

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES

June 1, 2020

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Upper St. Clair, duly advertised and posted in accordance with law, was called to order at 7:30 PM on Monday, June 1, 2020 in the Board of Commissioners' Meeting Room, Township Municipal Building, 1820 McLaughlin Run Road, Upper St. Clair, PA 15241. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

PRESENT: Commissioner Christie President
Commissioner Paoly Vice President (*present via audio conference*)
Commissioner Logan (*present via audio conference*)
Commissioner Orchowksi (*present via audio conference*)
Commissioner Plutko
Commissioner Waller

Matthew R. Serakowski Township Manager
Mark P. Romito Director of Finance
Irving S. Firman Township Attorney
Prudence Cooper Recording Secretary

EXCUSED: Commissioner Pardini
Jennifer J. Slagle, P. E. Township Engineer
Mark S. Mansfield Assistant Township Manager
Adam A. Benigni Director of Community Development

PUBLIC: None

Commissioner Christie began the meeting by announcing that due to the COVID-19 restrictions, three (3) Commissioners are present this evening via audio conference and that in-person meetings may resume at end of this month.

REVIEW OF BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 4, 2020

Commissioner Waller moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of May 4, 2020. This was seconded by Commissioner Plutko and carried with a 6-0 voice vote.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Serakowski went on the record to say that an email was received today through the designated email address for citizen comments from residents Craig and Susan Stuver of 1740 Quigg Drive, and Ray and Rose Halackna of 1736 Quigg Drive regarding the condition of the property located near Quigg Drive owned by James Hawk. The email was forwarded to the Board Commissioners earlier today.

Mr. Serakowski stated that this matter is currently in litigation and that Mr. Firman will be providing his comments on this matter.

Mr. Serakowski added that the residents have four (4) areas of concern regarding this property:

- 1) The steps involved in getting the house repaired, improved, and maintained;
- 2) Determining whether the property has been sold or not;
- 3) Determining whether building permits have been issued for remodeling of the house and if the remodeling has been completed. If the remodeling has not been finished, determining whether the property should be condemned, and
- 4) Determining if fines and liens can be issued against the property.

Mr. Firman stated that this matter is involved in ongoing litigation and he can not provide any further comments at a public meeting at this time. This case is in active litigation and enforcement proceedings are pending.

Mr. Serakowski concluded that both residents, the Stovers and the Halacknas, have been very active in following this case and they have been in close contact with Community Development Staff. An update will be provided via email or a phone call tomorrow to both parties.

Commissioner Logan commented that Mr. Stuver has reached out to her on several occasions regarding this property and the Stovers have been tracking the litigation very closely. Commissioner Logan assured Mr. Stuver that the Township is taking this critical matter very seriously.

Mr. Firman and Mr. Serakowski both addressed Commissioner Orchowksi's comments by stating that property compliance is only part of this matter and although there has been a delay in this case due to COVID-19 restrictions, the case is scheduled for trial in September and is moving forward. For the record, this case is being heard in Common Pleas Court before Judge Ignelzi.

Commissioner Christie added that balancing residents' property rights and community rights are some of the most difficult issues Staff and the Board face and he thanked everyone for their patience and the residents for their comments.

Commissioner Christie asked if there were any additional public comments or comments from the Board and there were none.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

CONSIDERATION OF THE MAY 2020 BILL SHEET

Commissioner Logan stated that the Bill Sheet was reviewed and everything is in order.

Commissioner Christie asked if there were any additional comments or questions from the Board and there were none.

Commissioner Logan moved for approval of the May 2020 Bill Sheet, which was seconded by Commissioner Paoly and approved by a 6-0 voice vote.

ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE FOUR-MONTH PERIOD ENDING APRIL 30, 2020

Commissioner Logan acknowledged receipt of the Financial Statements for the Four-Month Period ending April 30, 2020.

Commissioner Logan commented that the Financial Statements are now reflecting a negative impact to Township revenue due to the COVID-19 pandemic and she asked Mr. Romito to provide comments on this matter.

Mr. Romito stated that a review of the data from April and more recently, shows an impact from the current economy to sales tax and deed transfer tax revenues. Revenue from sales tax in March dropped around 25% and it could reach as high as 50-60% for the month of April. Sales of motor vehicles nearly completely shut down in May and the data the Commonwealth has released reflects a 70% decline in vehicle tax revenue which affects Regional Asset District (RAD) funding. The Township has been notified that a 20% decline in RAD funding is expected until tax revenue is normalized.

Mr. Romito further commented that the revenue from deed transfer taxes, as well as the number of transactions from April is also down 25% from the five (5) year average. Through three-quarters of the month of May, the County is expecting a drop in deed transfer taxes of 50-60%; however, that revenue may come back in June. Mr. Romito stated that he will be monitoring this until revenue is back to normal. However, due to the large deed transfer in the Township earlier in the year, the deed transfer tax is close to the budgeted amount.

Mr. Romito added that earned income tax poses the most impact on Township revenue, and that there will be no accurate data until July or August. Currently, unemployment data is being used to make internal models and educated assumptions of earned income tax making pinpointing exact data very difficult.

Mr. Romito addressed Commissioner Orchowski's inquiry by stating that there has been a 20% cut across the board for operating revenue that RAD distributes and there are no capital grants being distributed for 2020 as they are currently on hold.

In response to Commissioner Christie's question, Mr. Romito commented that RAD capital funds have been awarded for the perimeter trail and Miracle League playground work. On the operating side, projects involving Boyce Mayview Park and the Library will be dropped for the time being.

Commissioner Christie asked if there were any additional comments or questions from the Board and there were none.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Romito addressed Commissioner Christie's question by stating that the budget process starts at end of this month. Work on the Capital Improvement Plan started in March due to the current economic situation and the draft of the Plan is near completion. The Budget and Finance Committee of the Board of Commissioners meeting is tentatively scheduled for the end of June.

Mr. Serakowski provided the following updates as Allegheny County moves into the green phase of the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions:

- The Township will issue a press release in the next few days regarding the reopening of the municipal building, Public Works, Tax Office, and Community Development to the public.

- The Township is working with the Library and the Allegheny County Library Association (ACLA) for a phased reopening of the Library.
- Local athletic association and tennis development programs, structured team play and summer programming and athletics will be resuming their schedules soon and playgrounds will be opening before long.
- The Township has been in communication with South Fayette Township regarding the July 4th Fireworks celebration. June 10th is the deadline to decide to celebrate on that day or on an alternate date in September such as Labor Day.
- A phased reopening of the Community & Recreation Center, including outdoor aquatics, will start at the end of June. Updated pool opening regulations from the County are very fluid and reopening schedules are subject to change.
- Furloughed Staff are being called back as needed.

Commissioner Christie commended Township Staff for taking their time to make decisions of availability and preparations according to safety guidelines which should be satisfactory to the residents of Upper St. Clair.

Commissioner Orchowski commented that the Perimeter Trail has started in earnest in that the clearing has been done which has had no effect on the canopy which is still quite thick.

Commissioner Christie asked if there were any additional comments or questions from the Board and there were none.

ADJOURNMENT

Following a motion for adjournment by Commissioner Waller and a second by Commissioner Plutko, which carried with a 6-0 voice vote, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:50 PM.

Prudence Cooper
Recording Secretary
June 2020