

MINUTES

The Moon Township Board of Supervisors met in special session at the Moon Township Municipal Building, 1000 Beaver Grade Road, Moon Township, PA 15108. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m., Chairman Jim Vitale presiding. Supervisors present: Mr. Vitale, Mr. Eicher and Mr. Gribben.

Also present:

Staff:

Jeanne Creese, Township Manager; Jeff Ziegler, Assistant Township Manager; Meghan McNamara, Communication Director; Jim Koepfinger, MCA-TV Director

Moon Township Municipal Authority:

John Riley, MTMA General Manager; John Wink, Joseph Seman; David Mitchell

Library Board:

Susie Ruskin, Interim Library Director; John Shaver, Bob Toothman, Elaine Sollinger, Joseph Kranyak

MCA-TV Advisory Board:

Mark Morava, Peggy Betlyn

Mr. Vitale said that the purpose of the meeting is to make sure we are all on the same page and working toward the same goal with respect to the future of the Community Service Center that houses everyone here. There have been some issues with the roof and the HVAC units so we need to see what we want to do. Mr. Shaver said that a meeting was held with a realtor to identify properties in Moon that everyone currently housed in the Community Service Center might be able to move into should the Township decide to sell the building. The realtor identified 11 possible properties, very few of which would meet the needs of the community the way they should. The conclusion of at least two of the three meeting attendees is that they would really prefer to stay in that building. They would like to stay in the building, but the question remains concerning the roof. The last roofing bid came in at \$250,000. John Riley obtained two more recent bids. One bid is for fixing the roof and one for replacing the roof—both are considerably less than what the Township obtained. However, Ms. Creese needs to explain the status of the discussions with Cherrington.

Ms. Creese said that she wanted to start out with several basic understandings about municipal law before we proceed. The Board can have loose discussions with the owners of Cherrington through Administration about their interest in the property. However, if and when the Board decides to sell that building—a building that is owned by the Township—it has to go up for public sale. Therefore, the Township cannot enter into negotiations with any one party without listing it for public sale. The Cherrington owners have come to the Township expressing an interest in that property for a specific use. However, no firm offer has been made. The public sale requirement is specified in the Second-Class Township Code.

The second caveat to this is that we have pricing on the cost of repairing the roof. The first pricing we have is from the Township Engineer when we issued a bid specification. Mr. Riley has gotten a different set of quotes that he will discuss. But Ms. Creese said that she wanted to make sure that everyone understood that the quotes were not obtained by the Township to

comply with the public bid process. Any time that the Township purchases or repairs anything over \$4,000 three written quotes must be obtained. If the cost is over \$10,000 the purchase/sale or work must be publicly bid. The quotes obtained by Mr. Riley can be used as estimates for the work. But when we go to do those repairs and it exceeds \$10,000 the repairs have to be publicly bid.

Mr. Riley said, from his perspective as General Manager of the Moon Township Municipal Authority, he is a very happy tenant in the Community Service Center. He said that they are very privileged to have been able to rent there for the last 17 years. He wanted to express his appreciation to the Township for allowing the municipal authority to rent the space. The Township has been a good landlord to the municipal authority. He believes that this building represents a significant asset to the community. It is a very nice building in a lovely location. His customers and employees enjoy coming there and he feels the Township charges the authority a very fair rent. The space is perfectly adequate to meet their long-term needs. They have had a very nice relationship with the library and other building tenants for many years. They see the building as an asset but like any other asset it requires maintenance.

They have had experience working with a roofing consultant who lives here in Moon Township. It will be a significant expense to the municipal authority if they have to move. They have another building that they could potentially move to but would rather stay in the Community Service Center. At a modest expense they engaged their consultant to do an assessment of the roof. He determined that the roof over the municipal authority's space was in good shape. But the seams of the rubber roof have been over-taped. The rubber roof material over the library is good. But the roof was only in fair condition because those seams had not been taped. There are some other parts to the roof that he recommended be coated. There is some wooden siding that has come open which would allow water to enter the building that he recommended be covered. He also recommended painting the exposed decorative portions of the roof. The quote he received for the siding work was \$13,000. The quote for the painting work was \$17,000. He received a quote for maintenance of the roof which was \$23,000. This work included coating the flat roofs, overseaming the rubber roof areas and replacement of the pitch pans where the metal supports come down to hold the decorative roof portion. The quote for the replacement of the entire flat rubber roof was \$115,000. That would involve removal of the original roof, bringing the insulation up to code and putting a rubber roof over the entire building that would be warranted for 20 years. Their experience with the consultant has been very good over many projects and his estimates have generally been good. But the quotes that have been offered cannot be awarded because it would have to be publicly bid. Mr. West, the consultant, said that the main reason to replace the roof would be if the Township were concerned about energy costs and saving energy. The repair of the roof would make it a good roof and expects that it would last another ten years. A discussion ensued on the roof repairs.

Jim Koepfinger said that while the building may be adequate for the municipal authority, it is not adequate for the future of MCA-TV. They continue to grow in both volunteers and programming. It was a good start to get out of the high school building, but that success has grown the station significantly. The space and layout are not very conducive to the business that they are trying to do. The station currently has five people crammed into one office. He currently needs more editing space for the increasing number of volunteers. A discussion ensued on the space needs and possible long-term solutions for MCA-TV.

With regard to the library, Mr. Shaver said that the library currently has 8,400 square feet. Including the Sky Room brings the total to 9,200 square feet. They should have between 15,000

and 16,000 square feet, based upon their circulation and the Township's population. They are happy with their location. But it is up to the Township to decide if we believe that Cherrington is not going to propose anything specific. The roof does need to be fixed if the asset is going to be maintained with the thought of selling it to someone. He thinks we need to move forward and make the asset usable.

Ms. Sollinger said that what she understands is that the specifications drawn up by the Township Engineer is what is causing the higher price. Ms. Creese said that was probably correct. However, we are discussing two types of roof repairs. The specifications from the Township Engineer addressed two issues as he was asked to do. Prior to being asked to address the roof repairs, he was also asked to address the heating and air-conditioning issues. He looked at the multiple HVAC units sitting on that roof and the order in which they need to be replaced. In order to do that, there is duct work in the roof that may or may not need to be repaired. We were looking at that issue combined with replacing the roof for a long-term stay. At that point, when that was done, there was no discussion of ever vacating that building. Putting a short-term repair/replacement on that building requires a different bid specification. If the library intends to stay there for five or ten years she would suggest that the Board needs to budget money for the HVAC system. The Township spends a significant amount of money every year just keeping those units in operation. We are continually dealing with heating and air-conditioning complaints in that building which is always an issue with buildings of that age. She gave details of the failures of some of the parts of the units and a discussion ensued on maintenance of the HVAC system and roof units. Ms. Creese said that this has been an issue with all of our buildings as they are all getting older. It is a particular problem with that building because it is not the original design of the building.

Mr. Shaver said that if we fix the roof there are still other things that will have to be done as well for the long term. The large windows will need to be replaced. He showed the Board the footprint of the property and what they would like the Board to consider doing. There is sufficient space to put on an addition. Their suggestion is to remove the portico that is in front of the building for an addition that would include that area down to the covered porch that is on the side. The addition would total 8,000 square feet and meet their needs for the foreseeable future. He gave details of the addition that they would like to construct. Mr. Vitale asked Mr. Shaver if he had any idea of what such an addition would cost. Mr. Shaver said that he had no idea. Such an estimate would have to be done by architect. Ms. Creese said that there is no money in the Township budget for that purpose. Mr. Shaver said that they would be willing to share in that cost.

Mr. Eicher asked if MCA-TV left the building, would the vacated space be usable by anyone. Mr. Riley said that the municipal authority does not have a need for it and Mr. Shaver said that he does not think that the library can use it for anything other than storage space. Mr. Riley said that the windows in his area of the building have been replaced. A discussion ensued on the other maintenance needs of that building and options for the addition. Mr. Vitale said that as he understands it, the Library Board feels that this is their desire right now. Mr. Shaver said that he is not speaking for the Library Board. He is saying that it is an alternative for us all to consider. If the Board of Supervisors decides that it would be better for the Township if the Library were in a Community Center, then so be it. They have no problem with that. But they have eliminated one option and that is moving somewhere because there is no space available. They are simply providing one option for the Board's consideration. The Board must decide if they want to keep this asset of the building that they are in.

Mr. Vitale said that his impression from the last time the Board met with the library board was that we needed to do several things. The first is that we need to find temporary housing for the library until the goal of having a new library or library structure was finished. If that is still the optimum idea, maybe we should look along those lines. Mr. Shaver said their recommendation is based on comments made by Ms. Creese during a meeting with the library board on the future of the Community Service Center at which time she said that the library would likely not be in that building in 12 months. But that does not seem to be the case now.

Ms. Creese said that there are elements of that conversation that will remain confidential. However, the driving factor of that conversation is the economic reality of repairing that building and whether it is a sound investment to continue to put money into that building or not. The second component of that conversation is that every year the Library Board requests more space of the Supervisors. The third component of the decision is if an offer is made on that building. The Board can publicly sell that building at any time. The Board needs to decide whether it is economically feasible to maintain that building and determine space usage for both the short and long term. A discussion ensued on the parking in and around that building and in the Cherrington Office Complex. The use of the property expressed by the owners of Cherrington was strictly for parking and not for a future use of the building. Mr. Shaver said that he feels that the addition would provide the Township with the best option and best use of space. But we need to decide whether or not the Board wants to move forward with this idea prior to the Library Board starting any fundraising. But some type of cost figures need to be determined by an architect or engineer. Ms. Creese said for the Board to remember that there is no money budgeted for this purpose. But she would have to get some type of estimate in order to give the Board some type of figures on how much such a project would require. Mr. Shaver asked if it would cost the Township more than it would cost any of the other entities. Ms. Creese said that since all of us are municipal entities we are all bound by certain legal requirements. But the solicitor should be consulted before any such expenditure is authorized. Even though the library and municipal authority occupy the building, it is still owned by the Township and this will be a public project. It could be challenged.

Mr. Eicher said that obviously we can fix the roof and add an addition cheaper than constructing a new building. If the library board believes that what they want is a new 16,000 square foot facility and they will raise the funds to do it, they need to tell the Township when they will move out of the current building. For example, if the library board said that it will take them five years to raise the necessary funds, then the Township can plan accordingly to allow the library to remain for five years. However, if they do not want to do that and want to remain and try to expand, it helps the Board to make their decision. Mr. Shaver asked if the Board is throwing that full burden onto the library board because no other community in Allegheny County would do that. He understands that it would be a shared responsibility and they would seek funds from private donors. But he does not think that they could do it solely by themselves.

Mr. Eicher said that for the Township to take on that much additional debt would probably result in a tax increase. He believes that if we were going with a 16,000 square foot new facility, there should be a constant stream of funding to support it. If that were the case, it should be put on a referendum for the taxpayers to decide. The Township has to run the police force, take care of the roads, run the parks, etc. Those are the things we have to do, per the Second Class Township Code. It also permits us to take taxpayer dollars and support a library. A decision needs to be made on what percentage of those dollars do you use for the library and can the community support it? Mr. Shaver asked if the community would be more receptive to a community center with a library as part of it. Mr. Eicher explained the history of the Township

exploring the possibility of a community center approximately ten years ago. At that time, the Board felt it was cost-prohibitive. But nothing is off the table. If you want something, however, you have to pay for it. As an elected official, he has to sit here and determine how best to use the tax dollars. And we run pretty tight right now. We have not raised taxes in the last six or seven years. He is leaning toward trying to do something with the existing facility. While the Municipal Authority is happy with their space, MCA-TV is looking for additional space. The key to the focus is the space they need and the cost to provide that space.

Mr. Shaver said that he can talk to the rest of the rest of the trustees to determine if they are going to be happy if they get the addition. He then talked about fund raising and the possibility of some type of donor as was done in Fox Chapel and Canonsburg. Mr. Eicher said that it is really up to the Library Board to tell us what they want to do and what they are capable of doing so far as fund raising is concerned. The quicker we get some response from the Library Board the sooner the Board can set a course of action. If we choose to keep that building, then we need to look at what it will take to keep it in usable condition and how we start spending money in the future to maintain it. If the library plans to leave, he would be inclined to say that we need to make it usable over the upcoming time period. But he would spend money a little differently if we are going to keep the building for the next 30 years.

Ms. Creese said that from a budget perspective these are not simple architectural or budgetary decisions. When you talk about building a new addition and get into construction and zoning issues of tying those buildings together in a building of that age that was not constructed for that purpose, you need to think about the cost to seam those systems together. It is still an old building with architectural and ADA issues.

Mr. Eicher said that before we leave here we want to make sure we have a plan of action. The Library Board will meet on August 22 and they will report back to the Board of Supervisors that they have come to a conclusion that they either would like to work to stay there or would prefer to look at some other alternative.

The second part is that we have to get the repairs done. We need to decide if we have to modify the bid specifications that we have. Ms. Creese said that the staff is getting information to come before the Board about doing a bond issue. One of the items scheduled for the bond issue is the roof repairs. This roof repair has held up the bond issue because we did not know what type of roof repair to do—a 5, 10 or 20 year warrantee roof. Once we get a decision, we can sit down with the Township Engineer and review the bid specification. Mr. Eicher asked about space for MCA-TV. Mr. Koepfinger said that he has had some discussions with Ms. Creese about some possible alternatives. One of the possible options is the Municipal Authority building on Moon Clinton Road. Mr. Riley said that the building is 4,800 square feet with very tall ceilings. The Municipal Authority board has never discussed whether or not that could be used by MCA-TV because of the uncertainty of whether or not they would be staying in Cherrington. Their plan was that if they had to move, they could move their office to that site. But if there is a long-term commitment on the part of the Township that the Municipal Authority could stay where they are then the use of that building on Moon Clinton Road by MCA-TV is something that could be talked about. The Municipal Authority board will discuss this possibility at their upcoming meeting.

Mr. Vitale thanked everyone for coming and expects to hear from everyone soon.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet L. Sieracki
Assistant Municipal Secretary