

UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
MAY 17, 2012

The Board of Supervisors of Upper Merion Township met for a Business Meeting on Thursday, May 17, 2012, in Freedom Hall, in the Township Building in King of Prussia. The meeting was called to order at 7:38 p.m., followed by a pledge to the flag.

ROLL CALL:

Supervisors present were: Greg Philips, Greg Waks, Erika Spott, Bill Jenaway, and Carole Kenney. Also present were: Ron Wagenmann, Township Manager; Joseph McGrory, Township Solicitor, Tom Beach, Township Engineer, Judith A. Vicchio, Assistant Township Manager, and Angela Caramenico, Assistant to the Township Manager.

MEETING MINUTES:

It was moved by Mr. Waks, seconded by Mr. Philips, all voting "Aye" to approve the April 12, 2012 Business Meeting Minutes and the April 19, 2012 Joint Meeting Minutes as submitted. None opposed. Motion approved 5-0.

CHAIRPERSON'S COMMENTS:

Chairperson Spott commented on an executive session held prior to the business meeting during which litigation matters were discussed. She also commented on a telephonic executive session held on May 8, 2012 to discuss personnel matters.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION 2012-15 RE: APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF OF POLICE

Before reading Resolution 2012-15 regarding appointment of the Chief of Police, Mrs. Spott discussed the results of the succession plan and extensive promotional process that was put in place after Chief Ron Fonock announced his plans to retire effective June 1, 2012.

Board Action:

It was moved by Mr. Philips, seconded by Mr. Jenaway, all voting "Aye" to approve Resolution 2012-15 and appoint Lieutenant Thomas Nolan to be Chief of Police for a probationary period of one year effective June 1, 2012 and ending on June 1, 2013. None opposed. Motion approved 5-0.

POLICE DEPARTMENT PROMOTIONS:

In view of his retirement on June 1, 2012, Chief Ron Fonock stated the Board of Supervisors authorized the promotional process not only for the Chief of Police, but also subsequent staff moving up the chain of command. Chief Fonock announced the results of a very competitive promotional process which occurred over several months. They are as follows:

Officer David Gershanick was promoted to Corporal  
Corporal Jeremy Jay Johnson was promoted to Sergeant  
Sergeant Christopher Bird was promoted to Lieutenant

Judge James P. Gallagher administered the oath to all newly promoted officers.

On behalf of all newly promoted officers, Police Chief- Designate Tom Nolan thanked the Township Manager and the Board of Supervisors for their

continuous support of the Police Department and commitment to conduct a very challenging and professional promotional process evidenced in the quality of the personnel selected for promotion.

Chief Ron Fonock provided additional information about the promotional policy and challenging procedures adhered to during the process that began in August 2011. In order to be as objective as possible, with the approval of the Board of Supervisors and support of the Township Manager, the International Association of Chief of Police (IACP) provided their top executive police officers from around the country to provide outside objective perspective and testing. They are highly trained, know what they are looking for, and provide their insight in examining written, oral and other assessments and processes.

Mrs. Spott commented that this information inspires great confidence in our entire police force.

#### PROCLAMATION RE: POLICE WEEK MAY 13 - MAY 19, 2012

On behalf of the Board of Supervisors, Mrs. Spott read a proclamation proclaiming Police Week May 13 - May 19, 2012 and May 15, 2012 as Peace Officers Memorial Day.

#### CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Permission to Receive Bids - Matsunk Trickleing Filter Towers Rehabilitation Project
2. Waiver of Fees - Mother of Divine Providence - \$80.00
3. Resolution 2012-14 re: Challenge Act 13, "Shale Gas" Law
4. Budget Transfer re: Trout Run Oxidation Tower - \$50,000.00
5. Resolution 2012-16 re: Accept Right of Way from PennDOT and Transfer the Right of Way to the National Park Service
6. Equipment Replacement Request re: Replacement of PC's - \$15,000
7. Equipment Replacement Request re: Updating IT Hardware - \$6,000
8. Deed of Dedication re: Keebler Road Sidewalk
9. Proposal re: SmartSearch Document Management

#### Board Action:

It was moved by Mrs. Kenney, seconded by Mr. Philips, all voting "Aye" to approve the Consent Agenda as submitted. None opposed. Motion approved 5-0.

#### PRESENTATION BY YVONNE POST - USING GOATS AS A SOLUTION FOR INVASIVE SPECIES REMOVAL

Mrs. Spott stated the presentation by Yvonne Post concerns the use of goats as a solution for invasive species removal, primarily at Bob White Park.

Ms. Yvonne Post provided an extensive overview of the use of goats as an ideal alternative to machines and herbicides to fight invasive vines called "mile a minute." Highlights of her experience include:

- she has a small herd of four-year old angora goats used for the purpose of sustainable weed control.
- her relationship with Upper Merion has been ongoing for a few years
- the Upper Merion goats were completely raised on grain and as a result

- were not inclined to forage.
- Ms. Post's goats were three months old when she got them and they have lived on forage nine months out of the year.
  - Since goats do not pass seeds through their droppings it becomes a sustainable weed control solution.
  - Goats will eat poison ivy, weeds with thorns, "mile a minute" (especially at the end of the season with seed pods and berries), English ivy
  - Goats are intimidated by dogs
  - Goats will eat for about 3 or 4 hours and then they will rest.
  - Goats disturb the root system of every plant that they eat; they can interrupt the natural life cycle of a plant and have a long term result

Mrs. Spott asked if Ms. Post was on site at Bob White Park. Ms. Post responded she has not been out to Bob White Park, but has been out to Nor-view Farm. Ms. Post suggested if the supervisors are interested in looking into this further, she would do a site visit and bring her two lead goats and let them forage.

Mrs. Spott followed up by indicating this presentation was recommended to the Board of Supervisors by the Park and Recreation Department so that the supervisors can better assess moving forward, not with a formal motion, but just if there is support for working together. Mrs. Spott asked about the next step if the two lead goats responded favorably at the site. Ms. Post responded she would assess the site to locate the boundaries. If fencing is needed, she would provide electric fencing. Initially she would stay on the site with the goats to make sure they are comfortable; at some sites the goats can actually stay overnight. All of these factors would be ascertained to determine if the goats are safe and not at risk.

Mrs. Spott asked if goats pose any danger to people. Ms. Post responded while goats have horns, they are not aggressive animals. In Ms. Post's view, goats are extremely resilient and do not have a lot of diseases that affect them or can be transmitted.

Mrs. Spott asked for clarification about poison ivy and the likelihood of spreading poison ivy to someone who might touch the goat. Ms. Post responded unlike a dog's coat, a goat's coat has lanolin and substances do not adhere as it might for human skin. She said she has never had a situation where someone has touched one of the goats and gotten poison ivy.

Mrs. Spott asked Ms. Post to continue working with the Park and Recreation Board, go out to the site, come up with a program and report back to the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Waks commented if electric fencing is used broad notice must be given to the residents at Bob White Farms and the entire area as well as extremely visible signage. Ms. Post responded she does not electrify the fence if she is with the goats and she would be with them at the beginning of this process. The only time she would electrify the fence is when they are alone.

Mr. Philips followed up by asking if a battery electrifies the fence. Ms. Post responded that she uses a car battery. There is a setup for a solar battery that is used when on site for a very long time, but a car battery usually works fine. When running about 160 feet of fence, the charge from that is minimized.

Mr. Philips commented, "12 volts or less." Ms. Post responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Philips indicated his general support of this idea to take care of an issue in an ecological way.

Mrs. Kenney pointed out while being ecologically sound is about 50% of the reason for doing this; the other 50% of that reason has to do with cost. She noted an estimate provided from the Public Works Department about three years

ago for getting rid of “mile a minute” at Bob White Park amounted to \$100,000 for just one park. There are 21 parks in Upper Merion Township.

Mrs. Kenney asked if there are any other goat breeds that are good foragers. Ms. Post gave a detailed explanation on some of the different types of goats, and indicated she would talk to different people around the country and ask what kind of goats they use for foraging.

Mrs. Kenney indicated she was interested in the cost to buy goats since the township has a place to keep them and, if it is practical, to breed them. Ms. Post responded it is very inexpensive to keep goats if they are going to forage. She purchased her bellwethers (angoras) for \$75 a piece. Boer goats would be more expensive because they have a value as meat; however, she was unable to provide an idea of their cost.

Mr. Jenaway commented that his experience is there is always a root with the vine and asked for confirmation that this would be a maintenance process. Ms. Post responded in the affirmative. She explained the goats will eat all the leaves and when they get down to the bottom of the vine they will be pulling. Every time they are eating they are pulling and disrupting the roots. The natural progression for most plants is if they are eaten at a regular pace they will not propagate as quickly.

Mr. Jenaway followed up by asking if it could take a period of time. Ms. Post responded in the affirmative. She indicated she has had good experience in eradicating “mile-a-minute”; however, pointed out it is important to make sure the goats eat the seeds at the end of the year. The key to success is interrupting the seed process.

Mr. Jenaway asked for clarification about the effect of traffic noise on goats. Ms. Post responded goats do not seem to be bothered by traffic as they adapt to anything that is a constant.

Mr. Joseph McGrory, Township Solicitor, stated when dealing with an animal that may not be supervised plus an electric fence there would always be the potential that something would occur. He asked for clarification about Ms. Post’s insurance to cover events such as one of her goats or the electric fence hurting someone. Ms. Post said she is covered with a \$50,000 general liability policy. She explained she does not have a true rental herd at this point as they are more for educational purposes now. However, if they are going to be utilized in the township, she would obtain an additional amount of insurance.

Mr. McGrory stated the township generally asks to have \$1 million for third party vendors and have the township named as insured. He suggested Ms. Post discuss this with her insurance agent to determine if this policy can be acquired, and to let township staff know if this presents a problem. Ms. Post responded once this proposal moves into the next step she will discuss further; however, she said if it becomes a case leaving the goats overnight, it may be cheaper for the township to purchase its own goats.

Mrs. Spott commented that all the supervisors are in agreement that they would like Ms. Post to continue pursuing a pilot program with the Park and Recreation Board. It is to be determined whether this would be an educational program with the township possibly adding to their goat supply or working something out with an insurance policy with Ms. Post.

Mrs. Spott asked for clarification when the seeding season occurs. Ms. Post responded in the fall.

Ms. Post commented that she first needs to see a site and assess it since it might not be appropriate for her goats. She indicated that she will commit to bringing two goats, assess the site, and then report back to the supervisors about the assessment and then figure out what to do next.

Mrs. Spott asked if the supervisors agreed with that course of action and it was the consensus for Ms. Post to continuing working with the Park and Recreation Board and proceed with the next step.

#### ACCOUNTS PAYABLE & PAYROLL:

##### Board Action:

It was moved by Mr. Waks, seconded by Mrs. Kenney, all voting "Aye" to approve the Accounts Payable for invoices processed from April 12, 2012 to May 3, 2012, in the amount of \$416,464.84 and the Payroll for April 13, 2012 and April 27, 2012 in the amount of \$1,237,645.16 for a total of \$1,654,110.00. None opposed. Motion passed 5-0.

#### ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

##### UPDATE ON BALLIGOMINGO CONSTRUCTION

Mr. Philips asked for an update on the Balligomingo construction. Mr. Wagenmann responded he will obtain the latest status for the Board of Supervisors and have the information posted in the township's e-newsletter.

##### UPPER MERION STORM

Following the recent rain storm, Mr. Jenaway reported there were approximately six rescues of people who drove into standing water and had to be extricated by public safety officers. He reminded citizens how dangerous it is to drive into a submerged roadway.

##### UPCOMING EVENTS IN TOWNSHIP

Mrs. Spott announced a number of Township meetings and events.

##### TOWNSHIP MANAGER SEARCH

After an extensive Township Manager search, Mrs. Spott announced that Mr. David Kraynik currently Township Manager in Cheltenham Township has accepted a conditional offer of employment to serve as Upper Merion Township Manager Designee. The offer will be finalized once standard pre-employment screening is completed, a final contract negotiated and the Board of Supervisors formally votes to appoint Mr. Kraynik.

##### UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP RECEIVES FIRST PLACE AWARD

Mrs. Spott also announced Upper Merion Township was awarded First Place Award in the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Road and Bridge Safety Improvement Contest. The award was presented at the recent 90<sup>th</sup> annual educational conference of the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors (PSATS) in Hershey, Pennsylvania. Upper Merion Township was recognized for the adaptive traffic light system installed along DeKalb Pike (Route 202). Mrs. Spott explained the adaptive traffic signals accommodate changing traffic patterns and ease traffic congestion.

##### ON THE MOVE

Mrs. Spott noted that "On the Move" is one of the township's popular and informative news magazine programs on UMGA-TV, airing at 7:30 p.m. She encouraged residents to take advantage of this worthwhile program and check the programming schedule on the township's website.

##### MR. WAGENMANN RECIPIENT OF AWARDS

Mrs. Spott announced Ron Wagenmann, Township Manager, received the

Chairman's Distinguished Service Award at the recent Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors (PSATS) conference. Mr. Wagenmann was honored for his three decades plus extraordinary service to municipal government. The award is not presented every year, and since it was created, only a handful of people have received the honor.

Mrs. Spott was also pleased to report that the Transportation Management Association recently honored Mr. Wagenmann with the Founder's Award which is awarded to transportation leaders for their contributions in improving transportation and mobility.

#### FARMERS MARKET - THIRD SEASON

Mrs. Spott invited citizens to the Upper Merion Township Farmers Market Saturdays May 19 through November 17 from 9 am to 1 pm.

#### ELECTRONIC RECYCLING EVENT

Mrs. Spott announced the township will be holding an electronic recycling event on June 2, 2012 at Heuser Park from 9 am to 3 pm. Additional information is on the website.

#### ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Board, it was moved by Mr. Philips, seconded by Mrs. Kenney, all voting "Aye" to adjourn the meeting. None opposed. Motion approved 5-0. Adjournment occurred at 8:59 p.m.

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RONALD G. WAGENMANN  
SECRETARY-TREASURER  
TOWNSHIP MANAGER

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Minutes Approved:  
Minutes Entered: