

UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WORKSHOP MEETING
JUNE 1, 2023

The Board of Supervisors of Upper Merion Township met for a Workshop Meeting on Thursday, June 1, 2023, in the Township Building. The meeting was called to order at 7:42 p.m., followed by the pledge of allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

Supervisors present were: Bill Jenaway, Greg Waks, Greg Philips, Carole Kenney and Tina Garzillo. Also present were: Anthony Hamaday, Township Manager; John Walko, Township Solicitor and Kailie Melchior, Solicitor's Office; Leanna Colubriale, Twp. Engineer.

CHAIRPERSON'S COMMENTS:

Chairperson Garzillo stated that there will be an Executive Session following tonight's meeting.

DISCUSSIONS:

PORTNOFF LAW ASSOCIATES – Collection of Delinquent Taxes:

Mr. Kevin Buraks from Portnoff Law Associates stated that Portnoff Law Associates have been collecting delinquent Real Estate taxes and Utility taxes for over thirty (30) years for municipalities. Kevin explained that one hundred percent of what they collect goes back to the municipality that they're collecting for because the fee is applied to the delinquent tax payer. Not only does this save the municipality money it also gives the delinquent entity an incentive to pay on time to avoid an additional fee. The first delinquent letter they send is a reminder to pay by a certain time with a \$25.00 fee only, this only goes to residential properties. The second letter will be mailed Certified and will show all other fees as well as the original amount due and this will be the first letter that commercial properties will get. Sending Certified letters to both groups will cost the municipality \$40.00 per letter, that would be the only cost to municipality for now. If the tax payer still doesn't pay then Portnoff Law will file a lien against the property, there is about thirty to forty days between each step. The last and final step, which is very rare, Portnoff will have the property sold to recuperate the fees and taxes. For residents that own and live at that property they can file a Hardship Claim which enables Portnoff to work with them by setting up a payment plan.

After a long discussion the Board decided to proceed by creating an ordinance and to sign a contract with Portnoff Law allowing them to be our third-party collector.

PLASTIC BAG ORDINANCE:

Members of EAC, Zach Davis, Theresa Landewe and Vicki Meitus presented feedback that they received from various local businesses in Upper Merion Township regarding enacting a plastic ordinance. Both large and small Mom & Pop businesses were receptive to eliminating plastic bags as long as they have sufficient time to use all existing stock and time to order reusable or paper bags. There will be 6 months for bags, polystyrene and straws to switch over and 12 months to switch over for utensils.

The Board also would like this Ordinance to be called Plastic Pollution Reduction, so it covers all single use plastic products, utensils, straws, containers and bags. Supervisor Waks wants to change the last sentence in Section 5 about supplying plastic straws for people who need assistance in drinking. Mr. Walko said that line can be deleted because Portion E states that if businesses have the ability or need to provide bendy straws (which are plastic) for use by someone with a disability they can without repercussion.

Supervisor Kenney would like this Ordinance to be fully effective by July 1, 2024, starting with plastic bags and takeout containers in January 2024 followed by utensils (anything that you use to eat or drink from, which includes straws). At the June 8th Business Meeting, the Board will ask for permission to advertise this Ordinance for Single Use Product Recommendation so hopefully they can adopt it at the July 13th Business Meeting.

Public Comment: None

NORCINI AUTOBODY LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN – 121 E. Church Road:

Representative for Norcini asked for an extension on their land development plan. They have concerns over the cost of the fee in lieu of plantings in the amount of \$23,650.00, which they consider high for this small project. The Board agreed to reduce the fee to \$1,500.00 since this project will not change the pervious area. The applicant will construct a sidewalk and plant one (1) tree and eight (8) bushes, which is all they can fit on this property due PECO's gas line running in the front of their property. They will attend the June 8th Business Meeting for consideration of approval of this plan.

BUSINESS MEETING AGENDA REVIEW:

Anthony Hamaday, Township Manager gave an overview of the June 8th Business Meeting.

Public Comment: None

ADDITIONAL BUSINESS: None

ADJOURNMENT:

Board Action:

It was moved by Supervisor Waks, seconded by Supervisor Philips, all voting "Aye" to adjourn the meeting. None opposed. Adjournment occurred at 9:25 pm.



ANTHONY HAMADAY
TOWNSHIP MANAGER

lr
Minutes Approved:
Minutes Entered: