

November 4, 2020

Mr. Miller, President of the Board, convened the work session at 7:00 p.m. on the above date via ZOOM. Present were Commissioners Eckles, Milazzo, Pavone and Smock. Also present were: Jason M. Bobst; Kathy K. Frederick; Sean Kilkenny, Esquire, Michael Kelly, Stephen Morris; Donna Horn; Michael Valyo; and Jonathan Dzedzy.

After reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, the meeting proceeded

Presentations *Daryl Peck of Concord Public Financial Advisors prepared a power point presentation of refinancing proposals of the Township's 2014 B Note which is currently at a 2.65% fixed rate until 2024 with a variable rate thereafter to a cap of 5.25%.*

According to Mr. Peck, interest rates are at an all-time low due to COVID and the stock market and the objectives of refinancing would be to lower the current interest rate, lock in a rate for a longer period, and/or lower the current cap rate. A presentation of potential scenarios was made by Mr. Peck, who noted that we could either go directly to banks and request rates to modify our current loan or go through the RFP process. In response to an inquiry by Mr. Smock regarding the charges for refinancing and whether or not credit unions would be considered, Mr. Peck stated that the fees for an RFP would be larger than simply refinancing through current lender or other bank, and he added that credit unions would be considered.

Ms. Eckles suggested putting out an RFP and the Board agreed. It was mentioned by Mr. Bobst that the target would be to have proposals back by the Board's meeting in December.

Manager

A. Mr. Miller expressed his gratitude to Mr. Bobst and the department heads for their work on the 2021 budgets, and he stated that township services will continue with no cuts or tax increase.

B. With regard to the potential sale of the Norristown Municipal Waste Authority (NMWA), it was mentioned by Mr. Miller that he had a conference with Shay Ash of the NASD who expressed his concern over the significant cost to the NASD of the sale and thus to NASD's budget. It was requested that we send a letter to Norristown with our concerns and/or we cosign or join in the letter. Mr. Bobst shared his concerns with the actions that the Municipality of Norristown has taken with regard to the dissolution of the NMWA. In response to inquiry by Mr. Miller of the impact, if any, that the sale would have on our residents, Mr. Bobst stated that it all depends on the cost of operation (current and future), but that Aqua has not reached out to meet and discuss so he has nothing to go on. Ms. Milazzo agreed with the writing of a letter and Mr. Bobst suggested that we join in the letter to show that we are united with NASD. In the alternative, it was suggested that 2 letters be penned: one letter with emphasis on the Township and the second letter joining with NASD. Mr. Kilkenny stated that he recused himself on this issue as he also

represents NASD. In response to an inquiry by Ms. Pavone as to NASD's concerns, Mr. Miller stated that it was increased rates. Ms. Milazzo added that through her research with PA American Water, private utilities charge sixty percent (60%) more than public utilities. It was agreed by the Board that Mr. Miller will reach out to Mr. Ash to proceed with the letter.

C. Consider approval of Stipulations and Order of Settlement for Assessment Appeals as follows:

- Joseph Lynch at Parcel #63-00-07267-00-5 - Per Mr. Kilkenny, this settlement will result in an assessment reduction for tax years 2013 – 2021 from \$186,000.00 down to \$173,000.00;*
- VRJ Associates at Westover Golf Club. Details of stipulation have not yet been received, but a reduction in assessment and taxes will result; and*
- Home Depot USA @ 600 S. Trooper Road. According to Mr. Kilkenny, this appeal is for 2019-2021 taxes.*
- Pro Penn Properties @ 2420 Blvd. of the Generals. Details of stipulation have not yet been received, but a reduction in assessment and taxes will result.*

In response to an inquiry by the Board regarding appealing the stipulation and order of settlement, Mr. Kilkenny noted that to appeal we would have to pay appraisals, counsel, etc. and it would likely wind up costing more than the reduction in taxes.

In addition to the items on the Agenda, Mr. Bobst provided the Board with an update on the police hiring process. According to Mr. Bobst, three (3) officers were hired, all with varied backgrounds and work experience (U of P, SEPTA and Drexel) and one of which is fluent in Spanish, and will be sworn in on Monday. Ms. Pavone inquired if any of the Board members have met the new officers. In response thereto, Mr. Bobst suggested that the new officers be introduced to the Board at its ZOOM meeting next week.

Mr. Bobst noting that there is no work session currently scheduled for December, and Ms. Pavone inquired as to why not. Historically, there is no work session in December, unless needed to pass the budget. Mr. Miller added that, based on what is upcoming, he sees no need for the December work session and Ms. Milazzo concurred, adding that if something arises, we can schedule the meeting. It was agreed by the Board that no work session will be held unless need-based.

Public Comment *Per Mr. Bobst, no public comments were received prior to the meeting.*

MaryEllen Moran of Port Indian Road inquired about the number of tax assessment appeals and what is the criteria in getting appeals. Per Mr. Bobst, there are 11 stipulation and order of settlement s for assessment appeals (4 of which are on the agenda this evening), and comparable valuations and other information justify the appeals. It was noted by Ms. Bobst that sometimes the appeals go the other way. Ms. Moran also inquired about plans in place for the increase in COVID cases. According to Mr. Bobst, the County hasn't raised alarms yes as regards to closures, changes, etc. so we will keep our plans in place until that time.

Kim Haymans-Geisler, 1810 Ardin Drive, thanked Ms. Pavone for bringing up the work session to allow residents to make comment prior to the regular meeting. Also, Ms. Haymans- Geisler inquired about the status of the Act 537 Plan. Mr. Bobst replied that Mr. Figaniak will take that on after the Rittenhouse Pump Station issue, but that he will request that Mr. Figaniak give an update on the Plan on Tuesday evening at the regular meeting.

There being no further public comments offered, upon motion of Mr. Smock, seconded by Ms. Eckles and unanimously agreed, the public comment portion of the meeting was closed.

Upcoming Meeting Dates *According to Mr. Bobst, a ZOOM meeting of the Zoning Hearing Board is scheduled for November 18th @ 7:00 PM re: variances for sign at Visitation BVM and variance for shed size at 1825 W. Main Street.*

Announcement *Mr. Miller thanked all who voted and those who worked the polls and stated "democracy marches on".*

Adjournment *There being no further items on the Agenda, upon motion of Ms. Eckles seconded by Mr. Smock and unanimously approved, the work session was adjourned at 8:10 P.M.*

*Kathy K. Frederick
Assistant Secretary*

