

Conewago Online

Report on the February 19, 2003 Meeting of the Conewago Township Board of Supervisors

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The Conewago Township Board of Supervisors held a special meeting on February 19, 2003 to present the draft agreement between Conewago Township and DTMA. Those present were:

The Supers:

John Graybill (chair), John Rochat (table), Jay Brandt (stool)

Their trusted Assistants:

Shirley Bretz (secretary)

Max Shradley (engineer)

Jon Yost (solicitor)

The Reporters:

Joel (*Flash*) Buckley, ConewagoOnline

Interested Developer:

Greg Hill of the Waterford Hills

Interested Citizens:

Ruth Siegel

Kent Bachmann

Cathy Scott

Todd Kreiser

Gerald Boltz

Maurice Didntgethislastname

Maybe someone else I missed

Call Meeting to Order

There was a meeting (executive session--meaning public not allowed) going on with DTMA representatives as the public arrived for the scheduled special meeting. It was announced that despite the announcement a week earlier that a draft agreement would be presented tonight, that there were still some "issues to be resolved" and so no agreement would be presented. The board indicated they would be going back into executive session. Rather than immediately adjourning the public meeting and sending home all the interested citizens who had braved the snow to attend, they held a short period for public comment and questions--many of which they couldn't or wouldn't answer.

Public Comment Period

Maurice asked what the tapping fee and annual fee were going to be. Sorry, they couldn't say.

Ruth (*I am not Mrs. Widome, that's my mother-in-law*) Siegel

(Sorry, Ruth. Seriously, I know how it feels--Joel {*I am not Mr. Ostrov*} Buckley)

Ruth Siegel, perhaps anticipating that these fees are going to be unpleasantly high, wanted to discuss using general fund revenues to defray the cost of the project. There was a bit of discussion pro and con on this idea. One of the supervisors responded that several hundred thousand dollars of general fund revenues had already been spent on this project (mostly design fees? to DTMA). While it wasn't explicitly stated, I got the impression that perhaps these amounts would not be added to the rate base (capital construction costs) that the sewer users will have to pay and perhaps this would be the extent of the township's contribution to the project costs. Though they didn't exactly say that, and I don't know if that's actually been decided. So the \$3.3 million quoted as the cost of the sewer--does that NOT include \$300,000 already spent on design fees, etc? Is the cost really \$3.6 million? Inquiring minds want to know.

Todd Kreiser said that he wanted to commend the board for not rushing into things and taking the time to get a good agreement.

Let's see. Under the Township's 1998 Act 537 Plan, this agreement was scheduled to be adopted in 1999. Before we spent over a quarter million dollars on design fees, before bidding on the construction was advertised. I would agree that the board has been taking its time to get an agreement. Whether it will be a good one, remains to be seen.

Joel Buckley asked if the board would advertise the agreement and allow a period of time for public review and comment before voting on it. Solicitor Yost replied that they might advertise a special meeting one day in advance in the Lebanon Daily News(Ed Note: everybody in the township reads that paper, right?) and present and vote to approve the agreement at the same meeting.

Remember- Next regular Board of Supervisors Meeting is Wednesday March 12 at 7:30 pm. A special meeting to approve an agreement with DTMA could be held one day after being published in the Lebanon Daily Item. Naturally, *ConewagoOnline* will post notice of any special meeting on its website as soon as I hear about it. And just in case you are not yet in the habit of logging on to *ConewagoOnline* every day, you can contact the webmaster to ask to receive an e-mail alert when sewer news is posted on the site.

That's it – *Flash*