

**LOWER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, APRIL 8, 2025**

SUPERVISORS PRESENT:

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
Paul Kenny, Police Chief
Fred Zollers, Director Public Works
Melinda Haldeman, Finance Director
Chad Dixson, Bowman Traffic Engineer
Jim Hersh, Gilmore Township Engineer

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 an executive session on March 31st and prior to tonight's meeting to discuss matters of personnel, real estate, and potential litigation.

Lower Gwynedd Township has issued a Request for Proposals for a police department study as part of succession planning. Lower Gwynedd Township is fortunate to have an accredited and highly regarded police department led by Chief Paul Kenny. The Chief's entrance into the deferred retirement option plan means that we will have the benefit of his expertise for only a few more years. To plan for the upcoming transition, the Board of Supervisors invites firms to submit proposals for an analysis of the Police Department's management and organizational structure in the context of law enforcement best practices. By doing this study now, we have the advantage of incorporating Chief Kenny's extensive knowledge and experience. As we move into the future, this Board is determined to maintain the level of safety and service that residents have come to expect from the Lower Gwynedd Police Department. Qualified firms are invited to submit proposals by May 7, 2025.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from the public.

BUILDING AND ZONING

Sketch Plan for redevelopment of 1100 N. Bethlehem Pike, replacing the Gulf gas station with a new Sunoco gas station and convenience store at Bethlehem Pike & Norristown Road

Robert E. Blue, consulting engineer, presented a plan for the property located at 1100 N. Bethlehem Pike, currently the Gulf Station. The potential applicant would like to demolish the existing building and redevelop the property with a gas station and convenience store. Mr. Blue provided drawings of the proposed project for the BOS to see. Some concerns from the BOS included the traffic at the intersection, the ability to get in and out of the property safely, the number of gas pumps proposed (6), the lack of parking, and zoning relief needed. Mr. Blue said he will need to get input from PennDOT also related to a traffic study. The BOS asked for pictures and addresses of the applicant's current locations. Mr. Blue will review the plans with his clients and make some changes to the plan. He will update Ms. Worman with any information from PennDOT.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Accept the resignation of elected auditor, Ron Amchin

Ron Amchin resigned his position as auditor on February 25, 2025. His term would have ended at the end of 2029. The BOS has 30 days to appoint a resident who has lived in Lower Gwynedd for at least one year. This resident will serve for the rest of the calendar year. Mr. Amchin's seat will then be on the November 2025 ballot to elect someone to complete the remainder of his term. The BOS will appoint a new auditor at the April 22, 2025, meeting. Ms. Duckett made a motion to accept the resignation of Ron Amchin, seconded by Mr. Twersky. Motion passed 5-0.

Discuss the Montgomery County Commissioners' review of the proposed cell tower in the maintenance area at Penllyn Woods Park and consider approval of conditions

Ms. Duckett made a motion to table this discussion as the BOS is not ready. Mr. Twersky seconded this motion. Motion passed 5-0.

Consider Ordinance # 551 adding intersections to the locations of stop signs in Chapter 458 of the Lower Gwynedd Township Code

A comprehensive study was conducted by the Police Department's Community Response Unit, in conjunction with our Traffic Engineer, to inventory stop signs throughout the township. Ordinance #551 will ensure that all stop signs are listed in the Township Code. The BOS authorized the advertisement at the April 8, 2025, BOS meeting. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. Martin, to approve Ordinance #551 for the stop sign ordinance amendment. Motion passed 5-0.

Consider approval of new administrator for the non-uniformed defined contribution 401a retirement plan

Currently the township uses Mission Square to administer the 401a non-uniformed money purchase retirement plan, the Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP) for police and as a 457-retirement plan option for employees to voluntarily contribute to. The total fees charged by Mission Square total 1.75%. Beirne Investment Advisors is the other platform the employees can use to contribute to a 457 plan. Beirne has a K-Trade plan for the 401a and a Fidelity plan for the DROP with lower fees totaling 1%, a

savings of .75%. If approved the staff will move forward by transferring the 401a plans from Mission Square into K-trade, and the DROP plan out of Mission Square and into Fidelity. Employees can also choose to move their 457 plans into K-trade. Ms. Duckett made a motion seconded by Ms. McNeely, to appoint Beirne Wealth as the plan administrator for the 401a and DROP plans and to authorize the Township Manager to execute the plan agreements. Motion passed 5-0.

Consider approval of deed of dedication revising the right-of-way for Old Bethlehem Pike needed for the culvert replacement project

Mr. Hersh stated the there is a gas main next to the existing bridge on Old Bethlehem Pike. Before the bridge can be replaced the gas line needs to be moved. The gas line extends onto the line of the right of way. The Deed of Dedication formalizes the conveyance of land from an adjoining township-owned property to right-of-way for Old Bethlehem Pike that includes the area needed for the gas line. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Twersky, to approve the Deed of Dedication revising the right-of-way for Old Bethlehem Pike. Motion passed 5-0.

Consider approval of deed of dedication of right-of-way for a trail easement at 1327 Gypsy Hill Road

The 2018 Mackell Minor Subdivision on Gypsy Hill Road had a paved pedestrian trail installed with an easement granted to the Township for access to a segment located outside of the right-of-way. A small portion of the trail leaves the right-of-way and crosses the front of 1327 Gypsy Hill Road to connect to the adjacent trail, requiring a Deed of Dedication for an easement. The property owners have signed the Deed of Dedication needed for the required trail easement. Ms. Duckett made a motion seconded by Ms. Martin to accept the Deed of Dedication for the trail easement at 1327 Gypsy Hill Road. Motion passed 5-0.

Consider approval of a RACP cooperation agreement with Thomas Jefferson University and the Montgomery County Redevelopment Authority

Thomas Jefferson University, located at Spring House Innovation Park (SHIP), received a \$2 million grant through the PA Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP). This grant will be used for the Jefferson Institute for the Bioprocessing Expansion project at SHIP. A requirement of the RACP grant is that the host municipality must authorize the project and agree to reimburse certain contingent repayment obligations if funds are used by Jefferson for expenses that are later determined to be ineligible for reimbursement. Ms. McNeely asked Mr. Stein what we are responsible for under this agreement. Mr. Stein stated that an indemnity clause was added to the agreement if any issues should arise. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. McNeely, to approve the cooperation agreement with Thomas Jefferson University and the Montgomery County Redevelopment Authority. Motion passed 5-0.

Consider approval of the contract for the planting of pollinator gardens at Oxford and Pen-Ambler Parks to ArcheWILD

The Park Master Plan included pollinator gardens at both Oxford Park and Pen-Ambler Park. ArcheWILD submitted the lowest quote for the project. The total cost is \$12,000; however, we received a \$6,000 Green Region Grant from PECO to help fund the pollinator gardens. Mr. Hersh mentioned that Public Works can do some of the sod removal at Pen-Ambler Park to keep the cost down. The BOS had questions regarding the maintenance of the gardens once completed. Mr. Hersh said there is a one-year maintenance bond and then we would need to work with staff moving forward regarding maintenance

of the gardens. There were also questions regarding the plantings. Mr. Hersh mentioned that the EAC had made suggestions and that all the plants are native. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. McNeely, to approve the contract for the pollinator gardens at Oxford Park and Pen-Ambler Park to ArcheWILD. Motion passed 5-0.

Approval of invoice report – April 8, 2025

The BOS received the invoice report for checks dated April 8, 2025, totaling \$360,909.71. There were no questions or comments. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Chong, to approve the invoices dated April 8, 2025. Motion passed 5-0.

Approval of minutes – March 25, 2025

The BOS received the minutes from the March 25, 2025, BOS Meeting. There were no questions or comments. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. McNeely, to approve the March 25, 2025, minutes. Motion passed 3-0. (Mr. Twersky and Ms. Martin abstained as they were not at the meeting)

SUPERVISOR LIAISON REPORTS

There were no Liaison Reports for review.

STAFF UPDATES

Ms. Worman gave an update on the Wissahickon Clean Watershed Partnership’s water quality improvement plan (WQIP). DEP’s previous comments have been addressed, and the final draft plan is ready to be re-submitted to DEP for approval. When that approval is received, the WQIP will go back to the individual municipalities for approval. After this process is complete, the multi-jurisdictional group will transition into a consortium to work together on implementation of the watershed-wide plan. The BOS had a few questions related to the time frame for this process, if a municipality does not approve, what happens, and could DEP want further revisions. Ms. Worman said she will follow up with the County and get some answers.

Chief Kenny reminded everyone that this Saturday from 1pm-3pm the CRU will host a Fill-a-Cop-Car event at the Giant. All donations will go to the Mattie Dixson food cupboard in Ambler.

SUPERVISORS COMMENTS

Ms. McNeely and Ms. Duckett reminded everyone about the EAC community conversation tomorrow to discuss plastics waste reduction.

Ms. Martin told everyone to keep an eye out for the summer concert series. The Park and Recreation Board and staff have revamped the event.

Both Mr. Twersky and Mr. Chong stated that the Lower Gwynedd Little League held its opening day events last weekend. Go out and support the teams!

Adjournment

Ms. Duckett made a motion at 7:50 pm, seconded by Mr. Twersky to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Board of Supervisors Minutes
April 8, 2025

Michelle Farzetta

Michelle Farzetta
Office Manger