

COLLEGE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
PUBLIC HEARING AND REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 8, 1983
7:30 PM

The College Township Council convened at 7:30 pm on Thursday, December 8, 1983, in the College Township Municipal Building for a public hearing and its regular meeting.

Members present: Donald E Bailey, J Carroll Dean, Gale L Dargitz - Chairman,
Herbert W Stewart, Dolores A Taricani

Others present: C Thomas Lechner - Manager
Beulah Houser - Administrative Assistant
Robert L Hayden - Treasurer

PUBLIC HEARING

Lowe's of Pennsylvania, Inc. IDA Loan Application

Chairman Dargitz opened the public hearing by stating the Lowe's of Pennsylvania, Inc. had requested a \$.5 million increase to an approved IDA loan of \$1.3 million. To comply with provisions in the IDA Act a second public hearing was necessary to approve the increase. With no one from the public to testify, Dargitz asked Terry Williams from the law firm of Miller, Kistler & Campbell, Inc. to give a brief summary of the project.

Williams said that Lowe's was a North Carolina-based corporation which operates a series of retail and wholesale lumber and building supply stores on the East Coast. Lowe's plans to build a store in the "David Weis Shopping Center." After further study on their original plan, Lowe's decided to increase the floor space by 25,000 sq. ft., which would necessitate the hiring of six additional full-time employees and 12 part-time employees, raising the total number to 31 full-time and 12 part-time employees. Williams added that the IDA had reviewed Lowe's financial statements and the Northwestern Bank's commitment letter and found everything in order.

Discussion among Council members followed Williams' presentation. Dargitz stated that an IDA loan was a subsidy which did not necessarily make it bad. A lot of businesses needing the subsidy were receiving it, but only people who need it, should get it. Dargitz added that if someone can finance a building without a subsidy, then that's what they should do, because the taxpayers are the ones making up for it. Dargitz then asked Williams if the project would go ahead if it did not receive IDA financing?

Williams replied that he did not know. Lowe's had only told him that they wanted the funding in place before December 31, 1983, because Congress may change the law in 1984.

Asked by Dargitz if the other stores in the Lowe's chain had received IDA funding, Williams replied that the Pennsylvania stores had.

Bailey then moved that Council approve the Lowe's application for an increase in financing from \$1.3 million to \$1.8 million. After Taricani's second, Council unanimously approved the application.

At this point in the meeting, the public hearing was closed.

OPEN DISCUSSION

None.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Dean moved and Taricani seconded that the minutes from the November 10, 1983 meeting and the November 22, 1983 meeting be approved. The motion carried.

MANAGER'S UPDATE

On the November 10, 1983 meeting Update, Item 4, Lechner clarified the statement ". . . to inquire if they (potential candidates) are willing or unwilling to serve"

Dargitz asked if there had been a response to the barbed-wire problem (Item 5). Fred Smith replied that two strands had been removed. Lechner added that the longest strand which was also the most dangerous was gone. Another short strand remains.

Regarding Item 1 on the November 22, 1983 meeting Update, Council was surprised to hear from Dargitz that the Solicitor had reaffirmed the fact that College Township was liable for real estate taxes on the Post Office. Solicitor McCormick had stated that if the building were used for Township business, it would be tax exempt.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Hayden reported no new developments since the October report or the November budget hearing. He added that no budget category had changed by more ~~than~~ ^{than} a percent, except for a construction project which was due partly to a truck purchase.

Dean inquired if the contributions for the Struble Road traffic signal were significant, and Hayden replied they totaled approximately \$5,000. Lechner said a developer and land owner donated a large sum which comprised a major portion of the total contributions.

Taricani then moved that the financial report be received. Bailey seconded, and the motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE

Letter from CATA Operations Supervisor Robert G Kaiser Regarding On-Street
Parking in the Penn Hills Development

Discussed under Business 1, Update reports from CATA.

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

Dargitz said the Planning Commission recommended that a more specific definition of the term "Family" be incorporated into the Zoning Ordinance with the recommended definition stated in an October 25, 1983 memo from Robert Watkins to the Planning Commission. Dargitz proposed either scheduling a public hearing for the amendment or waiting for several months until the other recommendations came through.

Taricani suggested they get the changes in place as soon as possible. Dargitz observed that it could be handled at the regular January meeting. Lechner indicated adequate time was available to advertise the public hearing.

BUSINESS

1. Update Reports from CATA, C-HJA, UAJA, and the Matternville Center

Lloyd Niemann, College Township representative to CATA, presented a year-end summary. He said ridership for 1983 had increased 6.88 percent since 1982, and if trends continued, the volume would soon be much higher. He attributed the increase mostly to an aggressive marketing campaign.

Niemann then reviewed the routes through College Township, saying that College Township does not participate in subsidizing the B or Boalsburg Route. Only a small portion of the R Route runs through College Township near Everhart Village; the Township shares in 7½ percent subsidy of that route. The C Route is totally subsidized by College Township and the X Route to the mall has 35½ percent of its subsidy paid for by College Township. The mall merchants contribute \$4500 annually to this route. College Township subsidizes the Transportation Authority in a payment of \$12,119, as well as a total share of \$110,000 for all municipalities. The money contributed by CATA participants will generate \$3½ million for the region in grants, etc., said Niemann.

The C Route was changed this fall after a great deal of deliberation, but the September and October ridership increase of 15 percent showed it was a wise decision, Niemann said. The C Route handles an average of 82 people per day and makes five trips.

Last spring College Township citizens petitioned CATA to establish a Houserville noon route; about 15 people ride the mid-day bus out and six ride it back.

Niemann added that CATA had obtained a study grant to consider new locations for garage facilities. The present structure is no longer adequate.

Robert Kaiser, Operations Supervisor for CATA, also discussed the transit system. He said that Centre Ride has been a much-used program by Senior Citizens and handicapped residents. Riders pay 60¢ and the rest is subsidized through grants.

To Bailey's question concerning the Hospital Route, Kaiser answered that it had been cancelled because of lack of interest.

Dargitz asked if the Authority had made an effort to integrate the municipal transit system with the University's, since that was the original plan. Taricani agreed that the time might be right to examine the issue again. Kaiser also felt it might be worth looking into. Asked if the University made a local contribution, Kaiser said no.

Dargitz also questioned the formula that determines each member's share. He asked Kaiser if he, as a College Township citizen, was satisfied or if he felt the Authority Board should reconsider the formula. Kaiser said they were continually examining it.

Dargitz said his observations indicated that many people boarded the bus downtown to go to the Mall, and yet College Township was paying 35½ percent of that route. He urged the Authority to re-examine the formula and give them a satisfactory response.

Council expressed appreciation to both Lloyd Niemann and Robert Kaiser for their work and especially for the improvements on the C Route.

(Correspondence - Penn Hills Parking Problem)

Dargitz said the Township's Parking Ordinance needed many revisions and he suggested that Kaiser and Lechner study the Penn Hills area and suggest places for parking control. When the Parking Ordinance is updated, Dargitz said, the suggestions could be incorporated.

Taricani felt they needed to take action quickly since the buses were having difficulties maneuvering through the area now. Kaiser added that it has been particularly troublesome since the change from Daylight Time. At times, he said, a supervisor must go to Penn Hills to guide the bus through; it creates a poor ride for the passengers and a delay in beginning the next run. The problem is most prevalent between 5 and 6 pm, and especially in the single family dwelling section.

Lechner said the Penn Hills parking causes problems with snow removal also. He thought, at least, parking should be prohibited from one side of the streets on a trial basis.

Dargitz then asked that CATA and Lechner formulate a recommended resolution concerning the traffic controls in the Penn Hills area, and Council would consider the issue at the January meeting. Taricani firmly agreed.

College-Harris Joint Authority & University Area Joint Authority

David Coe and Lee Shields presented the year-end summary on C-HJA. Coe

said they have reduced rates slightly with hopefully further reductions in the future. At this time the Authority is proposing no new sewer pick-ups. The ones now added are from new developments where the developer pays for the installation cost of the sewer. Last year C-HJA added 236 EDUs for a total of 37,056 EDUs in the system. Coe asked Council if they felt every request in the Township would be served or only those where the cost/benefit factor was favorable.

Coe went on to say that the Authority had, at PennDOT's request, put the sewer where the By-pass was originally planned--encased it in 10 ft. concrete, 26 ft. deep. Now the Authority will have to move it to the By-pass's new location. The Authority is requesting that PennDOT at least share expenses.

Shields said the Authority's indenture on bonds is approximately \$5.1 million; the bonds will be due in the year 2012. He added they had \$1.8 million in a bond redemption improvement fund on which it earned \$160,000 at 9.51 percent. Shields said they also buy back bonds at no more than 65¢ on the dollar.

If the Authority took the \$1.8 million surplus and let it compound at 9½ percent, Shields said, the Authority could retire the whole bond issue in 6½ years at discount value and 11½ years at face value.

Shields also asked Council for direction concerning the following: (1) Do we reduce rates and go for the life of the bond to pay them off on schedule, or (2) Do we try to buy more bonds, pay them off early, or (3) Just wait until the year 2012 and send customers a check instead of a bill. Also, Shields wanted to know how far the sewer lines should be extended.

Taricani responded that in years past when sewer extensions had been evaluated, it was done in a cost/benefit manner--no benefit, no sewer. At times, as in the case of Oak Ridge Avenue, Council had to decide that an area should be served regardless of benefit. Taricani stated that an area with a specific need should be sewered although she opposed the philosophy of running sewers just for the sake of running sewers.

As for rates, Taricani said in the early days of the sewer construction they were promised lower rates in the future but those days never came. She felt it was better to give users of the system the benefit now rather than wait until the year 2012. Rates should be reduced within prudent fiscal management. Both Bailey and Dargitz agreed.

Shields also addressed a problem of infiltration into the system because of the high water table and the poor condition of some of the sewer lines. Last spring, the Authority estimated over \$39,000 was spent in treatment costs for the problem. In 1984 they are planning to spend \$30,000 to discover where the infiltration is occurring.

In summarizing the UAJA, Shields announced that the financial resources were more than adequate to handle anticipated problems and the plant itself was operating at 2/3 capacity.

The Authority was awaiting a decision on the Bellefonte vs. DER case which would determine how much phosphorous was to be removed. Since UAJA now spends

\$200,000 a year on phosphorus removal plus \$70,000 to transport sludge, a reduction in phosphorus removal would mean a reduction in costs.

Dargitz thanked Coe and Shields on behalf of Council and said the consensus of Council was to continue in the direction they have been going. If an extension has to be paid for by the Authority and can be justified financially over some period of time, they should, by all means, proceed with it. Council is not in favor of extending sewer lines just for that reason and people who have been paying high rates for years should reap some benefit from the system now.

Matternville Center

Dan Stearns, College Township's representative on the Advisory Board of the Matternville Center, gave a summary of the Center's progress so far. As an outgrowth of the Benjamin Franklin Partnership Fund, which is administered by Penn State, the Matternville Center provides a place for fledgling businesses to become established by offering rent, utilities and limited secretarial services at reduced rates and low-cost consulting from experts at the University.

The College Township IDA is paying the \$14,000 rent for the first year and will perhaps consider the second with the purpose of helping the Center get established and build a reserve fund. A \$6000 grant expected from the Benjamin Franklin Fund has been cut back by the State so that amount is so far undetermined.

Four applicants have been approved to move into the Center, two were reviewed last week and four are waiting to be reviewed soon.

Dean suggested that office furniture should also be available to occupants of the Center, perhaps on a low-rent basis.

Council expressed appreciation to Stearns and all who are volunteering time and effort for the Center.

2. CATA letter - included in Business 1

3. Resolution No. 25-B, Fee Schedule

Dargitz explained that the resolution adjusted the fees on Zoning Subdivisions, etc., and that at this point only needed to be signed. Lechner stated that the \$45 minimum fee was added at the Council's suggestion from the previous meeting. While Council members signed the resolution, Dargitz went on to the next item of business.

4. MPO, 1984-85 Work Program

The Metropolitan Planning Organization, a division of the Centre Regional Planning Commission had requested suggestions for work projects for 1984-85. Bailey said that lists from each municipality would be discussed at the COG Transportation Committee meeting on December 14, 1983.

Bailey suggested listing the By-pass bikeway and turning lanes on Route 150 near the mall. Taricani thought turning lanes and intersection improvements near Harris Acres were needed. Dean said that a light or some kind of traffic control was needed at the intersection of Porter Road and College Avenue. Also the single access to developments like Harris Acres and Dalevue needed to be assessed with recommendations formulating. Lechner suggested that middle fifth lanes for turns should be constructed on both South Atherton Street and East College Avenue.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Stewart reported that a study committee of the Alpha Fire Company recommended that plans for a satellite fire station extension in Ferguson Township was tabled.

Concerning the Regional Police Force Study, Stewart said Tom Kurtz had selected someone to administer the study. A number of methods could be used to do the study; the three most likely were: (1) Use all volunteers and allot \$300 for miscellaneous expenses, (2) Hire a part-time University student to administer the study at a cost of approximately \$2000, and (3) The person administering the study could conduct it himself at a cost of approximately \$6800. COG will make the final decision on which option to use.

Taricani reported the Executive Committee had met with the Code Committee who was still struggling with its problems. The issues are still spiraling costs in a growing department and restrictive code enforcement vs. adequate enforcement for protection.

Asked by Stewart if there were many applicants for the COG directorship, Taricani replied that a group of approximately 20 applicants had been narrowed down to 10. Mayor Arnold Addison had been chosen as the "independent" person involved with the selection process. Only one or two applicants reside in the Centre Region.

Dean said the Finance Committee had just finished presenting the budget to the COG General Forum.

Concerning the Code Administrative Committee, Dean reiterated Taricani's concerns and added that an analogy existed between Codes and Land Use Zoning with the purposes of each being similar. Some of the compromises, the approaches, and philosophies that were used in Land Use Zoning can be applied to structuring the Codes Department in terms of what we don't have to do, what we can't afford to do, or what we can't do because the time and opportunities aren't right. On the other hand, he said, we have to hold on to the principles that we must have to make a program work.

ADJOURNMENT

With business concluded for the evening, Dean moved the meeting be adjourned at 10:00 pm. The motion met with Council's approval.

Respectfully submitted,

C Thomas Lechner
Secretary

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