

UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
WORKSHOP MEETING  
FEBRUARY 10, 2011

The Board of Supervisors of Upper Merion Township met for an Informational Workshop Meeting on Thursday, February 10, 2011, in the Township Building. The meeting was called to order at 7:45 p.m., followed by a pledge to the flag.

ROLL CALL:

Supervisors present were: Greg Waks, Joseph Bartlett, Edward McBride, Bill Jenaway, and Erika Spott. Also present were: Ron Wagenmann, Township Manager; Joseph Pizonka, Township Solicitor; Dan Russell, Director, Parks & Recreation; Judy Vicchio, Assistant Township Manager; and Angela Caramenico, Assistant to Township Manager.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS:

Chairman McBride reported on an executive session that dealt with legal issues.

DISCUSSIONS:

PRESENTATION RE: COMMUNITY CENTER – BALLARD\*KING & ASSOCIATES

Mr. Dan Russell, Director, Parks & Recreation, introduced Jim Bogrette and Martin Kimmel, from Kimmel Bogrette and Ken Ballard from Ballard\*King & Associates (on speaker phone) who provided an update of the Upper Merion Township community center feasibility study.

Mr. Martin Kimmel stated that the purpose of the feasibility study was to provide an understanding of the demographics, the market feasibility, the demand for community recreation and to identify within the community center what type of programs, facilities and amenities would benefit the community most. The two sites studied were the Gold's Gym and Heuser Park sites. Questions still to be addressed were the financial feasibility and if a self-sustaining rather than a subsidized facility could be created in Upper Merion Township. The focus of this presentation is to present the findings on demographics and to identify several different options in moving forward.

Mr. Ken Ballard indicated that he is President of Ballard\*King & Associates, a recreational planning firm that is based out of Colorado. He said his firm has done extensive work in Pennsylvania over the years and that their portion of the work is associated with market assessments, assisting architects in coming up with program options and then developing the operations pro-forma's. He discussed the market analysis portion of the study which is the first step in the process.

Mr. Ballard discussed their findings regarding the potential market for the facility. He explained that they have done a secondary service area that is a region just outside of the township boundaries where it might be possible to draw people to the facility on a regular basis for program and service delivery or to utilize the facility out of membership on a daily fee basis. Mr. Ballard noted that this is a reasonably conservative market assessment for a secondary service area and he realizes that pulling people from the far reaches is going to be a lower penetration rate than in the township itself. He presented findings in and outside the township to include about 74,000 people and discussed specific demographic characteristics.

Mr. Ballard discussed opportunities for those who not only in the township but in the secondary service area in terms of existing providers of indoor and outdoor aquatic facilities. The map illustrated the distribution of public and non profit indoor facilities some of which are school facilities and others which are YMCA facilities. They looked at local and area competitors and other leisure time facilities. Some of the comments from the community indicated that there were limited opportunities for an outdoor swimming experience in the township. Mr. Ballard noted that the township is currently highly dependent upon school facilities and there is also limited access since the first priority is to serve school needs.

Mr. Ballard stated that within the immediate surrounding market, the closest public comprehensive community center is the Greater Plymouth Community Center that is some distance away. He pointed out that the population basis, especially in the secondary market, is large enough to support another indoor recreation facility, but has a different market focus. Mr. Ballard said that one of the other items in the study is that from a demographic perspective Upper Merion has a high median household income which will help attract more users. He pointed out that participation rates in these types of facilities go up as income levels go up and certainly it would allow for a more aggressive fee structure and higher level of cost recovery.

Mr. Ballard said when discussions are held about the actual amenities that would be included in the facility, it would be important to note that the school district currently has two indoor competitive pools that are available not only for public use, but also to serve the competitive swim market. He said that finding an appropriate site is going to be critical in terms of the financial performance of the facility. One of the challenges has to do with capital funding and operational support. The ideal site would also have necessary parking and should be master planned to add potential later phases whether they actually occur or not. The facility should serve a broad number of recreation needs from active to more passive uses and have a strong multigenerational and family focus as this will ultimately affect the performance of the facility financially.

Mr. Kimmel discussed Heuser Park and that it was one of the sites considered to be the best when comparing it to the Gold's Gym site. He said it was a place with a lot of activity, had a clubhouse, road infrastructure, parking, future expansion possibilities and is a place well known in the community. Mr. Kimmel said although another analysis can be done at a later time to try to understand the cost benefit of going vertically in a smaller footprint that would incur other costs. He pointed out that another traffic study will have to be done at some point, but there are a lot of good things going on at the park.

Mr. Ballard discussed the project's financial expectations and steps taken to define what amenities should be included. He said that one of the key considerations in starting to move forward was to recognize where beyond the market assessment we need to be going with the project. At the top of the list is that the facility needed to be able to get as close to operational self sufficiency as possible and ideally even contribute to debt service. Based on information received from the project committee from public meetings, staff and other informal surveys, the priorities identified for spaces that should be included in the community center include a gymnasium, indoor/outdoor pool, fitness facilities, performance space, community rooms and an arts and crafts room. Mr. Ballard said that they also looked at what the market opportunities were as result of what some of the needs were identified not only from the market analysis but also in their discussions with staff and others. He said that there is an acute need for gymnasium space to support existing township programs, classroom multipurpose space for recreation programming and also an outdoor pool with a strong leisure orientation to draw more users to the pool.

Mr. Ballard stated that recognizing that operational self sufficiency is one of the primary goals, it is important to realize that the decisions that are made in terms of including certain amenities in a facility have a direct relationship to its ability to produce revenue. His slide presentation offered some comparisons of different options. While some of the listed options are high revenue producing, some of them also have high cost associated with them as well. Mr. Ballard

pointed out that self-sufficiency requires the high revenue producers to have medium or low expenses to operate. He said that in going through the process of determining what should be included in the facility it is important to note that not only the choice of amenities but also their sizing has a direct relationship in having the facility meet its financial expectations.

Mr. Ballard used another slide to illustrate the different model facilities and how they believe they are most likely to fit and succeed. The community based study that includes the “wish list” when translated into building square footage would be about 91,000 square feet and cost between \$25 - \$26 million to build and would require an operational subsidy of \$200,000 to \$300,000 per year. While not recommended, this model includes such items as double gymnasiums dividable into four gymnasiums, indoor walking and jogging track, indoor competitive and leisure pool, an outdoor leisure pool, party rooms, weight and cardio equipment area, group exercise, an actual theater with seating, community room with kitchen, teen area, arts and craft, day care drop-in for people using the facility, classrooms and support space.

Mr. Ballard next discussed the other models that have a high cost recovery with a lower capital cost. One option would be more in the range of 54,000 square feet as compared to 91,000 square feet and would cost between \$12 million to \$13 million to build as opposed to \$18 million, \$20 million or \$23 million. This model would have an operational shortfall of minus \$50,000 to plus \$150,000. Mr. Ballard said in comparison to the original list of those items the double gym is still a key component to retain since it meets the critical needs of the facility. It thrives on a lot of activity, usage and membership. With regard to the indoor walking and jogging track, one of the key components is that it is cross generational so it will drive older people there. There would still be an aquatics component, but since the township is now leasing the Gold's Gym site and already has competitive pools in the market, we would be looking at an indoor leisure pool, not a competitive pool. Mr. Ballard noted that a leisure aquatics facility drives a huge amount of revenue by having groups come and use it on different days of the week and weekend. There would still be party rooms and a robust weight/cardio equipment area for group exercise. Ample fitness facilities are required to drive membership. By having community rooms and multi-purpose community rooms, arts and craft and the teen area can be eliminated. Mr. Ballard pointed out that Plymouth Meeting has many dedicated spaces that do not generate a lot of revenue since it costs a lot to keep in operation.

Mr. Ballard discussed the “non compete” model which basically indicates that there are other providers in the marketplace, particularly in the fitness area and some people say we do not want to compete with the tax paying organizations. He pointed out; however, that community based fitness facilities fill a need that other fitness clubs/centers do not. Some members may not be

comfortable at an exclusive professional center whereas they could come to a community center and exercise so they do not work against each other.

Mr. Ballard discussed some sustainable cost recovery models and noted the success of the 62,000 square foot Lower Paxton Township “Friendship Center.” He pointed out that the mandate on this center from the very beginning was very much like Upper Merion and had to be 100% self sufficient. Initially they wanted to have 100% of the debt service covered by revenues generated by the facility. While Ballard & Associates could not get it to that point they indicated that they could get it to the point where it would cover its operating costs and would be able to cover a portion of the debt service. Lower Paxton has been very successful over the years in not only their costs but also reaching anywhere from \$100,000 to \$200,000 towards debt service. It has a large fitness area, classroom areas, leisure pool and a smaller competitive pool all designed to make the facility cost recovery wise along with an aggressive fee structure.

Mr. Wagenmann asked for clarification about the total debt service on this center from a proportional standpoint. Mr. Ballard responded that he is not positive, but it was his recollection that the township was having to total about \$100,000 to \$150,000 in debt service annually out of about a \$400,000 annual number.

Mr. Wagenmann asked the total cost of the facility. Mr. Ballard responded that he does not know “off the top of his head,” and would have to look up the actual capital costs.

Mr. Kimmel said the final report would have all that detail.

Mr. Waks questioned Mr. Ballard’s reference to “aggressive fee structure” and asked him to be more specific. Mr. Ballard responded that they made sure that they were aggressive from the beginning and were setting rates that were equal to what the existing rates were in the market for some other private facilities and non profits. He said that some of the difficulties in cost recovery can be the feeling that a public facility has to have rates that are potentially lower than some of the other surrounding providers. At the urging of Ballard & Associates the decision was made to be right in line and almost equal to most of the other providers in order to generate enough revenue to meet the financial goals. They could not afford to under price the facility simply because it was a public provider.

Mr. Kimmel commented that as a community facility there are a lot of non membership based activities that could be held there; community functions that might be completely free or programs that might be similar to the Upper Merion Park and Recreation Department’s fee for program.

Mr. Ballard said there are many ways to gain access without having a membership. He pointed out that Lower Paxton still provides basic services that were not all 100% fee driven. This would have to be built into the operational model.

Mr. Kimmel discussed the 49,000 square foot Bethlehem Township Community Center since it was located in an existing park that has an athletic field, picnic pavilion, indoor/outdoor pool, double gymnasium and many of the components that have been previously mentioned. It was not designed to have 100% cost recovery and they were willing to subsidize 25-30% of the operation.

Mr. Waks asked how Bethlehem Township's demographics compare to Upper Merion. Mr. Ballard responded that it has been such a long time since they did that he could not say. It was his recollection that their median age probably was about the same or lower and that their median income was definitely lower, but trending higher.

Mr. Jenaway asked where Bethlehem Township is located in relation to the City of Bethlehem. Mr. Kimmel responded that it is directly east of the City of Bethlehem and is probably halfway between the City of Bethlehem and the City of Easton.

Mr. Kimmel said another facility that was designed to operate through its own membership within a private community is Lake Naomi Timber Trails. He said it is the best performing community from a real estate perspective of all the Pocono communities for many reasons one of which is that it has a 17-acre park that was built as part of this particular project. Mr. Kimmel discussed some of the available community and recreational amenities.

Of more recent note, Mr. Kimmel discussed the recent groundbreaking for Haverford's new community recreation and environmental education center. The operation will be subsidized and some of the capital funding came from the real estate deal for the Haverford Reserve site. Key elements include a double gymnasium, walking track, indoor space with fantastic views, ball fields, public meeting space and a lot of open space that contribute to the site's flexibility.

Mr. Kimmel discussed their three-pronged feasibility study for Ridley Township which is interesting since it included the library.

Mr. Kimmel commented on Lower Southampton Township's community recreation facility. Amenities include senior center, multi-purpose area, double gymnasium, large fitness and aerobics center all on one level.

Mr. Kimmel asked for guidance in what direction they should go from here. He said while a decision is not necessary at this meeting the key to the successful cost recovery model is to establish an acceptable range of tolerance between a deficit of a certain amount. After that is determined the consultants can help to right size the programmatic needs necessary for success in achieving the township's goals. Mr. Kimmel pointed out that there must not be too much of a space, function and staff that it will not produce any revenue and so little that it does not serve the community needs. He noted that one of the key elements at risk for the chopping block is cardio fitness; however, it is really a driver and serves the wellness needs of a wide range of ages. Mr. Kimmel said that they are not recommending a competitive indoor pool on the site since there are two others in the township. He also noted that often there are separate rates for resident members of the township, non resident members, and corporate residents.

Mr. Kimmel outlined the next steps once the approval is given to keep moving. He said it would then be necessary to decide on one of the operational performers and he assumes it would be one of the high cost recovery models. Ballard\*King would then complete the full operational analysis including business planning, line item costs for everything from staffing to utilities to everything else that is needed to operate the facility. Revenue projections based on a fee schedule will be written out. A complete detailed operations plan will include projections on numbers of passes sold, daily admissions, dollars coming from programs and services based on the elements being included in the building.

Mr. Kimmel indicated that simultaneous to Ballard\*King doing that his firm would provide a concept for how it would actually fit on the park site. If the township decides to go forward with the project real floor plans could be added to the scope.

Mr. Jenaway asked if there was any consideration about the current investment or expense that the township makes in park and recreation and how that relates to an operational subsidy. Mr. Kimmel responded that what they are indicating in terms of general numbers are new expenses and new revenues not factoring anything in from existing costs of operation.

Mr. Jenaway stated that the subcommittee for the community center which he chaired identified possible five sites. He questioned if it is correct that the consultants looked at two sites and went immediately to Heuser. Mr. Kimmel responded that they did not go to Heuser immediately. They gave a strong look at the Gold's Gym site in terms of potential utilization. He said they were only directed to look at those two sites initially and they did ultimately determine that Heuser was a better site. Mr. Kimmel added that he still believes long term it is the best site in terms of enabling other recreation amenities. He said that in a

perfect world a recreation facility would have outdoor fields and park areas. In Heuser's case it works very well in terms of increasing utilization of the park and the facility.

Mr. Jenaway followed up by saying that there are long term plans for additional fields [at Heuser]. He asked if this dynamic or the solar field were considered in the discussions about the proposed facility. Mr. Wagenmann responded that he does not believe it impacts the solar field; however, as Mr. Jenaway stated it would impact the turf areas and the roadway projections would also have to be taken into account.

Dan Russell commented that two of those fields would be eliminated and leave the township with only two practice areas.

Mr. Jenaway stated that the Upper Merion Area School District data indicates that there will be 500 more children here in the next couple of years. He took issue with the data in the report.

Mr. Jenaway commented that he would like to have seen some kind of public/private relationship option. He said there are a significant number of vacant properties in Upper Merion Township and hopefully one of those existing buildings could have been identified so as to save the cost of construction.

Mr. Jenaway said he thought there would have been some option with Gold's Gym to incorporate some type of community center.

Mr. Ballard responded to the population estimates. He noted that on page 6 of their report it is indicated that the overall population basis is not going to go up significantly but that there will be an 11% increase in school age population for 5-17 which is higher than the national percentage. Mr. Ballard said that it coincides with what the school district is indicating that Upper Merion will be growing in school age population even though overall population numbers are not expected to jump up substantially.

With regard to other options, Mr. Ballard stated that other options were "kind of passed over", but that in the back of the report they identified general options. They indicated that there were three ways the township could go with this:

- the township would lease property to a private or non profit group to build and operate a facility – the pros and cons were noted.
- the township would actually build a facility and have it contract operated – the pros and cons were noted.
- the traditional model where the township builds and operates the facility.



Mr. Kimmel addressed the option of buying an existing facility and renovating or expanding. He said that they have been involved in several studies where that was the stated goal. With regard to the Gold's Gym site Mr. Kimmel said they did not want to spend a lot of time discussing this. He explained that their analysis of that property was that because of the grades it has a very small buildable area. With the outdoor pool there is not physically enough room to expand the Gold's Gym building to get the desired revenue potential.

Mr. Kimmel discussed the existing bubble gum factory on the main street in the center of Haverford. He said the original study was how they could renovate or expand there; however, it was found to be more expensive to renovate those facilities than it was to tear it down and rebuild. The YMCA wanted to put a facility in that same location and after more money was spent they decided if they are going to utilize the site they are just going to tear it down. Mr. Kimmel noted that the two overwhelming drivers in community recreation facilities are gymnasium and aquatics. Both are high volume and large footprint spaces. You have to ask is the building suitable for that. Very few industrial buildings have enough clear height to properly serve as gymnasium space as 27 foot minimum height is required. From the aquatic standpoint the key to having long term success with is the building envelope. It is a high humidity space and there are a lot of issues with moisture control and air quality control. For this reason you almost always have to build an aquatic space from the start. If it started out being something else it is cheaper to tear it down than it is to retrofit it.

Mr. Jenaway asked if it makes sense to remain decentralized by using multiple locations for separate tasks rather than consolidating everything into one building. Mr. Ballard responded that this question is asked a lot and it is probably the least effective utilization of resources within a governmental unit. He said it is extremely expensive to provide services that way and inconvenient from a user perspective and he would highly recommend that the township not do that.

Mr. Kimmel commented that Ridley Township is currently spread in five different facilities and is abandoning that exact model. From a cost recovery standpoint in terms of fees it is difficult to almost impossible to generate revenue in a facility that is scattered.

Mr. McBride asked about the examples provided from other townships and if the centers are staffed by employees that basically have the same wages, hours and working conditions as the rest of the township or if they hire 1099 employees.

Mr. Ballard responded that all these facilities have core full time staff who are township employees who are getting the same rates of pay and benefits as other township employees. He said there is a heavy emphasis on part time staff

for many operations and many instructors are contract providers either getting paid on a per class basis or taking a percentage of the revenue that is generated for the class. Generally anybody that is outside of a natural instructor or program provider is either a straight hourly part time or full time person.

Mr. Waks asked Mr. Russell if he currently has a fair number of contractors who work for themselves but provide services for the township. Mr. Russell responded in the affirmative. He said the bulk of his staff is contracted employees. Mr. Wagenmann responded that there are only two full time employees in the Park and Recreation Department.

Mr. McBride asked if someone such as a life guard would be hired outside of the township's benefits. Mr. Kimmel responded in the affirmative. He said that lifeguards are usually paid on an hourly basis or contracted from an outside agency. There would probably not be individual guards on a contract basis.

Mr. McBride asked if there is a formula of Full Time Employees (FTE's) to square footage. Mr. Kimmel responded that it is not based upon square footage because it depends on what types of amenities there are in terms of numbers of full time staff. The other key thing is whether all the park and recreation staff would go to the facility itself which lowers the cost because utilization of existing staff would assist with some of the basics of operation. It also depends upon how much staff there are on the programmatic end in terms of what will be required and the next step in this process will identify all of this. The consultant will identify how many full-time staff are needed, their pay rate, how many part time staff, including how many lifeguards would be needed. All these details will be itemized during the next phase.

Mr. McBride asked if his understanding is correct that the numbers used on the various models do not include the cost of the land which the township already owns. Mr. Kimmel responded in the affirmative.

Mr. McBride asked that the supervisors provide their feedback to the Township Manager who will collate the comments and report back at the next meeting.

## BOARD POLICIES

### Appointments to Boards, Commissions & Authorities

Judy Vicchio, Assistant Township Manager, provided an overview of the revisions and there were suggestions made in this process. She noted that one

question that came up recently was about a citizen serving on more than one citizen board.

Mr. Waks asked if there is still an ad hoc open space committee. Mr. Wagenmann responded that this policy does not apply to ad hoc committees because they have a short time frame associated with them. Service on the long established boards, commissions and committees is limited to one citizen board at any given time.

Mr. Waks asked about the Tricentennial Committee. Mr. Wagenmann responded that it is an ad hoc committee that will sunset in 2013.

Ms. Vicchio noted revisions in the section that addresses the discussions regarding appointments to citizen boards and the interview process conducted by the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors and the liaison. If an agreement is not reached in the interview process the discussion will take place at a business meeting of the Board concerning the consideration of the applicant.

Mr. McBride said he does not want to eliminate the other supervisors from sitting in on the interview process. While the Chairman and liaison would conduct the interview decisions would not be made at that point. If the other three supervisors want to witness the interview that would be acceptable and then the Chairman and liaison would bring the recommendations to the full Board of Supervisors where a discussion could be held if necessary.

Mr. McBride asked that a specific reference on line 3 to "Board meetings" be changed to "Citizen Board meetings."

Mr. Waks asked what happens if the Chairman is the liaison. This particular comment was not addressed during the discussion.

Mrs. Spott commented that it was her understanding that the Chairman and the liaison will conduct the interview. She agrees that all supervisors are welcome to attend as well. The Chairman and the liaison will make a non binding recommendation and although the appointments will only be made by the full voting Board she is not sure that this is reflected in the language of the draft board policy.

Mr. Wagenmann commented that the wording should indicate that all Board members would be invited; however, if more than a quorum attend than no discussions or deliberations will take place.

### Code of Ethics

Ms. Vicchio said that several changes were suggested to clarify definitions and correct wording.

Mr. McBride noted that under item 1, it indicates that the value of the gift must not be lavish in nature nor construed as a bribery. He had a concern that the word “lavish” may be interpreted in different ways.

A discussion ensued wherein it was decided that the value of the gift should be limited to an advertising novelty and the word “lavish” should be replaced with the word “nominal.” Mr. Wagenmann added that the “gift” would have to be given without the intent to try to influence the decision.

It was noted that public employees and elected officials are also bound by state law and the question was raised as to the need for a Board policy. The point was made that it is important for public employees to have a township code of conduct since it can be more restrictive. During the discussion Mr. Wagenmann stated that the Code of Ethics applies to all employees, but all employees do not have to file a disclosure statement. Mrs. Spott pointed out that the application of the law is not dependent on whether you file.

### Compensation for Attending the Annual State/County Conventions

No changes were made.

### Board of Supervisor Notification of Projects, Plans, Permits, Activities and Events

No changes were made.

### Vehicle & Fleet Policy/Use of Township-Owned/Leased Vehicles

Ms. Vicchio stated this policy has been renamed and she outlined the revisions. The policy defines township vehicles and equipment for non emergency and personal use and also includes rental vehicles while traveling. With the approval of the township manager and department head vehicles will be assigned as may be required in a manner that encourages the share in assignment and carpooling. The policy deals with who uses vehicles, when, where, and for what reason. It also incorporates language from the IRS code requiring employees to pay a certain amount for the reimbursement rate.

A discussion ensued questioning why the drug and alcohol testing reference was removed. Mr. Wagenmann explained that those who operate the vehicles and equipment of the township are subject to random drug and alcohol testing and this is covered in the personnel manual. Management staff and police officers are also included in the random drug and alcohol testing.

Ms. Vicchio discussed the section under accident and procedures and stated while current practice calls for the submission of an incident report for all accidents and incidents, a paragraph was added to place this language in the policy.

Mr. McBride requested that line 4 under that paragraph be changed to reflect that if an accident occurs a test will be conducted. He said as a rule if someone has a vehicle accident, they should be drug and alcohol tested.

Mrs. Spott questioned the deletion of the requirement that employees with a take home vehicle assure that the vehicle is parked in a proper and safe place.

Mr. McBride asked that this requirement be put back in.

Mrs. Spott asked if employees have to pay for any driving violations. Mr. Wagenmann responded in the affirmative and said they also have to report it.

Mrs. Spott asked if that was reflected in the policy. Ms. Vicchio responded in the negative.

Mr. Jenaway asked who performs the annual motor vehicle record checks. Mr. Wagenmann responded that there is an annual record check that is now done through the State Police.

With regard to personal use of a take-home vehicle, Mr. Jenaway took issue with the 25 mile radius philosophy that mirrors Lower Merion's policy. He believes that is a long way to commute every day. Mr. Jenaway asked about reimbursement for personal usage. Mr. Wagenmann responded that there is a formula that is used under the IRS regulations and a 1099 is issued with an assigned value and the employee pays taxes on that. Mr. Wagenmann added that the township has pulled back on the numbers of employees who can take their cars home and now there are just a handful of employees who do so.

Mr. McBride asked Ms. Vicchio to update the documents and include them on the agenda for next week.

### REVIEW RESOLUTION 2011-8 RE: RECORDS RETENTION

Ms. Vicchio stated that the Pennsylvania Municipal Records Manual was changed in July 2009 as a result of the Right to Know law to include the audio and video tapes. The Municipal Records Manual has been adopted in its entirety to cover the requirement and accordingly audio tapes will be retained for 90 days after the approval of the minutes and the video tapes will be retained for one year.

Mr. McBride asked about the archives. Mr. Wagenmann responded they will be retained as recommended by the Open Records Office because of matters of litigation.

### LENDING FIRE TRUCK TO CENTRAL MONTGOMERY TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. Wagenmann stated that the township received a request from the Central Montco Technical High School for a fire truck that can be used as an instructional tool. In their curriculum they have a concentrated area of fire fighter training that leads to a Commonwealth of PA certification in both exterior (FF I) and interior (FF II) firefighting. The Swedesburg Fire Company has a truck that has been replaced and it will be leased to the tech school for \$1 with the insurance certificate indicating that they will have it properly insured. It will ultimately be returned to Upper Merion Township for final disposition.

Mr. Wagenmann pointed out that this could lead to additional volunteers who would be available immediately for our volunteer fire companies.

Mr. Jenaway pointed that the township would need a "hold harmless" as well as the insurance. Mr. Wagenmann responded that the Township Solicitor will prepare the paperwork naming the township as additional insured with a "hold harmless" statement. Once the document is finalized it will come back to the Board of Supervisors for a vote.

### UPPER MERION CULTURAL FESTIVAL

Mr. Dan Russell, Director, Park and Recreation, stated that the idea for a cultural festival came about as a result of an overall consensus of a community group indicating a desire of residents to have more cultural events and more cultural awareness. He informed the group about a successful Diversity Day activity that was incorporated with the Adventure Day Camp Program. The children shared about their backgrounds and culture and that developed into an idea of having a day in Upper Merion in one of our parks in which residents could come and showcase their cultural history.

Mr. McBride commented that it is a great concept and asked how much staff time would be required for the event. Mr. Russell responded that this endeavor would be similar to the Community Fair with a cost somewhere between \$3,000 to \$4,000. It would include a good amount of staff time on the day itself and also preparing and organizing the day.

Mr. McBride asked if the \$3-4,000 is inclusive of the staff. Mr. Russell responded in the affirmative. He said it would involve the activities, the logistics, the entertainment, and things of that nature.

Mr. McBride asked if that is something that could be sold to PECO as a sponsor. Mr. Russell said that it could.

Mr. Waks said that his thought was that we would sell sponsors to offset the cost and there are residents who are interested in giving of their time.

Mr. McBride asked if this would be scheduled on the day of the Community Fair or as a stand alone.

Mr. Waks said his concern was that there was so much going on the day of the Community Fair that it would be better as a stand alone. He pointed out that this would be another source of relatively inexpensive or free entertainment for the residents of the community as well as an educational experience when people are looking for low cost entertainment.

Mr. McBride commented that the Community Fair is very well attended. He pointed that there is a part of the field away from where all the tables are that could be utilized for this event and it would get out the message out about diversity to more people.

Mr. Russell said that as a result of a staff meeting he had about this event it was agreed that this be done initially as part of the Community Fair and if it succeeds to do it as a stand alone operation next spring.

Mrs. Spott agreed that this would be the right thing to do. With her experience with the Farmers Market she found that reaching out to the ECDC for assistance was beneficial as there is a lot of spirited engagement in that group.

Mr. McBride asked if there are any sponsorships for the Community Fair. Mr. Russell responded in the negative.

Mr. McBride said that the township could absorb any cost for this year and if it is successful than do a stand along next year.

Mr. Russell said if the diversity event were done as part of the Community Fair, the cost would be minimal. As a stand alone operation it would cost significantly more. Mr. Russell also had the idea of possibly changing the name of the Community Fair to Community Fair and Cultural Event or something along those lines.

Mr. McBride asked if this required any official action. Mr. Wagenmann responded that a resolution will be prepared for adoption by the Board of Supervisors.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

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RONALD G. WAGENMANN  
SECRETARY-TREASURER/  
TOWNSHIP MANAGER

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Minutes Approved:

Minute Entered:

NOTE: The entire proceedings of the business transacted at this Informational Meeting were full recorded on audio tape, and all documents submitted in connection thereto are on file and available for public inspection. This is not a verbatim account of the meeting, as the tape is the official record and is available for that purpose.