

UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
JOINT MEETING  
APRIL 16, 2015

The Board of Supervisors of Upper Merion Township met for Joint Meetings on Thursday, April 16, 2015, in the Board Room, in the Township Building in King of Prussia. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m., followed by a pledge to the flag.

DISCUSSIONS:

BOARD OF COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE (BCA)

ROLL CALL:

Supervisors present were: Greg Waks, Erika Spott, Greg Philips, and Carol Kenney. Also present were David Kraynik, Township Manager; Sally Slook, Assistant Township Manager; Scott Milner, Chairperson; Robyn Briggs, Vice Chairperson, Lydia Dan Sardinias. Supervisor Jenaway, Mike Bowman (VFCR) and Ira Lubert (VFCR) were absent.

Mr. Scott Milner, Chairperson, stated when the Board of Community Assistance was first established in 2013 there was \$145,000 available to distribute back to the community. Through the application process, recommendations were made to the Board of Supervisors who approved \$128,000 for award to recipients. At the request of the BCA, \$17,000 was left in the coffers in the event of any emergency. In 2014, there was \$160,000 available and recommendations were made to the Board of Supervisors who approved \$155,000 for award to recipients. This year the BCA is starting with \$154,000 and will be meeting soon to make recommendations for awards.

Mr. Milner noted a positive trend in the increase of applications which was due to the support of the Board of Supervisors and the work the BCA has done to promote the BCA scholarship grant applications.

The first year there was a total of 41 applicants. Because of additional outreach efforts 95 applications were received for 2014 and this year there are 105 applications for the BCA to review.

In 2013 awards were granted to 16 organizations, 4 sports and all 8 scholarship applicants. In 2014 awards were granted to 26 organizations, 5 sports and 28 scholarships.

Last year BCA presented the following objectives:

- Continue to revisit the application process
- Plan for auditing the award recipients
- Determine what efforts are needed to promote the BCA application process.

BCA's 2015 accomplishments are as follows:

- Revised applications for both organizations and scholarships
  - Focused on making sure BCA better understood the projects and beneficiaries for the organizations/sports.
  - Scholarships – focused on making sure community service was post award
- Audit process
  - each recipient will provide a year-end summary that includes
    - receipts as appropriate
    - acknowledgment of meeting community service hours
  - 4 recipients reported on their projects at the March BCA meeting
- Community service hours.
  - Made a recommendation which the BOS approved to tie community service to the award amount.

Mrs. Robyn Briggs, Vice Chairperson, and Ms. Dan Sardinas discussed how some of the BCA funds were put to good use in the community as follows:

- Three new pieces of playground or playground equipment for the kindergarten at Caley Elementary School
- "Upper Merion Day" at Elmwood Park Zoo
- Roberts Elementary students planted a butterfly garden
- Funding for 5<sup>th</sup> Grade camping trip
- Girl Scout Troop project to help homeless people with such toiletries as toothpaste.
- Senior Center received \$5,000 for their activities
- Mother's Club for "Operation Backpack" for less fortunate children
- Upper Merion Emergency Aid for back to school items and shoes

Mr. Milner stated a focus is also made on literacy programs for such things as Neighborhood, and Concerts Under the Stars, and Neighborhood Meals on Wheels.

Mr. Milner announced recommendations have been made for a new \$10,000 scholarship to be named the General Von Steuben Scholarship that will be offered this year to a student who goes above and beyond in the application

process. It is recommended other scholarships be offered in increments of \$5,000 (\$5,000 award recommended to be named the Ronald G. Wagenmann Scholarship), \$1,000, \$2,000 and \$3,000 depending on the effort made in the application process.

With regard to BCA's 2016 objectives, Mr. Milner indicated it is planned to continue along the same lines as the 2016 objectives and take the feedback from prior years and continue to refine and improve the procedures. He noted the BCA has already started promoting the 2016 process.

Mrs. Briggs stated at the last BCA meeting there was a discussion about the need to refine the scholarship application as some students did not understand the community service objective as BCA is looking for a new project.

Mr. Milner stated the BCA will present their recommendations on organizational, sports and scholarship awards. The award announcement will be made at the May business meeting and the awards ceremony will be held on Tuesday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Mr. Philips commended the BCA members for their hard work and accomplishments and noted their steady progress in increasing the number of applications submitted.

As Board Liaison to the BCA, Mr. Waks pointed out the amount of work it takes going over 105 applications several times before coming to some very difficult decisions. He also complimented the BCA for the increase in both grant and scholarship applications which was due to the significant amount of their personal time invested for the betterment of their community. Mr. Waks said the formal naming of the two scholarships after two people who played an enormous role in the history of the township was most appropriate in that it speaks to the BCA's commitment to Upper Merion's history and to education.

Mrs. Kenney offered her words of praise and appreciation for the BCA's devotion and commitment and asked for some examples of some of the projects undertaken by the students in the past three years after their scholarship award. Mrs. Briggs provided details of the project to clean up the Upper Merion portion of the Schuylkill River. Ms. Dan Sardinias noted the project two years ago to redo the playground map at Caley Elementary School.

Mrs. Kenney asked about the timing of student projects since many go away to college. Mrs. Briggs responded students have a year to complete their projects and many fulfill the service requirement during the summer. Mr. Milner said some students use the time between the award announcement and leaving for college to complete their service.

Mr. Waks suggest that student applicants come with a plan about a project they are passionate about and make sure it is a project going forward and not their high school senior project. He emphasized the volunteer portion of the application is key and crucial and those that come with a well thought out plan do very well.

Mrs. Spott commented how difficult it is to make decisions on a review board such as the BCA and commended the members for the enormous amount of planning and effort that goes into the end result.

## PENSION ADVISORY BOARD

### ROLL CALL:

Supervisors present were: Greg Waks, Erika Scott, Greg Philips, and Carole Kenney. Also present were: Dave Kraynik, Township Manager; Eric Medrow, Chairperson; Tom Nolan, Police Chief; Sara Evans, Human Resources Director; Andy Fidler, Police Representative. Supervisor Jenaway and Sudha Suryadevara, Non-Uniformed Employee Representative, were absent.

Mr. Eric Medrow, Chairperson, discussed the Upper Merion Township 401(a) Defined Contribution Retirement Plan for civilian employees as of December 31, 2014. Highlights as follows:

- 401(a) is similar to a 401(k) which is administered by ICMA-RC, Washington, D.C.
- Plan participation is mandatory for all civilian employees.
- Each employee contributes 3% of wages and the township contributes 6% of wages.
- The plan has tier level vesting, but requires 6 years of service to be fully vested.
- There are currently 114 active employee participants in the Plan #109382.
- Employee contributions are \$6,401,966.84 and the employer contributions are \$10,293,267.79.
- Total assets in the 401(a) Defined Contribution Plan are \$16,759,745.90.
- There are no loan provisions allowed in the 401(a) plan.
- The total outstanding loan balance (as previously allowed) is now \$0.00 (last year was \$3,885.92)\*

\*The outstanding loan balance was included in the Total Assets of the 401(a) plan

### Act 600 Police Pension Defined Benefit Plan

- Unlike the 401(a) Retirement Plan, the Police Pension Plan is a “Defined Benefit Plan.”

- A Defined Benefit Plan provides employees a certain amount of benefit when he/she retires and that benefit is funded totally by the Employer/Township.
- There are 65 active employee participants.
- Custodian of funds is PNC Bank, Pittsburgh, PA
- The Fund Manager is Daniel F. Dent, Baltimore, Maryland.
- The Actuary is Thomas J. Anderson & Associates, Media, PA

Act 600 Police Pension Defined Benefit Plan as of December 31, 2014:

|                   |                            |
|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Cash Equivalents  | \$ 776,905.91              |
| Fixed Income      | \$12,516,775.48            |
| Equities          | \$31,216,035.60            |
| <br>Total Assets: | <br><u>\$44,509,716.99</u> |

Activity for 2014:

- Investment Income: \$ 904,431.24
- Benefits Paid: \$1,972,385.05
- Expenses: \$ 208,523.58
- Fees & Charges: \$ 40,789.65

457 Deferred Compensation/Supplemental Pension Plan:

As of 12/31/14:

- Service Provider is ICMA-RC, Washington, DC (#301437)
- Participation is mandatory for all police employees and optional for non-uniform employees.
- There are 80 active non-uniformed employees in the plan.
- There are 65 active police employees in the plan.
- Assets are: \$16,033,369.23.

Mrs. Spott asked if there is a targeted rate of return on the Defined Benefit Plan. Mr. Medrow responded in the affirmative and said it was 8%. He said in today's environment 8% is very high and it would be well to move that downward. He noted, however, it is not easy to move from 8% down to 7 ¾%.

Retirement Health Savings Plan (RHS)

As of 12/31/14:

- Plan is administered by ICMA-RC, Washington, DC
- Participation is open to all Township employees on a voluntary basis.

However, employees must be in a defined group, and contribute a fixed percentage as agreed upon by the group.

- Currently, there are two groups defined in the RHS: Executive Group and the Police Command Staff.
- There are 16 active employees participating.
- Assets are: \$1,195,141.69.

#### Final Comments:

Mr. Medrow stated the Pension Advisory Board has formed an Executive Committee in 2014 to address, review and evaluate the current Police Pension Plan and Non-Uniform Retirement Plans. The members of the Executive Committee include Eric Medrow, Chairperson; David G. Kraynik, Township Manager and Thomas Nolan, Chief of Police.

In the near future, the Executive Committee will discuss with the entire Pension Board, the Committee's findings. Mr. Medrow indicated there will be some changes occurring over the course of the next two months which will help strengthen all of the plan, particularly the police defined benefit plan.

Mr. Philips commended the Pension Advisory Board for their good stewardship of the township's assets provided by the taxpayers. He said the fact that 91% of the liabilities for pensions are covered going forward is an amazing rate considering what some other municipalities have in their pension benefit packages.

As Board Liaison and Trustee to the Pension Advisory Board, Mr. Waks Stated he is impressed with the work that goes into overseeing the work of the financial advisors who monitor the pension funds of the police and civilian employees. He indicated the percentage cited for pension liability coverage is pre-economic growth in the stock market and is probably even higher now which reflects great credit on the stewardship of the Pension Advisory Board.

#### SHADE TREE AND BEAUTIFICATION COMMISSION

##### ROLL CALL:

Supervisors present were: Greg Waks, Erika Spott, Greg Philips, and Carole Kenney. Also present were: Dave Kraynik, Township Manager; Jerome Ocker, Chairman; Bill Schutter, Parks Maintenance Superintendent; and Bob Dempsey. Supervisors Jenaway was absent.

Mr. Ocker outlined the following 2015 goals and achievements. Highlights as follows:

- Earth Day celebration – Saturday, April 25, 2015

- Tree Planting demonstration – the trees typically planted are bare root trees and there is a technique to do it properly. This will occur during the Earth Day celebration
- Trees that were planted in the last two years need to be checked for overall health. Guide wires have to be removed to make sure there is sufficient mulch around trees.
- Pruning club is being established. Two pruning seminars were held last year and one seminar was televised. Focus is on ornamental trees currently in our parks.
- Bare root trees will be planted in the fall with a focus on a site needing more trees.
- Continuing tree inventory with a focus on ash trees. Emerald Ash Borer is moving eastward and proactive plan will be developed to take care of the trees.
- Six of the largest ash trees in Executive Estates Park are being treated by Davey Tree Company.
- Inventorying of all other trees is continuing and will be identified as to species, condition, and possibly sizes.
- Identifying properties for beautification awards – also want to do backyard review; however, this will require permission to gain entrance to the property. There will also be a nomination for “outstanding tree of the year.”

Mr. Philips noted the beautification awards are well received in the community and has also received many comments from people who would like to help with the tree inventory. He pointed out that once again Upper Merion Township has been awarded the designation as a “Tree City USA.” It was noted Upper Merion has had this recognition for 39 years.

As Board Liaison to the Shade Tree and Beautification Commission, Mrs. Spott thanked everyone for all their hard work. She pointed out another assignment fulfilled by the Commission is review of development plans during the land development process. The Commission works with the Township Planner to make sure the landscaping aspects of development plans have sufficient greenery.

Mrs. Spott encouraged residents to participate in the Earth Day activities scheduled in the township on April 25<sup>th</sup> which are designed to engage the community in sustainability efforts.

Mrs. Spott commented on some of the beautiful large trees that are taken down and she encouraged people to think twice before removing a tree and if it is necessary to do so to plant a replacement somewhere else on the property. She noted the long-standing contributions trees provide to the well-being of our township by providing oxygen, shade and improvement to air quality.

Mrs. Kenney stated she is appreciative of the educational aspects provided by the Commission.

With regard to the Emerald Ash Borer, Mrs. Kenney asked how many ash trees are in the township in addition to the six trees at Executive Estates currently. Mr. Ocker responded he did not have that information as yet. He said an inventory has been at McKaig Nature Center and there are about 26 ash trees along the trail. They just focused on 30 feet off the trails. Mr. Ocker noted Bob White Park does not have any ash trees. Executive Estates has other ash trees; however, only the largest six trees are being treated. Once the inventory is completed the marginal trees will be removed and another species will be planted as an alternative. It was noted it is obvious when a tree is infested and one clue will be woodpecker damage.

With regard to the beautification awards, Mrs. Kenney asked if it is taken into account that people do the landscaping themselves versus using landscapers. Mr. Ocker responded the Commission tries to take that into account but it is not always possible to know. The other consideration is when there is a late spring like this year the Commission likes to be out reviewing properties now, but not a whole lot is in bloom as yet. Some people have better summer and fall gardens than they do in spring when the Commission does the review.

## PARK AND RECREATION BOARD

### ROLL CALL:

Supervisors present were: Greg Waks, Erika Spott, Greg Philips and Carole Kenney. Also present were: David Kraynik, Township Manager; Glenn Chairperson; Tina Garzillo, Vice Chairperson; Neil Sardinias, Secretary; Mary Ann Ahearn, Eileen Connelly, Rob DeFelice. Supervisor Jenaway and Dave Burns were absent.

Mr. Michael Trachtenberg, Chairperson, stated in addition to the normal work of park evaluation, there are several major projects going on at the same time which include working with the Master Plan, trail, and community center.

Neil Sardinias reported the Heuser Park section (1.48 miles) of the Schuylkill West Trails is under construction. Construction began in December and is targeted to be completed on September 2015. The contractor has cleared a length of the trail, installed erosion control measures and storm sewer piping for the stormwater basin proposed behind Trout Run Wastewater Treatment Plant. Construction was temporarily halted due to weather conditions in February through March and construction is expected to resume in late April. The next major milestone for the project will be the rough grading of the trail alignment. The construction value for the project is \$1.7 million and work to date

is 9.8% complete.

Tina Garzillo, Vice Chairperson, stated the Park and Recreation Board has been working on updated the field use guidelines and voted unanimously at the last meeting to recommend approval to the Board of Supervisors. The application for the grant proposals was also updated and will be coming before the supervisors as well. With regard to the proposed new guidelines for permits, Mr. Trachtenberg commented many outside groups have been using township facilities for fields and some have not have not taken proper care. As a result, a lot of extra work is involved to make sure the fields are useable. The impetus for the new guidelines came out of interview feedback for the Master Plan.

Mary Ann Ahearn stated the search is ongoing for goats to take care of weeds and invasive vines in township parks.

Eileen Connelly discussed the Outer Limits Program enjoyed in Upper Merion for almost 40 years which provides recreational activities for adults and children with special needs. Another successful program is the Special Needs Adaptive Program (SNAP) which is designed for soccer and basketball activities. Ms. Connelly asked if an adaptive playground could be included in the Master Plan, and if not, move forward with more adaptive equipment in some of our playgrounds. Mr. Trachtenberg pointed out in looking through the Activity Guide there is hardly a page that is not inclusive.

With regard to communication with sports teams, Mr. Trachtenberg indicated different organizations will be invited to come to the Park and Recreation Board meetings to provide an update of what they are doing and what can be done to help them.

Mr. Trachtenberg discussed the Master Plan and reported several public meetings were held to obtain feedback. There have been almost 1,000 returns on the survey and does not include all the personal interviews with all the various organizations, senior center, etc. The survey results have wide-ranging comments and include such comments as more fields (including turf fields), concern about Heuser Park, trails, improvement of current parks, especially for ADA adaptive playgrounds and new equipment, current maintenance, and the swimming pool issue.

Mr. Trachtenberg noted the charter passholder initiative for the new community center is well underway and staffing has begun. He also said the Park and Recreation Department will be involved in speaking at various community organizations about the various amenities to be offered at the community center.

Rob DeFelice, the newest member of the Park and Recreation Board was introduced to the Board of Supervisors.

On behalf of the Board of Supervisors, Mr. Philips commended the Park and Recreation Board for all the work they have done with regard to the community center, trails, Master Plan and surveys to determine the needs of the community. He encouraged residents to complete the surveys which are still available on the township website until mid-May.

Mr. Philips noted at the last workshop meeting the supervisors were interested to hear about YSC Sports involvement with the Philadelphia Union. The owner of YSC Sports was asked to provide input for the Master Plan as well as see how they can work with the Park and Recreation Board and Department as YSC is looking to propose a footprint which would provide for one or two additional fields. Mr. Philips also discussed the types of issues that recently occurred at Bob Case park where the field was damaged to the point the spring soccer program had to be relocated. He noted one of the reasons that Heuser Park is "beyond abused" is because it is a grass field and grass needs recovery time.

Mr. Waks followed up on Mr. Philips' comments and said field turf is an issue that he has previously mentioned in past years because he is physically active and played on field turf for many years when he was playing soccer. He said field turf is easier on the body and it has many benefits as to usage. There may be some other options, but the Master Plan will address all the issues.

Mr. Waks commented about a week ago he had the opportunity to walk a portion of the trail and looks forward to the official opening in early September. He noted the enormity of Heuser Park which most people do not realize and said there are numerous opportunities starting with the trail going forward as to what could be accomplished in that park for the benefit of all residents. Mr. Waks thanks the Park and Recreation Board for their efforts on behalf of the community.

Mrs. Spott commented how each member of the Park and Recreation Board brings something special to the overall success now being realized on so many different community projects. She recognized their hard work and dedication.

With regard to Heuser Park, Mrs. Spott noted this huge piece of land is so important to the Master Plan because available real estate is so limited and what is done with the land will determine the future of this township for decades and generations to come. She encouraged the Park and Recreation Board to find ways to influence the coexistence of a lot of different interests in the community and provided the example of a community garden next to a playing field.

Mrs. Kenney joined her colleagues in praise of the work of the Park and Recreation Board and commented she is particularly pleased to see the field

guidelines.

Mrs. Kenney asked if any advertisements have been posted for goats. Ms. Ahearn responded she will look into this.

With regard to adaptive playground equipment, Mrs. Kenney asked if there are any grants for this purpose. Ms. Ahearn responded she was wondering if the Park and Recreation Board could apply for a grant through the Board of Community Assistance (BCA). Mr. Waks responded this was the first year a formal policy was made indicating citizen boards can apply for grants. He provided the example of the EAC that applied for a grant for mile markers for the new trail. Mrs. Kenney suggested Ms. Ahearn be in touch with the Assistant Township Manager who is responsible for grant applications.

Mr. Trachtenberg commented once the Master Plan is completed it will be helpful in prioritizing various needs.

A discussion followed about the difference between a grass field and field turf.

Mrs. Spott asked if an educational effort could be made with schools and community organizations to encourage people not to litter in our parks. Ms. Garzillo responded one of the things that has been added to their grant proposal was a service component which was non-specific. In order to have children more involved the idea would be to have them adopt a park, do clean ups and efforts are underway in that direction. Mr. Trachtenberg noted when an individual or organization applies for a permit one of the conditions is to leave the area clean.

Mrs. Spott suggested a public service announcement about littering should be done beyond what is required by the permitting process.

Mr. Philips agreed that would be a good idea for a UMGA-TV PSA.

#### POLICE CITIZEN ADVISORY BOARD

Supervisors present were: Greg Waks, Erika Spott, Greg Philips, and Carole Kenney. Also present were: Dave Kraynik, Township Manager; Tom Nolan, Chief of Police; Jennifer Schauble, Chairperson; Frank Rodrique, Vice Chairperson; Harry Nuskey. Supervisor Jenaway was absent.

Ms. Jennifer M. Schauble, Chairperson, highlighted a variety of ways the Police Department interacts with the citizens of the township:

- Fingerprinting of children:
  - There were at least four different events and approximately 100

kids were fingerprinted at different events including the Police Week demonstration at the King of Prussia Plaza.

- Camp for 3-6 year olds at both Candlebrook and Roberts Elementary every year.
- Fingerprinting at Community Day at Heuser Park.
- Although National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day, formerly sponsored by the Drug Enforcement Administration, has been discontinued, the Montgomery County District Attorney's Office will be hosting this event twice a year throughout the county. It was noted medical return boxes will still be in the police lobby for disposal during the year. Residents are welcome to drop any unused, unwanted or expired medical prescriptions or any unused pharmaceutical controlled substances at any time during the year. Last year 365 pounds of unused or wanted medications were collected.
- Safety Presentation in conjunction with Lafayette Ambulance
  - First two weeks of June last year in all the elementary schools and will be done the same way this year
  - Park and Recreation summer camp counselors on June 19, 2015
- Police Week
  - National Police Week celebrated next month, with a Demonstration at the JC Penney Court in the King of Prussia Plaza on May 16, 2015. Jefferson Hospital and their trauma awareness team will be part of this demonstration
  - Police Memorial Day, May 15, 2015
- Third Annual Cop Camp June 15 through June 19, 2015
  - Program for ages 11-13 who live in the township
  - 20 cadets and multiple UMPD officers from all divisions of the Police Department
  - Designed to educate on PD job responsibilities and activities along with the Montgomery County bomb squad, fire department and Lafayette Ambulance
- New Officers – Introductions to CAB
  - Jennifer Cope – one of our newest officers
- Chaplain Program
  - Voluntary partnership between the clergy and UMPD
  - Currently 7 volunteers
  - Looking for more ways to get the Chaplain Program involved with the Citizen Board

- Purpose is to improve the quality of life for township residents and UMPD
- Help maintain strong community relations by exchanging vital information that will help residents to better understand police activity and procedures
- Help UMPD officers perform their duties more efficiently

Mr. Philips thanked the Board for all their hard work and mentioned how much his daughter enjoyed the Cop Camp last year. He commended the Upper Merion Police Department for their professionalism, the training they undergo, their involvement with the community with the Bike Patrol and various outreach programs which make officers more visible and approachable.

Mr. Waks provided an example of the professionalism of the Upper Merion Police Department and the way the officers handled the protestors last year at the King of Prussia Mall. From comments he received he has no doubt it changed some of their minds about seeing people based on their own merits and not on something that may have happened somewhere else.

Mrs. Spott mentioned she would like to see fingerprinting at the Farmers Market again. Officer Nuskey responded it has been scheduled. Mrs. Spott commented such community involvement is so important and reflects great credit on the Upper Merion Police Department and the leadership of Chief Tom Nolan and the citizens who are part of the Police Advisory Board.

Chief Nolan expressed appreciation to all the supervisors for their supportive comments and noted how pleased he is with the equipment and resources that are available to assist the department in fulfilling the full spectrum of police services.

Mr. Philips described a challenge coin presented to him by Chief Nolan and said this type of gesture goes a long way for the officers to have some unit pride as they distribute these coins.

#### ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved by Mrs. Spott, seconded by Mrs. Kenney, all voting "Aye" to adjourn the joint meeting at 9:20 p.m. None opposed. Motion approved 4-0.

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DAVID G. KRAYNIK  
TOWNSHIP MANAGER

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Minutes Approved:  
Minutes Entered: