

**WEST WHITELAND TOWNSHIP
PUBLIC SERVICES COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
September 6, 2023**

CALL TO ORDER:

The Public Services Commission regular monthly meeting was called to order at 6:34 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
Virginia Kerslake
John Ceschan
Liz Alakszay
Joe Roscioli

TOWNSHIP STAFF

Pam Gural-Bear, Township Manager
Ed Culp, Interim Public Works Director
Justin Smiley, Capital & Special Projects Manager
Brannon Tupper, Engineering & Construction Projects Mgr.
Brian Dunn, Member, Board of Supervisors

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The Police Department is partnering with Giant Food Store on Saturday, September 9 for "Fill a Cruiser" food drive at the Swedesford Shopping Center to collect non-perishable food for the local food bank.

Make-A-Difference-Day is scheduled for Saturday, September 23, beginning at 8:00 a.m. in Exton Park. Register in advance on our website to volunteer to help with general park clean-up, plantings, removal of invasives, meadow conversion, and more.

Mr. Culp advised that Burke Road Park is still closed with no estimated date for re-opening.

A free Shredding Event has been scheduled at the Township Building on September 23, from 9:00 a.m. – noon.

Ms. Alakszay announced that there is now a Free Library in Roscioli Park. The little library was installed in memory of a wonderful resident and is receiving lots of foot traffic.

Join the Board of Supervisors on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the next few months as they plan the 2024 Budget.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Roscioli made a motion, seconded by Ms. Alakszay, to approve the July 5, 2023, minutes as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Parks Wayfinding Signage – Results of Survey and New Signage

John Bosio and Madison Phillips from Merje Design were in attendance to review design options and present the results of the survey for parks signage. Jeannine Spears, Grant Monitor for the project, was also in attendance.

Ms. Phillips gave a quick review of the 4 design options previously presented at the July 5 meeting, and then presented the results of the survey conducted. Options 4 and 5 were preferred by the majority.

Option 4 uses:

- lighter wood elements
- lighter blue for the Park i.d. sign
- darker blue on the Rules & Kiosk signs
- uses parts of the logo on the main park i.d. sign
- uses full log on the Rules & Kiosks signs.

Option 5 uses:

- darker wood elements
- dark blue color
- stone elements (may or may not be used)
- full logo on all signs

Mr. Bosio confirmed that the color that appeared as black on the drawings was actually a dark blue.

Ms. Alakszay felt that Option 4 exhibits more of the flavor and nature of our smaller parks, and Option 5 was more imposing. Mr. Smiley pointed out that Option 4 has the Township's branding and colors and lends itself to the sizes of our parks better than Option 5. Mr. Dakin agreed with the comments made and confirmed that on his I-pad, the black color does appear as dark blue.

Bill Scudder, a member of Friends of the Parks, asked how the green color was chosen. Ms. Phillips said the green used in Options 1 and 2 came from the Township's branding, and the green shade used in Option 3 was picked by Merje. Mr. Scudder said he liked Option 2 and felt it was unique from other park signs.

Merje will send another survey to the Board of Supervisors, Staff, and PSC Members requesting further feedback on Options 4 and 5. A final option will then be picked.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Stormwater Discussion

Brannon Tupper gave a presentation on the Township's stormwater program, the three main components of which are infrastructure management, regulatory compliance, and

development and planning. Supporting these areas are mapping & operations, inspection and maintenance agreements, and ordinances.

With the intense recent storms, Staff has received numerous concerns from residents which Staff has begun mapping to better prioritize concerns and develop a game plan for action and initiatives to stay ahead of future stormwater.

Mr. Tupper explained the basics of the MS4 permit (Municipal Septic Storm Sewer System) required by the Environmental Protection Agency and outlined the six best practices that support the Township's stormwater program:

- public outreach and education
- public involvement and participation
- illicit discharge detection and elimination
- construction site runoff inspections
- post construction stormwater management
- pollution presentation in municipal operations

MS4 permit requires the Township to reduce sediment in its watershed by 10%. The Township is completing a bioretention project on Boot Road as part of its pollutant reduction plan.

In response to a question from Mr. Roscioli, Mr. Tupper explained that the Township cannot require a developer to fix a problem downstream but can only legally make them deal with what's on their property. However, the Township can ask nicely, and sometimes, in an effort to be a good neighbor, a developer will try to resolve an issue offsite.

Developments approved in 2004 and after are required to enter into a Stormwater Maintenance Facilities Agreement (SWMFA) with the Township to inspect all stormwater facilities annually and conduct regular maintenance. However, no such agreements exist for those older developments. The Township is in the process of contacting HOA's and other individuals about such maintenance, but it is challenging. HOA's can also be difficult because Board members change over time, and often knowledge is not passed down or money that may have been set aside for basin maintenance is spent on other things. Mr. Dakin suggested the Township should be proactive in reaching out to the HOA's to ensure that they know their obligations. Ms. Gural-Bear said the next Township Newsletter will have a great deal on stormwater in an effort to educate residents on the subject.

Mr. Roscioli pointed out that prior to 2004, many approved development plans had specific requirements about stormwater facilities and the maintenance of same. He asked why these requirements cannot be enforced absent a SWMFA. Mr. Tupper said legally they can, but it's a matter of reviewing all older plans to determine the requirements; there was never a data base with this information, and HOA's were not always aware of their requirements. This is what Staff is presently working on trying to catalog everything to do with stormwater.

Mr. Tupper assured members that land developments being approved and constructed today must adhere to very strict stormwater regulations. The Township's Stormwater Ordinance is one of the best around and requires basins to be sized for 100-year storms. Part of the problem is that recent storms are so much more intense with rainfall exceeding the 100-year storm.

Ms. Kerslake asked if existing facilities are determined to be undersized given the intensity of recent storms, can the Township require the facilities to be upgraded. Mr. Tupper said it

cannot, but an upgrade could be part of the Township's pollutant reduction program. He added that upgrades are very costly and grant funding would need to be found and secured.

Future projects and initiatives include the creation of a Stormwater Advisory Board, comprehensive hydrology studies, and drainage improvement projects.

In response to a question from Ms. Kerslake, Mr. Tupper confirmed that all stormwater eventually ends up in a waterway (creek/stream). Ms. Kerslake then noted that as more development is constructed and the ground becomes more impervious, Valley Creek will fill even more creating more intense flooding of Meadowbrook Manor. Mr. Tupper explained that the basins are designed to slowly release the stormwater so as not to flood other areas. The problem with the recent storms is that they far exceed the 100-year storm. Mr. Roscioli noted that Hurricane Ida was determined to be an 800-year storm! Funding remains one the biggest obstacles to solving many of the stormwater concerns.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mr. Dakin outlined agenda topics for the remainder of the year. October will feature Ally Brandt to provide a preview of events planned for 2024, and Wyatt Williams to provide an update on sustainability efforts and results of the plastic bag survey.

November will focus on infrastructure updates including the status of the Clover Mill Pump Station and the Ship Road Couplet.

December will evaluate the effectiveness of the new Property Maintenance and Rental Inspections programs.

ADJOURNMENT:

Ms. Kerslake made a motion, seconded by Mr. Roscioli, to adjourn the meeting; the meeting adjourned at approximately 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Kevin Moore
Recording Secretary