

CUMRU TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
5TH TUESDAY MEETING OCTOBER 31, 2023

The Regular Meeting of the Cumru Township Board of Commissioners was called to order by President Ruth A. O’Leary at 7:00 p.m. Other Commissioners in attendance were Vice President David J. Batdorf, Sam Kalbach, William B. Miller and Lisha Rowe. Also attending were Solicitor Kelsey Frankowski, Chief of Police Madison Winchester, Superintendent of Public Works Robert McNichols, Jr., Asst. Superintendent of Public Works Michael Yost, Jr., Manager/Secretary Jeanne E. Johnston, Business/Personnel Administrator Peggy A. Carpenter, and Special Projects/Asst. Secretary Patricia A. Wylezik-Pfeiffer. Fire Chief James Beane was excused with prior notification.

NOTICE:

Public comment will be accepted in person. Please include your first name, last name and address for all comments. Any comments without a name or address will not be considered. To accommodate as many people as possible, we request that each person’s comments be limited to 3 minutes. The meeting comment period is limited to a total of 60 minutes. This time period may be extended at the discretion of the Commissioners. While public comments will be given due consideration, immediate responses will be done at the discretion of the Commissioners.

Pledge to the Flag.

PUBLIC

Attendance: Andrew Casey from AJ Blosenski

A.) Chestnut Hill Farms Property Owners Assoc. re: possible dedication of roads
No one was present to discuss this issue.

DEPARTMENTS

Police Department

A.) Civil Service – vacate list and authorize testing

Since there are only 3 names left on the Civil Service list, the Police liaisons and Chief Winchester recommend that the Board vacate the list and authorize testing for a new list.

ON MOTION OF MR. KALBACH, SECOND OF MS. ROWE, A UNANIMOUS VOTE TO VACATE THE CURRENT CIVIL SERVICE LIST AND AUTHORIZE TESTING FOR A NEW LIST.

B.) Equipment – purchase new optics and order holsters

The Police liaisons recommended purchasing new red-dot optics for the handguns as well as replacing the holsters and iron sites for the entire department. The cost would be \$18,309.15. The range masters would be sent for training.

ON MOTION OF MR. MILLER, SECOND OF MR. BATDORF, A UNANIMOUS VOTE TO PURCHASE NEW OPTICS, HOLSTERS AND IRON SITES FOR THE TOTAL COST OF \$18,309.15.

C.) Equipment – purchase electric bicycles

- transfer \$4,000 from line item 4100-519 to line item 4100-740
- authorize purchase of 2 electric bicycles and upfit for an amount not to exceed \$6,000 using line item 4100-740

The Police liaisons recommended purchasing and upfitting 2 multipurpose E-bikes that are made in the USA. These bikes have wider tires and could be used for off-road terrain.

ON MOTION OF MS. ROWE, SECOND OF MR. BATDORF, A UNANIMOUS VOTE TO AUTHORIZE THE PURCHASE AND UPFITTING OF 2 ELECTRIC BIKES NOT TO EXCEED \$6,000.00.

D.) Patrol Vehicles – authorize ordering two vehicles (2023 model)

- no 2024 models to be manufactured
- 2025 models to be redesigned (upfit not compatible with current fleet)
- payment January 2024
- estimated cost \$53,000 each including upfit

Chief Winchester requested that the Board consider ordering 2 Ford Explorer Interceptors (2023 models) due to the availability of vehicles and compatibility with the current Police fleet. Mr. McNichols confirmed that there are 10 patrol vehicles at this time.

There was discussion about repurposing one of the vehicles.

ON MOTION OF MR. KALBACH, SECOND OF MR. MILLER, A UNANIMOUS VOTE TO AUTHORIZE ORDERING AND UPFITTING TWO 2023 MODEL VEHICLES AT A COST NOT TO EXCEED \$110,000.00.

Chief Winchester reported that it would cost \$2443.64 to purchase 2 terabytes of storage for the Police computer system. This will be included in the 2024 Police budget.

Fire Department

A.) Car 42 – authorize ordering F-150

- estimated cost \$70,000 including upfit with gear box

Ms. Johnston explained that the Fire Department would like to replace Car 42, which is a 2012 white Tahoe, with an F-150. The white Tahoe would be repurposed within the Township.

ON MOTION OF MR. MILLER, SECOND OF MR. BATDORF, A UNANIMOUS VOTE TO AUTHORIZE THE PURCHASE OF AN F-150 TRUCK TO REPLACE CAR 42 FOR THE FIRE DEPARTMENT.

B.) 2024 Fire Budget

Ms. Johnston explained that she had created several Fire Fund budgets by increasing the Fire Tax millage by 0.05 increments. The budgets show the proposed ending balances for each

millage amount. The Board concurred to increase the Fire Tax millage from 1.3 to 1.4 for the 2024 budget.

Administration

A.) 2024-2026 Refuse/ Recycling Contract – award bid

- 1) bid specifications advertised 10/06/2023
- 3) bid tabulation

Ms. Johnston explained that the bids for the 2024-2026 refuse/recycling contract were opened this morning. The results were that only J.P. Mascaro and Sons submitted separate bids for refuse and recycling that when totaled equaled the combined bid submitted.

| BIDDER | REFUSE AND RECYCLING BID | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| | 2024 | 2025 | 2026 |
| A.J BLOSENSKI | \$1,009,332.00 | \$1,059,798.60 | \$1,112,788.53 |
| J.P.MASCARO AND SONS | \$1,753,560.00 | \$1,825,776.00 | \$1,898,232.00 |
| REPUBLIC SERVICES | NO BID | NO BID | NO BID |
| WASTE MANAGEMENT | NO BID | NO BID | NO BID |
| WHITE TAIL DISPOSAL | \$2,209,644.97 | \$2,253,837.87 | \$2,310,183.82 |

ON MOTION OF MR. KALBACH, SECOND OF MRS. O’LEARY, A MAJORITY VOTE TO AWARD THE REFUSE/RECYCLING BID TO THE LOWEST BIDDER, A.J. BLOSENSKI, SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY THE SOLICITOR. MR. MILLER CAST A NO VOTE.

Republic Services and Waste Management submitted letters explaining that they did not bid because they use carts or toters for automated collection. The Flying Hills area of Cumru Township has various types of service that are not compatible with automated collection.

There was discussion about future refuse collection going automated and the potential need to separate Flying Hills from the rest of Cumru Township for refuse collection. In those areas of Flying Hills relying on some form of walk-up collection, there are no alleys to accommodate automated collection. In addition, toters or carts will not fit in the trash closets for those Flying Hills units that use such an enclosure.

For all properties with Township refuse collection, use of toters or carts creates the need for policy decisions. Currently, residents are allowed 6 cans or regular sized bags for 33 gallons. The large 96-gallon toter holds 3 regular sized garbage bags. The smaller 64-gallon toter holds 2 regular sized garbage bags. Typically, hauling companies allow for one toter or cart per residence, which would be a decrease in allowed volume. Bulk item collection would also have to be considered.

Mr. McNichols cautioned Mr. Casey about having proper tires on the refuse trucks for winter collection.

B.) 2024 Refuse Budget

Ms. Johnston explained that the Township had kept the discount/penalty amounts on the 2023 refuse bills during the transition period from County billing to Township billing. The proposed 2024 Refuse budget is based on 90% collection rate of \$330 annual fee for 2+ adults

households and \$300 annual fee for 1 adult households. This is based on no discounts and a penalty after a determined date.

There was discussion about keeping the same billing system. Muhlenberg Township offers a senior discount that involves an application process. The Board agreed to use the proposed rates of \$330 and \$300 for the 2024 Refuse budget as presented.

There was a question about the need to call ahead for bulk items to be picked up. Mr. Casey said that he would check into this and let the Township know.

**C.) Sheetz Land Development – authorize escrow release
ON MOTION OF MR. MILLER, SECOND OF MR. BATDORF, A UNANIMOUS VOTE
TO AUTHORIZE THE SOLICITOR TO WRITE A LETTER TO THE SURETY
COMPANY TO RELEASE THE BOND FOR THE ESCROW FOR THE SHEETZ LAND
DEVELOPMENT.**

Public Works

A.) 2023 Road Work – Cedar Top Rd, phase 1 – update

Mr. McNichols reported that Cedar Top Rd, phase 1 is completed. There was additional material needed because of the non-existent base. The contractor finished within 7 days.

B.) 2023 Road Work – South 9th St. – update

Mr. McNichols reported that this project was finished in 3 days. Marking on this road is not required.

C.) 2024 General Fund – highway dept. budget

There was discussion about some policy decisions in order to create the highway budget for the budget meeting on November 2, 2023. Management recommended filling the vacant highway position in the proposed budget.

There was discussion about Township vehicles. Management recommended ordering a new F-150 for the mechanics. It would cost approximately \$55,000 for an electric vehicle and \$45,000 for a gas-powered one. The cost would be split 50/50 between the sewer and the highway funds. The Board agreed to order a gas-powered F-150 based on availability. It was suggested that the old mechanic's truck could be repurposed with a new seat for the Codes Department to replace the 2005 truck that is in rough shape. It was suggested that Car 42, the Fire Department's 2012 white Tahoe, be repurposed to replace the Administration 2006 Jeep.

Ms. Johnston has talked to Atty. Doug Rauch about the PIB loan and they are waiting for a DCED response. The PIB loan money, if approved, would be used for road projects.

The General Fund is anticipated to experience decreased revenue. Ms. Johnston will provide information on the downward trend in assessed values at the next meeting. She reported that the Township only received approximately \$385,000 in host fees from the Western Berks Landfill (WBLF) in 2023, instead of the originally anticipated \$500,000. The 2024 budget estimates \$100,000 for this line item since the new projected date of landfill closure is 7/1/2024.

There was a reminder about the DEP meeting that will be held on 11/9/2023 at 10:00 a.m. in the Township Building for the Waste Transfer Station. Such facilities do not have host fees.

Mr. McNichols took a moment to recognize an achievement by a Public Works employee. Last night Highway employee and avid bowler, Mike Diezel, bowled a 279 and two perfect 300

games in three consecutive games. His total score of 879 was a personal best. Mr. Diezel is our premier boom mower operator and has been with Cumru Township for over 20 years. Congratulations Mike Deizel!

Ms. Rowe praised Public Works for the quick removal of a fallen tree that closed Maple Grove Rd. during a recent storm. Some of her relatives live along Maple Grove Rd.

Solicitor

Atty. Frankowski reported that she is working on the custodian agreement with M&T and the bid package for the future fire station.

COMMISSIONERS

A.) Vacancies

1) Sewer Authority – 2 vacancies – **appoint Mr. Miller and Mr. Kalbach**
ON MOTION OF MR. BATDORF, SECOND OF MS. ROWE, A MAJORITY VOTE TO
APPOINT MR. KALBACH AND MR. MILLER TO THE MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY.
MR. KALBACH AND MR. MILLER ABSTAINED FROM THE VOTE.

B.) Reminders:

- 1) Zoning Hearing Board
 - Regular Meeting – November 28, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.
 - Regular Meeting (rescheduled) to December 19, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.- upper level
(if application(s) received)
- 2) Board of Commissioners meetings for November and December 2023
 - 11/02/2023 at 3:30 p.m. – Budget meeting
 - 11/21/2023 at 7:00 p.m. – Regular meeting
 - 12/19/2023 at 7:00 p.m. - Regular meeting
- 3) Planning Commission – November 6, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. (upper level)

C.) Executive Session

8:30 p.m. – The Board met in executive session to discuss 1 personnel issue.

8:38 p.m. – The executive session ended; 1 personnel issue was discussed.

ON MOTION OF MR. KALBACH, SECOND OF MR. BATDORF, A UNANIMOUS
VOTE TO AUTHORIZE PAYMENT OF THE UNEMPLOYMENT SOLVENCY FEE
FOR 2024.

ADJOURNMENT

ON MOTION OF MR. BATDORF, SECOND OF MS. ROWE, A UNANIMOUS VOTE
TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:42 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Jeanne E. Johnston
Manager/Secretary