



**WEST WHITELAND TOWNSHIP  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

**BUSINESS MEETING**

Minutes of the second July Meeting

July 26, 2023

**1. Call to Order**

Chairman Brian Dunn called to order the second July meeting at 6:31 p.m. The meeting was a hybrid with participants attending both in person and via Zoom.

Those in attendance in addition to Mr. Dunn were:

Rajesh Kumbhardare, Vice-Chairman  
Theresa Santalucia, Supervisor  
Pam Gural-Bear, Township Manager  
Lee Benson, Police Chief  
Caroline Partridge, Finance Director  
John Weller, Planning & Zoning Director  
Brannon Tupper, Engineering & Construction Projects Mgr.  
Todd Greenawalt, Codes Administrative & Enforcement Mgr.  
Ed Culp, Interim Public Works Director  
Alex Baumler, Solicitor  
Sean Kilkenny, Solicitor  
Pat Layman, Minutes

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

The Board of Supervisors met in executive session prior to tonight's meeting to discuss matters of personnel and litigation.

Join us for the Concert in Miller Park – Sunday, July 30th at 6 pm with music from The Sun Brothers.

On behalf of the Board of Supervisors, Mr. Dunn thanked everyone for their hard work that resulted in a very successful Community Day at Exton Park!

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Resident Libby Madarasz asked for the Township's help to resolve flooding issues in the Meadowbrook Manor community. She provided pictures and a map of problem areas and asked if open lots in the neighborhood could be considered for use as retention basins.

Nicole Gonsorick, also a resident of Meadowbrook Manor, asked for help, adding that her home has been flooded four times in the last few months.

Ray McKeeman, resident of Amstel Way, provided pictures of flooding in his neighborhood. He noted that the Township cleaned out the area storm drain a few years ago, but no maintenance has been done recently, and the drain is clogged with debris.

Kevin McAnally, also a resident of Amstel Way, echoed Mr. McKeeman's concerns and asked for the Township to look into the matter. Mr. Dunn and Mr. Kumbhardare assured the residents that the Township will clean and maintain the storm inlet and are looking into all retention/stormwater basins in the Township that are currently underperforming and causing problems. The list is long, but they assured residents that they will work to resolve the issues.

Libby Madarasz asked about the condition of the sinkhole on Lisa Drive after last evening's rain storm. She noted that there is stagnant water in the area which she believes to be a result of grout used to fill the hole (grout not allowing water to permeate the ground). Mr. Tupper said he visited the site and found the sinkhole to be small in diameter and of the standard type usually seen in this area. He saw no exposed pipeline. He added that he did not believe the flexible fill used to plug the sinkholes would be a cause of flooding as topsoil is restored in each case.

## **PRESENTATION:**

### **2022 Financial Statements –Chris Herr, CPA of Maillie, LLC**

Chris Herr, of Maillie, LLC, presented the findings of the independent audit of the Township's financial statements for 2022. An "unmodified opinion" was issued, which is the best result. This means that all documents requested were received, the documents were free of any material misstatement, and comply with all regulations.

One material weakness was found relating to expenses incurred in 2022 but paid in 2023. Because of the timing of the expenses in late December 2022, they were not included in the Accounts Payable at the year end. Upon investigation, Mr. Herr said this was discovered to be the result of a software issue; as invoices were entered, they were traveling to the books based on the date of input rather than the invoice date. This resulted in an adjustment of \$230,000.

Mr. Herr reported on the pension plans (Police, Non-uniformed, and OPEB Trust), Capital Assets and depreciation, as well as Revenue and Expenditures. Revenue was up about \$1.5 million, mainly from a 10% increase in Earned Income Tax and an increase in building permits. Real estate tax remained flat. Sewer revenue was up as a result of tapping fees and reimbursements from Hurricane Ida. Expenditures showed a decrease in sewer treatment costs, and Public Safety expense increased by 2%, which considering inflation, was very good.

The Fund Balances are strong, stable, and consistent.

Resident JoAnn Kelton asked about the role of the elected auditors. Ms. Partridge responded that the appointed auditor prepares the statements, and the elected auditors review the statements acting as "checks and balances".

### **Presentation by Chester County Planning Commission on Housing**

Libby Horwitz, Senior Housing & Economic Planner, and Chris Patriarca, Senior Community Planner with the Chester County Planning Commission, gave a presentation on A+ Homes, the initiative effort to provide affordable housing in Chester County. Ms. Horwitz began by providing

information on the changing demographics, the rapid rise in population, and increasing median housing cost in Chester County (currently \$466,000). Incomes are not keeping pace.

Ms. Horwitz and Mr. Patriarca reviewed various strategies for municipalities which include:

- Provide a variety of housing types
- Provide bonuses for building height, density, and parking
- Amending ordinances (decrease minimum lot size, provide for accessory dwelling units)
- Coordinating with housing providers
- Inclusionary overlay
- Inclusionary zoning
- Land bank
- Tax abatements
- Utilization of public land

Once achieved, affordability can be maintained through deed restrictions, community land trust, and/or capped profit.

Ms. Santalucia asked how best to approach the topic with existing residents in already-established neighborhoods. Ms. Horwitz suggested "reframing the conversation – put a face to it – humanize it – develop a Task Force to talk about it". It was pointed out that for a community to be complete, it needs its work force close by to serve all businesses from retail to assisted living facilities.

Noting existing flooding issues in the Meadowbrook Manor community, resident Libby Madarasz suggested that any new housing be built on ground already covered in impervious cover. Mr. Weller remarked that the Township's ordinances already place the highest density housing in the area of the Crossroads where most impervious is located. He pointed out that the apartment complex built at the location of the former K-Mart contains less impervious cover than the previous K-Mart parking lot. Mr. Weller added that new projects have to meet much more stringent regulations than those developments built in the 1980's and prior. Mr. Kumbhardare added that every new development has a robust stormwater management system complete with maintenance agreements to ensure that stormwater issues are not passed on to those downstream.

More on the County's A+ Homes initiative can be found on the Chester County Planning Commission's website: [www.chescoplanning.org](http://www.chescoplanning.org)

### **CONSENT AGENDA:**

Ms. Santalucia made a motion, seconded by Mr. Kumbhardare, to approve the Consent Agenda consisting of the following:

- Approval of July 12, 2023, Minutes
- Resolution 2023-33 Disposition of Media

Mr. Dunn called for public comment, and there were none. The motion was unanimously approved.

### **BUSINESS:**

**1. Public Works Facility Bid Update**

Ms. Gural-Bear reviewed her July 21, 2023, Memorandum explaining that the Township has been planning the construction of a new Public Works Facility for several years, the final plan of which includes construction of a complete facility located at 121 Valley Creek Boulevard. The 39,000 square foot facility will consolidate and replace the Township's three existing, outdated buildings. The facility will include an administration building, mechanics bay, garage, material storage shed and all site related items such as utilities, stormwater system, and parking. The estimated cost and budget for construction is \$10,489,916, which will come from a variety of revenue sources. Construction is expected to take 12 months with the target being fully operational by Fall 2024.

The project will be competitively bid on PennBid on August 3; a pre-bid meeting with potential bidders on August 10; bid opening on August 31; and award of the bid on September 13, 2023.

**2. Acknowledgement of 457 Investment Plan Change**

Ms. Partridge explained Northeast Financial has recommended an investment change for the Employees' 457 Plan due to poor performance over the last three years.

Ms. Santalucia made a motion, seconded by Mr. Kumbhardare, to acknowledge the replacement of BlackRock Advantage Small Cap Core Fund and Metropolitan West Total Return Bond Fund with Invesco Main Street Small Cap Fund and Federated Hermes Total Return Bond Fund in the employer sponsored 457(b) Plan. Mr. Dunn called for public comment, and there were none. The motion was unanimously approved.

**3. Discussion of Other Sources of Revenue to Fund Fire & EMS Services**

Ms. Gural-Bear explained that the Township is required by the Second Class Township Code to provide fire and EMS services. Revenue sources remain flat for these services yet demand and expenses for same continue to increase. Township staff and elected officials from West Whiteland and surrounding communities have been exploring the options for fair and equitable funding for the fire and ambulance companies while not providing an overwhelming financial burden on the taxpayers. Several options are being explored including: County Tax, General Fund Tax Increase, and Fire and EMS Tax. It was pointed out that the greatest advantage of a fire and EMS tax is that all revenue generated from this tax must be used for public fire protection and ambulance purposes.

Ms. Partridge presented various scenarios of tax millage and amounts that would be generated by each. Mr. Kumbhardare asked if municipalities that have implemented an EMS tax find that donations decrease as a result. Ms. Gural-Bear did not know but will get that information. The Board will take all options under consideration.

**4. Approval of Township Payment Report for July 26, 2023**

Staff provided answers to Board members' questions.

Ms. Santalucia made a motion, seconded by Mr. Kumbhardare, to approve the Township Payment Report for July 26, 2023. Mr. Dunn called for public comment, and there were none. The motion was unanimously approved.

#### **5. June Financial Report**

Ms. Partridge advised that expenses are in line with revenues. Board members had no questions.

#### **6. Township Commission Updates from Board Liaisons**

Ms. Santalucia thanked Joshua Anderson and Lee Ann Embrey of the Historical Commission for manning a table at Community Day and answering visitors' questions. Friends of the Parks will be hosting the next concert at Miller Park on July 30.

Mr. Kumbhardare reported that the Planning Commission reviewed a plan for a studio space salon at the corner of Coeway Lane and Route 100. For safer access, the project will utilize an entrance from Coeway Lane, rather than Route 100.

Mr. Dunn advised that the Pension Advisory Board met earlier in the day and that the pension plans are in good condition.

#### **7. Staff Updates**

Mr. Culp advised that the tennis courts at Miller Park will be resurfaced next week. Mr. Kumbhardare requested Staff to get a cost estimate for painting pickle ball lines on the tennis courts for dual use. Mr. Culp further reported that the recent storms delayed the road paving project but will be resuming now.

Mr. Tupper thanked all the departments for their hard work during the storms, and assured residents that the Township hears your concerns and are working to address same.

Chief Benson announced that the Police Department will be conducting a DUI checkpoint on Friday from 9:00 p.m. – 1:00 a.m.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Pam Gural-Bear  
Recording Secretary