

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

The August monthly meeting was duly advertised and held electronically through the GoTo Webinar application via telephone and the internet

The Schuylkill Township Board of Supervisors held their virtual public work session on Thursday, August 20, 2020 via GoToWebinar . 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 6:40 p.m. by Board Chair Martha Majewski.

In attendance were Supervisors Martha Majewski, Fred Parry, Susan Guerette, Mark Donovan, and Bob Cooney. Also attending were Township Manager, E.J. Mentry and Township Secretary, Madeline Harbison. The meeting was chaired by Supervisor Majewski.

Mr. Mentry gave a brief overview of the virtual meeting protocols and reminded attendees that question and comments could be submitted at any time during the meeting via the question submittal box on the webinar dashboard. The submittals would be read aloud at the appropriate time in the meeting.

Amendment to Schuylkill Township Burn Ordinance (EAC Recommendation – Mr. Mentry informed the Board that the Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) is not recommending changes to the existing language in the Township’s current burn ordinance but rather is requesting the addition of language limiting exceptions in §122-2. Supervisor Donovan commented that the addition is onerous and will be difficult to enforce. He further commented that the specificity of the exception limits is troublesome. Supervisor Guerette asked if the EAC should be invited to attend a BOS workshop to reply to the Board’s concerns. Supervisor Majewski reminded Ms. Guerette that the EAC was aware that the ordinance amendment was being discussed at tonight’s workshop. The Board concurred that the current concerns regarding the proposed amendment be sent back to the EAC for consideration and specifically invite EAC members to respond at a future workshop, possibly in September. The Chief of Police and Township Fire Marshal(s) will also be invited to weigh in on the amendments. The list of current concerns to be sent to the EAC are:

- Enforcement of some of the new restrictions
- Language in #4: “interferes with reasonable enjoyment of life or property of a neighbor” - this is completely subjective and cannot be enforced
- Not OK mentioning specific websites in the ordinance
- DEP issues burn bans and air quality alerts/warnings, and the Township already follows and enforces those restrictions, so not sure if 3.a. is needed at all
 - Maybe change language in 3.a. to make more generic – refer to DEP or DCNR (whoever governing state agency is that issues burn bans) and state that Township will follow and enforce
- The 150 feet buffer from property line is too restrictive – maybe 150 feet from a neighboring **building or structure**, or a shorter distance to the property line (unfair to people with smaller lots)
- Reduce minimum age from 18 – maybe 13 or 15?

The Board Liaisons to the Valley Forge Volunteer Fire Company (VFVFCo) will present the proposed amendment at the VFVFCo meeting on 9/8 for the Fire Marshals’ review and feedback

Valley Park Municipal Park (VPMP)Next Steps

Supervisor Majewski reported that the trolley rail exhibit project is moving ahead; the base has been installed. Mr. Mentry advised that orders for the rails and other equipment have been placed. Supervisor Cooney commented that he had several original rail spikes from the trolley line, and these would be installed in the exhibit. Sign cases are in place and the interpretative content is currently being developed. The issue

with downed trees in the natural wooded area of the park has been investigated by the Roadmaster; he feels that any required clearing for the proposed natural trail can be accomplished in-house. Mr. Mentry informed the Board that quotes are being obtained to take down the large dead oak tree near the Anderson Cemetery. A rough estimate for removal is \$4000 - \$5000.

Additional Business/Discussion Items

Tree Issues on Township Properties – Mr. Mentry reported that the Roadmaster and the EAC have identified certain trees in Pickering Preserve and the municipal complex for removal. The dead pine trees in the Preserve will be taken down first. The issues in the municipal complex and VPMP are trees of heaven which harbor the spotted lanternfly. The EAC is working with the Township Manager and the Roadmaster to identify these trees for consideration of removal.

Mr. Mentry updated the Board on certain items:

- He did a tour of the Township with the new Township Engineer to familiarize the company with some of the current hot spots. One of the stops was VPMP where the drainage issue was discussed. Once the NPDES permit is closed; if the problems persist, T&M has some ideas for remedying the issue. Problem flooding areas such as Jug Hollow, Oakwood and Paul Lemen Drive were also part of the tour. The Township just received a \$300,000 grant award for the stormwater management remediation project on Paul Lemen. T&M will be working on an action plan for this project starting in September; more information will be available on the grant award and the remediation project then.
- The first Transportation Impact Fee Committee will hold its first meeting in mid-September.
- The Delaware Valley Workers Compensation Trust members have approved the Township's participation in the Trust.
- On Monday, August 17th, the Historical Commission recommended approval of the building permit for the main house on the Anderson Barn property at 225 Valley Park Road.
- Mr. Mentry asked that the Board consider setting dates for the 20201 Budget Workshops and suggested Thursday, October 15, 2020 as the first workshop and, if needed, Thursday, October 29, 2020 for the second.

Supervisor Majewski suggested that a memorandum be issued to the Township's commissions and committees with a date when in-person public meetings would resume. Mr. Mentry suggested that a message be issued stating that all Township in-person meetings and events are cancelled through the end of the year at which time the situation will be reevaluated. The Board concurred.

Tentatively, the Pickering Preserve inspection tour with Suburban Archers will take place on Wednesday, September 2, 2020.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15p.m.

The next work session is scheduled for Thursday, September 17, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Madeline Harbison
Township Secretary