Maidencreek Township Board of Supervisors
November 15, 2023
7:00 p.m.

Attending: David Franke, Heidi Fiedler, Joshua Meck, Hunter Ahrens, and Nicole Manley, Esq. of E. Kenneth Nyce,

Guests: Carol Anne Donohoe, Charles Voorhies, Eric Bauman, and other members of the community.

David Franke called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge to the Flag.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Heidi Fiedler made a motion to approve the November 15, 2023, Agenda. Joshua Meck seconded the motion. Hearing no question on the motion, all members voted "Aye." Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Charles Voorhies, 284 West Walnut Tree Drive.

Mr. Voorhies asked the reason for the Township Manager's resignation and if there was a reason the Township would consider rehiring him. Mr. Franke stated Hunter has another job, the manager's position is on a year-to-year basis and we are not ready to discuss personnel matters at this point. When Mr. Ahrens was hired, he told the Board he anticipated only being at Maidencreek Township for five years.

Ms. Fiedler commented that Mr. Ahrens worked hard and put the Township in a better position and stated there were unfair politics that caused him to seek employment elsewhere. She added that it is a loss to the Township especially when there are some issues including financial, economic climate, and interest rates. She thanked Mr. Ahrens for the job he has done since he's been with the Township. She then added the manager position should be full-time, and while he is still at the Township, hiring an interim manager for the day-to-day issues. Mr. Voorhies stated that Mr. Ahrens was the most transparent manager who worked for the Township.

Carol Anne Donohoe, 101 Spirit Court.

Ms. Donohoe thanked Hunter for doing a great job and being professional and easygoing through the conditional use hearings. She stated she watched the YouTube video of the most recent Board of Supervisors meeting and is concerned about what is going on and how personal agendas are being pursued rather than representing the residents of the Township. She asked if there was an opening for the manager position to be shared with Greenwich Township. Ms. Manley answered, saying that to her knowledge Mr. Frey reached out for a conversation but there was no agreement, and would defer the question to Mr. Frey. Ms. Donohoe questioned the behavior of the Supervisors and the influence that they have over our way of life. Mr. Franke stated personnel matters should never come up in a public meeting and apologized for the incident. The Board and Ms. Donohoe continued the discussion about the manager's position.

PRESENTATION BY PFM

Jamie Schlesinger said that mostly everything had been discussed at last week's meeting. He said there is a parameters ordinance for consideration that Peter Edelman from Stevens and Lee has prepared for review by your solicitor on behalf of the Township, related to potential future

financing tied to infrastructure needs in 2024. There is a maximum annual interest rate, maximum principal amount, and a final maturity. Should the Board move forward with the parameter's ordinance, the team would work toward financing that would occur sometime in 2024, stating this is the legal action necessary to allow us to move forward with the process. The rules tied to this fit within the standards of the Local Government Debt Act. He went over the maximum parameters, the debt service payments, and how it would work under the State guidelines. Mr. Edelman also spoke about the ordinance that has been prepared and is in compliance. Action is required by the Board of Supervisors to authorize the issuance of the bonds. He stated the Department of Community and Economic Development would have oversight and review the ordinance and spoke about the process and proceedings that would follow. The Board had some questions and Mr. Ahrens and Mr. Edelman went on to explain the credit rating, fund balance, and expenses. Ms. Fiedler had some concerns about the interest rate, the debt amount, tax increases, and financial and political instability and stated she would not support this. Mr. Franke and Mr. Meck both stated the Township has projects that need to be completed and this will help with the costs that entail and asked Ms. Fiedler if she had any alternative ideas. The Board continued the discussion with questions from the public on grants, storm damage, stream repair, tax increases replacement of bridges, road repair, and the need for emergency services. They also discussed the fees associated with the bond with the interest rates attached and the consideration of a debt management policy and recycling assessment.

A motion was made by Joshua Meck to adopt Parameters Ordinance 258. Dave Franke seconded the motion. Heidi Fiedler voted "nay;" the motion passed 2 to 1.

DISCUSS THE BUDGET FOR 2024

Mr. Ahrens presented a PowerPoint presentation on the budget projections. He spoke about the projections for the next 5 years with a TRAN included for both 2024 and 2025 and proposed 2.6 milage inclusive of the General Fund purposes and a 0.25 mills Fire Tax increase.

Road Work for 2024

Mr. Ahrens stated they received the RoadBotics analysis back and found that it is close to the assessment that Keith Shuman, Tom Unger, and himself for the 15-year projection. He had examples of roads analyzed by RoadBotics rating them as in good condition but certain roads are over ten years old. He continued to go over the ratings of roads and three scenarios for the Board to consider with the figures attached. The Board discussed Liquid Fuels, capital expenses, and pressing needs for certain roads. They discussed an alternative exit in Ontelaunee Heights that should be addressed. They also discussed Comcast and the Maidencreek Authority and road cuts before paving and the Cornerstone Bridge added into the 2024 budget. The Board continued the discussion on the amount of the budget, including repairs to equipment, new equipment, the Cornerstone Bridge, road repairs, and the acquisition of land for an access road for Ontelaunee Heights.

Support for Volunteer Fire Company

Mr. Ahrens stated they met with Dan Miller to discuss the increasing needs for the Fire Company, proposing a .25 mill increase to keep the Fire Department as a volunteer Fire

Company. The Board discussed the increase and the pros of the increase. Dan Miller explained what they needed for the upcoming years for equipment, utilities, and repairs for the building.

Borrowing Expenses

This was spoken about previously.

Taxes & Recycling Fee

Mr. Ahrens explained in his PowerPoint presentation the millage increases in General Fund and Fire Tax with options for the Board. The Board went over the paperwork that Mr. Ahrens provided and stated he would provide copies of the PowerPoint presentation due to some of the information being only on the PowerPoint presentation. The Board continued to discuss the tax issues and what burdens it would have on residents including the accelerating school taxes and splitting the rate over two years. Mr. Ahrens then presented a PowerPoint on how the recycling fee would be funded alone in the budget structure and set the fee similar to the taxes each year. The Board discussed money paid to the Township for recycling, wages, expenses for the Yard Waste Site, and the Road Crew for leaf and brush pickup. Ms. Fiedler mentioned the money coming back from the Northern Berks Police Department, Mr. Meck stated that the NBRPD did a great job on their budget and they don't have an increase so the Township does not have to raise the contribution to them. The Board continued to discuss the costs of recycling and the fee to the residents and what that amount should be. Ms. Fiedler did not agree with the budget and wanted another budget meeting. Mr. Meck asked Ms. Fiedler if she had other ideas, and Mr. Franke explained how the budget works without borrowing more money and noted the reasons why there needs to be a vote tonight.

A motion was made by Joshua Meck to raise the Fire Tax by .25 mills for the 2024 budget with expenses reflected as presented and David Franke seconded the motion. Heidi Fiedler voted "Nay." The motion passed 2 to 1.

A motion was made by Joshua Meck to increase the tax millage under the General Fund budget by 1.25 mills for the year 2024 with expenses reflected as presented and David Franke seconded the motion. Heidi Fiedler voted "Nay." The motion passed 2 to 1.

A motion was made by Heidi Fiedler to move recycling to the county platform at a fee of $133.25 with expenses as presented. Joshua Meck seconded the motion. Hearing no question on the motion, all members voted, "Aye." Motion carried.

A motion was made by Joshua Meck to allow the Township to accept the State Liquids Fuel budget with expenses presented. Heidi Fiedler seconded the motion. Hearing no questions on the motion, all members voted, "Aye." Motion carried.

A motion was made by Joshua Meck to accept the Park and Recreation Fund with expenses presented. David Franke seconded the motion. Hearing no questions on the motion, all members voted, "Aye." Motion carried.

Capital Expenses: Tabled.

BUSINESS

Consider Withdrawal of Certificate of Deposit

A motion was made by Joshua Meck to withdraw the Certificate of Deposit to make bill payments for the month. Heidi Fiedler seconded the motion. Hearing no questions on the motion, all members voted, "Aye." Motion carried.

Consider Approval of Tax Revenue

A motion was made by Joshua Meck to approve the manager to sign the TRAN not exceeding $600,000.00 with Fleetwood Bank. Heidi Fiedler seconded the motion. Hearing no questions on the motion, all members voted, "Aye." Motion carried.

Accept the Resignation of Township Manager

A motion was made by Heidi Fielder to accept Hunter Ahrens's resignation letter effective no later than December 12, 2023. Joshua Meck seconded the motion. Hearing no questions on the motion, all members voted, "Aye." Motion carried.

Mr. Franke announced an executive session from 10:21 pm to 10:51.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by David Franke and seconded by Joshua Meck. The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christina Hafer
Township Secretary