

February 4, 2023

The East Lampeter Township Board of Supervisors held the annual Forecast Meeting on Saturday, February 4, 2023 beginning at 8:00 a.m. at the Hand-In Hand Fire Company, 313 Enterprise Drive, Bird-In-Hand, PA 17505. The meeting was called to order by John Blowers, Chairman. In addition to Mr. Blowers, Supervisors present were Mr. Corey Meyer, Mr. Roger Rutt and Mr. Mike Thornton. Also present were Mr. Ralph Hutchison, Township Manager, Mr. Stephen Zerbe, Chief of Police, Mr. Kevin Hostetter, Finance Director, Mr. Colin Siesholtz, Director of Planning/Zoning Officer and Mr. Charles Thomas, Public Works Director.

The following were presents in the audience:

Bob May, Lancaster Emergency Management Services
Bruce Hess, Parks & Recreation Board Member
Christian Chretien, Vice Chairman, Parks and Recreation
Darrell Siesholtz, Chairman, Planning Commission
Dave Gribble, Ronks Fire Company Representative
Dave Keens, Lafayette Alternate Fire Company Representative
Dave Zuilkoski, Superintendent of Conestoga Valley School District
Diane Tyson, Secretary, Park Board
Don Boyer, Hand-In-Hand Fire Company Alternate
Eric Bergstrom, Lafayette Fire Company Citizen
Gerry Huesken, Planning Commission Member
Greg Sherman, Witmer Fire Company Representative
James Glick, Zoning Hearing Board Alternate
Jason Dagen, Planning Commission Member
Jim Everhart, Chairman, Parks & Recreation
Paul Fisher, Hand-In-Hand Fire Company Representative
Randy Patterson, Vice Chairman, Planning Commission
Ray D'Agostino, Lancaster County Commissioner
Scott Ausburger, Zoning Hearing Board Member
Billy Joraskie, Representative for Senator Scott Martin
Steve Mentzer, PA State Representative
Vinnny Patel, Secretary, Sewer Authority
Dr. Jill Koser, CV Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Education
Nate Church, Ronks Fire Company Alternate
Ezra Rothman, Economic Development Company of Lancaster County
Ivan Stoltzfus
Matthew Fisher
Kyle Fuller

Chairman John Blowers called the meeting to order, welcomed those in attendance, thanked everyone for their dedication to the Township and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

Roger Rutt thanked Bob May, Emergency Management Services for their response to his father's fall at his residence a few weeks ago.

Ralph Hutchison welcomed everyone to the meeting. He indicated the purpose of the meeting was to bring Township officials and others together to review the state of the Township and to discuss what will be happening going forward in to this year. As he moved through the opening slides, he noted that the \$1.8M of ARPA funds would be utilized through the Federal provision for lost revenue and subsequently programmed with \$900,0000 to the fire apparatus fund, \$540,000 for the replacement and enhancement of the HVAC system at the Township building, and audio/visual upgrades to the public meeting room for online meetings. There will remain approximately \$300,000 to be allocated to other projects.

Mr. Hutchison noted that two collective bargaining agreements were finalized in December 2022 - (1) Non-uniform agreement for 3 years and (2) Police Department agreements for 4 years.

In addition, the Township staff is moving forward with a Community Survey in 2023 to collect baseline feedback from Township residents, landowners, and business owners to determine thoughts on services of the Township. The codification project is under draft review at this time and when finalized, a searchable document for all ordinances of the Township will be readily available online. The 2023 adopted budget calls for the hiring of a human resources/communications position given the need to recruit and retain highly trained staffing. This is a much needed position.

As noted in prior years, speeding is an issue in the Township and Pennsylvania is the only state in the nation that does not allow local police to use radar guns to catch drivers who exceed the speed limit. Township staff and the Township Police Department await the legislation that will allow this to move forward.

Since the adoption of the Lincoln Highway Streetscape plan in 2015, Township staff has diligently worked to implement portions of the plan. The western gateway project is currently in design phase and is scheduled to be bid in late 2024 with construction expected to begin in 2025. This is a PennDOT project.

A Township project is the phase 3 project which is from the Tanger/Dutch Wonderland intersection to approximately Bowman Road and involves moving the southside curb in toward the center line to make space for a 12-ft wide shared bike/pedestrian facility on the southside of the highway.

The portion of the Lincoln Highway Streetscape trail that will traverse through Rockvale is expected to be part of the Rockvale master plan and is currently on hold due to redevelopment

action being needed for that property. It will be a trail from Bowman Road to Hartman Bridge Road.

Another PennDOT project within the corridor is from Lincoln Highway East and Route 896 eastward which is scheduled to be bid later this year with the project most likely beginning construction in 2024. There will be a change to the traffic signals which currently have poles on the corners and span wires. These would be changed to poles with mast arms that will be the same design and color as what is currently at the Tanger/Dutch Wonderland intersection.

John Blowers inquired about the cost of the streetscape project which was responded at approximately \$200 million.

Finally, as part of the Lincoln Highway Streetscape Plan the recommendation for wayfinding and gateway signage given that the branding was finalized with “Lincoln Highway Lancaster”. Mr. Hutchison noted that the Gateway features on the western side will be part of the western gateway project that PennDOT is leading and the eastern gateway signage is being led by the Township.

The Lancaster Heritage Pathway is currently under construction along with the Walnut Street Extension. The Township is looking to make an application to PA DCNR for additional funding to continue the trail design and construction to the northwest towards Geist Road with another trail head. This application will be submitted by April 5, 2023 with the help of a consultant.

Connect 2040 Projects – The Board of Supervisors submitted 3 applications for the Township and was very successful being granted all three. As such, the Township will be doing more work on the Lancaster Heritage Pathway to the west to connect to the City of Lancaster with one path along Walnut Street to Ranck Road and the other along Oakgrove and Pitney through Conestoga Pines Park.

Bob May from LEMSA gave a history of Emergency Management Services. He stated there are 130 calls per day across 21 municipalities. He indicated there are a lot of county transports for mental health situations. The number of calls in East Lampeter Township for emergency services is higher than the national average. He stated calls for overdoses continue to be on the rise. He thanked East Lampeter Township for their financial support.

Paul Fisher from Bird-In-Hand Fire Company discussed recruiting and retention as it relates to human resources. He stated support staff is needed as well. He indicated there are 49 active firefighters. They are waiting on a new engine which will take 2-3 years.

Dave Keens from Lafayette Fire Company indicated in 2022 there was an increase in emergency calls. He indicated the Township is growing and the increased calls are likely to continue as a result. Financially they have \$810,000 remaining in funds and Fire EMS has \$90,000 remaining.

A new ladder truck will be needed by 2026 which will cost approximately \$2 million. He made a plea to raise the 2% funding cap for fire apparatus funding. Mr. Keens indicated in 2023 they will need an AF6 Supply Hose as the current one is 20 years old. The cost will be \$45,000. He is waiting on a fire attack hose that was ordered over a year ago and turnout gear which was purchased in January 2022 but still not received to date. Mr. Keens noted that false alarms are questionable as real or a result of a faulty system. Mr. Hutchison noted that the Township has a false alarm ordinance which requires billing of the landowner after so many false alarms which is implemented by the Township.

Dave Gribble from Ronks Fire Company indicated their calls are down 8% as a result of three companies merging together in Paradise Township. They do not do fundraising. The Township is their number 1 funding source. He spoke of rehabbing their current engine instead of buying a new one.

Greg Sherman from the Witmer Fire Company indicated in 2022 they had 271 emergency calls which was up 2%. They are having one of their tankers (1994) refurbished at a cost of \$196,000 and they should have had it back in December 2022 but now they are expecting it in 1-2 weeks.

Kevin Hostetter, Finance Director spoke to all things finance. The 2022 Budget revenue amounts were budgeted to be similar to pre-covid amounts. He indicated the general fund revenues were greater than the budgeted figure by almost \$700,000. The general fund expenditures were less than the budgeted figure by almost \$600,000. He went in to detail with reasons for these variances. In addition, when the 2022 budget was created the Township anticipated spending 1/3 of the American Rescue Plan funds however, after further Board consideration, plans changed and a significantly lower amount was utilized from this money in this year. Sewer and stormwater collections were greater than expected. Sewer fund expenses were lower than budgeted given anticipated repairs were not necessary. He indicated it is not unusual for some anticipated projects to not take place. He indicated with the volatile stock/bond market in 2022 he is not sure the pension plans will be considered fully funded as of the end of the year but if they are not they will certainly be greater than 90% funded which is far better than most municipalities in Pennsylvania.

Mr. Hostetter indicated the Township is expecting a \$1.5 million general funds deficit in 2023 due to increased labor costs, an increase in the number of projects planned and an increase in the number of large dollar purchases as there is an impact of inflation on these purchases. However, as a result of the surplus in 2022 he is expecting the general fund expenses to be about 37% so this should still result in the Township being in a good financial position at the end of 2023. Mr. Hostetter is expecting that all or most of the remaining American Rescue Plan funds will be spent during 2023. It is expected that many of the Capital projects and Stormwater projects that had been put on hold will now begin in 2023. With regard to the Sewer Authority, he indicated that despite not all of the approved projects being completed during 2023 there are a number of large projects taking place over the next few years and the current fund balance will not be

sufficient to pay for all of them so the East Lampeter Sewer Authority will be borrowing \$5 million which is scheduled to settle in March.

Charlie Thomas, Director of Public Works provided that there are total of 13 employees. In 2023 the budget allows for 2 more PW employees and an Administrative Assistant for the department. In 2022, John Brooks, Road Superintendent retired and sadly passed away in November. The PW staff handled 1,348 PA 1-calls. In 2023, a new bucket truck will be purchased for use across parks, roads, and sewer. The PW department has 13 plows, two of which the Township partnered with Conestoga Valley School District to have painted by the Art Club and by the Virtual Academy students. This was a fantastic endeavor and we hope it can continue.

Each year there are roads to pave, oil & chip, for 2023 the following roads will be addressed: Hornig, Rose, Lilac, Iris, Sage and Tulip roads.

As far as sewer updates, the emergency generator at Stauffer Run Pump Station was replaced at a cost of \$1.2 million. The Chopper Pump/Muffin Monster was replaced at Fertility. An H2O Grant has been applied for in the amount of \$2.5 million which will be matched at \$1.2 million by the Township if granted, to consider replacing two pump stations with one.

The playground equipment at Flory Park is 22 years old so they are looking to replace it with new equipment. Engineering for a pavilion at Lafayette Tower will begin in 2023 with construction proposed for 2024. Five (5) new security cameras will be installed at park pavilions. The 6th year of a 10-year project for the removal of ash trees will be done at Community Park in 2023. The Township will continue focusing on the Spotted Lantern Fly problem. A grant application has been submitted to the Fish and Boat Commission which would allow for work to be done at Gibbons Park at Nolt's Mill at the entrance on Route 340, the parking lot, and a canoe and kayak launch. The total cost is \$200,000 with a 50% match from the Township.

Colin Siesholtz discussed the MS4 program indicating the next permit cycle would be from 2023 – 2028 and he indicated the Public Works Staff assists with meeting a portion of permit requirements through street sweeping and inlet cleaning.

As for potential development, Mr. Siesholtz discussed a 12-unit apartment complex that is proposed to be constructed at 1782 Lincoln Hwy East, at 2599 Old Philadelphia Pike there will be an expansion of industrial areas for startup businesses on the Vallorbs site, the E.G. Stoltzfus property at 458 Mt Sidney Rd is under review for a 15-lot subdivision for single family dwellings. In addition, he spoke about the Rockvale Master Plan project which will have between 400-500 residential units and changes to the commercial spaces that the Township staff anticipates reviewing soon. Mr. Siesholtz presented the Township Official Map updates and reviewed the potential for another Zoning Ordinance update. In addition, a housing study will be conducted in the Township in 2023.

Ralph Hutchison reviewed the sewer rate study to ensure that what is being charged to customers is fair. He discussed the partnership with High Associates to seek funds for the improvements at Greenfield and Hempstead Roads. Mr. Hutchison discussed how there was a grant established for use by the Conestoga Valley region to use to establish a Recreation Commission which was being worked on by a Steering Committee of Conestoga Valley School District, East Lampeter Township and Upper Leacock Township. At the beginning of 2023 Upper Leacock Township backed out of being a part of the group. West Earl Township never committed to any part of working toward the recreation committee. At this point, East Lampeter Township will continue to work with Conestoga Valley School District to determine if there is a possibility of East Lampeter Township providing such recreational opportunities to its residents. As a reminder, Mr. Hutchison communicated the U.S. Women's Open will take place in 2024 at Lancaster Country Club. For the prior event, East Lampeter Township was involved and intends to be for this one as well.

Chief Stephen Zerbe went over statistics related to drugs, prostitution, overdoses, accidents, and dealing with mental health issues. Chief Zerbe noted that the East Lampeter Police Department is state accredited and has been for a number of years. Chief Zerbe announced the retirement of Detective Joe Edgell in March 2023. It was acknowledged that there was a hiring of 6 new officers to ensure a full complement of officers as retirements occur and training is needed to get individuals ready to be officers. Chief Zerbe noted that the impound yard was completed in 2022, a canine program has begun in 2023 with a therapy dog and that new tasers will be purchased in 2023.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Corey Meyer and was seconded by Mike Thornton at 10:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ralph Hutchison