

The stated meeting of the Public Affairs Committee of the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Abington was held on Wednesday, October 5, 2016 at the Township Administration Building, Abington, PA., with Commissioner Spiegelman presiding.

**CALL TO ORDER:** 8:26 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:** Present: Commissioners SPIEGELMAN, BOWMAN, SCHREIBER, ROTHMAN, KALINOSKI

Township Manager LEFEVRE  
Township Solicitor CLARKE  
Director of Parks and Recreation WENDELL

Also Present: Commissioners LUKER, KLINE, MYERS, HECKER, FARREN, SANCHEZ, MARKMAN, DiPLACIDO, GILLESPIE

**MINUTES:** Commissioner Spiegelman made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Kalinoski to approve the minutes of the August 31, 2016 Public Safety Committee meeting.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

Parks and Recreation Report:

Doug Wendell, Director of Parks and Recreation, reported that we had our first feasibility study meeting in regards to the Township's pools and we discussed the development of a survey instrument, and as soon as the URL is activated, he will notify the Board as to what that URL is and it will be posted on Township's website and Facebook page.

Library Board of Trustees Report:

Thomas E Tyler, Esquire, President of the Library Board of Trustees, announced that the library is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year.

The principle issue of the library at this time is maxed out capacity that we face on a consistent basis. State law requires that libraries be one square foot per capita per resident in the Township, and with about 48,000 residents in Abington, we should have a facility of 48,000 square feet, but we are half that at 24,000 sq. ft.

Statistics on use of the library are by ward and Ward 1 has the most usage at 2,751 loans made in July followed by Ward 11 with 2,419 loans and Ward 12 with 2,360 loans. Circulation year-to-date until the end of August 2016 totaled 297,000 loans, and the turnstile shows at least 1,000 people a day who visit the library and until the end of August it was about 172,000 people visiting the library, which was an increase over prior year of 6%.

Penn State students use the library on an informal basis now and we suspect the students from the new dorms being built across the street from the library will be interested in using it as well. We are not discouraging anyone from using the library, but we are trying to anticipate what might happen. We are exploring some plans for additional building that may involve future requests from the Townships, but for now, he wanted to give the Board a level of understanding.

Nancy Hammeke-Marshall said Mr. Tyler indicated that the size of a library is a State law requirement and it is not. It is a recommendation of the American Library Association and the Pennsylvania Library Association; however, if Abington Township were to build a brand new library today, it would be unheard of not to adhere to that recommendation.

2016 HUD Program – Architectural and Engineering Contract Crestmont Park Community Facility

Commissioner Spiegelman made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Kalinoski to approve and enter into a contract with Daley & Jalboot Architects, Inc. for the preparation of construction documents for a new community facility at Crestmont Park in the amount of \$66,800.00.

Mr. Strother explained that officials of Abington Hospital expressed interest in participating with the Township in the summer meal lunch program for income-eligible children as well as expressed interest in participating with the Township on other food and health initiative programs, so the scope of work was increased by adding a basement and installing geothermal and solar panels to the building increasing the carbon footprint.

Due to the costs for scope of work being increased, Township staff was unable to finalize terms of engagement with the firm previously approved by the Board in July 2016, so we decided to award the contract to the next firm.

Commissioner Spiegelman asked for any comments from Commissioners. There were none.

Commissioner Spiegelman asked for any public comments. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

Grant Award Acceptance for TCDI Grant – ‘Walk Park Train Abington’

Commissioner Spiegelman made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Kalinoski to accept the Transportation and Community Development Initiative (TCDI) grant from Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) in the amount of \$75,000.00. The grant will support the ‘Walk, Park, Train Abington’ concept of the Master Bike Plan.

Manager LeFevre noted this grant provides opportunity to implement another phase of the Master Bike Plan and does require a match of \$18,500 that will be taken from 2016 Contingency Fund.

Commissioner Spiegelman asked for any comments from Commissioners.

Commissioner Kline asked about TAP grant funding from the State?

Manager LeFevre replied we should hear about it any day now.

Commissioner Spiegelman asked for any public comments. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

Consultant Acceptance for TCDI Grant “Walk Park Train Abington”

Commissioner Spiegelman made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Kalinoski to accept the proposal from the team of Simone Collins Landscape Architecture and Traffic Planning and Design Inc. to prepare the ‘Walk Park Train Abington’ Plan through the Transportation and Community Development Initiative (TCDI) grant from Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC).

Manager LeFevre noted that the Township has previously worked with this firm and a requirement of the grant was to go through the RFP process. Proposals were received by a number of firms and recommendation by staff is Simone Collins and the cost of their services is included in grant funding.

Commissioner Spiegelman asked for any comments from Commissioners.

Commissioner Kline commented that that County has begun their master bike plan and will incorporate Abington’s bike plan as part of their overall plan.

Commissioner Spiegelman asked for any public comments. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

Act 511 Tax Hearing Officer

Commissioner Spiegelman made a MOTION, seconded by Commissioner Kalinoski to approve for the remainder of 2016, Stephen P. Imms, Jr. Esquire as the Abington Township Hearing Officer for Act 511 Tax Appeals.

Manager LeFevre noted that back in 2013, the Board adopted Taxpayer Bill of Right regulation that requires municipalities to add Act 511 for Business Privilege and Mercantile taxes and the guidelines provide for the implementation of those taxes and any appeal rights for any taxpayer, who feels they were unjustly impacted by the tax.

There is an ongoing business tax audit program and there has been one significant finding where the taxpayer may want to proceed within the next month to an appeal hearing. Requirements are that the hearing should be held within 30 days and that hearing be conducted by a hearing officer.

Staff is requesting that the Board approve Mr. Imms for just the remainder of this year, and then in 2017, that appointment will be included on the agenda for any other candidates the Board may want to consider.

Commissioner Spiegelman questioned whether a future appointment of a hearing officer would need to be done by the RFP process.

Manager LeFevre replied these regulations have been in place for three years and there has never been a request for a hearing previously. RFP process is tied to a certain dollar level and he does not feel this position would qualify, but it is certainly something the Board may wish to consider going forward.

Commissioner Spiegelman asked for any comments from Commissioners. There were none.

Commissioner Spiegelman asked for any public comments. There were none.

MOTION was ADOPTED 5-0.

Commissioner Spiegelman asked for any general comments relating to Public Affairs.

Commissioner Markman questioned the hours of operation of Alverthorpe Park.

Mr. Wendell replied hours of operation are listed in the brochures, but they change during daylight savings time.

Public Affairs Committee Meeting

October 5, 2016

**ADJOURNMENT:** 8:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael LeFevre, Township Manager

sev