

**LOWER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2025**

SUPERVISORS:

Danielle A. Duckett, Chair
Michael Twersky, Vice Chair
Janine Martin
Tessie McNeely
Jimmy Chong

STAFF:

Mimi Gleason, Township Manager
Jamie Worman, Assistant Township Manager
Michelle Farzetta, Office Manager
Neil Stein, Esq., Solicitor
Fred Zollers, Director Public Works
Paul Kenny, Police Chief
Jim Hersh, Township Engineer, Gilmore
Chad Dixson, Traffic Engineer, Bowman Company
John Farrell, Project Manager/Emergency Management Coordinator
Melinda Haldeman, Finance Director

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

The Chair called the hybrid meeting to order at 7:03pm at the Lower Gwynedd Township Building and virtually on Zoom and led those in attendance in the pledge of allegiance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS

The Board of Supervisors (BOS) met in executive session prior to tonight's meeting to discuss matters of real estate, and litigation.

At their regular public meeting on February 25th, the Board of Supervisors will discuss the feedback received from the January 30th open house about the proposed redevelopment of the Spring House Corporate Center, which includes demolishing an office building and replacing it with an apartment building and adding retail along Norristown Road.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There was no public comment.

BUILDING AND ZONING

Consider decision for a conditional use application for Lower Gwynedd Little League to permit two new scoreboards with sponsorship signs to replace two existing scoreboards at Ingersoll Park

A conditional use hearing was held at the January 28, 2025 BOS meeting for the replacement of two existing scoreboards with two new scoreboards. The scoreboards can contain no more than two sponsorship signs. The little league will provide accurate dimensional information for the proposed scoreboards prior to permits being issued. There were no questions or comments. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. Martin, to approve the conditional use application permitting the replacement of the scoreboards as presented with the conditions noticed in the order. Motion passed 5-0.

Review Zoning Hearing Board (ZHB) applications for 1348 Sumneytown Pike and 821 N. Bethlehem Pike and determine action to be taken, if any

Ms. Duckett announced that the applicants for both 1348 Sumneytown Pike and 821 N. Bethlehem Pike have requested continuances. Therefore, neither application will be heard at the ZHB meeting on February 13, 2025. Therefore, the BOS tabled any actions for these applications. Several residents wanted to know when the application would be on the ZHB agenda. Mr. Stein explained that 1348 Sumneytown Pike has an open-ended continuance, therefore we will need to see when an amended application is submitted and then it will be scheduled and readvertised. There was an active conversation about the ZHB, their role and the process for notifying residents of an application. Mr. Twersky explained that they are quasi-judicial with their own solicitor. They are not responsible for changes to the zoning ordinance; they approve relief from existing zoning requirements. Changes to the zoning ordinance, or rezoning, is approved by the BOS. A resident requested an education on the ZHB focusing on their role, advertisement requirements, specific legal standards and how decisions are appealable. There were also requests to have notification sent out to all residents, not just those within 500 feet of the application location. The BOS and staff stated that all ZHB applications are advertised in The Reporter monthly, there is a link in the e-newsletter every month to the ZHB applications and they are posted on the website. Sending out notifications to all residents every month would be cost prohibitive and sending out emails to all residents is not possible, as we do not have everyone's email addresses. Residents were advised to check the Lower Gwynedd website on a routine basis for updates.

Resolution #2025-07 Approving a deed of dedication accepting the sanitary sewer facilities, as depicted on the "Site Utilities Layout Plan", prepared by Woodrow & Associates, Inc. dated December 15, 2017, and last revised August 31, 2018, for the 1325 Gypsy Hill Road Subdivision
Resolution #2025-07 accepts the deed of dedication for the sanitary sewer improvements installed as part of the 1325 Gypsy Hill subdivision known as Gypsy Way. Gilmore has confirmed that the sewer improvements have been installed and inspected and are acceptable. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Chong, to approve resolution #2025-07 accepting the sewer improvements for the 1325 Gypsy Hill Road subdivision. Motion passed 5-0.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Consider approval of the text for the following historical markers for Bethlehem Baptist Church - to be located at 225 Penllyn Blue Bell Pike (now China Grace Christian Church), the Penllyn School, Penllyn Village, Spring House Village and Gwynedd Corners

The Historic Advisory Committee (HAC) has finalized the text for the historical markers recognizing Bethlehem Baptist Church, Gwynedd Corners, the Penllyn School, Penllyn Village and Spring House Village. The HAC is now asking the BOS to review and approve the proposed text for five historical markers. There was a discussion regarding the accuracy of the information proposed for the markers. It

was confirmed that extensive research was done to gather the information, and the Wissahickon Valley Historical Society (WVHS) validated the information. Gloria Jones, 1007 Pershing Road, is a member of the HAC and stated that they worked hard on the marker text. They spoke with historians and legitimate resources to gather the information. The BOS asked that the proposed text be made available to the public before approval so anyone who may be interested to learn about the markers is aware of them and has an opportunity to review. Ms. Gleason stated that we could post the information on social media and the Lower Gwynedd website. Ms. McNeely made a motion, seconded by Mr. Chong, to make the marker text available to the public until the February 25 BOS meeting. Motion passed 5-0.

Consider approval of license agreement for 924 Chesterfield Drive

The residents at 924 Chesterfield Drive have erected a shed on Township property. The Township is willing to consider and grant the owners permission to keep the shed in its present location subject to the understanding, agreements and acknowledgments set forth in the encroachment license agreement. The property owners have signed the agreement. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Twersky, to approve the Encroachment License Agreement for 924 Chesterfield Drive. Motion passed 5-0

Consider approval of Resolution #2025-08, revising compensation for the elected tax collector

The PA Local Tax Collection Law requires a resolution to change the Elected Tax Collector's compensation. The resolution must be adopted by February 15th of the election year for this position, which is this year. The only change is the increase of the duplicate bill fee from \$5.00 to \$10.00. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Chong, to approve Resolution #2025-08 revising the tax collectors compensation. Motion passed 5-0.

Consider plan for sidewalk and landscaping at the Township-owned property at 900 Sunneytown Pike (site of the former Texaco station)

Staff have been discussing ways to rehabilitate the property at 900 Sunneytown Pike so that it looks nice. After collaborating with the Parks and Recreation Board, staff created a plan for sitework, plantings, sidewalk, and curb repair. A sketch plan was provided showing the proposed plantings that include Arborvitae, Crape Myrtle, Eastern Redbud, Northern Red Oak, Red Maple, River Birch, and Sweet Bay Magnolia. Most of the labor will be completed by the Public Works Department which includes re-grading the site, planting the trees, installation of a water line with a manual sprinkler head, and installation of the sidewalk. Ms. McNeely asked if some of the plantings could be changed as they were not all native. She suggested consulting with the EAC for some ideas. Mr. Farrell said they could look into other possibilities. Ms. Martin said that she would update the Rotary on this plan and inquire whether they might be willing to contribute to this work or future improvements. The current plan leaves room for additional improvements in the future. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Chong, to approve the work plan for the property at 900 Sunneytown Pike with a budget not to exceed \$50,000.

Approval of invoice report

The BOS received the invoice report for checks dated February 11, 2025, totaling \$1,110,374.11. Ms. McNeely questioned the fees for the Ambler Wastewater Treatment Plant. Ms. Haldeman stated that the higher fees are related to capital improvements that are being made but was unsure of the specifics. Ms. Gleason said she would get some information and will relay it to Ms. McNeely. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Chong, to approve the checks totaling \$1,110,374.11. Motion passed 5-0.

Approval of minutes – January 28, 2025

The BOS received the minutes from the January 28, 2025, BOS meeting. There were no questions or comments. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. Martin, to approve the January 28, 2025, minutes. Motion passed 4-0. (Mr. Chong abstained as he did not attend the meeting)

SUPERVISOR LIAISON REPORTS

The BOS received the liaison report for the Park and Recreation Board. There were no questions or comments.

STAFF UPDATES

Mr. Farrell gave an update regarding the well testing by the North Wales Water Authority (NWWA) related to the high PFAS levels. This issue is stemming from products used at the Willow Grove Naval Air Base. There are a total of 88 wells that could be affected, but only 31 of those homeowners have requested testing. Those residents affected can connect to public water, but it can become costly. There is a grant opportunity with MIRIA that will cover 80% of the costs. NWWA is sending out information one more time to homeowners that have not yet responded. Mr. Farrell mentioned that we have no official role or authority to address this situation but are looking for ways to help our residents by seeking information for them from the Navy and working with NWWA to find additional grants to cover remaining costs. There was some discussion about ways to notify the public, however it could be difficult as this is affecting only a small number of residents within a specific portion of the township. Ms. Gleason said she will talk with staff about communication options.

Ms. Worman mentioned that our annual shredding and electronic event will be held on Saturday, June 7th from 8am -11am.

SUPERVISORS COMMENTS

The supervisors all indicated their excitement for the Eagles winning the Super Bowl. Mr. Twersky asked residents to support our local businesses and visit a new restaurant that opened on Bethlehem Pike - Chewy's has great food and is open Wednesday through Saturday from 4pm-8pm for dinner. Mr. Chong mentioned that Wissahickon schools have a 2-hour delay tomorrow due to the weather event this evening and Ms. Duckett thanked the Public Works staff in advance for their hard work tonight in the storm.

Adjournment

Ms. Duckett made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:37pm, seconded by Mr. Chong. Motion passed 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Farzetta
Office Manager