

**LOWER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, APRIL 22, 2025**

SUPERVISORS:

Danielle A. Duckett, Chairman
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 and Emergency Management Coordinator
Melinda Haldeman, Finance Director

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

The Chair called the hybrid meeting to order at 7:09pm 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 met in executive session prior to tonight's meeting to discuss matters of real estate related to open space properties and potential litigation related to pensions and zoning.

Appointment and swearing in of elected auditor Emily Hires Vanneman by Judge Susan Leonard
Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. Martin to appoint Emily Vanneman as an elected auditor for the remainder of 2025. Judge Leonard swore Ms. Vanneman in with the oath of office.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no comments from the public.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Discussion about upcoming bid for residential trash and recycling collection

Our current trash contract expires on October 31, 2025. Staff are working on preparing a bid for waste hauler services and are looking to have a discussion with the BOS to gather input about possible changes. A few key discussion points were the number of pickups per week, cost, and low volume options. Currently, Republic picks up twice a week and provides two toters, one for trash and one for recycling. Ms. Worman mentioned that a popular request from residents is for one pick-up per week, to lower the cost, however that is not an option with the current contract. The BOS is concerned that residents with children might have trouble with a once a week pick up. The BOS asked if there would be an option for a once a week with two trash toters? Staff said they can put it on the bid. There was also the question of a senior citizen discount or a low volume option. Staff explained that the bid can include alternative collection options to obtain prices, but at the same time we want to keep the bid submission reasonable to avoid deterring bidders. Ms. Gleason also mentioned that the Township could allow residents to choose their own haulers and service levels, but the downside would be multiple trucks on the roads throughout the week and most likely higher fees for those residents versus the bulk price from Township-wide collection. Staff will work on the bid and present to the BOS in May for discussion and authorization to advertise.

Consider approving the Costars proposal from Corbo Landscaping Inc. for \$28,800 to plant trees on Township property along Norristown Road

Mr. Zollers has been working with residents regarding the thinning landscape buffer along Norristown Road. The issue occurred due to tree trimming from the Spring House Intersection project and PECO's utility pole relocation last year. Mr. Zollers spoke with Corbo landscaping for some suggestions. The proposed work includes trees along the Township trail that extends from Old Bethlehem Pike to Stone House Road along Norristown Road. Corbo has proposed the installation of Prague Viburnum and Arborvitae with a total proposed cost of \$28,800. Ms. McNeely asked if some of the plantings could be replaced with native plants. Mr. Zollers said he will talk to Corbo and see what they can do. Mr. Stein asked for confirmation of a warranty on the plantings before signing any proposals. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. McNeely, to approve the Corbo proposal in an amount not to exceed \$30,000. Motion passed 5-0.

Consider approval of combination of a third-party contract for mowing and hiring summer help to supplement the contract

Mr. Zollers received three proposals for the mowing of Township properties, with fewer properties than the previous mowing contract included. The lowest bidder was AJR Environmental with a total cost of \$233,648.85 for a three-year contract. Besides approval of that contract, Mr. Zollers is recommending the hiring of one part-time seasonal employee to assist Public Works with mowing the additional smaller properties that were removed from the contract. Mr. Zollers mentioned that in previous years they were not successful in hiring seasonal help, but this year they had several qualified candidates. Mr. Twersky asked if hiring a part time employe would put us over budget or could the part-time employee's salary be capped at \$9,000 for the season? AJR's contract plus \$9,000 for one seasonal is within the amount budgeted for mowing. Additional seasonal positions were not budgeted but Mr. Zollers said he could easily keep a few more seasonal workers busy. After some discussion it was decided that staff will look at the other seasonal candidates and return to the Board with a possible recommendation for a budget

amendment to hire them and get extra work done at a reasonable cost, while the Board will authorize the mowing contract and first seasonal position to allow that work to get started. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. McNeely, to approve AJR Environmental for the mowing of Township properties and the hiring of one part-time seasonal employee. Motion passed 5-0.

Consider authorizing advertisement of an ordinance revising the collection method for delinquent real estate taxes

The Montgomery County Tax Claim Bureau reached out to Lower Gwynedd to alert staff about the option of collecting delinquent real estate taxes via a hybrid method. Real estate taxes that are not paid in full by December 31st of the year billed are required to be handed over to the Tax Claim Bureau for collection. Currently, the Tax Claim Bureau deducts 5% of the tax collected to cover their costs and returns 95% to the Township. Using a hybrid method allowed by the Real Estate Tax Sale Law and the Municipal Claims and Tax Lien Law, the Tax Claim Bureau will collect 106% of the delinquent tax amount from the property owner. The Township will then receive 100% of the tax owed and the Tax Claim Bureau will receive 6%, of which 5% would cover the Tax Claim Bureau's costs and 1% would cover attorney fees. The BOS discussed the number of people impacted, who pays the fees or penalties and notifications sent to residents. Natalie Cormier, Elected Tax Collector, stated that the number of properties affected is under 100. Typically, the owner gets into a bind and cannot get caught up. Payment plans can be set up with the Tax Bureau, but Ms. Cormier is not permitted to do it for them. Ms. Duckett made a motion, second by Ms. McNeely, to table this item, as they would like more information regarding the number of those impacted. Motion passed 5-0.

Consider waiving the requirements of Section 612.01 of the Township Code to permit the sale and consumption of alcohol at the 2025 summer concert series and Fall Fest

Ms. Martin stated that the Park and Recreation Board has changed the arrangement of the concert series this year. There will be one concert a month in May, June, and July. The concerts will be bigger events with activities, food trucks and a vendor for drinks. The Park and Recreation Board is asking for the BOS to waive the Township code provision to permit the sale and consumption of alcohol during the concert events, as well as Fall Fest in September. Ms. Martin made a motion, seconded by Mr. Twersky, to waive Part Six, Section 612.01 to permit the sale and consumption of alcohol during the 2025 summer concert series and Fall Fest. Motion passed 5-0.

Financial report – March 2025

The BOS received the Financial Report for March of 2025. Ms. Haldeman stated that the revenue shows an increase due to the Liquid Fuels money coming in. All other expenses are within budget.

Approval of invoice report -April 22, 2025

The BOS received the invoice report for checks dated April 22, 2025, totaling \$187,076.92. There were no questions or comments. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. Martin, to approve the invoices dated April 22, 2025. Motion passed 5-0.

Township Engineer Report – April 2025

Prior to the meeting, Mr. Hersh provided the Gilmore Engineers report for April of 2025. There were no questions or comments.

Traffic Engineer Report – April 2025

Prior to the meeting, Mr. Dixon provided Bowman’s Project Status Report for April of 2025. Ms. Martin inquired about the traffic light at Penllyn Pike and Trewellyn Ave. Mr. Dixon stated that the design is being worked on right now. Once complete, the project will go through the permitting process, which will take about a year and then will go out for bid. It will be roughly two years before it is complete. Ms. Duckett asked about the PennDOT project on Gypsy Hill Road. Mr. Dixon said it is not yet on the schedule for PennDOT’s capital program. He will follow up with them for an update.

Approval of minutes – April 8, 2025

The BOS received the meeting minutes from the April 8, 2025, BOS meeting. There were no questions or comments. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Twersky. Motion passed 5-0.

SUPERVISOR LIAISON REPORTS

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

STAFF UPDATES

There were no staff updates.

SUPERVISORS COMMENTS

Ms. McNeely thanked the EAC and staff for the single use plastic community conversation event. She also stated that today was Earth Day and is proud that we are both a tree city and bird community. She is looking forward to hearing about the forest and trail management plan at a future meeting.

Ms. Martin had no comments.

Mr. Chong mentioned that a Spring Cultural Festival would be held at the North Penn High School April 26 from 10am -5pm. There will be many fun activities for the family.

Mr. Twersky had no comments.

Ms. Duckett also thanked the EAC for their work on the single use plastics event, as well as their environmental education. Ms. Duckett noted that we are a Ready for 100 community, but the Sierra Club has concluded that initiative while Montgomery County is developing related initiatives. She asked staff to reach out to Montgomery County to see if we could partner with them.

Adjournment

Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Chong, to adjourn the meeting at 8:10pm. Motion passed 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Farzetta
Office Manager