



MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Commissioners
FROM: Melissa Shafer
DATE: March 20, 2017
RE: Manager's Report

Agenda Items:

- The Employee Manual is ready for adoption. This is a housekeeping item that has been under review for some time, but needs to be updated to be in compliance with current employment laws.
- Steve Hunsberger will be at the meeting to review the sewer agreement with the City of Bethlehem.
- The Discussion Item regarding the survey is in response to the Township Commissioners desire to poll the community about our involvement with the Bethlehem Area Public Library.

Non-Agenda/Ongoing Items:

- **Brodhead Road**
 - The DCED has awarded the Township \$400,000 for the Brodhead Road Project under the Multi-Modal Transportation Program. We will be reapplying for the PennDOT Multimodal Grant for \$800,000 and hopefully have that money awarded in the spring. We are currently discussing the impact of the grant funds to the scope of the work.

Letters have been sent to property owners at Brodhead Road who need to bring their curb ramps into compliance with ADA regulations as part of this paving project.

- **Community Center**

Due to the weather, the Community Center Renovation Project bid opening has been moved to Monday, March 20 at 10 am. The bid opening will take place electronically on PennBid.

The following is the proposed tentative schedule for the Community Center Renovation Project:

- February 6 – BOC Approves Bid Package
- February 10 – Bid Packages distributed to Prime Contractors

- February 21 – Mandatory Pre-Bid Meeting and Walk-through
- *March 20* – Bids Due and Opened. Solicitor, Entech, and Allied begin proposal review and recommendation process.
- April 3 – BOC votes to award the contracts
- April 4 – Notice of Intent to Awards are distributed to successful Prime Contractors
- May 1 – Notice to Proceed issued to begin material procurement
- July 24 – Mobilization
- October 31 – Substantial Completion

This renovation project includes all items that were identified by the architect as “High Priority – Deficiency” as well as the two “High Priority” items that weren’t marked as deficient: installation of a dehumidification system and a new UV system for the indoor pool.

The staff is also working with Entech and HT Lyons to address some minor facility issues that need to be addressed this year to make sure that there will not be any duplication or unnecessary overlap of work scope. Work is currently underway to replace bathroom counter tops, shower stalls, and flooring in various parts of the Center.

- **Township Website and Social Media**

Staff is working with NAS Studios to redesign the front page of the website to integrate our Facebook feed as the newsfeed in order to deliver more timely information to the community. We also are going to feature our YouTube page, and are working on a new video right now about the Police Department’s License Plate Reader System.

The Dashboard is up on the front page of the Township website. Now you can go to one spot to get up-to-date information about Township departments and finances.

We launched the Bethlehem Township YouTube page with our first video on the Township’s Leaf Collection Program. The goal is to complete a video for each of the Township departments by the end of next year, showcasing a different service that we provide.

We have also expanded our social media outreach from just Facebook to other platforms including Snapchat, Instagram, and Twitter. Our goal is to improve communication and citizen engagement and we are working on ideas for some interactive programs with the BTCC staff and Police Department.

Thanks to the hard work of our Finance Department, you can now pay your sewer bill online through a program called Invoice Cloud. A flyer is being sent with the next round of sewer bills with more information for the residents.

- **Nixel**

We have recently upgraded the Nixel platform for emergency alerts to allow us to take advantage of unlimited text and email alerts, social media posting, Google public alerts, anonymous tipping, severe weather alerts, and emergency voice calls. The Board may wish to consider adopting policies and procedures for the emergency voice calling component.

- **PennEast Pipeline**

In light of the latest map sent to the Township which shows the pipeline going around the PennDOT Maintenance Yard to the east instead of hugging Route 33, we have reached out to our legislators and PennDOT for support with getting PennEast to move the siting to the Route 33 corridor. PennEast has responded and we are currently reviewing that response at this time.

The BOC granted PennEast Pipeline access to our Hope Road property for surveying. This was completed last week under the supervision of the Assistant Public Works Director.

PennEast sent Bethlehem Township easement agreements for two minor crossings of the Bike Path south of Freemansburg Avenue. The Township Solicitor is currently reviewing those documents.

- **Easton Avenue Culvert Collapse**

A meeting was held with the property owner of the culvert collapse. The owners have retained an engineer to assist them in this process. They are now working with a contractor on preparing a plan for the repairs. Staff will contact PennDOT to confirm they will still handle the MPT.

- **Freemansburg Avenue**

Final inspections are being held on Phase A and punchlist items are being addressed by the contractor.

Construction on Phase B (the Bridge Project) is also underway. The Township is the Local Project Sponsor on this Phase because of the Federal and State earmarks. We continue to work closely with St. Luke's on the Project Management of this corridor to make sure that there are as few disruptions to commuters and neighbors as possible. The new official date for the bridge completion is June of 2018, however we anticipate that construction should wrap up this fall.

- **Housenick**

- **Exterior Renovation**

The Housenick Trust has approved the Spillman Farmer and Boyle proposals for the pre-bid phase of the exterior stabilization of the Mansion. *A status meeting is being held next week.*

- **Park and Trail Project Phase 1**

This project is now complete.

- **Park and Trail Project Phase 2**

The Township has been awarded a DCNR Grant for Phase 2 of the Park and Trail Project in the amount of \$400,000 (we had applied for \$427,222) This grant will cover 50% of the project cost. The Northampton County Open Space Program will cover the other 50% of the project. The Commissioners approved a change in scope from Phase 2 to Phase 3 and 4. Those scope change requests are now being made with the granting agencies.

- **Bathrooms at the North Forty**

Our \$250,000 grant application through the Act 13 Greenways Trails and Recreation Program was denied for the second time.

The size (and subsequently the cost) of the bathrooms is being driven by the state building code. The staff has been exploring ways to save costs, and there may be a case to make at the Building Code Appeals Board to reduce the number of required fixtures while still maintaining the level of required handicap accessibility.

- **Chetwin Terrace**

Paving and drainage work has been completed at this site. It will be one of the priority areas on the Stormwater Improvement Plan.

- **Parks Master Site Plan**

The Parks Master Site Plan Grant application was denied for the second time under the Act 13 Program. *However, we may still be able to acquire grant support for this project and are working with Senator Boscola's office at this time. A new grant application was just submitted two weeks ago through the state system for \$75,000.*

Even if we don't get funding, this project is still a priority for the Township, and staff will lead the Recreation Commission through this process, utilizing the DCNR guidelines to ensure compliance in order to secure future construction grants. Monies have been budgeted for 2017 for the mapping portion.

- **Stormwater**

We have sent letters to eight municipalities located within the Monocacy Watershed to see if they would be interested in developing a regional Pollution Reduction Plan with us. A Pollution Reduction Plan is required in order for municipalities to maintain the NPDES permit for our municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4). We have heard back from a few so far and will

continue to reach out. We believe that regional stormwater planning is in everyone's best interest.

The LiDAR and orthophotography flyover of the Township, Freemansburg Borough, and the East Blvd basin in the City of Bethlehem is complete.

The Commissioners appointed T&M Associates as the Township Stormwater Engineer. A kick off meeting has been held and contract language is being negotiated. First step in the process will be the modeling and mapping of the system which will allow T&M to manipulate the maps in order to create some alternative analysis for the infrastructure improvement plan. A request for an extension on the County CIPP grant has been submitted and approved since the plan will not be completed by the December 2016 deadline.

- **Finance**

- **2017 Budget**

- The 2017 Budget was approved in December 2016. *First quarter review meetings will be scheduled with Department Heads this spring.*

- **Long Range Budget**

- This was completed for the 2017 Budget Hearings.

- **Grants**

We have several grant applications awaiting review and potential award at the state level. Here are the grants that we are currently waiting on:

- PennDOT Multi-modal Grant for Brodhead Road (third reapplication submitted Dec 16)