

Palmer Township, Northampton County

Stormwater Authority Committee Meeting Minutes

August 13, 2024, 2PM, 3 Weller Pl, Upper-Level Municipal Training Room

1. Roll Call

- a.** Present: Robert Blanchfield, Kendall M. Mitchell, Robert A. Lammi, Craig Swinsburg, Matthew Gunther, George White, Luke Gibson, Phillip Godbout and Paige Strasko. Bruce Hulshizer was present on video call.
- b.** Charles Bellis was present as a member of the public.
- c.** The meeting was called to order at 2:01PM.

2. Discussion Items

a. Appeal and Credit Update

i. Resident Meeting Updates/Discussion

- 1.** Strasko updated the group that she has responded to 341 appeals, 83 of them have been approved, and she is also working with HRG to make annual updates and fix discrepancies that were found with townhomes and other properties where parcel lines are incorrect. Strasko also updated that she has completed 19 credit responses, 14 of them have been approved, she and Pyle have completed 23 resident meetings, and there are four more scheduled in the upcoming weeks. Strasko also discussed and asked for direction on how to respond to residents that submit multiple appeals even when they have been denied. PTSA members discussed and accepted advice from Gibson for Strasko to use stronger language and indicate that this is the final appeal response that will be given. White also instructed Strasko to mail an aerial photo of the property from the GIS map with the final appeal response.
- 2.** Strasko also briefly discussed meetings she and Pyle had recently with residents who asked them to share their case with the Stormwater Authority. These residents included 2004 Newlins Mill Road, and the Condominium Association for Glenmoor on Corriere Road. PTSA members discussed topics from the meetings including changing residents' tiers to be lower, not including roof area in their assessment, if there are exemptions for associations, and other topics from the pre-application meetings. PTSA members asked clarifying questions and agreed that the 2004 Newlins Mill Road homeowner was treated fairly and did not require further adjustments, and that Strasko should advise the Glenmoor Condominium Association to apply for a credit and complete the process as their neighboring development did.

3. Strasko asked Hulshizer clarifying questions for the Highlands of Glenmoor credit and how it applies to the residents within the private community. Hulshizer explained the normal process of COAs and HOAs submitting a list of residences with their credit documentation and stated that he would discuss this with Pyle when Pyle returns from vacation.
4. Strasko also brought up the discussion she and Lammi had with the Raub and Fehnel farmers. Lammi summarized the meeting they had at the Raub farm house, who was there, what was discussed, and that he invited the farmers to attend the August PTSA meeting next week. The group discussed percentage amounts of credits for farmers, updating the credit policy, a low-impact parcel credit, how the credit changes would affect the budget, making sure credits are defensible, property owners with farmed land, credit policies and practices in other municipalities, future state legislature exempting farms from stormwater fees, and working with property owners and farmers to finalize the credit.

b. Credit and Appeals Manual Review

- i. After discussion about the agricultural credit, PTSA members decided to tentatively add an agenda item to update the Credit and Appeals Manual.

c. Township Staff Reports

i. Finance

1. Strasko reported in place of Farley in his absence on the total July revenues received and shared the invoice packet with the board for approval at the next meeting. There were no questions on the invoices and PTSA members agreed to have checks be prepared for the meeting next week.
2. PTSA members also discussed timing for collections for delinquent bills, the grace period for some customers who are in the credit and appeals process, as well as timing for repayment on the new equipment Kistler had approved.

ii. Public Works

1. Blanchfield briefly discussed the sanitary sewer work completed by Public Works on Kingwood Street and stated that they worked quickly and efficiently to update the sanitary system under the road.

iii. Public Services

1. Godbout stated that he had nothing to add but had an agenda item to discuss.

d. Fox Run Subdivision Drainage Improvement Project

- i. Godbout discussed background of the project, that this project also pre-dates the Authority, a few specifications for general construction, the public bidding process and thresholds for bidding requirements, and asked about how the Authority would like him to proceed with bidding. PTSA members were unsure of the process and White briefly discussed escrow money left from the developer of the project. Mitchell stated that Godbout could approach the BOS for approval and use of the escrow money for the drainage improvement project.

e. HRG Project Updates

i. Kingwood Street Construction

1. White updated the group that Kingwood construction was ongoing, contractors are working on the street section, the trail has been repaved, the contractors are installing inlets, discussed the construction schedule, material delays early on, the use of subcontractors, and that there have been changes to the construction schedule that the Authority needs to approve. White asked Strasko to add the agenda item to the next meeting for approval of the construction schedule change.

ii. 25th Street Update

1. White stated that HRG is addressing the second set of comments from PennDOT, Strasko and Godbout have been working on easements, Godbout stated that Strasko has already gotten one easement signed, and Strasko stated that she would add the signed easement to SharePoint for HRG's record.

iii. Old Nazareth Rd Update

1. White stated that the PENNVEST application was submitted, and HRG is addressing comments from PENNVEST now, that this is the typical review process and there have not been any comments yet from DEP.

iv. Meadow Ave Drainage Swale

1. White summarized a recent meeting with the property owner's engineers, that they did not have problems with the proposed future regional basin, NPDES permit approvals for the property owners proposed medical building, and that there were no financial or regulatory implications for the property owner.

v. Schoeneck Creek Update

1. White stated that HRG was working on drainage calculations for the area, and that design is underway for creek restoration.

vi. Wedgewood Update

1. White stated that HRG staff were in the field on Friday observing storm flows and reviewing footage from residents posted on Facebook. White described the velocity of the water, how quickly it was discharging from the pipe on Wedgewood, and HRG working on designing drop manholes for the pipe system due to the slope the water must travel to the outfall.

vii. Hobson St Detention Basin Update

1. White stated that HRG's GIS team is out locating all the catch basins and pipe systems that drain into Hobson Street detention basin, retrofitting the basin for MS4, and increasing the capacity of the basin to help mitigate flooding on 25th Street.

viii. Bayard/Sheridan Update

1. Gibson updated the group on the status of the intermunicipal agreement with Bethlehem Township, that their office has a call scheduled with Steve Hunsburger, Bethlehem Township's Public Works Director, to understand what they are looking for in the agreement, and they were looking to present the agreement as soon as it was finalized. Gibson stated that he would update Strasko if the intermunicipal agreement could be added to the August agenda.

ix. Capital Improvement Plan Update

1. White updated the group that the plan is moving along, the HRG team has worked out an initial priority list of projects for the next ten years and they plan to present a weighted list with more information in the fall.

f. Earth Stewards Clean-Up/Partnership

- i. Blanchfield provided a summary of a clean-up project the Earth Stewards have been planning with Supervisor Bellis. Blanchfield also described how the Earth Stewards approached him about credit for the Township's MS4 Pollutant Reduction Plan through the Earth Stewards cleanup efforts. Strasko stated that she would contact the Earth Stewards and ask them to share any cleanup data they have on file to include in the annual report.
- ii. Bellis also described the cleanup events he is currently planning with the Earth Stewards, signs that have been made, and the anniversary of America in 2026 and that he is hoping for national recognition through a cleanup organization.

g. Solicitor Fee Agreement

- i. Gibson briefly discussed the fee agreement that was shared with PTSA members previously on SharePoint, updating the document to address Blanchfield as the chairman, and that the agreement matches the Township

solicitor's fees. Gibson stated that they would be looking for agreement approval at the August meeting next week.

3. Public Comment

- a. Strasko commented that she planned to put together a flyer to hand out at Palmer Days over the upcoming weekend detailing project progress, estimated timelines for projects and costs to help educate residents about the wide array of work that is ongoing for stormwater.
- b. PTSA members also briefly discussed stormwater photos that were recently shared from William Penn Highway, as well as drainage issues on Greenwood Avenue and Hartley Avenue.

4. Adjournment

- a. The meeting was adjourned at 3:49PM.