

## **Upper Makefield Township Board of Supervisors September 16, 2015 Special Meeting Minutes**

The September 16, 2015 Special Meeting of the Upper Makefield Township Board of Supervisors was called to order by Chair Tom Cino at 7:30 p.m. In attendance were the following members of the Board of Supervisors: Chair Tom Cino, Vice Chair Larry S. Breeden, Treasurer Mary Ryan, Member Dan Rattigan and Member Mike Tierney. Also in attendance were Interim Township Manager David R. Nyman, Assistant Township Manager Judy Caporiccio, Finance Director Sandy Wenitsky, Police Chief Mark Schmidt and Planning & Zoning Director David Kuhns.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND MOMENT OF SILENCE**

Mr. Cino led in recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance which was followed by a moment of silence.

Mr. Cino made a few opening remarks regarding the Budget consideration schedule, healthcare considerations, clarifying surpluses as fund balances and providing some highlights of the status of the Township's Open Space program.

### **OPEN SPACE FUND DISCUSSION**

Mr. Nyman then reviewed the Open Space Fund noting a one mil reduction in the real estate tax assessment and two opportunities to preserve additional Open Space.

Mr. Breeden stated that the excess funds should be utilized to make bond payments only and additional funds to preserve open space can be borrowed.

Mr. Cino re-stated that there are two potential deals, one being finalized and one under negotiations. He stated that this debate is about two different philosophies of the use of fund balances.

Mr. Rattigan explained that a prudent use of the fund balance would be to limit further borrowing.

Mr. Cino stated that our Open Space program has been a model program.

Mr. Breeden stated that he likes the Open Space program, but believes it needs to be better managed.

Mr. Tierney criticized the purchase of certain parcels as undevelopable forests, streams and swamps.

### **WATER/SEWER FUND DISCUSSION**

Mr. Nyman provided an overview of the Water/Sewer Fund, the Water and Sewer Capital Reserve Fund, Dutchess Farms Fund and Dutchess Farms Capital Reserve Fund, and reviewed the Five Year Capital Improvement Plan.

Mr. Breeden stated that he believes the water and sewer rates are higher than necessary.

Mr. Cino stated that establishing a fund balance to deal with unexpected situations is prudent.

Mr. Tierney proposed that the Township turn the water & sewer systems over to the Homeowner's Associations and allow them to run them. Mr. Nyman will inquire of DEP regarding that possibility and report to the Board at the next meeting.

### **PARK AND RECREATION FUND DISCUSSION**

Mr. Nyman provided a review of the line items of the Park and Recreation Fund and the Park and Recreation Capital Fund, highlighting items typically covered by the Repair/Maintenance of facilities

funding. Mr. Cino noted the capital expenditures include purchase of benches for the new Brownsburg Park court area, investigation of irrigation system at Brownsburg Park, building improvements at Lookout Park and playground equipment at Lookout Park. Grant opportunities will be investigated to offset costs.

Mr. Breeden asked whether the proposed irrigation system was the same request made a couple of years ago. Mr. Cino explained that the Park and Recreation Board would like to further consider the idea. Mr. Tierney requested a better breakdown of the proposed costs. Mr. Cino explained that these are estimates at this time.

Ms. Ryan stated that these cap funds are contributed by developers and not tax dollars.

Mr. Breeden suggested consideration of a "Doggy Park," and Mr. Rattigan requested that the Park and Recreation Board review that idea.

#### **MISCELLANEOUS FUND DISCUSSION**

Mr. Nyman presented a draft of the following funds: Fire Fund, Building Construction Fund, Riparian Restoration and Preservation Grant Fund, Tree Fund, Emergency Services Fund, Grading Escrow Fund Police Pension Fund and Non-Police Pension Fund.

Mr. Breeden stated again that the Fire Funds are for limited uses and that requests for them need to be accompanied by invoices. Mr. Nyman reminded the Board that this same discussion occurred last year during budget discussions and that the Fire Company has acknowledged the need to provide justification for funding requests.

#### **GENERAL FUND REVIEW**

The Board reviewed the General Fund revisions from the first Budget Workshop with no additional comments.

#### **LIQUID FUELS & CAPITAL RESERVE FUNDS**

Mr. Nyman reviewed the Liquid Fuels and Capital Reserve Fund revisions from the First Budget Workshop with no additional comments.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Harold Tamburro, East Grant, acknowledged receipt of Open Space funding information distributed by Mr. Breeden and shared an amortization schedule for paying down the Open Space debt and cutting the tax millage.

Brian Bark, 1166 Eagle Road, suggested using some of the Open Space fund balance to purchase the Matthews parcel and create a Veteran's Memorial Park at the entrance into the Village. He also stated that the Township's current healthcare plans costs are two and a half times what the law will allow in a couple of years. Mr. Cino noted that the creation of a park was investigated previously by the EAC and does not meet Open Space Fund guidelines.

Ron Smolow, Three Ponds Lane, shared concern about defunding the Open Space program that has been supported in multiple referendums, stating that the program has provided for higher property values, less pollution and significant open space. He encouraged the Board to use the existing fund balance to purchase additional open space and not borrow additional funds that would result in higher taxes.

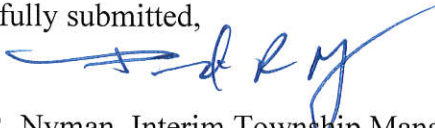
Guy Polhemus, 82 Washington Crossing Road, stated that he disagreed with the expenditure of funds on open space that allowed for the building of homes, and he compared our program with that of Tincum Township. He recommended a thorough review of the program to discern what we really got.

George Cino, Upper Makefield, stated he considers the Township portion of real estate taxes to be relatively small compared to school taxes and a reduction in Township taxes would not result in a large sum of money per resident as has been implied during discussions.

**ADJOURNED**

A motion by Mr. Rattigan and seconded by Ms. Ryan to adjourned at 9:30 pm was approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



David R. Nyman, Interim Township Manager  
Approved: September 23, 2015