

**South Fayette Township
Township Manager's Report
January 12, 2022
Submitted by John M. Barrett**

Summary: This report will summarize activity since our December meeting. Year end activity was quite heavy, with construction activity continuing in Fairview Park, a formal closing taking place for our recent bond issuance, preparations for the 2022 Road Program ramping up, and day to day activities requiring significant time and attention from the Manager. The mostly warmer weather earlier in the month allowed the residential and commercial active construction sites to continue, requiring the Township to remain active in the field and the office. The Manager has also devoted a chunk of time to preparing the 2022 General Fund Budget document that will include the Manager's Message, highlights from 2021, budget narratives and an updated Capital Improvements Program. The Board can anticipate having a bound copy of the budget this week. Additionally, we experienced our first taste of winter weather on January 6th, with Public Works crews being called out for winter operations into the evening. The cold weather and wet snow caused problems for local roadways, and we experienced some minor mechanical breakdowns and a minor fender bender. Fortunately, no one was injured, and we are making the necessary repairs and will be ready to go before additional winter weather impacts us. Additional information on these and other projects are presented below;

Bond Closing and Bid Opening. The Township participated in a formal closing for the bond issuance we have secured for the Municipal Complex and Recreation Center. The closing occurred on December 22 with all proceeds being wired to a segregated PLGIT account. The Township will be able to accrue interest on the borrowings, with PLGIT also monitoring arbitrage on behalf of the Township. The Board will begin to see a statement of activity for this account as construction activity scheduled to begin later this Spring. Public Bids for the Municipal Complex Project will be opened on January 27th. Once bids are opened, a bid tabulation and recommendation for award will be brought to the Board at our February Regular Meeting. The Manager is requesting an Executive Session with the Commissioners and Solicitor to review contractual and legal matters surrounding this project.

Low Volume Road Grant – Coal Pit Run Road. The Township previously secured a grant through the Allegheny Conservation District's Low Volume Road Grant program. The Township proposed to replace an existing structure on Coal Pit Run Road with an aluminum box culvert with wing walls to stabilize the adjoining slopes. The 2019 Grant Award was for \$105,909, although the Township has been made aware that we are eligible for up to a 20% increase in award to account for potential cost overruns and increases in material costs attributed to Covid. Former Public Works Supervisor, Nick Nickolas was instrumental in applying for this grant, and had performed significant leg work to design the project included with the grant application. In 2020, Covid delayed the grant process and more recently, the Township has asked Gibson-Thomas Engineering to assist with project design and oversight. After reviewing survey data, CAD files and meeting several times with ACCD members in the field, our Engineers are skeptical as to the feasibility of this project. They have determined that the originally proposed structure will not fit in the project area and would need to be 'skewed' to conform with the existing conditions of the roadway and stream. This process will increase costs, as additional measures are required during the construction process that will result in the project costs to exceed \$500k. Initially, the Township believed this project would cost about \$200k, with the grant providing roughly half of the total estimated project costs. Assuming the review performed by Gibson-Thomas is accurate, the Township would

have to provide roughly \$400k to complete the project. Given the low volume of traffic on this roadway, the Manager is questioning the practicality of pursuing this project. It is never a good practice to return grant money, however, it doesn't seem prudent to spend this much money on a low volume roadway. The Manager and Engineers have begun putting together a smaller, bridge rehab project that would address some of the more urgent repair items with the existing culvert. These expenses are anticipated to be under \$100k and will dramatically extend the useful life of the culvert. The Manager wanted to make sure the Board was aware of this situation and had the opportunity to respond prior to any final decisions being made with the Low Volume Road Grant.

2022 Road Program Update. We have been ramping up our efforts to develop the 2022 Annual Road Program. This year will be the first road program using Gibson-Thomas Engineering. We have been working with GTE to develop a multi-year road program using some new technology. The new technology, called Road Botics, uses cell phone video of our roads, runs the video through an application that produces a rating system. Once all video has been secured for our local roads, the ratings will be shared with GTE who will help us to cost out the repairs noted by Road Botics. We have secured the equipment needed to run the Road Botics application and are nearly complete with our data gathering phase. We hope to have submitted all video with the next week and will need a two week review period for Road Botics to finalize their rating system. Gibson Thomas will present a draft road program to the Township soon thereafter. This will be shared with the Commissioners once completed and we will then be able to advertise for the 2022 Road Program. The annual road program carries a budget of \$1.5M in 2022.

Public Works Storage Proposal at Fairview. We have identified a potential location for a DPW storage facility and would like the Board to weigh in on the proposed plan before any steps are taken to construct. The location would be right off Mayview Road, adjacent to where the realigned entrance road will be constructed. The new park entrance will form a "T" with the entrance to Chartiers Bend on Mayview Road, which will create the opportunity for significant Public Works storage on a discreet location adjacent to where the new road will sit. The strategy would be to grade off this proposed area and rough grade in an access road that will join the newly designed road. This location is far enough from the new entrance that it will not deter from our new park entrance. We also would be able to sufficiently use landscaping to screen this area, and include a series of entrance gates to secure the area. HRG provided us with a field survey and rough design of this proposed storage area, which they believe could easily accommodate a large storage building and a salt storage facility. These features would greatly assist Public Works operations especially with regards to park maintenance. Currently all maintenance equipment must be trailered from the Millers Run Road location to perform maintenance.

Capital Project Tracking – Open/Pending/Upcoming Projects. During the budget process, the Board requested some additional management tools be implemented with regards to our capital projects and our sequence of events for implementation. To that end, staff has been working on mapping all our 2022 Capital Projects on a spreadsheet that will include milestones, timelines and updated project costs and completion estimates. When this tool has been completed, it will be shared with the Board and incorporated into our monthly meeting documents. Currently our open Capital Projects for 2022 include;

- **Fairview Park Phase 1 Improvements.** Contract awarded and construction has begun. Work scheduled to be completed by April 1.

- **Park and Facility Signage.** Sealed bids were opened last week, and the Board will be presented with a motion to award this contract at our January meeting.
- **Municipal Complex/Police Building.** All bids must be received by January 27, with anticipated award February 9.
- **Boys Home / Preservation Park Restroom.** Both sites have been surveyed and a modular unit has been selected using CoStars pricing. Township is working with GTE to evaluate installation using DPW versus third-party contractors. Anticipated completion date is July 1.

\$1M DCNR Grant. The Township has been made aware of a grant award totaling \$1M for artificial turf installation on several athletic fields in Fairview Park. The award notice was issued on December 30, 2021, to the Township and we will begin working on the project details such that the project can be advertised for public bids later in the year. This is a tremendous opportunity for the Township to continue our aggressive improvement plan for Fairview Park, and to work towards completion of our Master Plan without depleting our reserves or burdening our General Fund. Congratulations to Paula for another successful application. Support from Representative Ortity was instrumental in securing the grant.

Testimony on Redistricting. The Board was asked to sign a letter to the Commonwealth Redistricting Committee in response to the draft legislative map that was recently completed. The new map would split the Township into two legislative districts and was perceived to be not in the Township's best interest by the Board of Commissioners. As a follow up to the letter that was submitted, the Manager provided testimony to the redistricting committee, via zoom last Friday. South Fayette is now on record as being opposed to the new legislative map.

Manager Contract Renewal. The employment contract for the Township Manager expired at the end of 2021. The First-Class Township Code permits an employment contract for Township Manager for a time period not to exceed two years in length and cannot extend beyond the term of the Board of Commissioners. The purpose of these restrictions is to restrict communities from binding a future Board with an employment contract for the Manager position. The terms of the contract have previously been agreed to by the Board and Manager and the action required next is approval of the contract extension at a public meeting.

If anyone would like to discuss any issue independently, please do not hesitate to contact me. I will also be prepared to discuss with the group at our upcoming meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

John M. Barrett
Township Manager