



MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Commissioners

FROM: Melissa Shafer

DATE: August 15, 2016

RE: Manager's Report

Agenda Items:

- **Community Center Construction Manager RFP**

Township staff and Entech Engineers are recommending that the Township hire a Construction Management firm for the Community Center renovation project by early November. This way the firm will be on board and able to review drawings and have a participatory role before the project goes out to bid.

Non-Agenda/Ongoing Items:

- **Community Center**

The Commissioners voted to move forward with engineering and design of the first phase of the Community Center renovation project, which includes all those items that were identified by the architect as "High Priority – Deficiency" *as well as the two "High Priority" items that weren't marked as deficient: installation of a dehumidification system and a new UV system. The staff is also working with Entech and HT Lyons to address some minor facility issues that need to be addressed next year to make sure that there will not be any duplication or unnecessary overlap of work scope.*

I also want to address a recent story the Morning Call ran about the desire for the Township to include a UV system in the renovation project. This story has unfortunately caused some concerns about the health and safety of the air quality at the Bethlehem Township Community Center indoor pool.

We had the opportunity to discuss these concerns with the writer and editor at the Morning Call and they were happy to work with us to make sure the following clarification was issued: "Clarification: A story in Wednesday's edition included a reference to chloramines in the Bethlehem Township Community Center's indoor pool. According to engineer Stuart Heisey of

Entech Engineering Inc., Reading, which inspected the pool, the presence of chloramines is common in indoor pools and results in a distinct odor. The odor occurs when the pool's chlorine reacts with human sweat and other elements. The chloramine levels in the Bethlehem Township Community Center's indoor pool are not unusually high nor unsafe and typically fluctuate depending on the level of usage of the pool, according to Heisey."

- **Township Website and Facebook Page**

In an effort to increase transparency and continue providing timely information to Township residents, business owners, and stakeholders, we are looking at ways to have specific data on Township programs and the Budget available on the website. There are certain "dashboard" options that we are reviewing and hope to have this feature available shortly.

- **Nixel**

We have recently upgraded the Nixel platform for emergency alerts to allow us to take advantage of unlimited text and email alerts, social media posting, Google public alerts, anonymous tipping, severe weather alerts, and emergency voice calls. The Board may wish to consider adopting policies and procedures for the emergency voice calling component.

- **PennEast Pipeline**

PennEast sent Bethlehem Township easement agreements for two minor crossings of the Bike Path south of Freemansburg Avenue. The Township Solicitor is currently reviewing those documents and they will be presented to the Board for consideration shortly.

However, to date, PennEast Pipeline has refused to sign an access agreement with the Township, and therefore at this time will not be permitted to access any of our properties.

PennEast Pipeline presented a map to the Township, per our request, showing a change in the siting of the Pipeline in the vicinity of PennDOT's maintenance yard on Hope Road. The new tentative siting moves the pipeline away from the Hope Ridge Development and shows the pipeline siting on the far side of Route 33.

- **Easton Avenue Culvert Collapse**

The Commissioners have instructed the Township Solicitor and Township Manager to notify the property owners about their responsibility to make the area safe. Letters have been sent out to the property owners asking them to contact Nathan Jones with a plan to bring the area into compliance with the Property Maintenance Code. Several residents have responded back and we are currently working with them.

- **Freemansburg Avenue**

Final inspections are being held on Phase A and punchlist items are being addressed by the contractor.

Construction on Phase B (the Bridge Project) is also underway. The Township is the Local Project Sponsor on this Phase because of the Federal and State earmarks. We continue to work closely with St. Luke's on the Project Management of this corridor to make sure that there are as few disruptions to commuters and neighbors as possible. The new date for the bridge completion is September of 2017.

- **Housenick**

- **Central Moravian Drive**

- Bethlehem Township now owns the Central Moravian Church/Housenick Park Driveway. Paving is complete and the entrance sign has been installed. A newsletter article about the park will be prepared for the Fall issue.

- **Architecture and Bathroom**

- The Board of Commissioners has asked Spillman Farmer to provide a proposal for architectural services to move forward with the Historically Preferable Exterior Stabilization. We are also currently reviewing different financing options with the Foundation.

- **Park and Trail Project Phase 1**

- Nearing completion.

- **Park and Trail Project Phase 2**

- The Board of Commissioners authorized T & M to re-apply for a DCNR Grant for Phase 2 of the Park and Trail Project in the amount of \$427,222 since we weren't funded under the 2015 round due to the state budget. This grant will cover 50% of the project cost.

- We have received confirmation that we were awarded County Open Space funds for the other 50% of the project.

- **Bathrooms at the North Forty**

- Our \$250,000 grant application through the Act 13 Greenways Trails and Recreation Program was not approved in the 2015-2016 round. We have reapplied under the 2016-2017 round. This program requires a 15% match. The size (and subsequently the cost) of the bathrooms is being driven by the state building code. The staff has been exploring ways to save costs, and there may be a case to make at the Building Code Appeals Board to reduce the number of required fixtures while still maintaining the level of required handicap accessibility.

- **Chetwin Terrace**

The repaving the portion of the bike path from Sheridan Drive to the bridge over Freemansburg Avenue is complete. This area will be inspected and addressed by the Stormwater Improvement Plan, set to commence later this year.

Public Works has also increased the size of the swale on the Chetwin Playground side of the Bike Path to allow for more water to flow behind the path.

- **Parks Master Site Plan**

The Parks Master Site Plan Grant application was denied under the 2105-2016 round and is being reapplied for under the 2016-2017 round.

- **Stormwater**

The Stormwater Committee has interviewed five firms for the Stormwater Engineer position. We are currently checking references and reviewing past projects and anticipate making a recommendation to the Board in September.

- **Finance**

- **2017 Budget**

The 2017 Budget Schedule has been finalized and included in the fall newsletter. It includes a Saturday morning wrap up meeting.

- **Long Range Budget**

We are finishing up the Five Year Plan and will have this long range budget for the Commissioners to review as part of the 2017 Budget process.

- **Grants**

We have several grant applications awaiting review and potential award at the state level. Due to the fact that there is no state budget, the approval process has been stalled. Here are the grants that we are currently waiting on:

- DCNR Grant for Phase 2 of the Housenick Park and Trail Project (County match acquired)
- PennDOT Multi-modal Grant for Brodhead Road (reapplication)
- DCED Multi-modal Grant for Brodhead Road (reapplication)
- Act 13 GTR Program North Forty Bathrooms (reapplication)
- Act 13 GTR Program Parks Master Site Plan (reapplication)

The Commonwealth Financing Authority (CFA) should meet on Nov 1 to review/approve the Act 13 and DCED applications and we will be able to budget accordingly for 2017. We also expect to hear about the DCNR Grant in the fall as well. Unknown timeline for the PennDOT Multi-Modal Grant.