

The agenda meeting of the Northampton Township Board of Supervisors took place virtually using the Zoom platform. The virtual meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

Present were:

Adam Selisker
Eileen Silver
Dr. Kimberly Rose
Frank O'Donnell
Barry Moore
Robert Pellegrino
William Wert
Joseph Pizzo
Amanda Fuller

Agenda items were reviewed and discussed.

The regular business meeting of the Northampton Township Board of Supervisors took place virtually using the Zoom platform. The virtual meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

Members of the Board present were:

Adam Selisker
Eileen Silver
Dr. Kimberly Rose
Frank O'Donnell
Barry Moore

Others present were:

Robert Pellegrino, Township Manager
Amanda Fuller, Township Engineer
Joseph Pizzo, Township Solicitor

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Selisker led the Pledge of Allegiance and held a moment of silence in support of military and emergency services personnel.

CHAIRMAN ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Selisker explained the procedures for public comment and how to email questions to be read and answered. Chairman Selisker also provided an update on the status of the Township and its operations.

Chairman Selisker announced there is an emergency declaration in place due to the current snow event. The Police, Fire, and Public Works are diligently working during this storm. During the holidays the trash will move to the next day if your day lands on Christmas or New Years'.

The Library has once again moved to curbside service due to Governor Wolf's COVID-19 restrictions. The Parks and Recreation Department is all virtual under the COVID-19 restrictions except for the pre-school which is in person.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Chairman Selisker introduced Dr. Ken Lavelle the Township Medical Director. Dr. Lavelle provided an update on the COVID-19 pandemic. Dr. Lavelle covered the following topics: Vaccinations including how the process works and who is in the queue to receive them. Discussed the daily number of cases and the impact on the hospitals. Reiterated the need for social distancing, the wearing of masks, and limiting emergency room visits to major issues, i.e., heart attacks, trouble breathing, etc. Discussion ensued with Board members asking questions of Dr. Lavelle.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None was heard.

CONSENT ITEMS

The Board meeting minutes of November 18, 2020, were approved by unanimous consent.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

The accounts payable of December 9, 2020, for \$450,047.86 and, of December 16, 2020, for \$919,521.29, were approved by unanimous consent.

NEW BUSINESS

Consideration of Preliminary/Final Plan of Land Development-Giant, SLD-20-25, 1025 Second Street Pike

Mr. Moore stated the following persons are in attendance for this meeting and are available to take comments and answer questions during this discussion:

- Mr. Marc Kaplin, Esq., of Kaplin Steward, Attorney for the project.
- Mr. Matt Kelly, Metro Commercial, Manager
- Mr. Brian Meyers P.E., Landcore Engineering Consultants, Civil Engineer for the project
- Mr. John McGillin, Architect for the project
- Mr. Bruce Bachtel, Schrader Group,.
- Mr. Kerry Eck, Manager of Real Estate Development for the Giant Company

Mr. Moore outlined the project that is located at the northeast corner of Second Street Pike and Newtown-Richboro Road, the proposal is to construct a new 50,340 square-foot Giant at Richboro Plaza Shopping Center. The site is served by public water and sewer. It is zoned C-3 in the Village Overlay District.

The Zoning Hearing Board granted variances for the following on July 16, 2020:

- To allow 36 new off-street parking spaces in support of the addition to the existing building;
- To permit an impervious surface ratio of 79.9%; and
- To permit a new freestanding sign along Second Street Pike.

The following was submitted to the Board for their review:

1. Waiver request letter – November 20, 2020;
2. Gilmore & Associates, Inc. – Review letter – December 7, 2020;
3. Pennoni Associates - Review letter – December 1, 2020;
4. Township Planning Commission Memo – December 8, 2020;
5. McMahan Associates – Review letter – December 7, 2020;
6. Bucks County Planning Commission – Review letter – October 28, 2020; and,
7. Copy of the Plan

Overall, there are no major issues to consider with the exceptions of the waivers, which are primarily related to the existing conditions in the shopping center. Two important items to note:

1. The applicant will be working in conjunction with the Township concerning the Richboro Sidewalk project. They will be constructing the sidewalk along the frontage of their property at their expense.
2. Since the subject property is in the Village Overlay District, it is requested the Board be satisfied with the final design of the proposed Giant. This notation has been incorporated into the motion.

A motion was made and seconded (Moore-Rose) for the approval of the Giant Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan, SLD 20-5, subject to compliance with the Gilmore Associates review letter dated December 7, 2020, the Pennoni Associates review letter dated December 1, 2020, and the McMahan Associates review letter dated December 7, 2020. Also, the requested waivers are granted. The following are also conditions of this approval:

1. The applicant shall enter into a land development agreement and escrow agreement in a form acceptable to the Township solicitor and engineer. This shall include a stormwater management maintenance and operations agreement.
2. The applicant shall construct sidewalks at their expense along the full property frontage in conjunction with the Richboro Sidewalk Project under the Township's Highway Occupancy permit.

3. The Township shall review and approve the final design of the proposed Giant in conjunction with the Village Overlay requirements before building permit issuance. This includes the wall facing Newtown-Richboro Road and the inclusion of any architectural features.
4. A fee-in-lieu of recreation/open space shall be submitted for \$1,656.46 per 1,000 square feet of new gross floor area (12,350 additional square feet proposed) for a total of \$20,457.28 as required per the terms of the land development agreement.
5. The application is responsible for obtaining any outside approvals that may be necessary, including, but not limited to, DEP, PennDOT, and the Municipal Authority.
6. The project should be in full compliance with the Zoning Hearing Board Decision No. 2020-9.
7. Lighting shall be directed down in an effort to prevent spillage on adjoining properties, especially in the rear of the store, and shall utilize timers where appropriate.
8. No deliveries shall be made past 11 PM and before 5 AM for the Giant controlled vehicles. Reasonable efforts shall be made for outside vendors to comply with this requirement.
9. Approval from any outside agency having jurisdiction shall be required, including, but not limited to, PennDOT and the Conservation District.
10. All conditions and recommendations incorporated with the motion and minutes are subject to the Township Solicitor's approval letter.

Chairman Selisker called for Board comment:

Mr. Moore stated his biggest concern with the design of the project is making sure there is safe pedestrian access from the front of the building to the 90 parking spots in the back.

Dr. Rose agreed with Mr. Moore and discussion ensued among the Board and the representatives of the Giant project. Ms. Fuller the Township Engineer offered input and suggestions for the area.

Discussion ensued regarding the sidewalks, lighting, and landscaping.

Mr. Moore stated the need for improvements to the sidewalks, lighting, and landscaping. The Board agreed to include this as part of the motion and per the Township Solicitors' approval letter.

Chairman Selisker called for public comment. None was heard.

Motion passed 5-0.

Resolution Authorizing Issuance of Tax Anticipation Note for the 2021 Calendar Year

Dr. Rose explained due to a projected reduction in the Township's cash position through the first 4 months of 2021, the Finance Director recommends the Board authorize a tax anticipation note, which is a short term loan used for cash flow purposes, in anticipation of tax receipts expected in April and May.

The Township solicited proposals from several financial institutions and received a very favorable proposal from the First National Bank and Trust Company of Newtown to borrow \$2.5 million for fiscal 2021, at an interest rate of 0.8% for the period of January 15, 2021, through May 15, 2021, with no pre-payment penalty.

A motion was made and seconded (Rose-Silver) to adopt resolution R-20-25 authorizing the issuance of a tax anticipation loan from First National Bank and Trust Company of Newtown at an annual interest rate of 0.8% and authorizing the appropriate Township officers to execute all the necessary documents in connection with the loan.

Chairman Selisker called for Board and public comment. None was heard.

Motion Passed 5-0.

Consider Bond Parameter Ordinance for Fire Station Construction

Chairman Selisker opened the hearing at 9:09 pm.

Mr. O'Donnell introduced Mr. Henry Van Blunk of Eastburn & Gray (Bond Counsel) and Mr. Dan O'Brien from RBC Capital Markets, LLC (Bond Underwriter) and stated they are in attendance to answer any questions.

Mr. O'Donnell noted the Administration has been working closely with Mr. Van Blunk and Mr. O'Brien on the proposed bond issue to fund the construction of two new fire stations to replace the existing buildings in Richboro and Holland.

As part of the process, the Board must adopt an ordinance, commonly known as a Parameters Ordinance, before marketing and issuing the bonds, and establishing a sinking fund for bond proceeds. The proposed ordinance authorizes the issuance of the bonds.

The Township is currently working with the architectural firm Alloy5, out of Bethlehem, PA on the fire station designs. Alloy5 has prior experience with fire station designs, and recently completed plans for new fire stations in the cities of Easton and Reading.

The design for the new stations in Richboro and Holland are in the conceptual plan phase, which is where the building program is refined in allocating space for all of the various

components necessary for a modern fire station. The designs are anticipating a minimum 40-year life expectancy for the new facilities.

The current estimated construction cost for the two buildings is approximately \$27 million. This includes building design costs, civil engineering costs, permitting, and site improvements. It is the net amount the Township will need to receive once the bonds are issued. The actual estimated cost of construction will be determined once the concept plans and total building sizes are finalized.

The parameters ordinance will authorize the issuance of up to 34 million in municipal bonds. The higher amount would include the net amount needed by the Township for all costs associated with the project, bond issuance costs, and any capitalized interest the Township determines may be necessary related to the timing and re-payment schedule for the bonds.

The proposed ordinance was advertised Friday, December 11, 2020, for a public hearing on December 16, 2020. The advertisement conforms to the requirements of the PA Unit Debt Act.

A motion was made and seconded (O'Donnell-Silver) to adopt ordinance #609 authorizing the issuance of municipal bonds for the construction of two new fire stations and authorizing the appropriate Township officers to execute all documents related to this transaction.

Chairman Selisker called for Board comment.

Mrs. Silver asked for a quick summary of the process for bond issuance which Mr. Van Blunk accommodated.

Mr. Moore questioned the \$27 million cost and Mr. Pellegrino stated it is an estimate until the actual number and construction costs come in.

Chairman Selisker called for public comment:

Joe Johnson, 41 Grant Drive, questioned the previous bond ordinance for \$37 million and its payoff date, asked if there would be a tax increase due to this new bond ordinance? Questioned why the buildings cannot be renovated vs tearing them down and building new? Will there be additional public hearings on this matter?

Mr. Pellegrino answered Mr. Johnson's questions in detail with the information he had at the time.

Chairman Selisker called for board comment.

Mrs. Silver commented on the amazing fire company and firefighters. These buildings are not up to code, there are not sleeping or showering facilities.

The Board all agreed on the necessity of new fire stations, and how the services they provide are a necessity to the Township.

Mr. Moore stated the rates are at an all-time low in 25 years and with a 40-50 year longevity this is the perfect time to do this.

Discussion continued with Mr. Pizzo and Mr. Pellegrino explaining how the Parameter Bond ordinance works and how numbers are determined for construction.

Public comment continued:

Mr. Johnson, 41 Grant Drive, wanted to make sure everyone understood that he believes the fire services and firefighters are top-notch, but wants to make sure all options are explored.

Chairman Selisker stated its happening all over the state and the country, the burden that is put on volunteers is so much, that it is becoming more common to have paid firefighters and combination departments.

Chairman Selisker called for a roll call vote:

Eileen Silver – Yes

Dr. Kimberly Rose – Yes

Frank O'Donnell – Yes

Barry Moore – Yes

Adam Selisker – Yes

Motion Passed 5-0.

Chairman Selisker closed the hearing at 9:30 pm.

Consider Final Adoption of 2021 Budget

Mrs. Silver outlined the proposed 2021 Preliminary Budget and noted it was advertised for public inspection on November 20, 2020, and a copy was made available for public inspection on the Township website following adoption by the Board on November 18, 2020.

Mr. Pellegrino stated during the inspection, the Administration received one e-mail complimenting the Township on the budget presentation. No other communication was received and the budget is ready for final adoption.

Mrs. Silver reiterated there will be no increase in taxes or fees for the 2021 budget and broke down the budget as follows:

General Fund	6.0247 mills
Fire Fund	3.0000 mills
Parks and Recreation Fund	1.6280 mills
Ambulance Fund	0.5000 mills
Debt Service Fund	4.5597 mills
Library Fund	1.7284 mills
Road Maintenance Fund	0.5000 mills
Road Equipment Fund	<u>0.5703 mills</u>
	18.5111 mills

A motion was made and seconded (Silver – O’Donnell) to adopt the final 2021 preliminary budget.

Chairman Selisker called for Board and public comment. None was heard.

Motion Passed 5-0.

CONSENT ITEMS CONTINUED:

The Board meeting minutes of November 18, 2020, were approved by unanimous consent.

REPORTS

Dr. Rose made the following announcements:

- The Senior Center sold wreaths as their fundraiser and ended up selling over 150 of them.
- Holiday Happenings is taking place now.
- The Parks and Recreation Departments are providing virtual classes, and programs. Go to northamptonpa.myrec.com for current information on the various classes, activities, and programs being offered. The new brochure is now available.

Mr. O’Donnell made the following announcements:

- The Library has reopened to the public on October 1, 2020 times are limited and masks are required at all times. For detailed information go to the Library’s website at www.northamptontownshiplibrary.org or see the Library’s Facebook page.
- Give the Library a call or check the website for Library access as access times can change under Governor’s orders.

Mrs. Silver made the following announcements:

- December 19th light your sidewalks with lanterns or candles to symbolize, light and hope.

Chairman Selisker made the following announcements:

- The Fire Company is bringing Santa to every street on December 19th starting at 8:30 am. Listen for the sirens for his arrival.
- It's snow season so consider "Adopting a Hydrant". During a fire every second count. Help the firefighters save valuable time. Clear out your hydrant, take a photo of the cleared hydrant and your shoveling crew and send it to chief@ntvfc.org. A gift card winner will be randomly selected.
- The Police Department wishes to thank a Program Donor that will allow the Police Department to put Bike Patrols on the road. This will be a great addition to the community.
- The Northampton Shop with a Cop was another huge success, with 478 area kids that we're able to shop and have gifts for Christmas.
- Congratulations and a big thank you to Charles Woolsen, who has just announced his retirement after 25 years as a crossing guard in Northampton Township.
- A thank you to Dr. Arthur Friedman and his wife Susan, who are moving out of the Township after 51 years. Their dedication and commitment to the community will be missed.

Manager's Report

- Thanked everyone for their support during this challenging year. Thanked Dr. Lavelle for all of his assistance and noted he has been an asset.

Solicitor's Report

Mr. Pizzo announced the Board has met in executive session twice: December 9 and tonight immediately before the business meeting. The members of the Board, Mr. Pellegrino, Mr. Wert, the Township Engineer, and Mr. Pizzo himself were in attendance. Two (2) matters of pending litigation were discussed, no action was taken during the executive session and no action was taken tonight for any of the matters.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Selisker called for public comment.

Brandon Yett, 41 S. Timber Road, introduced himself noted he works with the Bucks County Board of Elections. Mr. Yett announced he is very interested in volunteering and would like to get involved in the Township.

Chairman Remarks:

Chairman Selisker noted there has been a new addition of Holiday Decorations at Dembowski Park.

Chairman Selisker also thanked Bill Wert, Assistant Manager for making the meetings easy due to all of the modifications that had to be made to hold them virtually due to the pandemic. Also, thanked the Township Solicitor, Engineer, and the Manager for all their work during this trying year.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Frank O'Donnell, Secretary