

LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP GROWTH & REDEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Tuesday, May 9, 2017

The following are the minutes of the Growth & Redevelopment Committee meeting, which was held on Tuesday, May 9, 2017, at 6:30 p.m. in the Lawrence Township Municipal Building, Lower Level Conference Room.

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 and the Trentonian.

Roll Call:

Present: Lovette Love-Stevens
Charles Lavine
John Conroy
Joan Brame (left at 7:18 pm)
Maria Connolly
John Odalen
Peter Ferrone

Absent: Danielle Delprato
Teresita Bastides-Heron
Max Ramos, Board of Education Liaison

Excused Absence: Ryan Kennedy
Tushar Patel

Also Present: Christopher Bobbitt, Council Liaison
Andrew Link, Liaison
Susan Snook, Secretary

Minutes:

The April 11, 2017 minutes were unanimously approved per a change.

Public Comment:

None

Awards Ceremony:

Chairperson Conroy stated that we need a date, a place and a speaker to start with. Mr. Odalen has some things he would like to go over, per a handout he submitted to the Board members, attached.

The first item the members spoke about was the speaker: Ms. Brame suggested the new business manager, Kevin Nerwinski and the Board members agreed. Councilman Bobbitt will talk to him. The second item was the date and the date is normally the Wednesday after Columbus Day, which tentatively is October 11, 2017. The third item was the venue and suggestions were made to be at Green Acres, Educational Testing Service and Bristol-Myers Squibb.

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A discussion was to have Bristol-Myers Squibb because they have received numerous awards. Mr. Lavine stated he asked them last year and they were very doubtful because it is a secure building, did not have a great interest and the distance of the parking lot.

Ms. Brame stated Greenacres has a great central location and easy to get. Chairperson Conroy commented that it was very good but became very expensive. Mr. Lavine commented that the Chamber uses this as a money maker and currently the Chamber has changed with a new director. Ms. Brame asked how many people attend and Chairperson Conroy stated 75 to 100 people.

The Board members spoke about the Indoor Sports complex on Spruce Street and the Educational Testing Service; however, Greenacres is the most favorable spot. Chairperson Conroy asked if we have a Chamber representative and Mr. Odalen stated it is Heather Kearns-Latini.

Chairperson Conroy suggested, before the Chamber took a stronger role in coordinating this event, and the Board took more of a role in coordinating it, seek out our own sponsors and what that did was, if we have six awards and that would be 12 businesses represented because we asked the business representative come up and hand out the bowl. So do we want to try to do that this year? Mr. Odalen asked if the sponsors were even in Lawrence and suggested we make it a Lawrence event.

Mr. Link commented the bowls are \$85.00. The Mayor's award was \$300 and the others were \$250. Mr. Link stated he heard this through the Chamber that some of the sponsors were complaining because they were being asked twice, once by the Chamber and once by the Committee. This is the complaint that generated the change for the Chamber to take over. Ms. Connelly suggested giving a list to the Chamber on the sponsors we would like contacted and the Board members stated it does not work that way and was discussing on getting sponsors. Mr. Lavine asked who keeps the money. Mr. Link stated they take care of the sponsorships now and we have nothing to do with that. However, we invoice them for the price of the bowls and the admissions.

Mr. Odalen stated last year the Board spoke about re-writing the descriptions of the requirements of some of the awards, especially the large business and small business because they do not seem to jive, see attached. Ms. Brame stated she has a problem with "recognizes a successful new business" that is like a oxymoron because how do you know if you are successful if you just opened. Chairperson Conroy suggested a definitive date you were opened and not just a fresh coat of paint. The members suggested a year from October of last year. Ms. Brame stated about the new business is saying "thanks for coming to Lawrence" and how you discriminate or distinguish between business A, B or C of all the same size who came into Lawrence. Mr. Lavine stated you have to think what size they are, like 50 employees or smaller.

The Board spoke about the wording of the descriptions of the award categories and were making suggestions. The Board summarized the Awards Ceremony: Kevin Nerwinski will be the speaker; it will be held at Greenacres Country Club and tentatively on October 11, 2017.

Committee Goals:

Chairperson Conroy spoke about social media. Councilman Bobbitt stated during the interview process they spoke about social media coverage and question of how we start to work that. Somethings about social media with the Township is that is it operable under the public meetings act, so there are restrictions and who have to keep and maintain all the comments, allow who is going to monitored it, maintain it because you do not want it to get out of control. So these are things we are going to have look at. Everyone on Council and the Manager knows we have to do something. There are other departments that would like to have social media like the Recreation Department. So Councilman Bobbitt

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suggested to keep working on what you want to see from it; that would be helpful. Councilman Bobbitt is assuming the Board would want to have our own page or would it be part of the Township page.

Mr. Odalen made a suggestion to start out as the Township page to get started and made a couple of announcements and to see comments. Councilman Bobbitt stated the Committee has it owns page on the web site but it does not get updated.

Ms. Connolly handed out an article regarding property tax break for buying locally, copy attached. She explained that when you shop the municipality provides the residents with a card and present it at a local store you get a percentage of a rebate on your property taxes. Councilman Bobbitt stated with the cap that we have from the State and is this from the municipality and because we are .30 on the dollar on property tax and the County and School still raise their property tax. Ms. Connolly will look into it.

Mr. Link brought up the loyalty card that the Township had.

Other Business:

None

Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

Digital audio file of this meeting is available upon request.

Respectfully submitted,



Susan J. Snook
Recording Secretary

Minutes approved: June 13, 2017