

# UPPER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

## PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

October 19, 2020

This meeting was held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The public was notified of the meeting via an ad in The Reporter as well as our website and other social media. The public was invited to participate by calling in or by submitting questions in advance.

### **Liz K. McNaney, PRESIDENT** **Finance/Personnel/Administration**

#### 1. Call to order

The October 19, 2020, Public Meeting of the Upper Gwynedd Township Board of Commissioners was called to order by President of the Board, Liz K. McNaney at 7:00 PM. This meeting is being recorded and visually taped.

#### 2. Pledge of Allegiance

Mrs. McNaney led the Pledge of Allegiance

#### 3. Roll Call

Roll call was taken by Deanna Logan, Administrative Assistant to the Township Manager. The individuals in attendance were:

Liz K. McNaney	President
Denise M. Hull	Vice-President
Martha A. Simelaro	Commissioner
Katherine D. Carter	Commissioner
Ruth S. Damsker	Commissioner
Sandra Brookley Zadell	Township Manager
Megan Weaver	Assistant Township Manager
Lauren Gallagher	Township Solicitor
Isaac Kessler	Township Engineer
David Brill	Finance Director
David W. Duffy	Chief of Police

#### 4. Recognition of Karen Buzby for 15 years of service to the Township (will attend)

Mrs. McNaney thanked Mrs. Buzby for joining the meeting and recognized her for her 15 years of service to the Township. Mrs. Buzby has accurately processed over 25,000 paychecks for her fellow employees and generated over 180,000 sewer utility bills for businesses and residents. Mrs. McNaney said Mrs. Buzby is a key member of the finance department and appreciates everything she does at the Township and thanked her for her service.

#### 5. Recognition of Lori Hammell for 20 years of service to the Township (unable to attend)

Mrs. McNaney said the Township is very fortunate to have Ms. Hammell on our team. Mrs. Zadell said she is a key player with the Parks & Recreation events and congratulated her for her 20 years of service.

## UPPER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

### 6. Announcement of Executive Sessions

Ms. Gallagher said the Board of Commissioners met in Executive Session on the following dates.

- October 8 to discuss matters of collective bargaining
- October 15 regarding matters of potential litigation

### 7. Public comments and concerns (limit of five minutes per individual)

There were no public comments.

### 8. Motion to approve the Public Meeting Minutes of September 14, 2020

Hearing no public questions or comments, upon motion by Mrs. Damsker, seconded by Mrs. Hull, the motion to approve the September 14, 2020 minutes was unanimously approved.

### 9. Motion to approve the Public Meeting Minutes of September 29, 2020

Hearing no public questions or comments, upon motion by Mrs. Simelaro, seconded by Mrs. Carter, the motion to approve the September 29, 2020 minutes was unanimously approved.

### 10. Motion to authorize the Township Manager to execute the contract with Constellation for a 60-month term.

Ms. Weaver said our energy contract ends in December 2020. The Pennsylvania Municipal League has a cooperative purchasing agreement to get a lower energy rate. There is a significant savings using this purchasing agreement. She said we received the updated rates this morning for a 60-month agreement.

Hearing no public questions or comments, upon motion by Mrs. Hull, seconded by Mrs. Damsker, the motion was unanimously approved.

## **Denise M. Hull, VICE PRESIDENT** **Zoning/Planning/Code Enforcement**

### 11. Motion to approve escrow release #2 for the Shoppes at Upper Gwynedd/Upper Gwynedd Equities, LLC in the amount of \$135,208.66

Mrs. Hull said our engineers have approved the escrow release which reduces the letter of credit to \$407,549.09.

Hearing no public questions or comments, upon motion by Mrs. Hull, seconded by Mrs. Simelaro, the motion was unanimously approved.

### 12. Motion to approve the Deed of Dedication, Widening of Cottage Avenue for Gwynedd Walk

Mrs. Hull stated the applicant has submitted the deed to the Township for the sanitary sewer and Cottage Avenue ultimate right of way.

Hearing no public questions or comments, upon motion by Mrs. Hull, seconded by Mrs. Damsker, the motion was unanimously approved.

## UPPER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

13. Motion to approve the Merck & Co. waiver request from Chapter 113-1 & 124-5 for afterhours crane work on Building 56 High Roof Replacement Project, Sundays in November & December 2020

Mrs. Hull said this request is for nine (9) consecutive Sundays that are backup dates to the already approved Saturdays.

Hearing no public questions or comments, upon motion by Mrs. Hull, seconded by Mrs. Carter, the motion was unanimously approved.

14. Motion to approve the Merck & Co. waiver request from Chapter 113-1 \* & 124-5 for extended work hours on West Point Building 60A Modular Addition Project, beginning Sunday, October 25, 2020 through April 2021.

Mrs. Hull explained this modular addition is a unique project that requires continuous construction.

Hearing no public questions or comments, upon motion by Mrs. Hull, seconded by Mrs. Simelaro, the motion was unanimously approved.

15. Motion to approve Resolution 30-2020, Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan for Merck 45B addition

- Merck Presentation

The following representatives of Merck were present at the meeting; Greg Landis, Tom Alvarez, Tom Dugath and David Brooman.

Mr. Landis clarified that this is for an addition to building 45. The original building 45 was built in two (2) phases (1984 & 1999) as a research facility for safety assessment. The proposed addition will add 40,408 sf to the building. The addition is over 1000 feet from West Point Pike and the building height is less than sixty-five feet (65'). Merck is requesting three (3) waivers and one (1) partial waiver.

- Combine preliminary/final land development approval
- Waive the requirement of utility markings within one hundred feet (100') of the property site
- Maintenance and performance of public improvements
- Stormwater operations maintenance agreement because Merck is entering into an agreement with the Township by the end of the year.

Mr. Landis presented several slides depicting the aerial location of the building, rendering of the site and building plans. He added the plan was reviewed by the UGT Planning Commission, Wissahickon Creek Watershed Stormwater Management Ordinance, UGT Fire Marshal, UGT Sanitary Sewer Engineer (EEMA), Township Engineer (RVE), and the Montgomery County Planning Commission.

Mrs. Hull said all reviews from Township Consultants are in order.

Hearing no public questions or comments, upon motion by Mrs. Hull, seconded by Mrs. Damsker, the motion was unanimously approved.

### **Katherine D. Carter** **Public Safety**

16. Motion to ratify/approve the Emergency Declarations dated and October 12 and October 19, 2020

Hearing no public questions or comments, upon motion by Mrs. Carter, seconded by Mrs. Damsker, the motion was unanimously approved.

## UPPER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

17. Motion to hire Abdenour Fahem for the position of Upper Gwynedd Township Probationary Police Officer with a start date of November 2, 2020.

Mrs. McNaney said this was a last-minute addition to the agenda. Mrs. McNaney asked Chief Duffy how long the probationary period is. Chief Duffy responded one (1) year. Mr. Fahem attended the police academy and has police experience. The formal swearing in ceremony will be held on Monday, November 9, 2020.

Hearing no public questions or comments, upon motion by Mrs. Carter, seconded by Mrs. Simelaro, the motion was unanimously approved.

### **Ruth S. Damsker** **Public Works/Parks/Recreation**

18. Motion to approve Payment #3 to Allan Myers for the 2020 Roads Program in the amount of \$1,417.50 (via roll call vote)

Mrs. Damsker said this is for the 2020 Mill and Overlay Project with ADA Ramps.

Hearing no public questions or comments, upon motion by Mrs. Damsker, the motion was unanimously approved.

Roll call vote:	President McNaney	Aye
	Vice President Hull	Aye
	Commissioner Simelaro	Aye
	Commissioner Carter	Aye
	Commissioner Damsker	Aye

Note: the record is unclear as to which Commissioner seconded the motion for payment, so this vote will be ratified at a future meeting.

19. Motion to approve Resolution 31-2020 authorizing the Township's application to the Multi Modal Transportation Fund from the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation.

Mrs. Damsker said this grant will help fund the Sumneytown Pike Bridge Replacement Project. Mr. Kessler said we will use this Resolution as part of the exhibits for the grant application. He said the deadline for the grant application is November 6, 2020. Mr. Kessler explained this is an expensive project and this project that checks many of the boxes that PennDOT requires for grant funding. This bridge has been identified during inspections that a full replacement is needed.

Hearing no public questions or comments, upon motion by Mrs. Damsker, seconded by Mrs. Carter, the motion was unanimously approved.

## UPPER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

### Martha A. Simelaro Wastewater Treatment

#### 20. Presentation by PFM, Financial Advisors

Mrs. Simelaro said the Township recently hired PFM as the Financial Advisors. This is to advise the Township the best way to finance the balance of the WIP project and to satisfy all the legal requirements of this financing.

Jamie Schlesinger and Melissa Hughes were in attendance from PFM Advisors to present their recommendations.

Mr. Schlesinger thanked everyone for the opportunity to work with the Township. He said Township is in a great financial position and added Merck is a strong taxpayer & partner for the Township. The goal is to make the plan the most cost effective and find the right fit for the Township to keep the rates down. Mr. Schlesinger stated current interest rates are very low as a result of COVID-19 and the global world crisis. He continued, because the debt will be relatively short, PFM recommends a bank loan for ten (10) years. This will keep payments in the budgeted amount.

Ms. Hughes said the Township has two (2) existing pieces of debt. One is a loan by the state from 2010 and the other is a general obligation note from 2015. She said we will refinance the 2015 note that is included in the General Fund. We estimate the Township will save \$57,000 by refinancing the 2015 note. Ms. Hughes went on to say the bank loan RFP will be distributed to local and regional banks this week and we expect to have the responses returned by November 17<sup>th</sup>. PFM will review the RFP and the Commissioners will consider the ordinance for approval at the November 23<sup>rd</sup> Public Meeting. Settlement on the loan is expected by the end of December. Mr. Schlesinger said banks will look favorably at this proposal.

Mrs. Damsker asked if the interest rates can be raised during the 10-year period. Mr. Schlesinger said we will more than likely be locked into a rate for ten (10) years.

Mrs. Simelaro thanked the staff at PFM for their presentation.

#### 21. Motion to approve the advertisement of the bid for DelPAC 1525

Mrs. Simelaro said DelPAC 1525 aids in the removal of phosphorus at the WWTP.

Hearing no public questions or comments, upon motion by Mrs. Simelaro, seconded by Mrs. Hull, the motion was unanimously approved.

### Other Business

#### 22. Motion to approve the September 2020 Open Invoices (via roll call vote)

Hearing no public questions or comments, upon motion by Mrs. Damsker, seconded by Mrs. Carter, the motion to approve the Open Invoices was unanimously approved.

Roll call vote:	President McNaney	Aye
	Vice President Hull	Aye
	Commissioner Simelaro	Aye
	Commissioner Carter	Aye
	Commissioner Damsker	Aye

## UPPER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

23. Motion to approve the September 2020 Paid Invoices (via roll call vote)

Hearing no public questions or comments, upon motion by Mrs. Hull, seconded by Mrs. Simelaro, the motion to approve the Paid Invoices was unanimously approved.

Roll call vote:	President McNaney	Aye
	Vice President Hull	Aye
	Commissioner Simelaro	Aye
	Commissioner Carter	Aye
	Commissioner Damsker	Aye

24. Call for Adjournment

Mrs. McNaney said the Commissioners recently attended via ZOOM a Montgomery County Association of Township Commissioners Meeting. County Commissioner Val Arkoosh gave an update to COVID at this meeting. This information will be posted on our website. Mrs. McNaney announced a new app that is available on the Montgomery County website for COVID-19 (COVID alert PA). This app will provide you with updated information about COVID-19 and is not associated with GPS so there is no tracking.

Mrs. Carter added the COVID testing sites are County run and there are no barriers (no age, no cost) to getting the testing completed and no doctors note is required.

Mrs. Hull stated mail in ballots are just being sent out and you should receive yours shortly. There is a drop box in Lansdale behind Station Square for the mail in ballots.

Mrs. McNaney said the Board of Commissioners and Township extends condolences to Senator Maria Collett on the recent death of her father.

Mrs. McNaney adjourned the meeting at 8:02 pm.



Respectfully Submitted,

Sandra Brookley Zadell  
Secretary

**Approved November 23, 2020**

/djl