

**GENERAL MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY OF THE TOWNSHIP OF MANHEIM  
FRIDAY AUGUST 22, 2003 MINUTES**

The regular meeting of the General Municipal Authority of the Township of Manheim was held on Friday, August 22, 2003 at 7:30 a.m. at the Manheim Township Municipal Building, 1840 Municipal Drive, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Authority members present were: John H. Kadel, J. Michael Flanagan, Harry Ritter, Roger St. Germain and Elmer Wagner. Also present were Solicitor William McCarty of Hartman, Underhill & Brubaker, Finance Officer Valerie A. Calhoun, and Township Manager James M. Martin.

Mr. Kadel announced at the meeting July 31, the Authority made a motion to award a miniature golf contract to the lowest responsible bidder, which was Harris Miniature Golf. That motion was tabled to determine whether or not the Commissioners and the Overlook Community Foundation were backing the proposed mini golf project. The Commissioners unanimously approved the construction of a mini golf facility at their August 11 meeting. The Foundation approved the facility at their August 19 meeting. He said he would like to entertain now a motion to take the tabled motion off the table that they had at the last meeting.

Mr. Ritter moved to take the tabled motion off the table and bring it back for action by the Authority. Seconded by Mr. Wagner. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Kadel said comments on mini golf were solicited and recorded at the July 18 and the July 31 meeting of the Authority, as well as at the Commissioners' meeting on August 11, and the Foundation meeting on August 19. The purpose of this morning's meeting is to take action on the original motion. He asked if the Board was ready for the question on the original motion. He asked Mr. Martin to read the original motion.

Mr. Martin said the original motion was to award the bid to Harris Miniature Golf in the amount not to exceed \$239,000.00. Mr. Ritter said he would second that motion. Then he asked if they needed to make a motion. Mr. Martin said they need to make a motion to take action.

Mr. Ritter moved to take action on the original motion to award the bid to Harris Construction, not to exceed \$239,000.00. Seconded by Mr. Flanagan.

Mr. Kadel said the motion has been made and seconded to award the contract to Harris Miniature Golf. He asked if the Board was ready for the question.

A member of the audience said he had a comment and asked if he could make a comment. Mr. Ritter asked if it pertained to miniature golf. Mr. Kadel asked what it pertained to. The member of the audience said he wouldn't be here if it didn't. Mr. Ritter said they've heard comments. The member of the audience interrupted and said he asked a question and asked the Chairman if he could make a comment. Mr. Kadel said he could make a short comment.

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The member of the audience began by saying he challenged the process. Mr. Martin reminded him to state his name. David Friedrichs of 1470 Hunsicker Road said he has been a 31-year Manheim Township resident and he appreciated them taking the time to listen to him. He said he challenged the process in which the Overlook Foundation approved the miniature golf project, and thus their having been unduly influenced by city Commissioner Bob Bledsoe, who has blatantly and knowingly presented unsubstantiated and misleading information, made strong allegations against those who have opposed the miniature golf, lead him to conclude that this approval process was tainted by unethical and willful actions of Bledsoe. He said he stood before them to challenge Bob Bledsoe. He said he would challenge Bob Bledsoe to answer in writing within five days, allegations and statements listed below, which were taken directly from his Overlook development proposals dated July 21, 2003. He continued that if Bob fails to adequately answer these allegations with proof, facts and data, then he is no longer fit to serve Manheim Township residents, and as a result of his failing to show just cause and proof to back up this report, he said he would ask him to resign in order not to do further harm to Manheim Township system of fair and ethical standards of governance. He said he would skip the next paragraph. He said they, as voting Authority, must do their due diligence. Before they vote on this miniature golf contract awarded today, he asked them to please do two things. Verify all the facts and statements as he had listed below, and ask for a proposal from those who oppose this project. He said then they can competently make a decision based upon the facts, allegations and statements. He said if they eliminate one of the activities, the project is jeopardized. These are all quotes. As members of the Municipal Authority, he said they have been bombarded by individuals and SURGE members to vote against miniature golf. Many of these people have bombarded the Commissioner, lobbying against plans for a community center. He said quote, they are a small minority with personal agendas and vested interests. He said and they did not represent the wishes of the majority of citizens of Manheim Township, as proven by survey data. As a Municipal Authority, their partnership is to evaluate the bid and if it meets the goal of developing the property with no tax dollars, then move forward to accomplish that goal. The Commissioners do not agree that they are hurting businesses in the county. The recommended approving miniature golf bid and award contract to the lowest builder. Public versus private sector and minority opinions should not be a part of their decision-making process. Survey data guides actions. He said thank you. There was applause.

A member of the audience asked if they would take any other comments. Mr. Kadel said two minutes. The member of the audience said fine, that's long enough. Mr. Kadel said this will be the last comment.

The member of the audience said he would read from this morning's editorial, in case they haven't seen it. He said he was just going to read two paragraphs; it's called a matter of trust. A member of the audience said excuse me and asked him to state his name please. Donald Reed of 76 Glen Moore Circle said he's lived there since 1967, about 36 years. He read this morning the Township's General Municipal Authority is scheduled to vote on a construction contract to build a miniature golf course at Overlook. However the cost associated with the project suggests taxpayers could be again asked to pick up the tab if the course does not meet expectations, which some experts in the field argue are already

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inflated. Although we are less concerned about a public miniature golf course competing with private courses, we are worried about the course's ability to make ends meet. And we are further troubled by the constant fluctuations in bottom line estimates. He said that was what he would consider someone who does not have a vested interest, and he said he has no vested interest in whether there is a miniature golf course or not. He said his vested interest is in whether we should or should not compete with the private sector. He said as he's stated before, he's a Republican. He said he believes Republicans believe that in fact the public should not compete with private industry, and he said that is exactly what they are asked to do. He thanked the Authority. The Authority thanked him. There was applause.

A member of the audience asked if he could have two minutes, or a minute. Mr. Kadel joked that he would be down to a minute now! There was laughter.

Mike Santaniello of Fruitville Pike said on Wednesday of this week York City started their process for a formalizing, started to formalize their budget for the coming year. He said he was surprised to see one of their biggest concerns in the budget this year is how to make up the money from the bond that supported an ice rink two years ago that was supposed to give the city money, and they can't even make their mortgage payment. He said one of their biggest concerns is to find out how much they are going to have to give and for how long they are going to be supporting this. Why Manheim Township wants to even get into this area, and put itself in a position to be doing something that the people of the Township don't want, and spending money to do it, he said he just didn't understand that. He thanked the Authority. The Authority thanked him. There was brief applause.

A member of the audience asked for thirty seconds. Mr. Kadel agreed thirty seconds. There was laughter.

Larry Gagnon of 1723 Santa Barbara Drive said he would like to ask Mr. Kadel and his colleagues, was there anyone on the Commissioners that believes that enterprise will not make money? Mr. Kadel answered that he could not answer that question; he didn't know what the Commissioners want. Mr. Gagnon said he was sorry, he meant the Authority. Was there anyone on the Authority that believes that this miniature golf alone will not make money? He asked if he could get a response. Mr. Kadel said he could get a response after the vote on the motion. Mr. Gagnon asked if they could get it before.

Gail Hines, of Haskell Drive, said she would take five minutes. She said she has gone from meeting to meeting to meeting to meeting and listened to them and these people say they represent the people of this Township? She said she thought not, because no thinking representative of the people would go against what the people want, and do a ridiculous thing to compete in private industry. She said when her daughter was in Manheim Township Schools she had to sell candy bars from door-to-door to get playground equipment. She said when she went to the high school they had to do car washes and sub sales in order to get band uniforms. She said her suggestion to them was that if they want to have a miniature golf course, have a bake sale or have a car wash. She told them to quit dipping in their pockets for nonsensical things that government has no business being in. She continued by

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telling them not to say they represent the people; they've played a shell game. She said they've gone to the Foundation meeting, to the Commissioner meeting, to this meeting, and somebody somewhere by god voted for it. The people don't want it but they figured out a way to vote for it. They do not represent the people and she said there is not a person here with the conviction, the ethics and the courage to stand up and say this is not right, I'm not going to vote for it. There was applause.

Mr. Kadel asked if the Board was ready for the question. Some members answered yes.

Rick Castleberry of 370 Sarsen Drive said he didn't even know if it was appropriate and he brought it up at the Foundation meeting. He said again he didn't know if it was appropriate for this Board to answer or not. But, there was a million dollar bond that was approved, when they went through the exercise of finding out how that's going to be repaid back with the driving range and the mini golf, it turned out it was over \$100,000.00 short a year. The driving range and the mini golf paid back up to \$118,000.00 a year. They know that the debt service and the interest on that bond is \$221,000.00. He asked who is accountable for whether or not the full million is actually spent or only half a million is spent, or how does that work? He asked if that, how does that work? He asked who? The million dollars there, they are solely responsible, or the ones to see how that money is dished out? If it is, right now as it stands, he said he thought there is \$533,000.00 that's earmarked for the driving range and the mini golf. So that leaves over four hundred thousand that we don't have the debt service to pay back. He said that was his question. He didn't know how close ... Mr. Kadel said if they don't appropriate the money, they can reduce the debt service, because there is no penalty to pre-pay the loan back. Mr. Castleberry said so this Board is responsible that, with the debt service that we see on the projections from the mini golf, that we only spend that amount of money toward it. Someone answered that's right. Mr. Castleberry said OK.

Mr. Flanagan said generally they are pretty tight with a buck. They mostly do waterlines; he said they are always looking at the costs involved with that. He said he thought they were pretty vigilant about that. He said he was glad he brought those up the other night, because he was not aware of those numbers. As this goes forward, if this is approved, he said he thought they will all be looking at prepaying what ever they don't need ... that would be prudent.

Mr Kadel asked if they were ready for the question to vote on the original motion? There was agreement. They decided to do a role call vote. Mr. Flanagan asked if they could also explain their vote. Mr. Kadel asked Mr. Flanagan if he wanted to comment first. Mr. Flanagan said well, as they go through the role call vote, he wondered if it would be OK to explain their vote. Mr. Kadel said OK.

Mr. Martin called for the vote of Roger St. Germain. Mr. St. Germain said he was voting yes on accepting this bid. Originally when he heard about it he was in doubts whether this was the thing to do, however as he heard the program that the Overlook Foundation is suggesting, which as everyone in attendance knew was not only the mini golf but the driving range, there is already a pool, they have a golf course and they will put in a concession

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stand, by the way is that concession stand going to be in competition with other concession stands around? He said as he's looked at the overall, in his mind this is only a small part of the overall project to develop Overlook park. He said he also didn't believe that a miniature golf course 10 miles away or 8 miles away is a competition. We don't have a miniature golf in Manheim Township. Overall as he has thought about it, he thought we ought to do this. And by the way, he said their job is not to decide really if this is a good thing. He said what they are called upon to do is simply award the contracts that are presented to them with all the data that backs them up, that's why they've come, and that all they've done. He said it's not up to them to decide whether the golf course should continue, or whether this should continue or anything else. He said so as he looked over the whole thing he thought it was the right thing to do, and that's why he voted yes to award the contract for this project.

Mr. Flanagan said he wanted to thank everybody for showing up to all these early morning meetings, and missing work, and other things. He said he was real pleased and he thought everybody else was that we are a Township where people take the time to be involved and ask difficult questions, as a citizen and not a member of this board, both pro and con, he appreciated everybody being here. He said he knew at these meetings, whether they agreed or disagreed on things, and keeping the discussion very civilized, he thought. He said they tabled this twice, and the reason they tabled it both times, at least the reason he felt it should be tabled was because they were asked to vote on some numbers that the Commissioners hadn't really considered yet, and more importantly the Foundation, which is really responsible for the Overlook property, for them to consider and actually say specifically what they viewed this project to be and whether it should go forward. The Foundation has now looked at those and has had a public meeting, and a couple of Foundation members are here and he wanted to thank them, because at that meeting they opened up the floor to discussion for individual Foundation members to say how they felt. There was a majority that wanted to go ahead and a minority that didn't. He said both sides actually were very articulate and thoughtful. He said they appointed the Foundation members to develop Overlook, the Schwartz property, and he thought they have an intelligent, thoughtful, common sense group of people there. He said if they want to do something they have appointed them as the citizens responsible to do that and unless they are completely wrong on something, he didn't think they should overrule them. He said he just thought that would be an incorrect thing to do. He said in weighing this decision, that was the first thing that drove him in tabling it, because he wanted to hear what these folks had to say. They have recommended it. The two issues brought before them are one, an economic issue, whether or not this is going to turn a profit or a loss or break even. The other was a little bit more philosophical, and he said he knew Roger was concerned about it as soon as he heard they were doing and that was should they be doing something like this which perhaps belongs in the private sector; should they be competing with the private sector. On the profit and loss, he said he went up and sat at a mini golf place for an entire evening on a Wednesday night in the summertime to actually count heads. He counted every head coming in and out. He said he thought our numbers might be a little bit light. If his survey, which is very unscientific, is correct and we might not turn a profit on it. However, where this is positioned is probably going to be more of an attraction than most places. This is going to be a place where soccer tournaments are going to go on, baseball tournaments, and he thought it is going to get a lot more use than the place that he went to.

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The other thing that really struck him while sitting at a golf course is this is really a wholesome activity. The people that came that night were all families with kids having a very nice time, teenagers on dates and with groups. It couldn't have been a more pleasant, cheerful, wholesome activity, as far as what people were doing. He said he thought the profit and loss they are not going to know for a couple of years. If it is a profit, it is not going to be much. He said he thought if it is a loss he didn't think it would be that much, so that doesn't really drive him on this. He said he thought it was going to be pretty close to breakeven. The philosophical question though he thought was what has been raised by a lot of folks here, which is whether or not we should be doing something like this that perhaps is competing with the private sector. He said we should be very careful about competing with the private sector. He said he has absolutely no doubt about that. But in certain areas, they are already touching upon that and he didn't think ... that we've done that. He said we do that with the skating rink. He said you can go there and see hundreds of kids having a good time at a reasonable cost and he didn't think they were losing money on that. He said we do it at the pools. The private sector was pulling out of that, it was no longer something that was economically viable. The Township stepped in and if we go to any of the pools, people are having a really good time. We do that at the Golf Course. He said he thought Mr. St. Germain's comment that miniature golf courses around here really are not that close to Manheim Township, and certainly not in the Township, is important. He said he is not convinced we would compete that much with anyone. He said he for one would not go down to Strasburg and play miniature golf ever, but he would take his kids over to Overlook. Having said all that, and rambled on a bit, he was initially leaning against doing this, and going to the contract, but he said he would vote yes and go ahead with the contract to award the bid to build the miniature golf course.

Mr. Wagner said he would vote yes for all the reasons they just heard.

Mr. Ritter said he voted yes. He said he firmly believed that the three units, the snack bar, the miniature golf and the driving range will fully support the debt that's put against it, and he believed it is an asset and it is very important to the entire development of that piece of ground.

Mr. Kadel said his vote will be yes. He said a little bit of background information; they've already developed the soccer fields on this property, that was one of the first projects they got into. He said in doing so they partnered with the Manheim Township Soccer Club. He said it was kind of a joint venture. The baseball fields will probably be the next thing to come on stream. And now he said he believed firmly that this miniature golf facility will be a place where our youth can congregate. And he thought we owe it to the youth of this Township to provide places where they can go and enjoy good family entertainment. He said he thought in conjunction with the driving range, this will be a successful venture. He said he looked forward to, this is just another step in developing a whole, complete community center and library for this Township. He said we are a good Township, we have the facilities and the will and the desire to develop this property, and he thought we should go ahead with this.

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Mr. Martin announced motion carried: five yes and no zero.

There being no further business, on a motion by Mr. Wagner, seconded by Mr. Ritter, it was moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 a.m. Motion carried unanimously.

The next meeting will be Friday, October 17, 2003 at 7:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

James M. Martin  
Manager-Secretary