

Green Team Meeting

December 19, 2019

6:00 P.M.

- The meeting took place at the South Strabane Township Municipal Building (550 Washington Road)

Attendees: Bracken Burns (Supervisor), Rich Luketich (Supervisor), Mark McCurdy, Colleen Johnson, Penny Steggles, Robin Richards, Kathy Pienkowski, and Assistant to the Township Manager Patrick Conners

Topics of Discussion

- Introduction of Penny Steggles
 - Assistant to the Township Manager Conners introduced Ms. Penny Steggles to the Green Team. Ms. Steggles stated that she is a lifelong resident of South Strabane Township and is eager to contribute to the community.
- ICMA Recycling Crisis Recap
 - Assistant to the Township Manager Conners presented a video outlining the struggling recycling market which was provided by the International City Management Association (ICMA). The video highlighted challenges including the shifting of global policies, particularly in regards to the China Sword initiative. Assistant to the Township Manager Conners reported that single-stream recycling programs have reported high contamination rates, ultimately reducing the overall value of the re-usable commodities. He concluded by stating the increased international standards for recyclable materials coupled with the decreased value of commodities has resulted in increased recycling charges for consumers.
 - Assistant to the Township Manager Conners noted that corrugated paper and cardboard products contribute the greatest volume and hold the highest commodity value of all recyclable products.
 - The Green Team expressed their frustrations with commercial leadership in the recycling market, specifically highlighting the lack of enforcement (participation and compliance) of curbside recycling programs. Mr. Burns noted that he has witnessed and audibly heard glass being collected and hauled from recycling containers with no repercussion.
 - Mr. Luketich highlighted that the Township should seek partnerships with local industrial businesses that may have a use for collected plastics, glass, etc.
 - Mr. Luketich voiced his support for writing local legislators concerning the state's recycling requirements. Mr. Burns directed Staff to research and report on the most recent recycling legislation under consideration.
- Update Regarding Glass Recycling Dumpster and Recycling Facility
 - Assistant to the Township Manager Conners noted that an 8-yard dumpster intended for glass recycling was installed in the Municipal Building's parking lot during the week of December 2nd. He stated the reception has been extremely

positive, noting it will likely need emptied prior to the holidays. He highlighted that the dumpster would be moved to the permanent Township recycling facility at 253 Zediker Station Road sometime in January.

- A discussion ensued regarding the permissible materials for the container. Assistant to the Township Manager Connors highlighted that glass products such as mirrors, porcelain dishware, and light bulbs are not permitted within the glass dumpster. He concluded by noting the importance of complying with the collection standards set by Michael Brothers Hauling concerning the glass dumpster.
 - Ms. Johnson highlighted the need for additional signage illustrating what types of glass can and cannot be recycled.
- Township Conservation Efforts
 - Ms. Johnson expressed her interest in the Township distributing educational materials on the topic of sustainability to local schools for Earth Day. Ms. Steggles also discussed donating trees to local students during the month of April in celebration of Earth Day.
 - Assistant to the Township Manager Connors highlighted that in effort to reduce the use of single-use plastic bottles, the Township has purchased a filtered water fountain unit which includes a re-filling station and a meter which tracks the number of plastic bottles “eliminated”.
 - Mr. Luketich highlighted the volunteer fire station as an ideal location for a similar unit.
- Residential and Commercial Communication Update
 - Mr. Burns cited the Township’s initiative to distribute a mailer outlining residential responsibility concerning the Act 101 program. He noted the state law requires that all residents participate in the curbside recycling program. He highlighted that the mailer will serve as an educational tool as well as a precursor to greater enforcement efforts.
 - Assistant to the Township Manager Connors reported that a physical newsletter will be sent to residents during the first quarter of 2020. He noted that the recycling mailer will be a separate item mailed within the newsletter.
 - Assistant to the Township Manager Connors next discussed the Code Red software program highlighting that it will serve as an informational tool to relay emergency as well as general news to participating residents. He illustrated how to sign up for the service for members of the Green Team.
 - A discussion ensued regarding negative backlash to increased recycling efforts on social media platforms such as Nextdoor and Facebook.
- Year in Review
 - Assistant to the Township Manager Connors briefly recapped the Green Team’s efforts and accomplishments during 2019 including the following:
 - 2 glass collection events culminating in a permanent glass collection area within the Township.

- Litter collection along 12 streets throughout the Township including partnerships with “Clean Up our County, Inc.” and the Washington County Community Service Program.
- Extended recycle center (253 Zediker Station Road) drop off hours with the assistance of security cameras secured through Illegal Dump Free Pennsylvania.
- The introduction of recycling bins in Community Park
- The purchase and installation of a re-fillable water station at the municipal building.
- New Ideas, Current Events, and Final Thoughts
 - Mr. Luketich inquired regarding a bottle cap collection program that was discussed during the November Green Team meeting. Assistant to the Township Manager Conners stated that he will continue to look further into the project.
 - Ms. Pienkowski highlighted that the Citizens Library has distributed flyers and information to South Strabane residents in the past and may serve as an intermediary for Township initiatives such as the recycling program and Code Red software.
 - Ms. Steggles noted that advertising events and initiatives within Township parks would be effective in spreading news.
 - The Green Team concluded by discussing beautification efforts along Township entrance points. Mr. Burns inquired regarding relaying the location of entrance points to Aiden McCoy who attended the last Green Team meeting. Assistant to the Township Manager Conners reported that he would work with Public Works Supervisor Grego to establish the entry points on a map for Mr. McCoy’s use.

Adjournment: 7:01 p.m.