

**WEST GOSHEN TOWNSHIP  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
TELECONFERENCE BOARD MEETING  
January 19, 2021**

Township Supervisors:

Mr. Shaun Walsh, Chair  
Ms. Ashley Gagné, Vice-Chair  
Ms. Robin Stuntebeck, Member  
Mr. John Hellmann, Member  
Mr. Hugh J. Purnell, Member

Township Officials:

Mr. Casey LaLonde, Township Manager  
Mr. Derek Davis, Asst. Township Manager  
Mr. Michael P. Carroll, Police Chief  
Mr. Bill Webb, Zoning Officer  
Mr. Rick Craig, Township Engineer  
Ms. Kristin Camp, Township Solicitor  
Ms. Christine Riffey, Finance Director  
Mr. Bill Keenan, Tax Collector

The January 2021 board meeting of the Board of Supervisors was called to order by Mr. Walsh, Chair of the West Goshen board, at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 19, 2021, virtually, via GoToMeeting due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Walsh opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mr. Walsh announced the meeting was being recorded via GoToMeeting and asked the public to mute themselves when not speaking to eliminate background noise. He also stated with each topic that requires a vote will be discussed by board members, followed by public comment, and finally a full roll call vote. He asked that people wanting to speak announce their name. He also stated there would be an opportunity for public comment at the end of the meeting.

**Monthly Police Report**

Police Chief, Michael P. Carroll, preceded to give the monthly report as well as the 2020 annual report for the police department. Chief Carroll started with the monthly report and gave the December 2020 numbers on accidents responded to, alarms, and total mileage traveled. He stated the number of miles traveled was down from the previous month and attributed that to COVID-19 as well as some officer injuries and being at minimum staff most of the month.

The Chief also went into training for the month of December and stated that, regarding the body cameras purchased, all officers were trained on and issued the cameras. He mentioned two officers that attended the Glock Armor School.

Mr. Hellman questioned the alarm responses to Ryan Homes (NV Homes) development at Greystone and wondered if the six responses to that development were valid. The Chief stated they were not valid and were false alarms. Chief Carroll attributed this to the development being new and people going in the new homes to look at them even when they are closed at times. Mr. Hellmann questioned whether fines were being implemented in such a situation with repeated false alarms as this can put an unnecessary strain on our police resources. Chief Carroll stated there is an ordinance in place and generally they would get one false alarm allowance, but the next false alarm would be a fine. He stated he would look into if the development was fined as a result of these false alarms.

Mr. Hellmann also asked about fireworks as he heard a lot in his neighborhood over the holidays and wanted to know if the Chief received a lot of calls for such activities over the past month. He also asked if there were any injuries. Chief Carroll stated the police did not receive any calls regarding injuries but did in fact get calls about fireworks and more so than usual. He attributed this to more people staying at home due to COVID-19 as well as Pennsylvania's recent legalization of fireworks.

Mr. Hellmann asked about the data acquisition initiative on the topic of engagement between police officers and civilians and if the Chief could explain it in more detail. Chief Carroll said that, as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, the department started collecting data on all stops including vehicle stops, pedestrian stops, etc. He further stated that for these stops, information is now being collected about the person's age, race, gender and other identifying factors.

Mr. Walsh asked about the implementation of the recently purchased body cameras for police and what the department's policy was regarding when these cameras need to be activated, when they do not need to be activated, how much video storage is there, and what consequences there are for an officer not following the policy. The Chief explained that all uniformed officers need to activate the body camera during citizen contacts. He stated there is a list in the policy stating when cameras need to be activated but further explained that almost all citizen contacts qualify as having to activate said camera and that they could not turn it off unless it meets specific situations in the policy. Chief Carroll said there would be disciplinary actions should an officer not follow the policy. He also went on to explain that, right now, the current policy for video storage is 180 days but, given the amount of data coming from the cameras, he would have to evaluate that as the program goes on to evaluate server storage capacity.

Chief Carroll went on to give the 2020 annual numbers for calls, reportable accidents, non-reportable accidents, alarms, and miles driven by officers. Mr. Hellmann asked about the noticeable drop-off in overtime hours from 2019 to 2020. The Chief explained that the bulk of that difference is most likely COVID-related since, when COVID-19 first hit the area, there was virtually no overtime due to the fact everyone was working and there was the ability to split up shifts. He also stated that there was far less training due to COVID-19.

Mr. Hellmann went on to state that there was \$1.5 million stolen in value during 2019 but in 2020 that number dropped down to \$546,000. He wanted to know why there was so much less values stolen in 2020. Chief Carroll said that the number can be misleading and does not have much meaning in and of itself and that specific cases would need to be looked at versus the overall value stolen in a year to get a better picture of this type of crime in West Goshen.

Mr. Hellmann asked the Chief how some of those numbers, such as less overtime and less value stolen in the township, compare to some of our neighboring municipalities throughout the area in 2020. Chief Carroll stated he did not know specifically and would have to get back to the board with that information since other places are most likely getting their year end reports at the same time. Mr. Hellmann said he would revisit that question.

Mr. Walsh stated he noticed vehicle thefts were up in 2020 over 2019 and wanted to know if there was an explanation as to whether there was a rash of incidents in one part of the year or a specific season. Chief Carroll stated that vehicle theft is definitely up and believes it is COVID-19 related coupled with the current economy. The Chief went on to say that there is currently a spike in minor automotive parts theft which usually revolves around the cycles of the economy or an increase in drug use. Mr. Walsh asked if it was local or outside gangs coming in to commit the theft. Chief Carroll indicated that they are usually groups that are not in our immediate area but in adjacent areas or counties.

Ms. Gagné asked about the police hybrid interceptors and whether there was an update. Chief Carroll stated they are ordered but there is a 2-3 build period for them.

### **Good Fellowship Ambulance Corps 2020 Annual Report**

Mr. Chaz Brogan and Ms. Kimberly Holman, from Good Fellowship Ambulance, proceeded to give a report on the ambulance corps for the year 2020. Mr. Brogan delved into the 2020 Annual Operations Report. He stated that there were 5,541 calls across all municipalities they serve. He further delved into how the ambulance gets assigned the calls and the reason they serve so many townships and boroughs, which, as explained, is due to the “mutual aid system” that is implemented in Chester County.

Mr. Brogan explained the variations in the usual call patterns and call volume that would be seen in a usual year compared to a pandemic year like 2020. He also said that, with many recreational activities and businesses closed, there was definitely a decrease in call volume due to COVID-19. He did say that more “normal” calls returned somewhat in November and December.

Mr. Brogan explained the “hour by hour” call volume and said the main difference was the weekend calls being lower due to COVID-19. He also went into the “call sequence” explanation and how many times during the year there were multiple calls going on at once. There was also mention of the “live-in” program where volunteers live in the building in exchange for service. Mr. Brogan also mentioned the transport program wherein they transport patients from hospitals back to home as another added service.

Mr. Brogan went into detail on the calls themselves as far as where the patient was transported to, if they were transported at all, and how the calls ended up in each instance. Mr. Walsh asked if it was known what percent increase in calls COVID-19 is accounting for in terms of total calls. Mr. Brogan stated that it has been tracked by crews as they make an “exposure report” if there is a COVID-positive or COVID-suspected patient and the ambulance corps can track that data. Mr. Brogan said that, overall, the percent increase due to COVID-19 was still minimal, hovering in the 5-8% range.

Mr. Hellmann asked if Mr. Brogan could describe the differences between the services provided by Good Fellowship and by Goshen EMS for residents. Mr. Brogan went on to explain the differences between Advanced Life Support (ALS) and Basic Life Support (BLS) and how Good Fellowship as well as Goshen EMS fits into the township for those services.

Mr. Brogan's presentation went on to show other aspects of Good Fellowship's operations such as age ranges of patients, the specific vehicles that took each call, response times to calls, time on the scene, which station handles the specific calls, and total calls on West Chester University's campus. He stated that, due to COVID-19, calls to the campus are obviously down for 2020. There was also a mention of statistics on mutual aid as well as the upgrading to ALS and downgrading to BLS during a particular call.

Mr. Walsh asked about what "COVID calls" would be classified in as far as the statistical breakdown. Mr. Brogan explained that the majority are a BLS sick person category or ALS respiratory difficulty, but it does vary and can fall into different buckets depending on the nature of the call.

Ms. Stuntebeck asked about calls related to overdose and where the 2020 stat for overdose calls (129) stood historically. Mr. Brogan explained that the overdose number is certainly not decreasing and is either increasing or plateauing.

Ms. Holman explained that Good Fellowship is a main participant in *Project Naloxone* and that, Ethan Healey (who was on the call), administers and manages the entire program for the county when it comes to fire, EMS, and police. Ms. Holman stated that the program was a cornerstone of the DA's office *Opioid Task Force*. Ms. Stuntebeck said she was pleased to hear of Ethan's involvement.

Mr. Brogan showed a map in order to give a better visual of the different calls, what station services each area, and how calls are distributed. With regard to COVID-19 vaccines, Mr. Brogan thanked Chester County hospital for deciding to share doses with EMS. Because of that, many at Good Fellowship have begun to be vaccinated. Ms. Holman added that she had a conference call with Chester County Hospital earlier in the day and they have vaccinated over 300 EMS providers and have reached out to local police departments such as West Goshen and West Chester Borough who are participating and getting vaccinated as well.

Mr. Walsh thanked both for the presentation, the service provided to the community, and all the data that was given. Mr. Hellmann reiterated that he was appreciative of the service that Good Fellowship provided to the community and shared a personal story about how they help a family member of his in the past.

### **Board of Supervisor Announcements**

Ms. Gagné stated that an ad hoc subcommittee was formed from members of the Sustainability Advisory Committee (SAC) and the Planning Commission in order to review and possibly improve West Goshen's solar ordinance language and to look for ways to encourage developers to go solar.

Mr. John Hellmann commented on the active "Ravens Lane Stormwater Project" in his neighborhood and stated that he felt most neighbors thought it was going well at this point and that, even though it was intrusive, most neighbors understand that it needed to be done. Mr. Hellman also stated it probably should have been done earlier than this but now it is important to stay on top of it and get it done.

Mr. Hellmann also stated there was a retiree group in that specific neighborhood which meets every month and he wanted to offer Public Works Director, Dave Woodward, the opportunity to attend some meetings in order to keep the group and neighbors informed about the project.

Mr. Hellmann also announced that he received a complaint about some traffic issues at the Wawa on South High Street near East Rhodes Avenue and was working through that with township staff to come up with a resolution.

Mr. Purnell informed the Board he was in touch with Fame Fire Company regarding their potential \$1 million grant from the Commonwealth. Mr. Purnell stated that, according to Fame, it was not yet known how much of that money the fire company will actually see but that Bill Ronayne, from Fame Fire Company, was putting together information in order to show how the grant will impact their finances. Mr. Purnell said he would stay on top of the issue.

Ms. Stuntebeck stated she had been working with staff regarding the performance review process and that she was trying to evaluate how there can be a simpler way to go about such a process but still include robust information wherein supervisors and employees can both get good feedback.

Ms. Stuntebeck also announced that the Historical Commission would be having a meeting January 27<sup>th</sup> and were working on simplifying the historical ordinance that was initiated close to a year and a half ago. She stated that there may need to be some work with the solicitor in case there are any legal issues with the ordinance, get feedback from township residents whose homes were on the historical preservation list, and continue working with the Chester County Historical Commission for guidance on the issue.

Mr. Walsh stated that the board met in Executive Session earlier in the night to discuss a legal matter.

#### **Township Manager Announcements**

Mr. LaLonde state that after the packet was delivered on Friday, there was a request received from Liberty Inspection Group to be added to the third-party inspection list for electrical inspectors. Mr. LaLonde explained that the township does not do electrical inspections and that homeowners retain third parties to do the inspection. Mr. LaLonde state he was seeking board approval to add Liberty Inspection Group to the list. He also said he believe there may be some homeowners who want to use the company for a current project, and he did not want to hold up their work until the next meeting. He stated their documentation has been reviewed by himself and staff and found to be in order.

Ms. Stuntebeck made the motion to add Liberty Inspection Group to the list of third-party electrical inspectors. Mr. Purnell seconded. Mr. Walsh asked for board questions or comments. Ms. Stuntebeck asked if these companies usually seek us out or if we seek them out. Mr. LaLonde indicated that there are dozens of firms that do this work and that they typically seek us out because they have an upcoming job in the township.

Mr. Walsh asked if there was any type of status review of these firms after a length of time and if there would be a reason to take them off the list at some point. Mr. LaLonde stated that all of these firms

work in proximity to our in-house building inspectors who would come to us if issues should arise with these firms, but, so far, there have been none.

Mr. Hellmann asked if there were any standards that they must comply with in order to be considered. Mr. LaLonde stated they must have the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry certification for third-party inspectors and that this firm has their certificate.

Ms. Gagné stated that if the staff did the background work then she was fine with approving the request.

Ms. Margie Swart, resident, asked where Huntingdon, PA was and Mr. LaLonde answered that he believed it was in Bucks County. Ms. Swart asked if it was correct the township had ten third-party electrical inspectors. Mr. LaLonde stated it was eight. Ms. Swart stated she was skeptical of this approval because it sounded like the builder or contractor of the site wanted their own personal electrical inspector. Mr. LaLonde reiterated the fact that the township does not have electrical inspections on purpose so the contractor has to hire a third-party. Ms. Swart indicated she was concerned the third-party inspectors in such situations may be biased and that favors or shortcuts could possibly take place. Mr. LaLonde asked if she was suggesting that they were doing something illegal.

Ms. Swart stated it sounds like a builder or somebody that is building in the township is questioning the addition of this inspector. Mr. LaLonde stated that it was the inspector themselves who requested to be added. Ms. Swart asked if Mr. LaLonde knew which contractor requested this firm. Mr. LaLonde stated he does not know and does not know if there are any outstanding building permits with this firm right now. Ms. Swart stated that she thought Mr. LaLonde said that somebody wanted to use the firm in question. Mr. Davis stated that is what the third-party agency itself stated. Mr. Davis also indicated that the overall point was that the firm currently meets the standards in place and there is no real basis to keep them out at this point. Ms. Swart said she thought that two or three years ago there were no third-party inspectors. Mr. LaLonde indicated that she was incorrect and that there has at least been six for the past fourteen years.

Ms. Stuntebeck wanted to follow up so she understood exactly how the process works and was wondering that, since they would now be on the list, we as a township feel comfortable with them reaching out to residents directly. Mr. LaLonde stated it was usually the other way around and homeowners or contractors reach out to the third-party inspector. Ms. Stuntebeck indicated it was a benefit to have that many choices for the homeowners and contractors. Ms. Swart asked if the information was in front of them for the approval. Mr. LaLonde stated the application was in front of the board.

On a full vote by the board, the motion to add Liberty Inspection group to the list of third-party electrical inspectors passed 5-0.

Mr. LaLonde stated he did not have any other announcements as he would let Mr. Craig talk about the Ravens Lane Project and that Mr. Hellmann also touched on it already as well.

### Township Engineer Announcements

Mr. Craig indicated that housing construction at Greystone was progressing through the winter but that the infrastructure work was slow due to the weather.

Mr. Craig stated that the Ravens Lane Stormwater Project began the previous Thursday and is making progress with replacing approximately 1500 linear feet of Corrugated Metal Pipe (CMP) that has failed and deteriorated in numerous places. He stated that the homeowners near the project have generally been on board with the project.

Mr. Craig went on to explain that Ravens Lane is indicative of a much larger issue throughout the township as there is approximately 30,000 linear feet of CMP throughout West Goshen. With CMP having an average lifespan of 30-35 years, we are starting to see localized failures in many locations.

A discussion ensued about various steps being taken in order to combat the rise in CMP failures. Mr. Craig stated that the township received a proposal from an engineering consultant to possibly assist with evaluating the photographic data that has been obtained through the Army Corps partnership over the last 3 years. Mr. Craig indicated that the Army Corps project, which has focused on evaluating the condition of township stormwater systems, should be finished this year if the Army Corps has the ability to do so as they were not able to complete the work in 2020 due to COVID-19. Mr. Craig estimated the prioritization analysis by a consultant would take about 18 months.

Mr. Craig explained that, in addition to the CMP issue, the township was focusing on complying with the MS4 permit by working on various TMDL/PRP projects that were required under the permit. Mr. Craig explained some of those projects.

Mr. Davis stated that the engineering consultant Mr. Craig mentioned was in fact HRG who has done work for the township in the past. Due to the urgency of the issue and the 18-month timeline mentioned, Mr. Davis stated that, from a staff perspective, it was preferred to move forward at some point with HRG on this project.

Mr. Walsh asked if the process would be a "rolling assessment" wherein a project could start to be designed as footage is still being obtained if it is a high problem area or was the plan to evaluate the entire township and prioritize at the end. Mr. Craig explained that he thought it would be a little bit of both since the township has a reasonably good idea where the problem areas are right now but that the prioritization might have to be tweaked as we go along and find new issues.

Mr. Walsh asked Mr. Davis about the HRG preference in consulting engineer and asked if it was staff's belief that there would be too much of a learning curve for a new firm to come in after that fact. Mr. Davis stated that was correct and that the Request for Proposal (RFP) process alone would be lengthy.

Ms. Gagné wanted to know more specifically what sort of learning process there would be and whether the township could save more money by opening it up to other firms. Mr. Craig said that the RFP process alone would take 2-3 months as far as receiving proposals and evaluating them whereas HRG is familiar with the township and can hit the ground running. He also stated that the price tag of \$30,000,

in his opinion, was reasonable for the scope of work and did not think the township could save too much beyond that by going out for an RFP.

### **Zoning Officer's Announcements**

Mr. Webb indicated that there were four zoning hearing applications received in the first month of 2021. He proceeded to go over the applications one by one and asked if the board would like to take a position on each or stay neutral.

#### **Application 01-2021 (1154 West Chester Pike)**

- The applicant seeks a use variance in a C-4 Zoning District to use a portion of the property as a hair salon/barbershop. A portion of the property is a daycare facility. Mr. Webb said that, besides the use not being allowed, he did not see a parking or any other zoning issue and recommended the board take no position.

Mr. Hellmann stated his only initial concern was, being that a daycare facility was on site, the accessibility and traffic of the salon coupled with the daycare but went on to state that, since a fence and physical barrier existed between the two uses, he was comfortable with staying neutral.

Mr. Walsh asked if there was a business on the site in the past that was a permitted use. Mr. Webb stated he only knew of the daycare. Mr. Hellmann stated it use to be a State Farm Office. He asked Mr. Webb if this going to be the lower or higher end of the property wherein Mr. Webb responded that it would be the lower end. Mr. Webb also stated that the property owner is also looking into what other, if any, barriers or separation can be used for this use and the daycare.

The board as a whole decided to remain neutral.

#### **Application 02-2021 (101 N. Five Points Road)**

- Mr. Webb stated that Goshen Manor Apartments is seeking a variance from storage shed requirements in order to erect a storage shed on the property to store salt and other miscellaneous tools. He also stated that he felt that his suggestion would be to not take a position on this application as well.

Mr. Hellman inquired whether this would meet the requirements of the township from an ordinance perspective as far as property line setbacks and issues of that nature. Mr. Webb said that was correct and, in fact, they exceed such requirements. Mr. Walsh inquired as to what type of surface it would be on going forward and Mr. Webb responded it would be going on existing impervious surface.



Mr. Webb further went on to describe where exactly the shed would be in the context of the property. It was decided collectively that the board would remain neutral.

#### **Application 03-2021 (1149 Kingsway Road)**

- Mr. Webb stated this was Goshen Terrace Apartments and it was the same owner of as Goshen Manor Apartments from the previous application and was also seeking relief from storage shed requirements. Mr. Webb went on to describe where the apartment complex was looking to put an additional shed and advised that the board again take no position. The board collectively decided to remain neutral as they did with the other shed application.

#### **Application 04-2021 (956 South Matlack Street)**

- Mr. Webb stated that this applicant, owner of the Luxor Luxury Apartments, was seeking 3 different variances in this application. First was requested relief from the sign ordinance in order to display a temporary sign longer than 30 days. The applicant was seeking a 120-day allowance. The second relief, in conjunction with the first requested relief, was another sign variance request asking to be able to erect a temporary sign more than the four-square feet allowance. Mr. Webb suggested the board take no position on such requested relief for the zoning hearing and also suggested the board may want to break this application into two sections as the last relief request was different in nature. The board agreed.

Ms. Stuntebeck inquired if staff were comfortable with that large a sign. Mr. Webb stated that the sign would be used for leasing purposes and would be on the side of the building so that it can be seen from Route 202 but would be taken down after the building was fully leased even if it comes before the 120 days. The board decided to take no position on this part of the relief.

Mr. Webb went on to describe the last part of the requested relief which was a request by the applicant to reduce the size of parking spaces from the required 9 feet for each space to 8 feet for any spaces provided over the 215 parking spaces required under this land development. Any space provided above that amount would be a foot smaller space. Mr. Webb explained that the applicant feels that the 8 feet space better reflects the target demographic who have smaller compact cars and are not driving larger SUV-type vehicles.

Mr. Webb did say that this issue had come up in the past but that the management team of the Luxor provided more facts this time around and, therefore, was seeking a very similar relief that was requested some time ago due to them explaining in more detail how this would work to the township. Mr. Webb went on to describe talking with the applicant and that the applicant was willing to put in some EV charging stations in order to better accommodate electric vehicles. This would be open to the public as

well. Mr. Webb alluded to the fact that this conversation focused primarily on sustainability efforts that are going on Township-wide. Mr. Webb said that staff felt comfortable with such as proposal by the applicant.

Mr. Walsh asked about the logic behind having the smaller space to the residents and whether it was an effort to keep more spaces in the garage as oppose to more exterior spaces that are exposed to elements. Mr. Webb indicated he believed this was part of the reasoning. He also stated that these spaces are assigned and controlled by management.

Ms. Gagné thanked Mr. Webb for including sustainability into the conversation and thought it was a worthwhile tradeoff in order to obtain the EV charging stations in the township for electric vehicles. Ms. Stuntebeck also stated she thought it was a win-win situation and provides more ways in which residents can reduce their global carbon footprint.

Mr. Walsh wanted to ensure that these EV charging stations were going to be made available to the public. Mr. Webb stated that, after speaking with the applicant today, it was decided that the EV stations would be on the exterior of the building so they can serve the community in that capacity.

Mr. Davis stated that it would be best to perhaps get some more detail from Mr. Jon Herzog, who represents the applicant, on the logistical issues with the charging stations and whether or not they know how it would work in that regard.

Mr. Herzog, who attended the teleconference, stated that these charging spots will be open and not assigned and they will not allow cars to simply stay there. He said the goal would be to have electric vehicles charge their car and then relocate.

Mr. Hellmann described in detail why he does not support this particular variance request. Although Mr. Hellmann appreciated the fact the applicant was willing to add EV stations, he reminded the board that the ZHB already denied a similar request the applicant made on the subject and that the applicant already unsuccessfully attempted to convince the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors to take up an ordinance amendment on the subject as well. Mr. Hellmann also indicated this was also part of an overall concern regarding the density of these new developments being constructed throughout the area that continue to exacerbate the traffic situation.

Mr. Webb stated that the reason they reduce the number of spaces in this application versus the one they were denied on previously was that they cannot go back to the ZHB and ask for the same exact relief. He also reminded Mr. Hellmann that the township took a position to oppose the previous application and that could have negatively impacted the request as well.

Mr. Walsh suggest that, given the differences of opinion on this subject, that the board poll themselves to see where they stand. Ms. Camp suggested that, if it were the board's desire to not take a position on the application, that a condition could be made to ensure the charging stations are available to the public if the ZHB grants relief. The applicant said they would agree to such a condition.

Ms. Gagné made a motion to reflect Ms. Camp's suggestion and to not take an adverse position on the applicant's request for relief provided they do in fact provide two EV charging stations that can be utilized by the public at all times and that the applicant will continue to monitor the situation so that residents do not park there. The motion was seconded by Ms. Stuntebeck.

On a full vote by the board, the motion passed 4-1 with Mr. Hellmann opposing.

Mr. Webb made one last announcement regarding the annual Rental Registration requirements and that he had to send out 40 citations to people that failed to renew their rental registration and that he will be needing to go to district court over the next month or so because of those citations.

#### **Discussion of 2022-2025 Tax Collector Responsibilities & Compensation**

Mr. Walsh explained that the position of West Goshen Tax Collector will be on the ballot come November 2021 for the 2022-2025 term and that any changes for the upcoming term to the Tax Collector's compensation or responsibilities must be adopted by the board by February 15<sup>th</sup> of this year. Mr. Walsh also said that himself and Mr. Hellmann have been looking into the issue to see how different approaches could be used to perform the current work of the Tax Collector.

Mr. Hellmann indicated that a Tax Collector is required to be elected by the citizens of West Goshen but that the tasks and compensation can be set by the board. Mr. Hellmann went to on to describe the duties of the current Tax Collector and how those duties get spread out over the entire year. Mr. Hellmann stated that responses to tax certifications and preparation of said certifications are currently being done by the Tax Collector himself but that many other additional duties, which he described, are currently being done in-house, namely by the Deputy Tax Collector.

Mr. Hellman also went on to describe the current compensation for the Tax Collector and that, in addition to the \$28,000 of annual compensation from the township, the current Tax Collector also makes approximately \$4,000 a year by performing tax certifications. Mr. Hellmann indicated he thought it was time to look at the responsibilities and compensation of the position and see what tasks can be brought even more in-house since most duties are being done that way currently and decide what would be adequate compensation for the elected Tax Collector.

Mr. Walsh gave some examples of neighboring municipalities, such as West Whiteland and East Goshen, and how they process and perform tax collecting duties. Mr. Walsh stated he thought it was time the township have all the work put into a single approach. He also stated that, given the capabilities of in-

house staff, he would prefer that approach over an outsourced model. Ms. Gagné asked if Mr. Walsh was proposing all duties go in-house. Mr. Walsh indicated he thought that made the most sense given that 95% of the duties are currently being done in-house. He also stated that this would coincide with taking the high level of Tax Collector compensation and making it a nominal amount.

Ms. Stuntebeck asked what the process looks like for producing a tax certification and if the staff is set up and trained for such a duty. Mr. LaLonde described for Ms. Stuntebeck how everything currently is performed in-house and what adjustments and logistical changes need to be made internally in order to make everything work. He also indicated that there would need to be input from our Township Solicitor on the issue.

Ms. Kristin Camp, Township Solicitor, said that there are certain statutory roles that the position would still have to perform but that, changes like the board is describing, would definitely make the role into more of a figurehead position with compensation being nominal. Mr. Hellmann stated that there is still a report that has to be done and signed off by the Tax Collector and that cannot be eliminated.

Mr. Davis asked Mr. Walsh that, if the compensation change must be in by the February 15<sup>th</sup> deadline, can there still be a longer and more thorough conversation with Finance Director, Christine Riffey, regarding the duties going forward and the pros and cons of in-house versus outsourced tax collecting. Mr. Walsh indicated it was his position tonight that, although outsourcing is possible, he would like to stick with an in-house approach given that 95% of the work is already being done that way. Mr. Walsh also reminded everyone that this new model would not start until 2022 as that is when the new term starts. Mr. Walsh also went on to ask the board to consider the resolution tonight and that, as addressed earlier, there was \$32,000 in compensation for the Tax Collector and this could amount to some savings to the township.

Mr. Hellmann stated this must be done by February 15<sup>th</sup> in order to be legal. Ms. Camp said that if the board defers passing the resolution tonight, it will have to be done at the February workshop meeting in order to be done in time for the February 15<sup>th</sup> deadline.

Mr. Walsh asked for other board members to comment. Ms. Stuntebeck commented that she supported it and was only concerned about the finance staff and whether they are prepared to take on this duty. Ms. Gagné agreed with Ms. Stuntebeck and supported the initiative of bringing most Tax Collector duties in-house but wanted to make sure the extra workload would work for staff.

Finance Director Ms. Christine Riffey stated she did reach out to East Goshen in order to gauge how they perform the in-house tax duties. Ms. Riffey went on to describe this process, the differences with West and East Goshen, as well as some general points about what the township will need to be aware of as we transition to all in-house tax collection. Mr. Walsh did point out that he is open to having our Tax Collector still be the arbitrator when a resident pays past deadlines or if there are questions with discount period or penalties owed.

Mr. Bill Keenan, West Goshen Tax Collector, went on to describe his duties and how he currently works with staff. Mr. Keenan stated that the reason the current system was set up the way it is, with in-house

staff performing the duties they do, was so that the township could have access more quickly to that cash flow without delay. He also pointed out that the current Deputy has other responsibilities beyond tax collecting. Mr. Keenan also stated that, while many processing duties are performed in-house, many of the larger issues related to tax collection are handled by him by contacting residents directly as well as mortgage companies. Mr. Keenan stated he thought he works well with township staff, with residents, and that West Goshen is getting a valuable service for his current compensation.

Ms. Gagné asked if it was the board's intention to change the salary tonight and, if so, what would that number be. Mr. Walsh stated that he appreciated Mr. Keenan's service throughout the years and that he most likely helped the township get to the good process they have in place today but that the issue for him was finding a more cost-effective way to process real estate taxes as the \$32,000 being spent right now was not comparable to surrounding municipalities. In response to Ms. Gagné's question, Mr. Walsh suggested maybe compensation of \$500 a year.

Ms. Riffey added that the setup right now that exists with the Tax Collector and in-house staff allows for good internal controls and segregation of duties due to the dual role and that the total in-house approach would be more of a single role.

Mr. Hellmann reminded the audience that there has to be a Tax Collector by law and that the board cannot eliminate that position but that this effort is to have compensation practices for the Tax Collector that better reflect what is currently happening already with most work being done in-house.

Ms. Stuntebeck asked Ms. Riffey if it were possible to put on paper exactly how she would plan to go about this transition and how the roles in her department would be assigned to take over some of the duties currently performed by Mr. Keenan. Ms. Riffey explained that she does have notes on the subject but there is no specific clear picture right now and that there would need to be a re-allocation or redesigning of the department and that this would have to be discussed within the department.

Ms. Gagné said her concern was that they only have until February in order to save taxpayers and the township money. Ms. Gagné went on to also express concern about a possible disconnect since Mr. Keenan has stated he spends about 500 hours a year on tax collecting duties but that it is also being stated most work is being done in-house. Ms. Gagné stated she is in favor of saving money but does not want to sacrifice service.

Mr. Walsh suggested that maybe the board gives Ms. Riffey a couple weeks to outline and frame how the work would get done in-house and make a final decision at the board workshop in February. Mr. LaLonde did elaborate on a possible difference in customer service if the township went all in-house since Mr. Keenan does call residents and business owners back at night and the township would most likely not be able to do that. Mr. Walsh indicated he felt since many of those calls are being collected during the day by staff and passed to Mr. Keenan for a nighttime callback, it was not a major concern as he felt it was being "double handled" in a way. Mr. LaLonde stated he understood that but that there was a portion of residents that cannot talk during the day. Mr. Walsh said he did talk to West Whiteland who moved over to Keystone for all resident inquires and, even with some initial pushback, it is working well for them after a couple years. Mr. Hellmann said this is not to say that the Tax Collector could still

not handle some higher level inquires that staff does not feel comfortable with but that most, routine inquires are already being handled by staff.

Mr. Walsh opened the conversation to public comment. Ms. Margie Swart stated that whoever is going to run for Tax Collector needs to know the salary soon so he or she can determine if they are going to run. She also reminded the rest of the audience that there are three elected auditors that have no responsibility and do not get paid outside of a very small meeting fee but that people always run for those positions. Ms. Swart indicated she had been concerned in the past with the gradual rise in Tax Collector compensation and that she is on board with Mr. Walsh's plan of compensation between \$500-\$1000. Ms. Swart stated that in-house staff are capable of executing the required tax collecting duties.

Mr. Christopher Pielli, resident, asked the board if, in their research, they came across a place that was compensating the Tax Collector \$28,000 or more. Mr. Hellmann stated he did not find one that matches West Goshen in compensation during his research. Mr. Hellmann also indicated the township is not just looking at the \$28,000 but also the extra \$4,000 or so that is going directly to the Tax Collector for certifications. Mr. Hellmann also said he did pose this question to other townships on a website for PA municipalities, but many responders were from rural areas and did not provide a good apples to apples comparison.

Mr. Pielli also asked about the mail associated with tax collecting and who pays for the mail and letters to be sent out on this subject. Mr. Walsh and Mr. LaLonde both indicated it was the township. Mr. Walsh stated that, for comparison purposes, West Whiteland outsources their tax collection services to Keystone Collections with the cost being around \$20,000 a year. He also said that for those that use the county for tax collecting the cost is in the "same ballpark". Mr. Pielli stated he thought what the board was proposing was a good idea and that the current number we are paying the Tax Collector is not justifiable when looking at our surrounding neighbors.

Mr. Andrew Husband, resident, stated that, if the board were to hold off on a decision for a few weeks, it will make it very difficult for anyone to make a decision to run for the Tax Collector position as they need to be organizing a campaign right now and should know what the responsibilities are now. He stated that if this is a position that requires 500-600 hours a year than Mr. Keenan should document that. He asked that the board make a decision tonight.

Dr. Doug White, resident, stated that the issue with Tax Collector compensation has been around for quite awhile and that there were opportunities to put it more in-line with our neighbors in the past. He also said that he would be in favor of finding some savings by bringing it in-house but still providing great service.

Mr. Walsh suggested that Ms. Riffey prepare a memo regarding the issue for the board to review so that a final decision could be made at the February 2<sup>nd</sup> workshop.

**Potential Quality Inn Redevelopment (943 South High Street)**

Mr. Lou Colagreco, attorney for Branchport Capital, started off a presentation for his client by introducing the property in question and explained that the purpose of being on the agenda tonight was to go over a proposal for the property and a use that would require the rezoning of the parcel by the board of supervisors. Mr. Colagreco indicated that the property was currently in the C-3 Zoning District and that it has been a hotel since the early 1970s and has been a “troubled” hotel for quite some time. Mr. Colagreco stated that, because of current zoning restrictions, it will likely remain a hotel unless there are changes to the zoning district due to the fact that other allowable uses are not in demand in present economic conditions and will not be for the foreseeable future. He said that what his client is proposing would be a more permanent residential use.

Sam Tarantini, representing the possible developer, gave a presentation on the proposal which was 290 luxury lifestyle apartments that would take place of the hotel. Mr. Tarantini said he thought the use would be a significant upgrade from the current use. He also said that, when factoring in the current use of a hotel, banquet facility on site, and a restaurant & bar, they do not see significant traffic increases from this proposed use. Mr. Tarantini stated he felt it would rejuvenate the site and would have a positive impact on the township from a fiscal standpoint in terms of additional real estate taxes.

Mr. Colagreco indicated that they wanted to focus on this use because the site is in-line for a total redevelopment and wanted to have that policy discussion with the board rather than get into the site plans tonight. He stated that they would not be proposing any new zoning language but rather be using the language already passed by a previous board with regard to “Lifestyle Apartments” that exists on a nearby property. Mr. Colagreco stated the proposal would likely have the same developmental footprint. He said they wanted to come to the board first before getting into the work that would be required because it would be a large undertaking and did not want to move forward if the board was not open to a zoning accommodation of some kind.

Mr. Purnell asked if it is proposed to have a full sprinkler system and Mr. Colagreco indicated that it would.

Mr. Hellmann asked how many units is being proposed. Mr. Colagreco stated it is currently being proposed as 290 dwelling units. Mr. Hellmann stated that he sees some sort of a disconnect in his mind because the developer is stating it would be minimal traffic impact and not much more than the current use but, with the amount of people proposed to be living there, it would seem to be a sizeable increase and that this is a very congested part of the township. Mr. Colagreco indicated that Mr. Hellmann was correct if the township were measuring the proposed apartment complex against the current dilapidated state of the hotel but that, if the hotel and accompanying facilities were a thriving site, it would generate more traffic according to their study. Mr. Colagreco stated they are operating under the thought process that the township sees value in getting rid of the dilapidated state of the hotel but, if the measurement is against the current dilapidated site, the proposed apartment complex would certainly generate more traffic.

Mr. Matthew Hammond, traffic engineer for the possible developer, gave his opinion on some of the traffic-related issues in the vicinity of the proposed site. Mr. Hammond stated he agreed with Mr.

Colagreco's assessment and that this current hotel, if ever revived by a popular brand name hotel company, would generate significantly more traffic than it does currently. Mr. Hammond also stated that there is no "magic bullet" that will cure all issues with this stretch of the Route 202 corridor, but they have had conversations with PennDot about this area and see this as an opportunity for everyone to work together and perhaps get some traffic improvements in this area.

Mr. Colagreco continued to stress the fact that another (and presumably more successful) hotel company could purchase this site by-right, make the site more viable, and generate more traffic than the proposed apartment use. He stated that he felt this was an opportunity to consider the future of the site and what scenarios the board sees for this property.

Mr. Hellmann asked what sort of problems they have heard about the site from surrounding residents. Mr. Colagreco indicated there have been reports of crime and drugs. Mr. Davis asked if Chief Carroll would delve into what kind of volume their department handles from that site so that we can get a better idea of how much crime is at this hotel. The Chief did state it has been consuming much more of the police department's attention over the past couple years.

Mr. Purnell asked if there was a possibility of getting an egress onto the bypass. Mr. Hammond stated that, unfortunately, grade differential with this site and the bypass as well as the fact that this stretch of Route 202 is a "Limited Access Highway" are both factors that would make it difficult to get an egress onto the bypass.

Mr. Walsh described how he had commuted daily past this site for 20 years to and from work and that getting on the bypass was always a "nightmare" and could be very dangerous at times. He wanted to know if there was a proposed residential use that did not reach the 290-dwelling unit. Mr. Hammond stated he could not answer the economic viability question of how many units was needed as that was outside his expertise but did give information on how he described possible traffic improvements as "wins" for the township, the site, and PennDot. Mr. Hammond stated he was referencing a study by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) and specific alternatives and improvements that was laid out in said study to improve this stretch of Route 202. Mr. Hammond thought this project was a good opportunity to explore some of those options and went on to describe the specifics of some points in the DVRPC study.

Mr. Colagreco state that, in his opinion, given the current marketplace he does not think the number of units could decrease by much and still be financially viable due to what the owner currently has on site and how much of an asset it is in the current use versus what it would be to a developer for less units. Mr. Ben Golthorp, also representing the possible development, delved into the economic viability issue and stated that different iterations of the plan are always looked at in these scenarios. Mr. Goldthorp added that, after doing the math, being able to develop a less dense site such as townhomes does not make sense on this site as there simply is not enough land and that the current asset (hotel) as it is presently performing would still be the best use in this scenario.

Mr. Walsh asked if there was a further desire for questions and answers by the board at this point. Mr. Hellmann asked if there has been contact with residents about going along with this idea. Mr. Tarantini



said there has been contact with one resident to the rear of the property that expressed support for such a change but that they have not talked to many residents yet. Mr. Tarantini stated they can certainly do that. Mr. Davis stated that many residents in proximity to the site would also be living in Westtown Township. Mr. Webb stated he had some conversations with the resident who was supportive of the project due to vagrants coming from the hotel through the neighborhood at times.

Ms. Gagné stated that she knows the hotel is not of great quality and would like to see it go and thinks that many residents would like to see it go as well. Ms. Gagné went on to say she has a lot of traffic concerns in that area. She indicated that there should be considerations for affordable housing since there are many demographics throughout the township and that maybe a small portion of such an apartment building could be used for such a purpose. She also said that help is needed to improve that intersection. Ms. Gagné stated that sustainability is also an issue in the township and that, with the direction the township is going, developers that give back to the community in terms of sustainability must be a consideration. Ms. Gagné reiterated that, for her, what she is looking at in these proposals are affordable housing, sustainability, and traffic improvements. She stated she always looks forward to new residents and is willing to have a conversation but will be viewing these issues by looking at those three subjects.

Dr. White asked if the Quality Inn that is currently operating on site is completely closed. Mr. Hellmann responded that it is still operational. Dr. White also asked if a height variance would be needed and Mr. Colagreco responded that, if the "Lifestyle Apartment" zoning is used, that would not be needed.

Mr. Colagreco concluded the conversation by asking the board members to get back to Mr. LaLonde if they had more questions or wanted to have further conversations at future meetings.

### **Political Sign Ordinance Discussion**

A discussion ensued about what else on the agenda needed to be discussed given the late hour. Ms. Stuntebeck stated she thought it was important to discuss the political sign changes due to elections coming up in 2021.

Mr. Camp stated that this issue came about due to concerns about the size of some political sign in the right-of-way for township and state roads. Ms. Camp said that the main problem with tackling only political signage was that the township is not allowed to control signs based on message alone and that zoning changes to signs must be content neutral. Ms. Camp explained that her and staff came up with a solution to put political signs into the "temporary signs" category in order to be able to limit the size of them and not really deal with any other issue or go through a full-scale zoning change. Mr. Webb stated that the current ordinance allows political signs up for 45 days and suggested we keep that language.

Mr. Hellmann asked Ms. Camp if the temporary status is just political signs or all temporary signs. Ms. Camp stated that this eliminates the current political sign definition and creates a new definition for temporary signs and exempts temporary political signs from needing a permit. It also has specific

regulations for the size. Mr. Hellman inquired whether the number of days for temporary signs versus political signs must be the same number and Ms. Camp said they do not.

Mr. Hellman asked if the resolution as presented to the board was enforceable in Ms. Camp's opinion. Ms. Camp responded that she thought it was more enforceable than what is currently in place and that it is not an easy task to develop content neutral sign regulations which is why it was decided to go this route instead. Ms. Camp stated she thought they were reasonable restrictions. Mr. Hellmann asked what the reasoning was for eliminating the inspection requirement language and she stated she spoke with staff and that is currently not being conducted anyway. She also said there are already provisions that give building code officials the right to seize signs that are not properly maintained.

Mr. Hellmann stated he thought the ordinance was enforceable and is good with it. Mr. Davis stated that, although one can never guarantee someone will never challenge an ordinance, he was comfortable with it being enforceable.

Mr. Walsh asked if there was a motion, but Ms. Camp reminded him that the ordinance change has to go through the county and township planning commissions and the hearing for it will most likely be at the March board meeting. It was decided to allow the ordinance to go forward to the planning commissions for review.

### **Community Garden Discussion**

Mr. Gagné stated that she thought this issue needed to be addressed tonight since members of the Sustainability Advisory Committee (SAC) have been on the call for hours waiting to discuss. Four board members agreed to go ahead with the discussion. Mr. Purnell opposed.

Ms. Gagné stated that the SAC has been in discussions about a possible community garden in West Goshen which currently does not exist. She stated it would be a site that people could come to freely use to grow and harvest their own food. Ms. Gagné said that the SAC would use the funds allocated in this year's budget in order to start the process and that they would just need to select a site. She also stated she thought it would be beneficial to the community. Ms. Gagné said she would be happy to work with the Parks and Recreation Board as well. She said that she was looking for the board to give the "go-ahead" so that the SAC could start working on a site selection.

Mr. Walsh asked what sort of size and scope Ms. Gagné had in mind for this project to which Ms. Gagné replied that they have not had in-depth discussions about that yet, but she envisioned it to be somewhere around 600-650 square feet and that access to irrigation systems as well as adequate sunlight would be needed. Mr. Walsh asked if there was any concern about vandalism in a space like this to which Ms. Gagné stated that anything is possible, but they do not envision that being a large issue.

Mr. Hellman suggested that the SAC members get together with Parks in order to come up with a plan. Ms. Gagné replied that this was her intent as Parks has to be involved for site selection. Ms. Gagné

stated that Melanie Vile, Chair of the SAC, would be leading the effort here. Ms. Vile stated she was excited about the initiative and thought it will be a great asset to the community.

Mr. Walsh stated that there appears to be full support to move forward with some sort of plan. Ms. Stuntebeck stated that it seemed that Mr. Christopher Pielli tried to make a comment but had since exited the meeting.

#### **Police Chain of Command Discussion and Commemorative Naming**

It was collectively decided to postpone these two agenda items due to the late hour.

#### **Approval of Meeting Minutes (December 15<sup>th</sup> 2020, January 4<sup>th</sup> 2021, January 6<sup>th</sup> 2021)**

Mr. Walsh asked the board to consider approving the minutes for December 15<sup>th</sup> 2020, January 4<sup>th</sup> 2021, and January 6<sup>th</sup> 2021. Ms. Stuntebeck made the motion. Seconded by Mr. Hellman.

Mr. Walsh stated that he had discussed previously with Mr. Davis that there was one outstanding item from the January 4<sup>th</sup> reorganizational meeting having to do with the appointment of Ms. Stuntebeck to the West Chester Area Council of Governments (CoG). Mr. Davis stated that, in the reorganizational meeting, there was a motion and a second for the appointment but not a full vote of the board which had to be remedied.

Mr. Walsh made the motion to appoint Ms. Stuntebeck to the CoG for 2021. Mr. Hellmann seconded. The full vote of the board passed 5-0.

Mr. Walsh asked Mr. Davis to make a correction about a comment Ms. Swart made regarding the EOP being available online.

Mr. Hellmann asked that his comment in the December 15<sup>th</sup> meeting regarding pipeline safety be amended to include "and field exercises."

Ms. Stuntebeck inquired about the EOP and whether we are putting it online. Mr. Walsh explained Ms. Swart asked but the board did not approve going forward with putting the EOP online.

On the motion and second, the full vote of the board passed 5-0.

#### **Approval of December 31<sup>st</sup> 2020 Treasurer's Report**

Ms. Stuntebeck made the motion made a motion to approve the Treasure's Reports and to pay the bills from associated funds. Mr. Purnell seconded.

Ms. Swart asked if the township was aware of the large invoices that would be coming in from Carroll Engineering. Mr. LaLonde stated that the township was aware and that it was included in budget

projections. Mr. Walsh said that it was discussed before that Carroll was late with some invoicing. Ms. Swart asked if the Boot Road project was being shared with East Goshen. Mr. Walsh and Mr. LaLonde stated that East Goshen is sharing construction costs while West Goshen is paying for design.

On the motion and second, full vote of the board to approve the Treasurer's Report and pay the bills passed 5-0.

### **Public Comment**

Ms. Swart, referring to stormwater projects and the possibility of using HRG, stated that, although she was impressed with HRG as a firm, it is standard best practice to seek an RFP and she hoped the board would do so on such projects. She also stated that she felt HRG was more focused on getting a stormwater fee implemented than the actual work being done and that maybe another firm would look at it differently. Mr. Walsh stated that the fee and the work surrounding that is a separate item from what was being discussed tonight. Mr. Walsh said that tonight was mainly about the data being collected on the integrity of the stormwater system and getting a firm to assess that data rather than the fee.

Ms. Vile, referring to some of Ms. Gagné's comments earlier in the night on housing and affordability, reiterated that she hoped the township would continue to push the issue of affordable housing as it is an important issue that seems to get lost sometimes among other issues and is important from a social equity standpoint.

Mr. Purnell made the motion to adjourn. Mr. Walsh seconded. The board voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting at 10:24 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

**Derek Davis**  
**Recording Secretary**