

**SOUTH STRABANE TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS LEGISLATIVE MEETING**

February 9, 2021

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The February 9, 2021 Legislative Meeting of the South Strabane Township Board of Supervisors (Board) came to order at 10:00 a.m. in the Mae C. Reynolds Meeting Room of the Municipal Building (550 Washington Road, Washington, PA 15301).

The following were present:

Board of Supervisors Bob Weber, Chair; Mark Murphy, Vice Chair; Bracken Burns; and Rich Luketich.

Absent Thomas Moore

Also Present Township Manager Brandon Stanick; Assistant to the Township Manager Patrick Conners; Police Chief Drew Hilk; Police Sergeant Andrea Steiner; Fire Chief Scott Reese; Public Works Director Russell Grego; and Township Solicitor Dennis Makel.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Weber led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no Public Comments.

4. REVIEW & DISCUSSION OF A PROPOSED ORDINANCE RESTRICTING ON-STREET PARKING DURING WINTER SNOW EVENTS

Township Manager Stanick began the discussion by noting the proposed Ordinance is extensive and can be reduced in scope. Public Works Director Grego noted the goal of the Ordinance is not to fine and/or punish residents who park on the street, but simply provide the Police Department with the enforcement ability to ask for compliance during snow emergencies. He stated the goal is to provide residents with clear streets, curb to curb, during the winter months. He cited that neighboring municipalities have passed similar legislation. He continued by noting some municipalities institute a parking pass system to serve residents who do not have access to off-street parking.

Mr. Luketich inquired regarding the areas within the Township which do not have off-street parking accessibility. Public Works Director Grego noted streets such as Magnolia and those within the Pancake neighborhood come to mind. Township Manager Stanick highlighted that various streets within the Colonial Heights neighborhood have limited off-street parking. He

continued by emphasizing the goal is not to penalize residents. Mr. Luketich inquired if the Ordinance is enforceable. Police Chief Hilk stated that the vehicle code outlines provisions allowing for citations should such an Ordinance pass. He highlighted the Department will assist the Public Works in their goal of providing safe roads during the winter months. He continued by stating the Police Department will work to educate the residents on the new Ordinance. He cited that education and public engagement is essential.

Mr. Luketich inquired regarding the issuance of parking passes. A discussion ensued. Township Manager Stanick noted that parking passes may result in additional burden to staff and a layer of bureaucracy for residents. Mr. Burns noted that the Ordinance could be written to identify certain streets which would be exempt from the regulations. Mr. Weber encouraged staff to develop an education initiative to provide further information to residents on the matter. He directed staff to use the Code Red software program in this rollout. Township Solicitor Makel briefly recapped the overall mission of the Ordinance highlighting the Police Department and/or Code Enforcement could issue verbal warnings followed by written warnings with citations being issued as a last resort.

Mr. Weber inquired what would constitute a snow event/emergency. Public Work Director Grego outlined the protocol for snow callouts highlighting that communication between the Police Department and Public Works Department is essential. Mr. Murphy inquired regarding the total number of affected streets. Public Works Director Grego stated that approximately 10-12 streets would be impacted. Mr. Murphy noted that signage could be placed along all affected streets outlining the on-street parking prohibitions. Public Works Director Grego noted that Nottingham Township uses signage. Mr. Burns expressed his apprehension regarding the erection of signage. He noted that with sufficient education the signage would not be needed. Township Solicitor Makel stated that Staff and Legal Counsel will work to develop an updated Ordinance per the Board's comments.

5. REVIEW & DISCUSSION OF PROVIDING FOR THE RECYCLING OF ALUMINUM CANS AT THE TOWNSHIP RECYCLE FACILITY (253 ZEDIKER STATION RD.)

Public Works Director Grego outlined a proposal to retrofit an existing hauling trailer for the purpose of installing a portable aluminum collection vessel at the Township's Recycling Center. He noted the vessel could collect approximately 10-13 cubic yards of aluminum. Township Manager Stanick provided an illustration of the vessel. Public Works Director Grego reported the trailer renovation would cost approximately \$1,200.00. He continued by discussing outlets that would accept the material such as General Alloy and Brookman's Iron and Metals. He highlighted that aluminum can be scrapped for approximately \$0.30 per pound.

Mr. Weber inquired regarding the benefits of the program. Mr. Grego highlighted the program would not be a revenue generator, but would serve as a means for residents to dispose of excess aluminum outside of the once-per-month curbside collection program. Mr. Luketich inquired regarding the time involved to retrofit the trailer. A discussion ensued. Mr. Luketich highlighted the Township should not be involved in the business of recycling. He cited the Township has a curbside recycling contract with Waste Management to collect materials, including aluminum. He

noted the Township collects glass to fill a void created by the overall recycling market and hauler (Waste Management). Mr. Weber echoed the concerns outlined by Mr. Luketich. Township Manager Stanick stated the program is structured to simply provide an additional service for residents to recycle aluminum. He affirmed that the program would result in an additional expenditure(s) by the Township. After some discussion, it was the consensus of the Board to not pursue such a program.

6. REVIEW & DISCUSSION OF A FIRE HYDRANT ASSESMENT

Township Manager Stanick began discussion on the matter by highlighting a Fire Hydrant Tax would apply to all residents equally with or without being in proximity to a hydrant. He continued by stating in contrast to a tax, a Fire Hydrant Assessment would serve as a user-based fee which would apply to residents that reside within a certain proximity of a hydrant. He also cited that Assessments apply to all property owners, exempt and non-exempt alike. He continued by reporting that Assessments would need to be applied through a formula possibly based on the following:

- Distance from a fire hydrant
- Number of fire hydrants

He stated the Township would need to create hydrant districts, determine quantity and proximity of hydrants to property owners within that district, and use GIS based system to map hydrants and identify districts.

He then stated that revenue raised through an Assessment must be consistent and in line with the actual costs to service the fire hydrants. He then provided the actual costs of Fire Hydrants over the past several years.

- 2017: \$57,012
- 2018: \$60,531
- 2019: \$57,923
- 2020: \$58,416

He noted the goal of an Assessment would be to raise \$60,000 annually. He then discussed the collection mechanisms of an Assessment

- Application of assessment fee to property tax bill;
- Collection infrastructure currently exists; and
- Cost for assessment collection at 5% commission.

He then discussed the following foreseeable implementation steps of an Assessment.

- Review and discuss with municipalities with hydrant assessments in place
- Review collection protocol with Tax Collector
- Identify hydrants on GIS system
- Draw hydrant districts
- Apply formula to property owners
 - Proximity
 - Quantity
 - Other? UNKNOWN
- BOS considers ordinance establishing hydrant districts

- Timeframe – Fall, in time for budget season levied in 2022

Mr. Weber noted that Pennsylvania American Water has not been proactive in the maintenance of hydrants as communicated by the Fire Chief. He highlighted his displeasure with the Township's annual Fire Hydrant costs when compared to the services provided. Township Manager Stanick reported Staff will be communicating with neighboring municipalities regarding their experiences. Mr. Weber noted his support for raising the annual funds through an Assessment. He then inquired regarding the differences between commercial and residential property owners. Township Solicitor Makel noted that the Township may not be able to treat commercial property owners differently than residential property owners regarding the Assessment. Mr. Luketich highlighted the three potential PRDs coming into the Township. He emphasized the need to strategically plan for the placement and payment for all fire hydrants within those communities. It was the consensus of the Board to have Staff prepare the pros and cons of a proposal such as this.

7. REVIEW & DISCUSSION OF A PROPOSED ORDINANCE RESTRICTING OPEN BURNING (NOT INCLUDING RECREATIONAL FIRES)

Township Manager Stanick began discussion by outlining the Township's existing Open Burning regulations citing the permissible materials and timeframes. He noted the Township's bi-annual curbside leaf and limb pickup and the Recycle Center are intended to provide residents with alternate outlets to dispose of organic materials. Mr. Luketich noted that Upper St. Clair prohibits open burning. Mr. Luketich stated the Township needs to enforce its current regulations before it institutes new ones. He inquired how many citations has the Fire Department issued for open burning activities. Fire Chief Reese stated that citations are not routinely issued. He noted that communication and education have been the strategy. He highlighted that frequent violators are not common citing that complaints concerning open burning are few and far between. Mr. Luketich inquired how many yearly complaints regarding smoke/open burning the Township fields. Fire Chief Reese stated that the Township averages approximately 12 complaints per year. A discussion regarding a landscaping business on Floral Hill Drive ensued.

Mr. Burns expressed his concern for residents who routinely experience neighbors burning materials near their homes. He noted his own displeasure with neighbors who burn grass and other prohibited materials. Mr. Luketich highlighted the Township has large rural areas where burning is common. He noted his apprehension regarding imposing large restrictions for the number of complaints we receive.

Mr. Weber asked Fire Chief Reese if the current Ordinance is sufficient to protect the Township. Fire Chief Reese affirmed that in his professional opinion the Ordinance is sufficient. He cited that flexibility within any open burning ordinance is essential. Mr. Burns stated that residents should not be subject to noxious fumes multiple times per week. He highlighted that the Board of Supervisors should be proactive on this issue.

Following a question regarding the regulatory content within the current Ordinance, Assistant to the Township Manager Conners read aloud the Ordinance. Township Solicitor Makel highlighted that any fine amount is subject to court proceedings. Township Manager Stanick concluded by noting that should the Township prohibit open burning, it would be eligible to apply for Act 101 Section 902 funds that can be used for the procurement of new equipment to assist the Township's Recycling Program.

After some discussion the Board directed Staff to focus enforcement efforts to achieve compliance with the current Ordinance and not proceed with any changes to the Township's open burning regulations.

REVIEW & DISCUSSION OF THE POLICE DEPARTMENT'S PROPOSAL FOR USING BODY CAMERAS

Police Chief Hilk stated that the Police Department had been awarded funding for the procurement of body cameras in 2019 through the Bureau of Justice Assistance Grant. He noted the matching grant funding was approved through the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) under the BJA Body Worn Camera (BWC) Policy and Implementation Program. He cited that funds through the Program would not be released prior to the establishment of a formal policy being adopted by the Township. He reported that a draft policy is ready for consideration noting that Sergeant Andrea Steiner was responsible for the Policy. He also cited that Legal Counsel is in possession of the draft.

Mr. Luketich inquired as to how many cameras would be purchased. Chief Hilk reported that every officer will be issued a camera. He highlighted that one additional backup camera will remain on site within the Department. He continued by highlighting many states have mandated the use of body cameras while noting that Pennsylvania has not done so to this point. He stated the Grant would provide funding through the initial launch of the Body Camera Program, but the Township would need to cover the legacy costs of the Program. Mr. Weber inquired if the Department had any body cameras in use currently. Police Chief Hilk reported that no body cameras are in use within the Department currently. He then noted that vehicle cameras have been used in the past. Township Solicitor Makel inquired regarding data storage. Police Chief Hilk stated that after each shift officers will dock their camera and all data extracted will be migrated to an on-site server. He highlighted that all data is stored on the server for 60 days prior to termination. He noted that any data tied to evidence will be separated and maintained separately. Mr. Weber inquired regarding training. Police Chief Hilk stated that the hardware's manufacturer will be training select officers within the Department. He reported that in-house training will occur thereafter. Township Manager Stanick noted the February 23rd BOS Agenda will include consideration of the PD Body Camera Policy.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Murphy moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Weber seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brandon J. Stanick
Township Manager