

MINUTES OF MEETING  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP

The Board of Commissioners of Springfield Township met in regular monthly meeting on Wednesday evening, August 9, 2023, at 7:30 PM at the Springfield Township Building for the purpose of transacting the general business of the Township. The meeting was also offered in a live streaming feature. All members of the Board were present.

Mr. Lee asked Mr. Taylor to summarize any comments received remotely prior to the meeting. Mr. Taylor stated three comments were received remotely. One comment was in favor of the proposed plastic bag ordinance and two were opposed to the proposed plastic bag ordinance.

Mr. Lee asked everyone to join the Board of Commissioners in a moment of silent reflection honoring the service men and women who have placed themselves in harm's way in order to help preserve our safety at home and overseas.

Mr. Lee led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion (Wilson-May) vote 6-0 dispensing with the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting and approving same as written and recorded in the official minute book of the Township.

Mr. Lee announced that Commissioner Standish was absent from the meeting due to a personal commitment.

Mr. Lee announced that the Board of Commissioners conducted an executive session as part of its August 7, 2023 workshop meeting to receive an update on four litigation matters and to discuss the acquisition of real estate.

Mr. Lee invited Mark Hoisington, retired police officer, to the front of the room. Commissioner Wilson read into the record Resolution No. 1616, a resolution honoring Mark Hoisington for his 34 years of service as a Springfield Township Police Officer.

Motion (Wilson-Maxwell) vote 6-0, to adopt Resolution No. 1616.

Mr. Lee acknowledged Officer Hoisington's wife, Denise, and announced that Denise retired from the Springfield Township Police Department in 2016 after 28 years of distinguished service. Denise is also the Department's second female Police Officer and first female Detective.

Mr. Lee opened the meeting to public comment.

Christine Hesser, Oreland, inquired about the testing of groundwater at the old Tank Car Corporation of America property. Mr. Taylor explained that the testing is required as part of the Act 2 remediation process and is limited to certain wells on the property. Ms. Hesser asked that consideration be given to test the wells closest to the homes on Orlemann Avenue. Mr. Taylor

suggested that such testing was not necessary based upon the results of previous tests, and the direction of groundwater migration away from the homes. Discussion ensued among Board members with regard to future testing of wells. Mr. Taylor agreed to consult with the environmental engineer regarding Ms. Hesser's request.

John English, Oreland, questioned the delay in enacting the ordinance banning plastic bags. Mr. Lee explained the history and advertising requirements. Mr. English suggested that the entire country is under stress as a result of inflationary pressures, and the proposed ordinance will only add to that stress. He noted that the results of a previous survey suggest that only 2% of the Township population is in favor of banning single use plastic bags.

Jane Thomas, Oreland, addressed the Board regarding single use plastic bags. She stated that she re-uses the single use plastic bags multiple times for various purposes. She provided several examples of how the bags are utilized.

Chris Weth, Oreland, asked the Board to explain the data points and sources of information that support the need for the proposed ordinance banning single-use plastic bags. Mr. Lee suggested the Program Guide prepared by the Environmental Advisory Commission would answer Mr. Weth's questions.

Mr. Garrity wished to clarify that the proposed ordinance only bans point-of-sale single use plastic bags.

Margaret Mary Burke, Oreland, asked when the Draft Connectivity and Trail Plan will be available on the Township website. Mr. Taylor responded that it will be placed on the website no later than Friday, August 11. Ms. Burke also opined that the former Tank Car property should be preserved as green space.

Mr. Lee, Chairman of the Public Safety Committee, reported:

Motion (Lee-Cobb) vote 6-0 to waive Section 3303.1 (12) of the Springfield Township Fire Prevention Code in order that the North Hills Country Club may conduct a professional fireworks display on Sunday, September 3, 2023 at approximately 8:15 PM. The approval was conditioned upon the following: 1) the pyrotechnical firm and North Hills Country Club shall add Springfield Township as an additional insured on their certificates of insurance for the event; and 2) the pyrotechnical firm and the North Hills Country Club shall work closely with the Springfield Township Fire Marshal and Oreland Fire Company to help prevent an accident and to create a plan of action in the event that an accident does occur during the activity.

Mr. Wilson, Chairman of Environmental Resources Committee, reported:

Mr. Wilson announced that during the month of July 2023, Springfield Township residents recycled 156.1 tons of materials with a householder participation rate of 71.6%. The net cost for the month was \$27,123.11.

Mr. Wilson reminded residents that electronic waste is not suitable for collection by the Township. In 2010, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania passed the “Covered Device Recycling Act” prohibiting the disposal of electronic waste in landfills and waste-to-steam plants. Mr. Wilson directed residents to the Township website for appropriate disposal facilities.

Motion (Wilson-May) to enact Ordinance No. 975. The proposed ordinance amends the Code of the Township of Springfield by adding a new Chapter 85 to regulate the use of single use plastic carry out bags by adding findings, definitions, requirements, enforcement provisions, penalties and exemptions relating to the distribution and use of single-use plastic carry out bags. The ordinance shall become effective six (6) months after enactment and includes a mandatory fee of ten cents per bag that is to be charged by merchants that choose to supply paper bags to their customers.

Mr. Wilson thanked and commended the Environmental Advisory Commission for their work in creating the ordinance.

Mr. Lee agreed with Mr. Wilson and also wished to thank Penn Environment who was helpful in creating the ordinance for the Township as well as for surrounding municipalities. He opined that the benefits to the environment outweigh any inconveniences.

Ms. Ratsavong stated she will vote to enact the ordinance. She does not support the fee on paper bags, but feels the benefits outweigh the deficiencies.

Mr. Cobb stated the ordinance is not perfect and there will be growing pains, but they will be resolved over time. He stated the Township is committed to protecting the environment and this ordinance will help achieve that.

Ms. Ratsavong thanked Steve Heverin, of the Environmental Advisory Commission, for his efforts to address residents’ concerns.

Vote on the motion 5-1; Maxwell opposed.

Mr. Maxwell, Chairman of Public Works and Facilities Committee, reported:

Motion (Maxwell-Wilson) vote 6-0, to authorize the Township Manager to execute an extension to the existing Listing Agreement with Dan Helwig, Inc. to market and secure tenants for two office suites at the Black Horse Inn, 1432 Bethlehem Pike, Flourtown. Pursuant to the terms of the agreement, Dan Helwig Realtors shall serve as the Township’s Broker and Agent and shall receive compensation during the term of the Agreement in an amount equal to one month’s rent per unit that shall be shared with any cooperating broker pursuant to the Terms of the Agreement. The Agreement shall expire December 31, 2023.

Ms. Ratsavong asked if Mr. Helwig suggested any other incentivization to attract tenants. Mr. Wilson said he spoke with Mr. Helwig who believes the current structure of shared

brokerage fees is adequate to attract interest, but that the market for office rentals is difficult at this time.

Motion (Maxwell-Wilson) vote 6-0 to adopt Resolution No. 1617, a resolution authorizing the condemnation of land and improvements located at 1502 Paper Mill Road, Wyndmoor, for public purposes which shall include, but are not limited to, the use and improvement to land for public buildings, public works, libraries, parks, recreation places, municipal purposes and all other purposes authorized by the First Class Township Code. The acquisition of the Property through condemnation at consideration or compensation shall not exceed \$350,000.00.

Mr. Taylor briefly explained the process of acquiring the subject property.

Motion (Maxwell-Ratsavong) vote 6-0 to appoint Jared Schwartz, Erdenheim, to fill an unexpired term of service as a member of the Springfield Township Shade Tree Commission. Mr. Schwartz's term of service shall expire July 13, 2026. Mr. Schwartz presently serves as an associate member of the shade tree commission.

Mr. Cobb, Chairman of Administrative, Fiscal Affairs and Zoning Committee, reported:

Motion (Cobb-Wilson) vote 6-0 to approve the July check reconciliation in the amount of \$1,252,822.90, and the August bill listing in the amount of \$1,756,942.34.

Mr. Cobb announced that the Springfield Township Zoning Hearing Board would next meet on Monday, August 28, 2023 at 7:00 PM at the Springfield Township Building. Mr. Cobb summarized the Zoning Hearing Board agenda, and announced that copies of applications are on file in the Code Enforcement Office and may be viewed during normal business hours.

Ms. Ratsavong, Chairwoman of Parks and Recreational Resources Committee, reported:

Ms. Ratsavong announced that a Draft version of the Springfield Township Trails & Connectivity Plan will be made available for review on the Township website beginning Friday, August 11, 2023. The Plan is intended to serve as an aspirational guide to connect neighborhoods, parks, schools and other places of interest within the Township to increase connectivity and recreational opportunities for Township residents. Arrangements have been made for the Montgomery County Planning Commission to present the Plan to the community at the October 11, 2023 meeting of the Board of Commissioners.

Mr. May, Chairman of the Cultural Resources Committee, had no report.

Mr. May announced that he attended the Library Advisory Committee meeting in July and was very pleased with the many programs being offered by the Library. He remarked on the efforts of the library staff to remain current with their offerings.

Mr. Garrity reminded the Board that the DeLaurentis family attended the Board's workshop meeting on Monday, August 7, regarding their petition to obtain a variance for the

placement of a 6' high fence along the property line adjoining Terminal Avenue, Erdenheim. Mr. Garrity noted that the Board previously authorized his firm to oppose the request, but that the Board seemed to be amenable to rescinding their opposition if certain modifications were made. Mr. Garrity stated that he would bring those suggestions to the attention of the zoning hearing board.

Mr. Lee opened the meeting to public comment.

Steve Heverin, Oreland, thanked the Board for voting to enact the ordinance banning single use plastic bags.

Jane Thomas, Oreland, stated that she does not agree with the ten cent fee that is imposed by the ordinance for a paper bag at the local grocery store.

Mr. Cobb commented that the third annual National Night Out was held on Tuesday, August 1. He thanked the police department, public works department and administrative staff for their efforts to make the event a huge success.

Motion (Wilson-May) vote 6-0 to adjourn the meeting at

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Taylor  
Manager/Secretary