

**MINUTES OF MEETING
MONTGOMERY TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
JUNE 8, 2020**

At 7:00 p.m., Chair Tanya C. Bamford called to order the virtual action meeting, which was held remotely by a live-stream event due to the current COVID-19 pandemic and social distancing requirements. The public and all interested parties were invited to view and participate in the meeting via a web link that was accessible on the Township's website and social media pages.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Chair Tanya C. Bamford
Vice Chair Matthew W. Quigg
Supervisor Annette M. Long
Supervisor Beth A. Staab
Township Manager Carolyn McCreary
Township Solicitor Robert J. Iannozi, Esquire

ABSENT:

Supervisor Candyce Fluehr Chimera

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Police Chief J. Scott Bendig
Director of Finance Brian Shapiro
Director of Fire Services William Wiegman
Director of Admin & HR Ann M. Shade
Director of Planning & Zoning Bruce Shoupe
Director of Public Works Kevin Costello
Director of Recreation & CRC Floyd Shaffer
Director of Information Technology Rich Grier
Public Information Coordinator Kelsey Whalen
Recording Secretary Deborah A. Rivas

Chair Tanya C. Bamford thanked the residents of the Township for their patience as the Board of Supervisors works to keep the meetings transparent for everyone. The Township has a page on its website, www.montgomerytwp.org, dedicated to providing information and resources during this time.

Chair Tanya C. Bamford acknowledged the tumultuous few weeks that we have had recently. On top of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have had some recent violent storms which knocked out power throughout the Township last week. Ms. Bamford also stated that recently the nation was rocked by the senseless murder of George Floyd sparking protests across the globe. Ms. Bamford reported that she and several Board members, attended a peaceful protest that was conducted in the Township over the past weekend. On behalf of the Board of Supervisors, Ms. Bamford stated that they stand with those fighting against racism and violence towards people of color and that black lives matter. Ms. Bamford also said that thoughts go out to all of those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. To date, 204 Township residents have tested positive and 28 deaths have occurred.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance and roll call, Chair Tanya C. Bamford announced that Montgomery County had transitioned to the COVID-19 Yellow Phase as of June 5, 2020. Ms. Bamford also announced that Montgomery Township hosted a Town Hall meeting with Montgomery County Commissioner Chair Dr. Valerie Arkoosh to discuss COVID-19 and moving to the Yellow Phase in Montgomery County of Wednesday, June 3, 2020. This very informative meeting can be viewed on the Township's website and Facebook page. All Township meetings for the month of June will continue to be virtual using Microsoft Teams.

Police Chief Scott Bendig stated that events of the past few weeks have noticeably impacted our community. The criminal actions of the Minneapolis police officers and subsequent repercussions continue to traumatize not only our residents, but business owners as well. Chief Bendig stated that he felt it was essential that he update the Board on recent Township events surrounding these unsettling times. On May 30 and June 6, peaceful protests were held on the Route 202 Parkway at Route 309. On both occasions, members of the department spoke with

event organizers, working to facilitate their demonstration while ensuring their safety. Chief Bendig reported that social media threats regarding the looting of Township businesses have been made. Patrol strategies have been altered, and staffing has been added to ensure the safety and well being of our businesses as they work to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic. The department continues to reach out to those they serve to address their fears and concerns. This is occurring through several means, in addition to the social media platforms. Chief Bendig stated that efforts including engaging with residents individually regarding questions surrounding department policies or practices that may have come into question regarding this event. Officers are also engaging with members of the business development partnership to deliver a message of commitment and assistance to our businesses post COVID-19; and arranging engagement opportunities with advocacy groups and individual citizens, including the NAACP and Worship Centers within the Township. Chief Bendig stated that unfortunately, the relationships and trust that the department has worked so hard to build with those that are served, have been negatively impacted by these tragic and disturbing events. The police department will continue to do their part to change this narrative and rebuild those relationships, one interaction at a time. Chief Bendig thanked the Township residents for their continue support.

Chair Tanya C. Bamford thanked Chief Bendig, stating that it is critical to keep an open dialog and she applauds his efforts on that part.

Vice Chairman Matthew W. Quigg stated that it is important to note that Chief Bendig mentioned rebuilding trust one interaction at a time. One of the things that the Montgomery Township Police Department has been is transparent in their interactions with individuals of difference races. The department is not required to, but they keep track and analyze this data on a consistent basis. Mr. Quigg stated that the Chief should be commended for this good work.

Chair Tanya C. Bamford called for public comment from the audience, which was available by previously submitted email questions and a live chat during the meeting. There was no public comment submitted.

Township Solicitor Robert J. Iannozi, Esquire announced that the Board had met in an executive session prior to this meeting at 3:30 p.m. by conference call to discuss one personnel matter and three matters of potential litigation. Mr. Iannozi stated that these matters are all legitimate subjects of executive session pursuant to Pennsylvania's Sunshine Law.

Chair Tanya C. Bamford made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 26, 2020 Board of Supervisors meeting and Supervisor Annette M. Long seconded the motion. The minutes of the meeting were unanimously approved as submitted.

Director of Planning and Zoning Bruce Shoupe presented a draft finalized resolution for proposed guidelines and policies for existing businesses in the Township to follow now that outdoor sales of food and merchandise is allowed during the coronavirus pandemic. The resolution will be in effect for 90 days. Businesses should contact the Department of Planning and Zoning for a review of plans and approval to proceed. Resolution #20-102 made by Chair Tanya C. Bamford, seconded by Vice Chair Matthew W. Quigg and adopted unanimously, approved the guidelines and policy for outdoor sales of merchandise and outdoor dining during the Coronavirus Pandemic.

Resolution #20-102 made by Chair Tanya C. Bamford, seconded by Supervisor Beth A. Staab and adopted unanimously, approved the Deeds of Dedication for roads Harley Court and Destiny Way, (including streetlights, storm sewer, and other public improvements, but excluding curb, sidewalk and driveway aprons) in the Montgomery Knoll, 33-Lot Subdivision, which will be dedicated to the Township and added to the official street map of the Township.

Director of Finance Brian Shapiro reported that he recently reviewed the Township's revenues with the Board of Supervisors and wanted to follow up a review of current expenditures. Mr. Shapiro stated that while the revenues are not consistent on a month-to-month basis, expenditures are more likely to occur on a month-to-month basis. Right now, the usual rate of expenses by the end of May runs around 42% of budget. At this time, in 2020, the average expenses are running in the low 30% range. Overall, the Township has expensed less this year at this time, than the previous two years. Some of the decrease in expenses can be attributed to the staff furloughs and the reduction of costs overall due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Shapiro also provided an update to the revenue numbers which are tracking approximately 7% behind this time last year. As the Earned Income Tax and Real Estate Tax deadlines were extended, it will take longer for those revenues to come in, but it is expected that they will. In addition, Mr. Shapiro confirmed that the Township's COVID-19 expenses were at \$47,000 and that he is working with the Emergency Preparedness Director Bill Wiegman to submit the applications to FEMA and PEMA for as much reimbursement as possible for the Township.

Township Manager Carolyn McCreary provided an update of the Township's operations during the Commonwealth's "Yellow Phase". Ms. McCreary reported that a "normal" resumption of operations is occurring with all employees who were working from home returning to the office as of June 8, 2020. Public access to the building is by appointment only at this time and masks must be worn by the public while in the Township building. Once onsite meetings begin, committees and staff will be instructed to practice social distancing. A new building access system has been installed with increased security options. Township department operations continue throughout the closure of the building. The Planning department has been accepting permit applications continuously and were being processed in advance of the Governor's order permitting construction to restart. The IT department worked to setup staff to work from home, enabled the Board of Supervisors to hold virtual public meetings and oversaw the installation of the secure building access system. The Finance department was able to conduct all key processes remotely, including paying invoices and processing payroll. An exterior dropbox was installed to allow all payments to be dropped off at any time. The Administration and Human Resources department developed policies required for the COVID-19 pandemic, purchased signage for the building, and installed personal protection equipment where needed. The Public Works department assisted with office changes and setups, installed a new water dispenser in the lobby, and is working to install hands-free sinks and soap dispensers, as well as stand-alone hand sanitizer stations for all Township entrances to the building. The Fire department ensured that necessary PPE supplies were available and monitored conditions at two long-term care facilities in the Township. The Police department worked to continue operations as usual during the pandemic and maintain the safety of all those in the department. Ms. McCreary stated that she was very proud of the staff and the many accomplishments that have occurred over the past three months. Chair Tanya C. Bamford thanked Ms. McCreary and stated that she and the Board were very proud and pleased to have her in charge at the Township.

A motion to approve the payment of bills was made by Chair Tanya C. Bamford, seconded by Vice Chair Matthew W. Quigg, and adopted unanimously, approving the ratification of the payment of bills as submitted for June 8, 2020.

There were two public comment questions submitted during the meeting.

Andrew Hatstat asked about the plan/criteria to reopen the outdoor playgrounds. Township Manager Carolyn McCreary responded that the Township does not plan to reopen the playgrounds until the County moves to the "green phase". The parks and trails are open. Currently, the

basketball courts, fields, playground equipment and bathrooms are closed. Tennis courts and a pickleball court are open for singles play at this time.

Albert Gelson of Bonnie Lane asked what enforcement mechanisms are in place to make sure that businesses comply with the guidelines established for reopening? Township Manager Carolyn McCreary responded that the Township does not have the power to enforce guidelines provided by the State. Ms. McCreary also stated that it is important that people who patronize a business and see that they may not be practicing the guidelines required, should walk out and go elsewhere. Vice Chairman Matthew Quigg asked Ms. McCreary to elaborate on the new outdoor dining and sales or merchandise guidelines and how the Township would enforce the policies in the resolution. Ms. McCreary stated that because the Board of Supervisors approved the guidelines, the Township can enforce the businesses that take advantage of the outside dining and sales opportunities if they do something that goes against the policy. The Township has the right to shut down the operation in this case.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah A. Rivas, Recording Secretary