

Centre Documenters

Meeting: Council Meeting
Township: College Township
Documenter name: Emily McGrory, Talaya Coffey
Date: 11/02/2023
Start Time: 7:00 p.m.
End Time: 8:26 p.m.

Notes

Call to ordinance/ pledge of allegiance

- The turnout included 5 council members and 7 others, not including 2 documenters).
- Council members present included: Dustin Best (chair), D Richard Francke (vice chair), L. Eric Bernier (member), Susan Trainor (member) and Anthony Fragola (member).
- Township staff present included: Adam Brumbaugh (township manager), Mike Bloom (assistant township manager), Don Franson (township engineer), Amy Kerner (public works director), Lindsay Schoch (planner), Mark Gabrovsek (zoning officer) and Jennifer Snyder (assistant township secretary).

Public open discussion

- Township manager Adam Brumbaugh opened the floor to the public for any questions or comments. *There were no comments from the community members present.*

New Agenda Items

- There were no new agenda items to be received.

Reports

- Manager's update:
 - o The manager made a correction to the Dale Summits small area plan. It was previously reported that staff had received draft 2 of the form-based code, when actuality they received the final version of the Dale Summits plan. Form-based code is still being developed and should be made available within the next 4 weeks.
 - o ***A note from your documenter:*** According to the [Form-Based Code Institute](#), "A form-based code is a land development regulation that fosters predictable

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built results and a high-quality public realm by using physical form (rather than separation of uses) as the organizing principle for the code. A form-based code is a regulation, not a mere guideline, adopted into city, town, or county law. A form-based code offers a powerful alternative to conventional zoning regulation.”

- After consultation with Pam Adams, sustainability planner for the Centre Region Council of Governments (COG), regarding a 12-month renewal for solar panels, the decision was made to renew contract with Construct Energy for 18 months. There were time delays while renewing the contract, and it ultimately made the most sense to go with an 18-month contract.
- On Wednesday, Nov. 1, there was a group meeting held to discuss possible airport renovations. There was an opportunity to meet with the chamber and community development representatives, as well as Penn State, to discuss where the airport is going and how they can assist the airport. There was talk of a potential transportation connector for the airport. *There are more conversations to come.*
- COG regional, county and liaison reports
 - There was a conducted review for 2024 work pass. Routine and ongoing tasks of revisions of policies.
 - Nothing to report from Eric Bernier from the liaison meeting.
- Staff/P.C./other committee reports
 - This month’s meeting of parks governance included the review of discussions during September’s meeting in which they started formulating something to bring to the authority as well as the general forum; they will have more to follow up soon.
- Diversity, equity and inclusion
 - Reminders:
 - Nov. 2 is Day of Dead which is celebrated in Latin American countries.
 - Nov. 11 is Veterans Day; township offices and other government buildings will be closed.

Consent Agenda

- Minutes
 - CA-1 minutes, CA-2 correspondence and CA-3 Actions items for Oct. 19, 2023 hearing minutes and regular meeting minutes were brought forth for approval. *There were no objections or changes and minutes were approved unanimously.*

Old Business

- There was no old business to be discussed further.

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New business: COG (Council of Governments) 2024 Budget Review

- On Monday, Oct. 23, the COG General Forum reported out the proposed 2024 budget. Adam Brumbaugh, township manager, received the report on Thursday, Oct. 26.
- There has been continuous review of the budget to ensure every expense is represented and to make decisions about cutbacks.
- The finance committee was presented a starting budget of municipal shares of 9.8 million dollars. This was a 15.4% increase in the budget from last year.
 - o The executive director and staff made reductions to try to get the shares down to the guideline of 8.05%.
 - o New initiatives were taken out of the budget to meet this guideline.
 - o The council is still above the guideline by an additional 2.63%.
 - o This 2.63% is because of “fire operating.”
- Additional funds are already being discussed by the finance committee.
- The COG summary budgets and program plans are being calculated through the cost-of-living adjustments.
- The summary budget breaks down the percentage of spending that is being allocated to specific township operations.
 - o Parks operating (21.5%), the library (19.3%), and fire operating (14.5%) are the three biggest areas of spending.
- The summary also includes capital and other expenses and compares the price changes from years past.
- There was agreement for the parks and libraries budget.
- There were new initiatives taken out of the budget based entirely on budget cuts. ***A note from your documenters: It was unclear which initiatives were removed.***
- The overall goals were said to be “responsible and equitable for College Township.”
- The budget can be [accessed online](#) via the township website. ***A note you’re your documenters: we have located that document and included it at the end of these notes.***

Staff Informative

Council/staff other matters

- The council started talking about the new initiative to pursue diverse infrastructure and legislation funding.
 - o Part of the funding would come from College Township, while the remaining funding would come from other avenues.
- This could include a wide range of projects: traditional bridge and highway projects, projects to reduce negative impact of extreme weather and projects to eliminate or reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

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- There was budget review by the finance committee in which they discussed realistic funding for hiring a team of members to apply for funding for these projects.
- The council members reviewed a report that had a summary budget request for the project. The report breaks down the shares of the funding for which College Township would be responsible.
 - o Every position in the initial draft budget was originally funded for 12 months.
 - o During the budget review, the finance committee discussed cutbacks for these positions.
 - o Consulting support was reduced from \$325,000 to \$100,000 per year.
 - o The finance committee supported reducing the grant specialist position to three quarters of the year.
 - o These reductions equaled a total of \$189,941 dollars by the finance committee.
 - o The finance committee believes the scaled down approach should be enough to gain momentum in 2024 and to get higher funding for 2025.
 - o Ultimately, the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) proposed an increase of funding by \$34,911.
 - o **A note from your documenter:** According to the Centre Region Council of Governments (COG) website, "Federal law and regulations require that local and state officials work cooperatively to maintain a continuous and comprehensive long-range transportation planning program in all urbanized areas with populations of more than 50,000 persons, which includes Centre County, Pennsylvania. This Federal mandate is carried out by a formal group called a "Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)."
- Principal transportation planner Jim Saylor then further described the process of getting outside funding.
- MPO members examined the Bipartisan Infrastructure Legislation in 2022 and found that its amendments could increase their highway funding from \$15 million to \$20 million.
 - o Only 60% of the funding was included in the legislation, while the other 40 percent is in a discretionary grant program.
 - o An application needs to be put together to get the remaining 40% of funding.
- MPO decided to apply for this type of funding and called upon their knowledge from a similar application process they underwent in 2017 and 2018.
 - o This application was to fund a project on the interchange of interstate 80 and 99.
 - o The application brought an additional \$37 million to a project that would have been \$145 million.
 - o The first phase of this project has been completed and it cost almost \$200 million.
 - o The second phase of this project, to improve Jacksonville Road, will be completed in the spring. This will cost \$8 million.
 - o The final phase will happen in the spring. The budget for this was increased from \$180 million to over \$240 million because of a longer than anticipated construction schedule.

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- Jim Saylor said, “the value of the effort that went into that application has grown and grown.”
- The application took multiple tries before it was accepted. Because the application requires a certain level of expertise, they needed a consulting committee.
- The application for the new project opens in November or December of next year.
- The MPO is going to make an effort to match the council's budget with funds from the bill's credit programs.
- The new staff member is being tasked to put together as competitive of an application as possible for this program.
 - The new staff member would also be an expert in project selection and development.
 - They would talk to local investors to help them understand project opportunities.
 - New staff would also be tasked with developing a standing projects committee.
- Additionally, there needs to be a team of people to help put together a range of competitive applications because of the wide breadth of potential projects.
- The council members then asked questions about whether or not the county will pick up the other half of the costs from this project.
 - With this budget increase, the cost will be split into thirds between PennDOT, Centre Region COG, and Centre County.
- The council approved MPO's request to add \$34,911 to their COG share finance director Kim MacMullan was introduced to the council.

Follow-up Questions

- When is the subcommittee aiming to submit their application to the discretionary grant?

Summary

- The contract renewal for the solar power purchasing agreement – discussed during the Nov. 1 waste authority meeting and brought forth to the township – was approved. The initial contract was for 12-months and the renewal is for 18-months.
- The College Township Council reviewed and discussed the proposed budget for 2024. Several reductions in spending were discussed. According to the council, the three biggest areas of spending in the 2024 budget are the parks operating costs (21.5%), the library (19.3%) and the fire protection operating costs (14.5 %). The 83-page proposed budget is available online and has been included in our documenters' meeting notes. A public hearing on the proposed budget will take place on Dec. 21 at 7 p.m. The council is expected to vote on the budget that

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evening.

- The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) proposed an increase of funding by \$34,911 and the council approved this request. ***Did you know?*** According to the Centre Region Council of Governments (COG) website, “Federal law and regulations require that local and state officials work cooperatively to maintain a continuous and comprehensive long-range transportation planning program in all urbanized areas with populations of more than 50,000 persons, which includes Centre County, Pennsylvania. This Federal mandate is carried out by a formal group called a "Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)."

Top Quote

“I think a healthy and a well-functioning community needs well educated and healthy people to grow the community” - Susan Trainor, COG public safety

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