

**Federation of Lower Merion Township Civic Associations**  
**Minutes of the Meeting of February 8, 2010**  
**Bryn Mawr Community Center**

Present: Ardmore Progressive, no repr.; Ard-Wood, no repr.; Belmont Hills, Greg Strickland.; Bryn Mawr, Hank Wilson, Leigh Anne Smith, Duncan Van Dusen; Gladwyne, Joe Brown; Haverford, Anne Mezey, Stephen Billings; Merion, Martin Piltch, Frances Quinn; Merion Park, Diane Actman; Narberth, no repr.; Neighborhood Club, Maxine Goldberg; North Ardmore, Hugh Gordon, Chad Graham; Penn Valley, Steve Selinger; Penn Wynne, Anthony Gil; Rosemont-Villanova, no repr.; Shortridge, Carl Watson, Randi Serota; Wynnewood, Deborah Levine.  
Guest: Maureen O'Leary, Narberth; Mike McGrath, Lower Merion Police Superintendent.

1. The meeting was called to order by President Smith at 7:32 pm.
2. Maureen O'Leary of Narberth Civic reported briefly on school district affairs. Reporting of district affairs is now done through a blog, OpenLMN.net, rather than through the Narberth Civic web site. A Transition Committee is active to deal with problems associated with the new high schools, including redistricting. There is some money unspent for the construction of the new Harriton HS, and the suggestion has been made that it be spent to provide irrigation of the athletic fields. The school board plans to seek a waiver from the state rule forbidding use of a single contractor for school construction. It is not clear why this would be desirable when high school construction is nearing completion. In response to a question, O'Leary stated that LM high school construction is on schedule, except for staff parking.
3. Minutes of the meeting of January 11, 2010, were approved.
4. Treasurer's Report, Anne Mezey. Checking account \$4045, Money Market Fund \$12,704. A check has been written for \$1500 payable to Laura Solomon for next month's civic business seminar (see President's Report below).
5. Mike McGrath, Lower Merion Police Superintendent, reported on police activity. The department is fully staffed. Two officers have been assigned to the canine unit, replacing two retired officers, and a new police dog has been acquired through a donation from a Township resident. Residents may sign up at [nixle.com](http://nixle.com) for a service by which local police alerts will be sent to a cell phone or e-mail address. Frequency of messages averages about one per week. The police blotter, listing very briefly each police incident in the Township, updated weekly, is publicly available. Go to the Township web site ([www.lowermerion.org](http://www.lowermerion.org)), then to the Police Department, then to Police Blotter. All 911 calls from LM now are answered at the county dispatch center. However, county dispatchers cannot communicate directly with LM police/fire/ambulance depts due to incompatible radio systems, so emergency calls are switched directly to a LM dispatcher. Non-emergency calls (abandoned car, defective traffic signal, etc.) are forwarded by equivalent of e-mail to LM. Emergency calls can be made directly to LM Police by dialing 610 642-4200. (Non-emergency calls 610 649-1000). The synchronized traffic light system on Montgomery Ave. will be operational in late spring. There have been no reported problems with snow blocking LED traffic lights due to lack of heating. Since late 2009 there has been an increase in burglaries in various parts of the Township, often crude break-ins in daylight. Some arrests have been made, but burglaries have not ended. The deer culling program in late 2009 resulted in 129 deer killed. There were an estimated 600 deer in the Township before the kill. The cost of the kill was about \$180 per deer. There are no current plans for culling in 2010. "Locks for Life" is a program to place residence door keys in a combination-locked box by the door of a home. In case of an emergency, if the occupant cannot open the door (say an elderly person has fallen), emergency personnel can enter the house without forcing a door. There are safeguards against improper use. Details are available from the police department.

6. Budget Committee, Greg Strickland. Expenditure of \$135,00 for installation of a fountain in a new mini-park at Anderson and Lancaster Aves. was approved by the Commissioners after debate. A bond issue of \$15 million is being planned for later this year. Debt service on current Township debt will be about \$2 million in 2010. The school district budget for 2010-11 is in preparation. Strickland would welcome additional committee members, especially to monitor school budgeting.

7. Township Actions, Carl Watson. The Planning Commission meeting Feb. 1 was devoted to preparation of a revised Comprehensive Plan. A report will be issued in the second quarter of 2010. The current Capital Improvement Plan includes 66 projects. Commissioners reviewed 13 of these on Feb. 3; some were delayed one year, some delayed indefinitely. These decision are available on the Township web site. An addition 9 projects will be reviewed March 3. Finance Committee: books for 2009 are being closed; there are no major surprises. Cleanup from a major snowstorm costs the Township \$150,000 to \$200,000. Cynwyd Trail workdays Feb. 13-14 have been cancelled due to snow. Major changes in regulations governing use of Township Parks will be considered Feb.10. [Added note: this meeting has been rescheduled for March.] The deadline for signups for the Environmental Advisory Committee sessions on composting and rainbarrels is Feb 19.

Martin Piltch noted that the Historic Preservation Awards ceremony will be May 11 at Merion Tribute House. Deadline for nominations is March 19. Anyone may make a nomination. Nomination forms are available on the Township web site.

8. President's Report: The March Federation meeting will start at 7 pm, and will be devoted entirely to a presentation, followed by a question period, on Civic Association obligations under federal and state tax codes and on insurance needs. This will be run by attorney Laura Solomon, and paid for by the Federation. All Civic presidents and treasurers are urged to attend.

The President asked for and received affirmation of the Federation's earlier resolution opposing billboards on Lancaster Ave. in Bryn Mawr. The Federation has not yet had an opportunity to present this resolution to the Haverford Zoning Hearing Board.

On another billboard matter, the LM Zoning Hearing Board will hear a case involving a billboard at the Five-Points intersection in Bryn Mawr. A sign has been at this location for many years, but it appears the current sign does not meet the conditions of the original permit. President Smith suggested that she appear at the ZHB hearing to report the Federation's general opposition to billboards in the Township, based on the resolution noted in the preceding paragraph. This action was approved.

9. Community Watch, Carl Watson. Community Watch will be sending a mailing to every household in the Township, with a cover letter from Superintendent McGrath, asking for Community Watch patrol volunteers.

10. Anthony Gil, Penn Wynne, raised the matter of an overlap of Penn Wynne and Wynnewood Civic area boundaries, and of the status of Wynnewood Valley Civic. Some rather disorganized discussion ensued. Among the points made were that neither the Township nor the Federation has any explicit authority to set Civic Association boundaries.

11. Old Business. The President asked for reaction to a Federation resolution opposing proposed changes in the Township noise ordinance. Various reactions were reported, including a lack of understanding of the existing ordinance and of the perceived need for change, general opposition to construction allowed earlier in the morning, lack of opposition to construction running later in the day, and concerns about landscaping noise (leaf blowers, brush chippers) as well as

construction noise. Any Civic wanting to be heard on this matter should appear at the Commissioners meeting next month when it is expected to be on the agenda.

12. Frances Quinn reported the next Neighbor to Neighbor talk sponsored by Merion Civic at the Merion Tribute House, 8 pm March 10, on Albrecht's Nursery, the oldest on the Main Line.

12. Adjournment at 8:58 pm.

The next meeting of the Federation will be March 8, starting at the special time of 7 pm (see item 8 above).