

**TOWNSHIP OF O'HARA
COUNCIL VIRTUAL WORKSHOP MINUTES
MARCH 1, 2022**

Manager Jakubec explained virtual meeting procedures.

I. OPENING PROCEDURES

- A. Call to Order by President Smith at 7:01 p.m.
- B. Pledge of Allegiance led by President Smith.
- C. Roll Call

Council Members Present: Robert John Smith, President of Council; Cassandra R. Eccles, Vice-President of Council; George H. Stewart, Second Ward; Michael F. Hammill, Third Ward; Olivia T. Payne, Fourth Ward; John R. Denny, Jr., At-Large

Absent: Richard S. Hughes, First Ward

Also Present: Greg Caprara, Township Treasurer; Julie A. Jakubec, CPA, CGMA, Township Manager; Dan Garfinkel, Township Solicitor; Charles W. Steinert, Jr., P.E., Township Engineer; Christopher Komora, Code Enforcement / Storm Water Coordinator; Loren R. Kephart, Public Service Superintendent; Scott K. Slagel, Police Superintendent; Cathy Bubas, Manager's Secretary

Manager Jakubec noted Mr. Hughes was unable to attend the meeting due to a business commitment.

II. BID OPENING

- A. Grass Mowing, Landscaping and Related Services

Motion by Mr. Denny, Jr. to open bids received for grass mowing, landscaping and related services was seconded by Vice President Eccles and carried unanimously.

Manager Jakubec stated one bid was submitted by the current contractor. It was noted the 2022 budget allocation for said services is \$74,000. The Manager proceeded to open the bid. The bid tabulation sheet is attached to and made a permanent part of these minutes.

President Smith requested staff to review the bid and provide a recommendation to Council next week.

III. CITIZEN COMMENTS CONCERNING NON-AGENDA ITEMS

No comments.

IV. REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

A. Discussion about Participation in Regional Fire Study with DCED

Manager Jakubec recalled speaking with Pleasant Valley VFC and Parkview VFD/EMS Fire Chiefs. The Fire Chiefs were agreeable to participating in a study. The Manager also reached out to Blawnox VFC, Sharpsburg, Aspinwall and Fox Chapel VFDs. The subject will be included on Aspinwall and Blawnox Boroughs March agendas for consideration.

It was noted the individual fire departments/companies would continue to meet through the study process.

Mr. Denny, Jr. recalled former Councilmember Scott Frankowski strongly encouraged doing a fire study after the Police Study was completed.

Vice President Eccles indicated a hybrid of paid and volunteer fire fighters would be needed, noting the matter has been discussed every year since she has served on Council.

B. Properties not Connected to Saxonburg Boulevard Sanitary Sewer System

Manager Jakubec stated per Allegheny County Health Department, property owners have 90 days to connect to a sanitary sewer once it becomes available. The Saxonburg Boulevard residents have had two years to connect. Letters were sent to the residents informing them they have to connect in 90 days, or to contact the Township if they are experiencing extenuating circumstances.

Ms. Payne inquired about the process for the residents to connect to the sanitary sewer, which the Manager explained. Manager Jakubec also noted a special program available to people that meet WIC Guidelines. Residents would need to apply and pay for a sanitary sewer permit (\$54) and could do the work to connect to the sewer themselves, or hire a plumber. Vice President Eccles noted the Township had already granted extensions to connect to the sewer and suggested granting a 30-day extension and if there is a problem they need to contact the Township. Mr. Stewart was not opposed to granting 90 days to connect to the sewer.

It was noted ten properties out of 60 properties were not connected to the sanitary sewer system. The Manager noted two properties with extenuating circumstances.

President Smith noted the Township could just turn the property information into the County. He recalled the Township had also offered special financing options.

Mr. Denny, Jr. noted the cost can sound huge, but the residents asked for the sanitary sewer system. It improves the property value.

Ms. Payne was not opposed to 30 or 90 days extension, but then turn it over to the County.

C. Requesting Authorization to Submit an Application to the Pennsylvania Municipal Assistance Program for the Preparation of the Long Range Comprehensive Plan

Manager Jakubec stated the Township is seeking assistance through the Pennsylvania Municipal Assistance Program to assist with the costs associated with updating the Township's Comprehensive Plan. The grant is being jointly applied for with Fox Chapel Borough. The funds will help to pay for the consultant.

President Smith suggested including in the resolution that the grant is being applied for "in cooperation with Fox Chapel Borough".

The consensus of Council was to include the resolution on the March 8th regular meeting agenda for consideration.

D. Requesting Authorization to Submit a Grant Application to the Commonwealth Financing Authority for the Epsilon Drive PRP Improvements Project

Manager Jakubec stated the Epsilon Drive Pollution Reduction Plan determined that installing a stormwater retention facility between Epsilon and Alpha Drives would help to alleviate downstream flooding and allow the Township to meet its goals in reducing sediment in the creek that runs through O'Hara Township Community Park. Staff is seeking a grant in the amount of \$805,000 through the Statewide Local Share Assessment Program for the construction of the stormwater retention pond. Prior GEDF grant applications to Allegheny County Redevelopment Authority were not successful.

It was noted the estimated cost of the project is between \$700,000 and \$750,000, plus design and restoration costs.

The consensus of Council was to include the resolution for consideration on the March 8th regular meeting agenda.

E. Requesting Authorization to Submit a Grant Application to the Commonwealth Financing Authority for the Powers Run Sanitary Sewer Project

The Manager noted this project was identified in the Feasibility Study that was submitted to ALCOSAN. This project involves relocating the sanitary sewer to eliminate an exposed section that goes over the stream, which will reduce surcharging in the Township's sanitary sewer line. The Township is seeking a grant in the amount of \$347,300 through the Statewide Local Share Assessment Program. Prior grant applications to ALCOSAN and Allegheny County Redevelopment Authority were not successful.

It was noted the estimated cost of the project is \$500,000.

The consensus of Council was to include the resolution on the March 8th regular meeting agenda for consideration.

F. Requesting Authorization to Submit a Grant Application to the Commonwealth Financing Authority for the O'Hara Township Community Park Trail Stabilization Project

Manager Jakubec stated a gabion basket wall along the trail in O'Hara Township Community Park is sagging. Repeated heavy rainfalls has created stabilization problems. It is recommended to replace the wall with soldier pile and concrete lagging. The Township is required to monitor the wall after every rain per an agreement Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. The Township is seeking a grant in the amount of \$125,000 through the Statewide Local Share Assessment Program to rebuild the wall, which will stabilize the trail above the wall. Prior grant applications to Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and Commonwealth Financing Authority were not successful.

It was noted the estimated cost of the project is \$500,000.

The consensus of Council was to include the resolution for consideration on the March 8th regular meeting agenda.

G. Nancy Werner Park/Six-Mile Island Rules and Regulations

The Manager explained two ordinances from 1985 and 1986 outline rules and regulations for the Nancy Werner Park/Six-Mile Island. It has been suggested that the Parks and Recreation Commission review these ordinances and provided recommended updates.

Mr. Denny, Jr. inquired about the location of the park. The Manager stated it is near the former Silky's Restaurant, in the Allegheny River. You need a boat to get to the island.

Mr. Stewart questioned the size of the island and Manager Jakubec explained the size keeps changing due to sediment. President Smith added that the island keeps moving further down the river.

The consensus of Council was for the Parks and Recreation Commission to review and recommend updates to the rules and regulations for Nancy Werner Park.

H. Requesting Certification of Police Officer Eligibility List

Manager Jakubec stated the Township Civil Service Commission met virtually last evening to review and ratify the Police Officer Candidates' examination scores and prepare the Police Officer Eligibility List. A copy of the list had not been provided to Council. Manager Jakubec noted three applicants remain on the list.

Mr. Denny, Jr. questioned why Council has to certify the list. The Manager explained because it is a Civil Service position.

Council agreed to include a motion for consideration on the March 8th regular meeting agenda.

I. Establishing an Adhoc Committee and Procedures for Redistricting Township Wards and Districts

Manager Jakubec recalled Mr. Denny, Vice President Eccles and Mr. Hammill were appointed to spearhead the Adhoc Committee for reapportioning the Township Wards and Districts. It is suggested that Council discuss the resident makeup of the committee and the process for their appointment.

Mr. Denny, Jr. recommending have one representative from each of the current Township districts. Three of the representatives would be Council. He questioned if a Judge lives in the Township, which the Manager indicated no.

Vice President Eccles noted each Township ward would have two representatives.

Manager Jakubec asked if Council wished to advertise for representatives to submit letters of interest and conduct interviews.

Mr. Denny, Jr. thought five representatives would be easier to schedule for interviews. He recommended having someone to guide the committee in the process. He knew of a person at the High School that had received awards for this type of project.

Mr. Stewart stated there are several organizations that could assist with the project.

It was noted the Township has funds available to cover the project costs. The Manager requested Mr. Stewart to provide contact information for the organizations that could help. Solicitor Garfinkel indicated he also would ask the government firms they represent. Manager Jakubec stated she would also reach out to the Allegheny County Elections Division and provide information in April.

J. Consideration of Contribution to Cooper Siegel Library

Manager Jakubec recalled Ms. Jill McConnell, Executive Director, and William "Pat" Getty, Board Member of the library attended the September 14, 2021 Council meeting to request equitable support from the communities served by the library. Municipalities that contribute less than the \$5.00 per capita expenditure per resident, were asked to increase their contribution to \$2.50 by the end of 2022, resulting in \$22,230 for the library, and continue to increase the contribution to get to \$5.00 per capita expenditure per resident by the end of 2025, resulting in \$44,460 for the library. Copies of prior meeting minutes discussions pertaining to requests for financial support for the library were provided to Council. The Manager noted during the 2022 Budget review, Council agreed to leave the allocation in the budget as a place holder and discuss next year. She also noted information from the Library's presentation was emailed to Council.

Ms. Payne asked how much the Township currently contributes to the library, which the Manager indicated zero.

President Smith recalled some history about the Boyd Community Center and Library, which had been located along Powers Run Road. A conflict arose between people that wanted to keep the library and community center together, and Fox Chapel Borough decided to no longer support the

combined library and community center. Fox Chapel wanted the library. The Township and Fox Chapel Borough did joint fund raising for both the community center and library. It was agreed that Fox Chapel Borough would fund the library forever and O'Hara Township would fund the community center forever. Currently Fox Chapel Borough provides \$350,000 to the library, and O'Hara Township provides \$120,000 to the community center each year. It is not Fox Chapel Borough asking for support; it is the library.

Mr. Denny, Jr. recalled Council knew that libraries are not revenue-generating. The Township does not contribute to the library and Fox Chapel Borough does not contribute to the community center.

Vice President Eccles recalled contributing \$5,000 to the Sharpsburg Library Branch previously because Fox Chapel Borough does not.

Manager Jakubec stated the two libraries are going to combine the two budgets into one budget.

President Smith and Mr. Denny, Jr. consider the library an asset to the Township.

Mr. Stewart recalled a number of former Councilmembers supported directing funds to the Sharpsburg Library. He stated there is no comparison between the Fox Chapel Library and the Sharpsburg Library.

Vice President Eccles noted the Library Association Board has five Fox Chapel members and one person from the other municipalities, so the municipalities really have no say. She strongly supported any library contribution to go to the Sharpsburg branch.

Mr. Denny, Jr. supported a \$20,000 contribution, but not the \$5.00 per capita.

Vice President Eccles was not ok with \$20,000. She anticipated the library would want another \$20,000 next year and the Township may not have it and she was not willing to raise taxes for the library that is not in the Township. The Township could use that money towards redistricting.

Manager Jakubec suggested discussion continue in April. Vice President Eccles indicated she has additional questions for the library to answer and would email the Township Manager.

Mr. Denny, Jr. questioned what other communities have committed to the library. Vice President Eccles indicated it was included in their presentation.

Manager Jakubec noted another question is, 'what have other communities committed in the future'. She requested Council to submit their questions for the library to her by Friday so she could forward to Ms. McConnell to answer, and discuss in April.

K. Request to Participate in the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program

The Manager referenced a flyer received from the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services with information regarding a program to assist families with water and sewer expenses subject to meeting Federal Poverty Income Guidelines and have an outstanding balance on their water and/or sewer bill. Fox Chapel Authority and Shaler-Hampton Water Authority have contracted to

participate in this program and O'Hara Township residents can seek the grant funds. Information will be posted on the Township website and social media.

L. Proposed Proclamation Recognizing PA 1Call 50th Anniversary

The Manager recalled Council has historically recognized March as safe digging month. This year PA 1Call is celebrating its 50th Anniversary. The proposed proclamation recognizes the anniversary.

The consensus of Council was to include the proclamation on the March 8th regular meeting agenda for consideration.

M. Solicitor's February 14, 2022 Invoice

No comments.

N. Proposed March 8, 2022 Regular Meeting Agenda

Manager Jakubec noted changes to the proposed March 8th agenda.

V. CONCERNS OF COUNCIL

Mr. Stewart indicated a 'Stop Here' sign is missing on Fox Chapel Road near the entrance to Route 28 South. Mr. Steinert, Jr., P.E. indicated he would investigate.

VI. CONCERNS OF STAFF

Manager Jakubec requested Council to remain after the workshop for an Executive Session to discuss a labor matter.

Mr. Steinert, Jr., P.E. informed Mr. Stewart that according to several years of google maps there was never a sign at the intersection; just a white line.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m. and Council entered into Executive Session.


Cathy Bubas, Manager's Secretary

Attachments: Attendance Sheet
Bid Tabulation Sheet

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