

#03-2022
WORK SESSION
February 1, 2022 – 6 p.m.

A work session of the Whitpain Township Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, February 1, 2022 at 6 p.m. for the purpose of updating the public on several matters and reviewing the agenda of the February 15, 2022 Supervisors' meetings. The meeting was held in hybrid mode. In-person attendees included Supervisors Kimberly J. Koch, Jeffrey Campolongo, Joyce M. Keller and Soctt M. Badami along with Solicitor Michael P. Clarke, Esq., Solicitor Gregory R. Heleniak, Esq., and IT Director Nicole Leininger. Remote attendees included Supervisor Michele Minnick, Township Manager Roman M. Pronczak, P.E., Assistant Township Manager David J. Mrochko, Police Chief Kenneth Lawson, Public Works Director Thomas Farzetta, Code Enforcement Officer Michael E. McAndrew, Finance Director Christine Bauman, Township Engineer James E. Blanch, P.E., Parks and Recreation Director Kurt W. Baker, HR Director Kathleen Yackin and Fire Marshal David M. Camarda. There were two members of the public in-person and 22 remote attendees.

Chair Koch welcomed everyone and asked them to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

After roll call, Chair Koch welcomed the members of two Ambler Whitpain Trojans Football teams. Coach of the 90-lb. class, Michael Monteleone, highlighted the successes of his team members who were the 2021 National Division Champions of the Keystone State Youth Football League in their weight class. Coach Chad Merriweather, who led the 105-lb. class, highlighted what his team members accomplished through the season. They, too, were the 2021 National Division Champions of the Keystone State Youth Football League in their weight class. Proclamations were ready by Chair Koch for each team, with offers of congratulations to everyone.

Chair Koch turned the meeting over to Mr. Pronczak for the remaining agenda items. He began with a review of the preliminary agenda for February 15, 2022. There will be a conditional use hearing for Normandy Development, LP for the reconstruction of a building damaged by fire at Rt. 202 and Morris Road, adding 581 sq. ft. to the building, with an increase in units from 12 to 21 while preserving the historic character of the site. He went over the Consent Agenda, including approvals of minutes, the Voucher List, Treasurer's Report, authorization to advertise the responsible contractor's ordinance and the resolution supporting the Ready for 100 movement, release of escrow funds, acceptance of a deed of dedication and authorization to advertise bids for the Pulaski Drive bridge. He noted there is one item that will be added to the final edition of the agenda that includes authorization for submission of a grant application to Montgomery County to provide funding for the installation of sidewalks and pedestrian connections from Skippack Pike to Wentz Run Park. There are two cases that will come before the Zoning Hearing Board on February 17th. One was continued from last month. It is a

residential property that involves a cabana that was built two feet from the property line, and the ordinance requires a minimum of five feet. The other applicant, Family Dining, Inc., is returning for confirmation of variances granted in January 2019 to install two menu boards and two ordering stations at 1760 Swede Road that were not installed when the relief was granted. With no questions from the Board, Mr. Pronczak returned to the work session agenda.

Mr. Pronczak discussed holding a Strategic Planning Session with the Board and Department Heads. This session normally starts off the budget season, though we have not held one in the past two years. Ideally, it is better to hold the session in person, though he is proposing a virtual gathering this year in order not to delay it. A preliminary session will be held February 18th with all Department Heads. He asked that the Board consider a full group meeting on a weekday evening, or Saturday or Sunday morning, either completely virtual or in hybrid format.

Mr. Pronczak gave an update on the Mermaid Lake property. We received good news from an evaluation of environmental conditions. Soil samples were taken in the areas around the golf course greens, which had elevated levels of mercury and arsenic from pesticides and herbicides. In an abundance of caution, we also tested groundwater for any impacts. Both rounds of testing have been completed, and there was no impact to tested groundwater. We will continue to work with the environmental consultant regarding removal of contaminated soils. It is possible, if a proposal is received, that there will be an agenda item added to the February 15th agenda to move forward with this process.

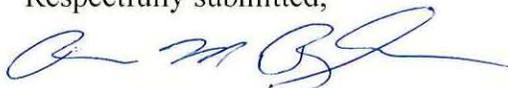
Mr. Pronczak asked Supervisor Keller and Mr. Mrochko to give an update on the ordinance to establish meadows. They have been working together to bring this forward. Supervisor Keller indicated that having meadows are beneficial to the environment, and this Board makes the environment a focus. Meadows include a diverse array of plantings, they reduce stormwater runoff, help water absorption and reduce the need for pesticides. An ordinance will help those who would like to create a meadow on their property and would eliminate property maintenance penalties for grass or plant overgrowth. Mr. Mrochko added that a meadow does not mean you stop mowing your lawns. To ensure that a functioning meadow is created, the ordinance mandates inspections. These inspections would be completed by the Township's land planner at three stages: at inception, during the first growing season, and in the second growing season. The ordinance will be crafted for three-year cycles, and establishing a meadow requires much work. The proposed fee structure could be \$350 for less than five acres, and \$700 for five or more acres. For smaller residential property owners where people are doing their best to help the environment, there are discussions about the idea of the Township absorbing some of the costs through grants. Supervisor Campolongo states this is a great idea, and he likes the point about affordability. We should keep this in mind to make this available to residents of all economic backgrounds. It is a good initiative.

Mr. Pronczak finished with the work session agenda noting on April 30th, there will be an Earth Day 5K from 9 a.m. to noon with a beer garden at the end. There will also be a fun walk along the Narcissa Road trail for those who do not run. Also, April 9th is WRA opening day which normally begins with a parade from the Centre Square Fire Company to Wentz Run Park, starting at 8/8:30 a.m. Updates will follow.

Mr. Pronczak announced that the Board met in executive session on January 19th to discuss a personnel matter and will meet again in executive session this evening at the conclusion of this meeting to discuss a personnel and potential real estate matter.

With no additional discussion, Supervisor Campolongo made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 p.m., seconded by Supervisor Keller.

Respectfully submitted,



Roman M. Pronczak, P.E.
Township Manager

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