital projects. He advised the Board that this was work in progress and would be amended as needs changed.

Traffic Impact Fee Advisory Committee (“TIFAC”) (Act 209 Study) – Mr. Mentry advised that he is actively canvassing for the 7th member and asked the Board to forward to him the names of any likely candidates; reminding them that what was needed was a developer, builder or realtor actively conducting business in the Township.

March Phoenixville Country Club Event – Supervisor Guerette informed the Board that Mr. Faran Savitz of PennEnvironment will be presenting on March 12th. The topic will be the Zero Waste PA campaign.

Additional Business

The publishing of a Township newsletter was discussed. The consensus of the Board, with Supervisor Guerette opposed, was to publish and mail a newsletter twice yearly.

Mr. Mentry advised the Board that he had scheduling conflicts with the March 19th and May 21st work sessions adding that the Endeavor Group was currently on the March 19th agenda. The Board instructed Mr. Mentry to reschedule the March and May work sessions.

The Planning Commission Chair for 2020 is Curt English. The Commission is petitioning the Board to add two alternates to the membership roster.

Mr. Mentry gave the Board the costs for obtaining equipment to allow for road brining in the Township; stating that at minimum it would be about \$25,000 for the equipment, i.e., a briner applicator, mixer, and storage tank. He addressed the EAC’s concern about obtaining brine from fracking operations with the information that it would be mixed on-site.

Supervisor Majewski proposed that an electronic survey be sent to township residents for input on the Township’s quarterly events at the country club. Discussion ensued on the various forms this would take and the possible issues resulting from such a survey.

The Board discussed how to best balance the Township committees’ and commissions’ goals with the Township’s needs.

Public Participation

Ms. April Goudie, 11 Schofield Road, asked for additional details on the Township’s 2020 projects. Mr. Mentry recapped the draft project list.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

The next work session is scheduled for Thursday, March 26, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Madeline Harbison
Township Secretary