



Keri Miller <kerimiller.greggtownship@gmail.com>

R-18-02

Keri Miller <kerimiller.greggtownship@gmail.com>

Tue, Jan 30, 2018 at 3:55 PM

To: Joel Myers <joelmyers@myersfarm.com>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: "Keri Miller" <kerimiller.greggtownship@gmail.com>

Date: Jan 19, 2018 7:46 PM

Subject: Re: R-18-02

To: "Jcwell11" <jcwell11@aol.com>

Cc:

Thank you for your email, Ms. Cornwall.

I appreciate your comments and they will be taken under consideration. Drafted from other municipal policies, this resolution was tabled to further discuss and adjust the language before approval. A revised version will be available for review prior to the February Board of Supervisors meeting. The intent of the policy is not to discourage participation, but provide clear understanding of what is expected of conduct by all during the meeting, so that everyone has the opportunity to participate, with out disruption and in a safe environment.

Thank you again for taking the time to voice your concern.

Keri Miller
Board of Supervisors, Chair
Gregg Township, Centre County

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On Fri, Jan 19, 2018 at 3:04 PM, Jcwell11 <jcwell11@aol.com> wrote:

Dear Supervisor Miller,

R-18-02, "Meeting Policies and Procedures," mounts unreasonable barriers and restricts in an unreasonable manner the participation of citizens at public meetings of elected officials in Gregg Township. By explicitly empowering the "presiding officer" of the meeting to "request" that citizens leave; by threatening (subjectively) "disorderly" residents with physical removal by law enforcement and allowing the presiding officer's to use his or her discretion to ban residents from future participation in such public meetings, the Township is creating an atmosphere of intimidation and hostility in its relationship with its citizens.

The "Recording of Open Meetings Policy" deters residents from recording meetings by requiring advance notice, limited movement, and the signing of a registry prior to recording. The policy further states the Board of Supervisors "shall" order residents to stop recording for a number of reasons, including recording in a manner which "distracts, disturbs, or is offensive" to any person in attendance. The "penalties" for non-compliance with this policy include "injunctive relief" with "the violator" paying "all attorneys' fees and costs."

The Sunshine Act allows agencies to create reasonable rules that govern the conduct of public meetings, but R-18-02 is not reasonable, nor does it benefit civic participation and encourage democratic governance.

Section 711(a) of the Sunshine Act states:

“A person attending a meeting of an agency shall have the right to use recording devices to record all the proceedings.”

It further provides:

“Nothing in this section shall prohibit the agency from adopting and enforcing reasonable rules for their use under section 710 (relating to rules and regulations for conduct of meetings).”

This provision, along with 710, allows agencies to create reasonable rules governing the conduct of public meetings, including the use of recording devices. Any such rule, however, cannot interfere with the statutory right to record meetings or the legislative intent to foster public participation and attendance at meetings. A policy that requires advance notice and permission from the agency in order to record a public meeting creates an unnecessary and unreasonable barrier to access and is contrary to the Law.

Legal challenges, expensive to defend against, are very likely to be mounted against the Township should the supervisors adopt this Resolution. Such defense of a Resolution – one full of seemingly unconstitutionally vague wording that creates pre-emptive barriers to exercise of statutory rights while threatening punitive actions against a Township's own citizens would be an extremely poor use of taxpayer's funds.

Please vote against R-18-02.

Jennifer C Cornwell
105 Railroad Street

Disbanding the Old Gregg School Advisory Board and creating a new board to address Recreation, Health and Welfare using Gregg Township Facilities

To: Gregg Township Board of Supervisors
From: Kathryn and Joel Myers
Subject: Old Gregg School – Committees and boards
February 5, 2018

Background

Gregg Township Supervisors purchased the old Gregg school building from the Penns Valley School District for \$1.00 in 2007. The Old Gregg School Advisory Board was formed to assist the supervisors in managing the building. The primary purposes were to maximize income from the school as well as creating a community center for Gregg Township residents and others. Within the past ten years the OGSAB exceeded expectations in their management of the facility.

Discussion

Currently the facility could be managed with the Gregg Township Secretary/Treasurer handling the administrative aspects of operating the building. This would include scheduling which will be handled on the new web site making it available to the public. Maintenance can be carried out by the part time building manager whose primary job can be to provide routine maintenance and to provide short and long term recommended repairs along with cost estimates and suggested priorities. The BOS can then take action on these recommendations. Based on this discussion, there is no longer a need for the Old Gregg Township Advisory Board as it exists. We applaud the efforts of this committee on which I had the privilege to serve for about 4 years.

Conclusion

At this point in time, a new committee should be formed with different goals and objectives. They can provide guidance and develop programs and activities in the areas of recreation, health and welfare for the building, playground and ball field. They can provide coordination of programs and activities with the Penns Valley Youth Center, YMCA and other agencies and groups. They would be responsible for determining and directing funding raising activities. Another responsibility that should be addressed would be to provide input and support for the Tri Municipal Park where ground will be broken this year for the beginning phases of the park.

Note: Current members of the advisory board should be asked if they would like to become members of the new board. This board should have its own charter and objectives with an understanding that they will make recommendations to the board of supervisors.

We would urge the BOS to take the necessary actions to move forward in the direction we have described.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Kathryn and Joel Myers
868 Sinking Creek Road
Spring Mills, Pa. 16875