

Board of Supervisors

MINUTES

November 11, 2008

Jim Brownlow, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. Reflecting on the fact that today is Veterans Day, Jim thanked those who have served in the Armed Forces.

Supervisors Present: Karen Bedics, Jim Brownlow, Barbara Lindtner, Volker Oakey and Rob Zisko.

Also present: Sandy Everitt, Secretary/Treasurer; Mark Laudenslager, Police Chief; and Rich Schilling, Township Manager

The Board held an executive session prior to this meeting to discuss personnel issues.

Approval of Minutes - Not Ready for Approval

Bills for Approval

Barbara Lindtner **moved** to approve bills totaling \$61,804.04 from October 29 – November 11, 2008. Karen Bedics **seconded**. Sandy Everitt noted that the bill for \$28,354.61 to Kansas State Bank is an annual lease payment the township is making for the Springtown Fire Department's new fire truck. Jim called for the question. The motion **passed** unanimously.

Reports

Road Department (posted) – Karen Bedics asked if PennDOT gave a date by which improvements to the intersection at State Road and Richlandtown Pike would take place. Rich Schilling said a staff member from Senator Wonderling's office spoke with PennDOT after receiving a copy of our letter and was told PennDOT plans to install warning signs both on Richlandtown Pike and on State Road about the stop signs ahead. Additionally, larger stop signs will be installed on State Road on both sides of Richlandtown Pike. Mark Laudenslager feels 4-way stop signs would be more effective. Volker Oakey is concerned about pine trees that may obstruct sight distance. Rich will discuss these other concerns with PennDOT after the township receives written notice of what PennDOT plans.

Code Enforcement (posted) – Accepted as presented

Police (available on the website) – The police investigated 78 incidents in October, of which 20 were criminal offenses. Property valued at \$10,169 was stolen with none recovered. One accident occurred, involving two vehicles with no injuries. The new police officers began their employment on November 3 and their transition is going well.

Township Manager's Report – Rich Schilling highlighted the following activity in October:

- October 13 – Met with Linda Sanchez (Optimus Ins.) on workplace safety issues.
- October 16 – Attended an Emergency Management meeting with Karen Bedics; Mike Guarino, Springfield Township's Emergency Management Coordinator; and Will Helm, Chief, Springtown Fire Department
- October 21 – Attended Ag Security meeting with Rob Zisko
- October 22 – Rich and Dave Taylor met with Bucks County representatives on the CDBG Grant that Springfield Township submitted for Handicap Accessibility Improvements to the township building. It looks good for the township's grant request. .
- Miscellaneous Activity:
 1. Helped Open Space Committee complete a mailing to applicants for open space funding.
 2. Talked with a resident who has agreed to donate \$10,000 for the 2009 Springtown Farmers Market.
 3. Rich plans to review the Emergency Management Plan over the winter with Mike Guarino, Emergency Management Coordinator, and Fire Chief Will Helm.
 4. Bobb Carson, Bob Wynn and Rich will meet with Lombardo & Associates regarding the status of the Act 537 Plan. Pio Lombardo will be asked to update the Supervisors at their November 25 meeting.
 5. Intensive work on the 2009 budget.

Jim Brownlow said that upon receipt of the gift to the Springtown Farmers Market, a formal acknowledgment should be sent to the anonymous donor from the Board of Supervisors. He noted that the gift has really helped the Township because of the budget deficit anticipated in 2009. Barbara Lindtner **moved** that a thank you letter be sent on behalf of the Board to the donor who contributed \$10,000 to support the 2009 Springtown Farmers Market. Jim Brownlow **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously.

Rob Zisko said the Ag Security Committee met on October 21. Minutes of that meeting and a letter from the Ag Security Committee will be prepared for the Board. The Committee recommended all of the most recent applicants for inclusion into the township's Ag Security District. At their November 5 meeting, the Planning Commission also recommended the applications be added to the Ag Security District. Rich Schilling noted that the Bucks County Planning Commission's approval of all the properties was received as well.

Public Comments on Agenda Items

Willard Weierbach – Mr. Weierbach is still concerned about the width of State Road where it joins Richlandtown Pike. He feels the pole should be moved from the corner because it obstructs vision and prevents the widening of State Road. Rich Schilling recommended that residents who are concerned contact PennDOT directly, as the more people who express concern, the more likely it is that something will be done.

Old Business

1. Planning Commission Discussion on GIS – Bobb Carson presented information relating to the need for a GIS system in the township. Bobb estimated a cost of approximately \$11,879 for the 2009 budget for purchasing the minimum software, hardware, and training to support GIS. The township will receive from Lombardo & Associates a series of GIS coverages in ArcGIS format sometime during 2009. This will include maps of the township with associated data—all tax map parcels identified with TMP numbers, roads, streams, floodplains, buildings, soil types, slopes, topography, depth-to-ground water, geology, location of known waste water systems, etc. This information will be on disk, but to utilize the information, the township will need the proper programs and equipment to read the disks. Someone at the township should keep the data up-to-date as new information becomes available, or it will become stale technology. One computer should be available in the township building for the public to utilize this information in a read-only format.

The wastewater management program being recommended by Lombardo will require residents to pump their septic systems every three years residents and provide written notification to the township when this is done. The GIS system will provide the vehicle by which that management program for septic systems is monitored by the township. It will bring up those properties, prepare notices when needed, etc. Bobb added that the Storm Water Ordinance revision contains a storm water facilities management program within it. That program should ultimately be entered into the GIS system. This would identify where the storm water facilities that the township is responsible to monitor are located, when they have been inspected, and list the maintenance record for them.

Bobb feels the information may be available by summer of 2009, but Rich Schilling said they would know more after they meet on November 25 with Lombardo & Associates.

Jim Brownlow thanked Bobb Carson for his work on this and for his clear presentation of the need for the system.

2. 2009 Budget – Jim Brownlow said the Board will be reviewing the draft budget in more detail at the November 25 meeting, and will approve the budget for advertising at that meeting. A public meeting will be held 20 days after the advertisement where the budget will be adopted. A \$106,000 deficit is expected at the end of 2008. Jim noted the township has a \$510,000 Operating Reserve fund that could be used for the shortfall. The draft budget for 2009 shows a \$260,000 deficit. Jim added that the options for making up that shortfall were to use some of the reserve funds, raise taxes, cut expenses, or a combination of the three.

Expense cuts reflected in the draft 2009 budget include reducing legal and engineering costs, freezing salaries of current staff (other than police whose salaries are determined by their current contract), placing hiring freezes on any additional staff, eliminating part-time police secretary and part-time zoning officer positions, and cutting cleaning/maintenance time from 20 hours to 10 hours a week. The township expects a \$75,000 decrease in the real estate transfer tax. Earned Income Tax revenue in 2009 is not expected to exceed the 2008 figure. Additionally,

decreased revenue from Local Services Tax, bank interest and permit fees is expected. Jim Brownlow noted that the Township may have to reconsider support levels for UBREMS and the fire company.

In 2008, PPL litigation costs were \$145,250 to date. On a good note, Rich Schilling stated that the township's 2008 revenue to this point is \$1,516,602, while expenses have been held to \$1,439,657.

Rob Zisko will not vote for a tax increase. He favors cutting expenses further or using Operating Reserve funds.

Volker Oakey asked if the Act 537 contract with Lombardo Associates is for a set amount. Rich Schilling replied the contract provides for a set number of meetings; however, Pio Lombardo will be submitting overage charges. Rich advised Pio that any overage charges would require approval by both DEP and the Supervisors. This will be discussed further with Pio at the November 25 meeting.

Karen Bedics provided Board members with information about other townships' contributions to UBREMS.

New Business

1. Request from Charles Diehl for Commercial Building Permit Fee Waiver – Rob Zisko **moved** to table the matter until the next meeting. Karen Bedics **seconded**; the motion **carried**.

2. Discussion on an ordinance lowering speed on local roads – There have been complaints about the speed limits on various township roads. Rich Pursell reviewed those roads and provided a list of roads that meet the criteria for residential roadways. The ordinance under consideration would establish a 25-mph speed limit for Ebert Road, Lower Saucon Road, Blue Church Road, Moyer Road, Funks Mill Road, Grouse Lane and Martin Lane. The consensus of the Board was that they needed more information on the qualifying criteria and the cost of posting the roads. The matter will be placed on a future agenda for further discussion.

Public Comments

There was a lengthy discussion between Hans Reimann and the board regarding procedural matters within the Open Space Committee.

Supervisors Comments

Volker Oakey noted that various surrounding townships are having the same budget problems as Springfield. He feels that the Township may need to come up with a solution for the year 2010 as well.

Karen Bedics noted that the Springfield Lions Club denied the request to purchase a shelter box. A free first aid CPR class will be held on the first Saturday in February. She will provide details as they become available.

Barbara Lindtner agreed with Volker about the long-term effect of the economy on local municipalities. She feels the township has a good handle on 2009, but has concerns about 2010.

Rob Zisko again stated he would not vote for a tax increase.

Adjournment

At 8:55 p.m., Jim Brownlow **moved** to adjourn the meeting. Rob Zisko **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra L. Everitt
Secretary/Treasurer

Next meeting: November 25, 2008 – 7:30 p.m.

Approved: January 27, 2009