

**WEST WHITELAND TOWNSHIP
PUBLIC SERVICES COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
May 4, 2022**

CALL TO ORDER:

The Public Services Commission regular monthly meeting was called to order at 6:38 p.m. The meeting was open to the public, and a link to join the meeting via Zoom was listed on the agenda posted on the Township's website.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Brian Dakin
Joe Roscioli
Janice Gottesfeld
Kevin Moore
Rob Hall
Tim Hubbard

TOWNSHIP STAFF

Pam Gural-Bear, Assistant Township Manager
Ed Culp, Assistant Director of Public Works

Brian Dunn, Board of Supervisors Liaison

PUBLIC COMMENT:

A local area scout and his father were in attendance to observe a local government meeting as part of his Citizenship Badge.

MINUTES:

A motion was made by Mr. Moore, seconded by Ms. Gottesfeld, to approve the minutes of the April 6, 2022, meeting. The motion was unanimously approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The Spring Craft Fair was well attended with 60 vendors and an outdoor component that helped to draw more attention to the event. The Egg Hunt was also very successful with 3600 eggs hidden. Great job by Friends of the Parks!

The first summer concert of the season is scheduled for June 12 at Miller Park.

OPEN DISCUSSION:

1. Property Maintenance Code

Marie Guarnera, Director of Codes, and Dan Stiteler, Building Inspector, were in attendance to present an overview of the Property Maintenance Code and receive feedback from PSC members regarding its possible adoption (in whole or in part) by the Board of Supervisors. Ms. Guarnera explained that the Township's current ordinances regulate building construction, but after the initial Use & Occupancy permit is issued, maintenance and life safety issues are problematic to enforce. Adoption of the Code would provide Staff with a tool to enforce ongoing maintenance and safety issues. The Township's current ordinances are very limited when it

Public Services Commission
Minutes of the May 4, 2022, Meeting

comes to matters such as abandoned homes, rubbish, etc. Also, there is nothing in place to address electrical or plumbing issues when commercial property transfers take place or address such safety concerns as a lack of heat for a renter with a neglectful landlord. While the Code would cover all buildings within the Township, Ms. Guarneri stressed that it would not be used as a "seek and find" tool, but rather a tool to enforce safety issues when complaints are received.

Some members expressed concerns that the Code is overly detailed and may be seen by residents as an invasion into their personal property rights. Ms. Guarneri and Mr. Stiteler assured that the Code will be used to provide a consistent basic means to enforce minimum standards and guidelines. It would help renters and neighbors and help maintain property values. There is no residential re-sale component to the Property Maintenance Code.

Ms. Guarneri advised that she has heard no negative comments from surrounding municipalities who have previously adopted the Code.

Two public sessions will be held on May 18 and June 15 to receive public feedback before considering adoption in whole or in part by the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Hubbard suggested that for people who may not have the financial ability to take care of needed or required maintenance, a list of resources be made available where people can get help. Mr. Stiteler thought this was a good idea and will research the matter.

2. Pay as you Throw system (PAYT)

Mr. Dunn presented a proposal to discuss the merits of the Township's current PAYT system and consideration of an alternative. He said he has received numerous complaints from residents about the current system and would like to provide an alternative that would be more convenient and cost residents less. Mr. Dunn proposed discontinuing the bags and allowing residents to use a can or their own bag of choice. Trash pickup would remain the same, but the current \$89 flat fee/year would increase to \$219/year (the cost of 1 trash bag/week). Those on fixed incomes could submit for a rebate of \$50/year. Mr. Dunn said the new proposal would save money for families who currently use more than one bag per week. He acknowledged that it would be more expensive for those who currently use less than one bag per week but felt the majority would benefit.

Mr. Roscioli said the PAYT system was instituted because it is fair (you pay for what you use), and it's responsible (encourages recycling which in turn saves land fill space). He maintained that tipping fees will increase if people decrease the amount they recycle. Mr. Moore stressed the need to get residents' feelings on the matter. Ms. Gural-Bear has reached out to the current hauler for any concerns with the proposal and cautioned against anything that would change the Scope of Work contained in the current hauler contract.

Mr. Dakin suggested a type of hybrid program. He felt that some may be circumventing the system currently; that there is a hidden volume of trash that will be introduced into the system if the fee is increased. This in turn would cause tipping fees to increase.

Public Services Commission
Minutes of the May 4, 2022, Meeting

The Township will conduct a follow-up survey of residents to be included in the next newsletter and posted on social media, website, electronic signs, as well as consideration of an open house to receive public feedback.

3. Sustainability Update

Mr. Dakin and Ms. Gottesfeld reported on the Sustainability Summit that they attended at the West Goshen Township building on May 2. A big topic of the Summit was the use of single-use plastic bags and straws and the recent ban on same in neighboring communities. Mr. Dakin encouraged members to be conscious of this in the future as it relates to the Township's PAYT bag system. Another topic for future consideration is the impact of winter road salt on streams.

There was discussion about whether or not the Township should consider having an EAC/SAC coordinator and establish a sub-committee on sustainability. This will be considered further. Ms. Gural-Bear pointed out that the Planning Commission as well as some of the Township's other Commissions do currently deal with sustainability issues.

Continuing to report on the Summit, Mr. Dakin said Clean Energy was also a big topic with discussion on solar panels and EV charging stations. Ms. Guarnere said the Codes Department recently issued 4 permits for commercial charging stations. Other forms of renewable energy were discussed including geothermal and the opportunities for grant funding.

The June meeting will feature details of the approved Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. The meeting will be publicized on all social media platforms as well as direct outreach to encourage public attendance. Mr. Dakin suggested a future meeting feature an update on transportation projects. Mr. Culp will reach out to see when a PennDOT representative is available.

ADJOURNMENT:

Ms. Gottesfeld made a motion, seconded by Mr. Roscioli, to adjourn the meeting; the meeting adjourned at approximately 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Kevin Moore,
Recording Secretary