

LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP GROWTH & REDEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

May 11, 2021

Page 1

The following are the minutes of the Growth & Redevelopment Committee meeting, which was held on Tuesday, May 11, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. using Uberconference.

Statement of Adequate Notice:

Adequate notice of the regular meeting of the Lawrence Township Growth & Redevelopment Committee has been provided by filing an annual meeting schedule with the Municipal Clerk and by filing the agenda with the Municipal Clerk, posting prominently in the Municipal Building and mailing to the Trenton Times.

Roll Call:

Present:

Charles Lavine
Maria Connolly, Vice Chairperson
Peter Ferrone
Andrew Frank, Chairperson
Stavros Papafilipakis
Joan Brame
Teresita Bastides-Heron
James Kilduff
Alan Di Sciuillo
Ryan Kennedy
Gregory Johnson, School Board Liaison
Cathianne Leonardi
Chris LaFlamme
Melissa Clark

Absent:

None.

Excused Absence:

Tushar Patel
Brian Vaughn

Also Present:

Christopher Bobbitt, Council Liaison
Jeffrey Radice, Secretary

Minutes:

April 13, 2021 minutes were approved.

Local Presentation:

Dr. Ross Kasun, Lawrence Township Public Schools Superintendent

Dr. Dave Adam, Lawrence High School Principal

Amy Amiet, Eldridge Park Elementary School Principal

Gregory Johnson, GRC Member and School Board Member

Dr. Kasun opened the meeting by speaking about how technology and video chats have made this time a lot more efficient for communication, not only with kids but with staff as well. He spoke about how he is

LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP GROWTH & REDEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

May 11, 2021

Page 2

proud of the Lawrence Township Public School District and entire community for rallying together to get through this difficult year. Dr. Kasun spoke on “seeing the light at the end of the tunnel”, with some students opting in to being back in person for a full five-day week. Ross talked about the adjustments made throughout the year to keep the kids and staff safe. In the Summer of 2020 a survey was sent out to Lawrence Township families regarding their comfortability of returning to school in person for the upcoming year. The fact that the schools originally opened fully virtually set them up for success later in the year when a quarantine was necessary, in Dr. Kasun’s opinion. Next year’s plan is to be back full-time, five days a week serving lunch; that being said, he still believes that there will be some times where remote learning is necessary.

Dr. Dave Adam spoke about Lawrence High School’s staff and student’s ability to be flexible. Dave talked about how sports were able to bridge the gap of returning normalcy to this year and build relationships between the kids. He talked about students telling him that they “took school and sports for granted”. Dave talked about how the pandemic brought the administrators closer and forced them to learn how to communicate better with each other.

Amy Amiet talked about the way that her staff all pulled together to make this year work. She said that her staff really focused on prioritizing what was best and most effective for the kids. Amy gave some examples of how her teachers were able to keep their students engaged over video chats. She said that as time goes on, parents are becoming more and more confident to send their kids into school.

Dr. Kasun spoke about how extensive and time consuming the contact tracing process was. According to Dr. Kasun there was no transmission of Covid cases in any school throughout the year so far. Ross spoke on the shortage of substitute teachers and aids. He also said that there is a lot less bus usage and more commuters to school, which drives up the need for crossing guards and traffic control. Dr. Kasun spoke about how the district is still undecided on how they handle snow days in the future.

Update from Council Liaison, Christopher Bobbitt:

Councilman Bobbitt gave an update on the Lidl store. He spoke about the Starbucks in the Lawrence Shopping Center having a drive-thru option. The Chick-Fil-A on Route 1 is under construction. The Lawrence Township Municipal Building is still currently closed to the public, but you can come to the North entrance and call a department and someone will meet you outside. There are now two electric vehicles for inspections and charging stations at the Municipal Building.

Other Business:

None.

Public Comment:

None.

Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP GROWTH & REDEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
May 11, 2021
Page 3

Digital audio file of this meeting is available upon request.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey Radice
Recording Secretary

Minutes approved: _____