

UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
JOINT MEETING  
APRIL 12, 2018

The Board of Supervisors of Upper Merion Township met for Joint Meetings on Thursday, April 12, 2018, in the Board Room, in the Township Building in King of Prussia. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m., followed by a pledge to the flag.

DISCUSSIONS:

SHADE TREE AND BEAUTIFICATION COMMISSION

ROLL CALL:

Supervisors present were: Bill Jenaway, Greg Waks, Greg Philips, and Carole Kenney. Also present were: Dave Kraynik, Township Manager; Sally Slook, Assistant Township Manager; Barbara (Barley) Van Clief, Chairperson; Susan Ridgeway, Vice Chairperson; Bob Dempsey. Supervisor Erika Spott was absent.

Ms. Barbara Van Clief discussed the activities of the Shade Tree Commission since the last joint meeting. She reported on the emerald ash borer issue at Heuser Park and indicated the removal of the ash trees was delayed because of weather issues but will probably begin the end of May or beginning of June. The ash trees are being removed for safety reasons. It will take about one month to remove the trees after which the trail will reopen.

Once the ash trees are removed the task of reforestation will commence. Ms. Van Clief discussed the grants that have been received to date as well as other grant opportunities that will be pursued for the reforestation effort.

The Shade Tree Commission has worked together with the Parks and Recreation Department on signage for the Heuser Park so that people who are using the park will understand the reason for the trail closure and actions being taken with regard to the emerald ash borer.

Ms. Van Clief provided details on the planting of 80 trees scheduled for Bob White Park on Earth Day. The trees were funded by the Rotary Club, District 7450 and they are providing the volunteers as well.

The Shade Tree Commission, under the guidance of Ann Marchino, reviewed the tree ordinance line by line and made recommendations to the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Jenaway said he received information last week about a resident cutting down several large trees as a way to manage leaf clean up in the fall. He indicated education is needed on the value of trees not only for aesthetic purposes but also for stormwater management.

Ms. Van Clief indicated as part of plan reviews which are done at every meeting they are concerned about some trees at Caley Elementary School and would want to see those trees kept intact. Mr. Jenaway suggested bringing this to the attention of the school board.

Mr. Philips asked about the status of the ordinance review. Ms. Van Clief responded the Shade Tree Commission recommendations were sent to the township planner and she offered to send the recommendations to the Board of Supervisors.

Ms. Van Clief said the Shade Tree Commission will be evaluating properties for this year's beautification awards. Residents can nominate a beautiful front or back yard.

The Shade Tree Commission has been working with Don Herbert, UMGA-TV, about setting up a series of videos about trees. Ms. Van Clief noted the success of the mulch video on the website and also reported on a volunteer tree maintenance day in Executive Estates Park in October during which they cultivated, loosened soil under the trees, watered, mulched properly and provided deer protection for those trees.

Other Shade Tree Commission activities include offering residential trees for purchase in the fall of 2017, providing guidance about the Christmas tree planted at the Township Building Park, partnering with the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources in hosting a timber utilization workshop for all of eastern Pennsylvania, held a workshop last fall about the emerald ash borer, and trained a troop of girl scouts on the care and management of young trees.

At the request of Mrs. Kenney, Ms. Van Clief discussed the ash trees of great value (not at Heuser) in another park that are being treated with chemicals.

Ms. Van Clief mentioned at the Earth Day celebration information will be provided about a new invasive pest, the spotted lanternfly.

Mrs. Kenney suggested publicizing with photos on what to look for and how to get rid of this new pest.

Mr. Jenaway commented about the extensive number of challenges during the storms earlier this year with downed trees on power lines which contributed to all the power outages. He advised residents with trees adjacent to

and encroaching on their power lines to call Peco for their trimming service.

## FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES BOARD

### ROLL CALL:

Supervisors present were: Greg Waks, Greg Philips, Bill Jenaway, and Carole Kenney. Also present were: Dave Kraynik, Township Manager; Sally Slook, Assistant Township Manager; Tom Nolan, Director, Public Safety; Bill Daywalt, Deputy Fire Marshal; Dennis Orangers, Fire Chief Swedeland; Jim Gallagher, Fire Chief, King of Prussia; Charles Rossi; William Gittins, Citizen Representative. Supervisor Erika Spott was absent.

Chief Dennis Orangers, Swedeland Fire Company, discussed Swedeland's activities and accomplishments as follows:

- There were 268 emergencies for 2017
- Over 1,000 hours of training – some in-house training, but most of the training is formalized training through the state and curriculum
- Received second place fire prevention award from the state for this division
- Awarded a state grant through the Fire Commissioner's office for \$15,000 which will help with the purchase of thermal imaging cameras to be placed on their apparatus
- Awarded a Pennsylvania Law Enforcement grant for \$10,000 that will go toward the purchase of a battery operated Hurst combination rescue tool for their squad
- Participated in numerous fire prevention and community events, hosted an open house, hosted a second annual car show in conjunction with Fast Track Motor Sports who partnered with them; donations were made to an MS Fund
- Participated in Operation Backpack with donations going toward children's school supplies.
- Hosted Third Annual Race for a Reason with Swedesburg Fire Company with donations to an MS Fund.
- Hosted Santa Breakfast for the community and brought Santa around to visit the community in late December.
- Instituted a stipend program for both Swedeland and Swedesburg which covers them for at least one apparatus with manpower for the hours of 10 p.m. until 6 a.m. This has been very successful in addressing some of their coverage concerns.

Some of their goals for this year:

- Participate in numerous fire prevention activities
- Maintain training standards and requirements

- Continue to apply for state grants
- Continue open houses
- Enhance recruitment and retention for the volunteers

Chief Jim Gallagher, King of Prussia Fire Company, reported as follows:

- There are 27 active fire fighters on crew status with 15 support personnel.
- They are supported by two live-in firefighters.
- Participated last year with over 1,500 hours of various activities throughout the community with fire prevention education and other types of services.
- Over 3,000 training hours at various different levels.

Chief Gallagher discussed two incidents that occurred last year to show the risk level associated with emergency services.

- Placed a new pumper in service.
- Received Fire Prevention Education Award from the Firefighters Association State of Pennsylvania
- Continued participation in regional Technical Rescue Task Force comprised of Upper Merion, Lower Merion and Norristown

Chief Gallagher mentioned Arkema, Inc. is one of the employers allowing an employee to respond with the King of Prussia Fire Company on emergency calls

- Mobile data terminals were upgraded and additional portable radios purchased.
- New procedure implemented through Montgomery County Fire Chiefs Association for Rapid Intervention Teams.
- County working on new program to announce levels of staffing on an apparatus and determine which department is the next closest resource.
- SAFER grant will be used for the stipend program
- Additional funding revenues include a cell tower site at Beidler Road on their property, billboard on their property at Allendale Road along the turnpike, and their annual fund drive. They no longer have a banquet hall; however, the property is being converted to a district court and the county will be providing rent. It was noted a mortgage was taken out to renovate for the district court.

Mrs. Kenney asked if businesses as a whole are responding more generously to support the fund drives. Chief Gallagher responded in the negative. He mentioned Arkema helps them not only by providing an employee to respond to fire calls, but 65-85 employees participated in 9/11 runs in September.

Chief Gallagher stated the chiefs have met and are forming a committee

to work on forming a regional training program involving Upper Merion, Bridgeport and Norristown.

Chief Gallagher discussed the potential SEPTA rail impact from an operational standpoint, particularly the Allendale Road station and the need to prepare for any decisions which may affect the department.

Chief Gallagher mentioned the planned hiring of a paid Fire Chief and paid firefighters in 2018.

Mr. Philips asked for clarification about the national certification course for ladder operations. Chief Orangers responded they are in the process of setting that up. He said they would probably incorporate that into the regionalization training Chief Gallagher mentioned because of a few different concerns (1) time constraints to hold that class and (2) having more members participate would be better.

Mr. Philips asked if they self-certify. Chief Orangers responded certification is done through the state. He said state instructors come in and actually institute certification and then it actually becomes a national certification.

Mr. Philips asked what is being done to enhance recruitment and retention. Chief Orangers responded the state has provided funds for this purpose and is being utilized for advertisements. He also noted UMGA-TV publicizes and as well as reaching out at fire company events. Chief Gallagher said since 1995 they have tried almost everything; however, the world has changed and the standards that are required now are very time consuming. He mentioned the pension program and incentives have been a help.

Mr. Jenaway commented Chief Gallagher has a statement that he uses about the types of people that are typically seen as volunteers – they are municipally employed, self-employed or unemployed. Because of the low unemployment rate, employed people are not always available and this detracts from what used to be their daytime staffing ability.

Mr. Jenaway stated at the end of the year a reorganization announcement was made about the creation of a Public Safety Department. He said Police Chief Tom Nolan has taken on the role as the Director of the Department of Public Safety. This new department integrates emergency management, fire companies and the EMS operations into a comprehensive department of public safety.

Mr. Jenaway mentioned the inordinate number of mulch fires that occurred today due to carelessly discarded cigarette butts along the roadways creating a serious hazard. Mr. Jenaway cautioned smokers to utilize their ashtrays and watch where they discard smoking materials. He also mentioned if mulch has

been recently planted to make sure it is raked and not anywhere where it will be able to spontaneously combust.

### POLICE CITIZEN ADVISORY BOARD

Supervisors present were: Greg Philips, Bill Jenaway, Greg Waks, and Carole Kenney. Also present were: Dave Kraynik, Township Manager; Sally Slook, Assistant Township Manager; Tom Nolan, Chief of Police; Jennifer Schauble, Chairperson; Judie Nuskey, Vice Chairperson; Jeff McCabe; Howard Hoffman, Media Advisory Board. Supervisor Erika Spott was absent.

Jennifer Schauble, Chairperson, discussed the creation of the Community Oriented Policing Unit led by Lt. Jeff Mauer which has been very successful so far.

Ms. Schauble indicated in January 2018 Police Chief Tom Nolan was appointed as the new Director of Public Safety. She indicated in these first few months he has been overseeing the transition to a singular unified Department of Public Safety. The new department was proposed after the 2016 Fire Services Strategic Implementation Plan suggested the clear need, especially with the expansion of the township, for coordination and oversight of all fire and rescue services within the township. The new department encompasses the divisions of police, fire, ambulance and emergency management. The merger of these divisions will allow for shared services and resources to effectively coordinate emergency protection within the community. Preliminary interviews for the Fire and EMS Chief position are well underway and the job posting for the Firefighter and EMT position went out this week.

The Police Officer's written examination will be held on Saturday, April 21<sup>st</sup>; applications were due by April 7<sup>th</sup>. A large turnout is anticipated. The written test will be conducted first, followed by the physical agility test, oral interview board, background checks and finally command staff interviews.

Director of Public Safety and Police Chief Tom Nolan stated there were 204 applicants for the police officer's written examination. He said this was in large part due to the efforts of their recruitment committee traveling to three different states and was highly visible on social media and at job fairs. It was noted the number of applicants is high compared to what most departments are receiving. Chief Nolan mentioned applicants are allowed to come to the department without Act 120 training which is a benefit because it adds to the department's diversity and attracts more candidates.

Mr. Philips stated having a department of public safety will be a great benefit to the township with the fire and rescue services and police under one leadership umbrella.

Chief Nolan mentioned the police department conducts a survey at the police officer test to find out how the candidates heard about the application process and whether it was because of the in person recruiting events. It was noted applications were distributed at the Race for Peace event at the King of Prussia Mall two weeks ago. .

Mrs. Kenney asked how many positions are currently open. Chief Nolan responded there are two scheduled for 2019 with a possibility of a third if there is a pending retirement.

Mr. Waks asked about the feedback from the Race for Peace. Chief Nolan responded he received great feedback and a great turnout. He said there were five different police departments participating in the event during which they enjoyed having conversations in a very relaxed atmosphere as opposed to during a critical incident.

Mr. Philips mentioned Central Montgomery County Vocational Technical School has implemented a public safety course and asked if they were considered for potential recruiting for firefighters or police. Chief Nolan responded the vocational technical level would not meet the age guidelines.

Mr. Jenaway asked about the value of social media for the department's operations. Chief Nolan responded social media has been helpful in disseminating a lot of information. He noted there is the other side of social media where information sometimes goes off track with some of the postings and there is a need to make sure that the information that comes back is accurate.

Mr. Philips asked if consideration has been given to any type of Police Explorers program. Chief Nolan responded it has helped Norristown in the past and is one of the things his department has looked at doing.

Mr. Philips asked about the Cop Camp. Chief Nolan responded the Cop Camp is very popular and has received a great response for a number of years and holds the hope of inspiring young people to consider law enforcement as a career.

Mr. Philips asked if anyone is currently enrolled in the FBI courses. Chief Nolan responded there is someone on the list for the FBI National Academy but that comes around about every five years.

Mrs. Kenney asked if there are any prospects for a fire camp for young people. Chief Nolan responded the fire service used to have their own camp but was not getting the needed response; last year they decided to incorporate with the cop camp.

## MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS ADVISORY BOARD

### ROLL CALL:

Supervisors present were: Greg Philips, Bill Jenaway, Greg Waks, and Carole Kenney. Also present were: David Kraynik, Township Manager, Sally Slook, Assistant Township Manager; Allison Pimm, Chief Public Information Officer; Don Herbert, TV Services Coordinator; Howard Hoffman, Chairperson; H. David Rassbach, Vice Chairperson; Bill Carroll, James Kravitz. Supervisor Erika Spott was absent.

Mr. Howard Hoffman, Chairperson, offered introductory remarks and complimented the efforts of Public Information Officer, Allison Pimm. He indicated the new website has come online and is easier to navigate. All the publications and newsletters have new looks and the TV Channel continues to win awards. Mr. Hoffman indicated the Media Communications Advisory Board assisted the Community Center Advisory Board in deciding the type of sign for the front of the facility. It was determined an LED sign was not feasible since the amount of time the vehicles would actually be able to see the sign was limited and a static sign was selected.

James Kravitz stated from 2016 to 2017 the amount received from Comcast was up an additional \$17,869 or 4 ½% and Verizon was down \$6,574 which results in an overall increase of \$11,295 for a total of \$681,346 in 2017. The franchise agreement with Verizon is due shortly and will be one of their initiatives for 2018.

Allison Pimm, Chief Public Information Officer, discussed the hiring of a Communications Coordinator who was tasked with a first goal to grow the township's social media standing, graphics and PSA's to keep residents informed. She discussed the township's use of social media which has expanded significantly with a variety of social media channels including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and a new Linked-In account. It was noted when the communications coordinator took control of Instagram there were 100 followers which has now expanded to over 800.

Don Herbert, TV Services Coordinator, discussed Vimeo, the online archive of UMGA-TV's on demand programming, which currently contains 400 videos. He provided some pointers on facilitating the search for a particular agenda item.

Jim Kravits provided an overview of the various printed and electronic publications, including the changes in *Township Lines* which is published two to three times a year and is sent to about 1,500 homes and businesses through direct mail; advertising helps defray the postage cost.



Ms. Pimm discussed the new township website which features more infographics for such topics as “how to mulch trees” and the “emerald ash borer.” She said the goal has been to make content easy to read and follow.

Bill Carroll discussed the E-Newsletter which is one of the most effective ways of communicating with residents. The previous vendor was Constant Contact and has been replaced with Robly which helps to send information quickly by email and makes it possible to combine three separate accounts with the township, library and park & recreation in one account to keep the brand consistent. It was noted the open rate of the newsletter is excellent at 7% over the industry standard.

Mr. Jenaway asked for clarification about the integration of three different accounts. Ms. Pimm responded the idea for that feature helps during weather alerts or anything that is breaking news. Rather than going to three different places it is possible to sign up in one spot. It was noted E-Newsletter platforms are serious about permission-based setting.

Ms. Pimm stated the website revamp was the main project for last year and was launched on December 26<sup>th</sup>. She reviewed some of the new streamlined design features and pointed out all the colors are consistent to match the township seal. The website now provides the same functionality for those viewing the website on a mobile device.

Mrs. Kenney asked if Constant Contact is still being used for the Farmers Market. Ms. Pimm responded they will be migrating to the new system once the Winter Market concludes. She said the Robly template is already done and will be permission based.

Mr. Herbert reported at the 2017 Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors (PSATS) Conference UMGA-TV won the Outstanding Citizen Communication Award which is awarded to one township each year. He said the team put in a lot of effort into selecting and submitting some great material. First place was given to social media, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place to the E-Newsletter and 2<sup>nd</sup> Place to Infographics. It was noted 2<sup>nd</sup> place was for the previous E-Newsletter and even greater things are anticipated for next year. Mr. Herbert said the 1<sup>st</sup> place videos were for a series of public service announcements for the Police Department and 2<sup>nd</sup> Place for the series of “Did You Knows” the supervisors provided for the library.

Mr. Philips asked about the next set of PSA’s that will be done. Ms. Pimm responded they will have to develop a “spotted lanternfly” PSA and will be doing some park safety PSA’s as well.

Mr. Philips asked if anything will be done to encourage volunteers for the fire and rescue services. Ms. Pimm responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Philips stated PSA's can also be done for citizen boards as there is a need to fill vacancies on many citizen boards. Mr. Herbert commented that is "in the works" right now. He indicated a high school student will be working on the script and images.

Mr. Herbert provided a compilation of videos and UMGA-TV programs aired during the past year.

Mrs. Kenney asked if some of the ideas are generated by residents. Ms. Pimm responded she monitors the social media pages to see what people are asking and/or interested in. Mr. Herbert indicated if he receives a lot of phone calls or questions on a particular issue they try to be proactive and get the answer out there as soon as possible.

Mrs. Kenney commented the road diet would be a good issue to focus on. Mr. Herbert responded he split *Community Connections* and *Township Talk* into two separate features. *Township Talk* will be actual township departments and *Community Connections* will be outside groups such as introducing the new Superintendent at Valley Forge National Historical Park. With regard to the road diet, Mr. Herbert indicated Eric Goldstein from the Business Improvement District, provided a video segment about the BID's activities which included information on the road diet and how it is going to work.

Mrs. Kenney commented the static sign at the community center was a good decision. She asked if there has been any discussion about another LED sign on the other side of the township. Mr. Hoffman responded while there has not been any recent discussion on this the Media Communications Board has seen how valuable the LED sign is at the Township Building and they would like to discuss a similar sign for the other side of US 202.

David Rassbach discussed the 2018 Initiatives which include a citizen survey which will be a statistically justified survey to incorporate all the needs from the various areas of the township. Berwood Yost, Franklin and Marshall's Center for Opinion Research, developed a proposal for the Media Communications Advisory Board which resulted in a budget number for the community survey which was approved by the Board of Supervisors for 2018. Mr. Yost will be at the May 3<sup>rd</sup> workshop meeting to provide additional details on the survey.

Additional initiatives include:

- A task force will be formed to work on the Verizon franchise agreement
- Finalize a community map for distribution to about 15,000 people (to be completed in the third quarter)
- Form an internal task group to brainstorm and establish a scope for the

township branding project

Mr. Hoffman stated the citizen survey will uncover where the Media Communications Advisory Board needs to focus its energies and will measure the effectiveness of all the current modes of communication.

As Board Liaison for the Media Communications Advisory Board for many years, Mr. Waks remarked about the high level of technical expertise on this board which is invaluable for everything from social media to fiber optics. He expressed appreciation to Allison Pimm and her team and Don Herbert and his team for everything they have done to transform, facilitate and enhance communication between the township and public.

## PENSION ADVISORY BOARD

### ROLL CALL:

Supervisors present were: Greg Philips, Bill Jenaway, Greg Waks, and Carole Kenney. Also present were: Dave Kraynik, Township Manager; Sally Slook, Assistant Township Manager; Sgt. Andy Fidler, Police Representative. Supervisor Erika Spott was absent

Mr. Dave Kraynik, Chairperson, discussed the Upper Merion Township 401(a) Defined Contribution Retirement Plan for civilian employees as of December 31, 2017. Highlights as follows:

### 401(a) Defined Contribution Plan

- Each employee contributes 3% of wages and the township contributes 6% of wages.
- The plan has tier level vesting, but requires 6 years of service to be fully vested.
- There are no loan provisions allowed in the 401(a) plan which is administered by the ICMA Retirement Corporation.
- Total assets in the 401(a) Defined Contribution Plan are \$21,563,281 and plan membership totals 127.

### Act 600 Police Pension Defined Benefit Plan

- Unlike the 401(a) Retirement Plan, the Police Pension Plan is a “Defined Benefit Plan.”
- A Defined Benefit Plan provides a specific amount of benefits based on a formula that includes factors such as age, salary and years of employment.
- The plan is governed by the Board of Supervisors.
- The plan assets are managed by D. F. Dent and Company, Inc.

- Custodian of funds is PNC Bank, Pittsburgh, PA.
- The Consultant is Thomas J. Anderson & Associates, Media, PA.
- Actuarial services are provided by Beyer-Barber Company.

Act 600 Police Pension Defined Benefit Plan as of December 31, 2017:

Cash/Short Term Investments      \$51,011,647

Activity for 2017:

- Net Investment Income:      \$8,071,546
- Pension Payments:            \$2,946,902
- Administrative Expenses:    \$    17,900
- Plan membership                115

Deferred Retirement Option Pension (DROP) Plan (Optional Plan)

As of 12/31/17:

- Service provider is the ICMA Retirement Corporation
- It allows an active police officer who has met the eligibility requirements for normal retirement to elect to participate in the DROP for a period of up to 60 additional months and staying on the force
- Current assets: \$2.3 million
- Plan participants: 8 officers were participating in the DROP

457 Deferred Compensation/Supplemental Pension Plan:

As of 12/31/17

- Service Provider is ICMA Retirement Corporation
- Participation is mandatory for all police officers and optional for non-uniform employees.
- Assets total: \$19,254,097
- Plan membership totals 190 participants

Retirement Health Savings Plan (RHS)

As of 12/31/17:

- Plan is administered by ICMA Retirement Corporation
- Participation is open to all Township employees on a voluntary basis. However, employees must be in a defined group, and contribute a fixed percentage as agreed upon by the group per IRS Code.
- Currently, there are two groups defined in the RHS: Executive Group and

- the Police Command Staff.
- Assets total: \$1.4 million
  - There are 43 active employees participating.

Mr. Kraynik recognized the members of the Pension Advisory Board who were unable to attend this joint meeting. He said there are currently four Trustees, Roseann McGrath who recently joined the Board in late 2017, Police Chief Tom Nolan, and Supervisor Greg Waks. Mr. Kraynik is also a Trustee. Employee representatives are Police Officer Andy Fidler, Deputy Fire Marshal Bill Daywalt, Finance Director, Nick Hiriak and Sibyl Bryant, HR Director. Mr. Kraynik expressed appreciation to Mr. Eric Medrow who retired as Chairman of the Pension Advisory Board at the end of 2017. Mr. Medrow served in a leadership role as chairman for many years with great distinction. Mr. Kraynik expressed appreciation to Mr. Medrow for the time, effort and talent he brought to the Pension Advisory Board and wished him all the best in his retirement from the Pension Advisory Board.

Mr. Philips commended the Pension Advisory Board, and the leadership of Eric Medrow, for their work with regard to the pension liability coverage for the Upper Merion Police Pension plan. He asked if the pension fund is in the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile. Mr. Kraynik responded it is funded in excess of 90% at the present time. Mr. Philips commented the defined benefit plan for the Police Department is one of the best funded employee benefit plans in the state.

Mr. Waks said the stability of the defined benefits pension program is going to inherently be tied to stock market performance which is true for every defined benefit pension plan.

Mr. Waks also noted the current vacancy on the Pension Advisory Board and encouraged interested residents with a background in finance, economics, accounting or auditing to consider applying for this important position.

Mrs. Kenney expressed appreciation to the Pension Advisory Board for their contribution to the work of the advisory board under the leadership of Eric Medrow who has served in the capacity of chairman for many years.

Mr. Jenaway commented Upper Merion Township hosted a statewide municipal pension reform hearing in Freedom Hall with the Pennsylvania House and Senate [October 1, 2015]. During the hearing testimony was presented on behalf of Upper Merion's strong pension plan while other municipalities have less than favorable reserves in place. Mr. Jenaway attributes Upper Merion's good standing to good long term planning and foresight.

ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved by Mr. Jenaway, seconded by Mr. Waks, all voting "Aye" to adjourn the joint meeting at 9:08 p.m. None opposed. Motion approved 4-0.

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DAVID G. KRAYNIK  
TOWNSHIP MANAGER

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Minutes Approved:

Minutes Entered: