

#19-2021
WORK SESSION
October 5, 2021 – 6 p.m.

A hybrid work session of the Whitpain Township Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, October 5, 2021 at 6 p.m. for the purpose of updating the public on several matters and reviewing the agenda of the October 19, 2021 Supervisors' meeting. In-person attendees included Supervisors Michele Minnick and Frederick R. Conner, Jr., along with Township Manager Roman M. Pronczak, P.E., Assistant Township Manager David J. Mrochko, Police Chief Kenneth Lawson, Solicitor Alexander M. Glassman, Esq., Solicitor Gregory R. Heleniak, Esq. and IT Director Nicole Leininger. Remote attendees included Supervisors Kimberly J. Koch, Jeffrey Campolongo, and Joyce Keller, Public Works Director Thomas Farzetta, Code Enforcement Officer Michael E. McAndrew, Finance Director Christine Bauman, Township Engineer James E. Blanch, P.E., Parks and Recreation Director Kurt W. Baker, HR Director Kathleen Yackin and Fire Marshal David M. Camarda. There were two members of the public in-person and no remote attendees.

Chair Minnick welcomed everyone and asked them to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

After roll call, Chair Minnick turned the meeting over to Mr. Pronczak for a review of the preliminary October 19th agenda.

Mr. Pronczak reviewed the business meeting agenda of October 19th which begins with the Consent Agenda including approval of minutes, the September Voucher List, August Treasurer's Report, advertising the meeting schedule for the 2022 Budget Work Sessions, acknowledge receipt of the 2022 Minimum Municipal Obligations for Pension Plans by the Board, resolution to allocate pension funds, release of fire relief funds, piggyback the sodium chloride contract, release escrow funds and approve a certificate of completion of work.

Mr. Pronczak gave a brief review of Zoning Hearing Board cases scheduled for October 21, 2021. At the time of the business meeting on October 19th, the Board will have the Planning Commission recommendations for its review. Mr. Pronczak asked if anyone had questions. Supervisor Campolongo asked for a clarification regarding the zoning case that includes a demolition and rebuild, as did Vice-Chair Koch. It was further explained by Mr. Pronczak, that a house exists on the property that does not conform to zoning regulations, specifically setback requirements. The zoning regulations allow non-conforming structures to remain and continue to be used. The zoning code also allows the structure to be rebuilt to its previous dimensions if it is destroyed by fire or otherwise condemned. However, the property owners wish to demolish a home that was not destroyed and build a new home that does not conform to zoning requirements. Mr. Pronczak also noted that relive was previously granted for additions to the existing home, but those additions were not built. He added that the new application actually

reduces what was previously proposed and approved, but the difference is that the previous proposal did not involve demolition of the building. Since part of the Zoning Hearing Board application involves a challenge of the zoning officer's determination, the Township Solicitor typically attends the hearing to present the Township's case.

There were no further questions or comments, and the review of the preliminary business meeting agenda was concluded.

Mr. Pronczak then led the discussion regarding various proposed ordinances, beginning with updates to the Human Relations Commission (HRC) ordinance. The HRC has been meeting, organizing, and going through training, in addition to participating in several events. In conjunction with training by the state HRC, potential updates to the current ordinance have been presented to the Board and the Solicitor. Mr. Pronczak asked Solicitor Glassman to continue with an explanation of the suggestions. Mr. Glassman said the HRC requested an expansion of the definitions of the classes, which the Board is empowered to do. Other questions by the HRC will be addressed with the Board within the next several days. Supervisor Campolongo added that the classes to be added are nothing out of the ordinary, or unusual, with respect to other municipal human relations ordinances. We are only expanding the definition of protected classes if these amendments are accepted by the Board. Mr. Glassman then explained the review of the current sign regulations and a general cleanup of the ordinance. Over the past few months, a few different sign issues have come up related to both Township property and private property. In terms of messages and First Amendment speech, ambiguities and inconsistencies were discovered. It is suggested that consideration be given to using the Montgomery County model sign ordinance as a baseline for specifications and working with Township staff to rework the sign provisions in the current ordinance.

Mr. Pronczak followed with the request for an update from the Shade Tree Commission that when relief is being sought, such as zoning, that there be stringent requirements that trees removed will be replaced. They also recommend that golden bamboo be prohibited in the Township. Since they are somewhat related, it might be good to put them into one ordinance amendment. We will also ask Land Concepts, our land planners, for their input on this amendment. Mr. Pronczak continued the discussion with the update on an ordinance for meadows. While everyone is in support of meadows, we have to differentiate between an established meadow and a property that is not being maintained as it should be. This is a work in progress. Mr. Glassman added that a draft will be available within the next few weeks as a result of a productive discussion with our consultants. We should be ready for action on it by the end of the year. Supervisor Keller offered thanks to the Solicitor and Mr. Mrochko for all their work regarding meadows.

The last item Mr. Pronczak discussed was metal detecting in Township parks. The Solicitor has drafted an ordinance that will be reviewed with the Parks and Recreation Department, and it should be presented to the Supervisors to ask for advertisement

authorization of the ordinance soon. Mr. Pronczak said there has been much progress made on these issues, and he wanted to give the Supervisors an update.

Chair Minnick called for any public comment. There was none. She asked if the Board had any old or new business to discuss.

With no additional discussion, a motion was made by Supervisor Conner, and seconded by Supervisor Koch to adjourn the meeting at 6:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Roman M. Pronczak, P.E.
Township Manager

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