

Board of Supervisors Meeting

MINUTES

July 10, 2007

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 p.m. by Vice Chairman Chuck Halderman and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Supervisors Present : Karen Bedics, Chuck Halderman, and Rob Zisko. **Absent:** Jim Brownlow and Rod Wieder. **Also present:** Terry Clemons, Solicitor; Sandy Everitt, Secretary/Treasurer; Rich Schilling, Township Manager; and Bob Wynn, Township Engineer.

Chuck Halderman noted that the Supervisors had an executive session after the June 26 Supervisors meeting (to discuss potential legal issues relating to the draft Zoning Ordinance revision) and prior to this meeting (to discuss personnel matters). Chuck noted that the Reshetar Request has been removed from the agenda for this meeting because Mr. Reshetar is out of town and could not get back in time for the meeting.

Minutes

Karen Bedics **moved** to table approval of the June 12 and June 26 minutes until the next meeting because she has not had an opportunity to review them. Rob Zisko **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously.

Approval of Bills

Rob Zisko **moved** to accept the bills (\$18,756.71) for payment as listed on the June 27 – July 10, 2007, bills list. Karen Bedics **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously.

Reports

Chuck Halderman noted that the **Road Department** and **Zoning/Building Report** were received and are posted for public review.

Police Report - Mark Laudenslager, Officer in Charge, reported there were a total of 98 incidents handled by the Police Department in June, of which 8 were criminal offenses. 6 traffic accidents were investigated which involved 9 vehicles and 9 non-fatal injuries. Property stolen in June was valued at \$5,250, of which \$50 was recovered.

During June, the department did a physical survey of signage on the state highways in the township. Numerous defects were documented, including but not limited to speed limit signs not being posted at a minimum of one-half mile apart. Additionally, there were numerous areas where signs were missing or covered by vegetation. Officer Laudenslager mailed a report of these findings to PennDOT requesting that they perform the necessary work so that our police department can properly enforce the traffic laws in the township. In addition, Officer McDonald and the Road Department placed numerous VASCAR white lines on township roadways in anticipation of getting the necessary PennDOT signage to permit local enforcement of speed limits.

A State Police report was attached to the local report showing incidents covered by the State Police during June.

Township Manager's Report – Rich Schilling noted that on June 12 he attended a PA By Way meeting with Karen Freeh, chairperson of the Historic Commission; the PA By Way Coordinator; and the Durham Township Recreation Board members to discuss the proposed By Way route. Currently, the By Way route is proposed to loop from Springfield Township through Durham Township into Lower Saucon Township and then back into Springfield. Springfield is attempting to get the other two municipalities to buy into the process, but because this may take some time, Springfield is moving ahead alone at this point. Durham will be given another 30 days and if they have not come on board, Springfield will move forward with the By Way to the Durham Township border.

Following a question by Rob Zisko, Rich Schilling indicated the By Way is important because it will permit us to secure funding through PennDOT for different things—road improvements, historic preservation, etc.—at an 80% PennDOT payout with the township or another outside agency providing the remaining 20%. Rich will share the proposed route of the By Way through the township at the next Supervisors meeting.

On June 26, the final paperwork was submitted for the \$5,000 DCED Historic Commission Grant.

On July 2, Rich Schilling, Zoning Officer Jeff Mease and Township Engineer Bob Wynn met with Solicitor Terry Clemons in the solicitor's Doylestown office to make proposed changes to the draft Zoning Ordinance. Copies of the proposed changes were distributed to the Board at this meeting for their review. The draft will be reviewed by the Planning Commission at their July 18 meeting. If desired, a second Board meeting can be scheduled in July to review the Zoning Ordinance draft if it is forwarded to them by the Planning Commission for possible authorization to forward to Bucks County Planning Commission. Karen Bedics **moved** that a Board meeting be held on July 24 to discuss the Zoning Ordinance Revision and other business that may come before the Board. Rob Zisko **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously.

Negotiations for the Police Contract are ongoing. Rich will prepare a red-line document of the tentative contract showing current language and proposed changes in the tentative agreement in advance of the next meeting.

The FEMA mobile home is not yet in place because the road department has been tied up with summer road projects. The road crew should finish their road projects within the next week or two and be able to do the work required for placing the mobile home.

Rich noted that the remaining payment of \$5,442.66 from DEP for the Sourcewater Protection Grant was received.

Public Comments on Agenda Items

Rose Strong asked how long it takes from when the supervisors decide to establish a speed limit for a particular road to when the actual speed limit signs go up. She was referring to Hunter Road and the decision that was made as part of the Sartori Subdivision to place a 25-mile-per-hour speed limit on Hunter Road. Rose is concerned because a motorcycle has been going back and forth on Hunter Road the past weekend at approximately 50-miles-per-hour. Bob Wynn indicated that the Sartori Subdivision has not yet been recorded, and the signs cannot be placed until an improvement escrow has been established to guarantee township reimbursement for the cost of the signs per their agreement as part of plan approval.

Planning Matters

Silver Creek Subdivision – Bob Wynn, referring to his office's June 26, 2007, letter to the Board, indicated that he is recommending acceptance of the Silver Creek Subdivision as complete. Bob is suggesting that the Township authorize release of the \$26,115.57 letter of credit held by Harleysville National Bank to Scott Mease, the applicant for this plan. Rob Zisko **moved** that the \$26,115.57 be released from the Harleysville National Bank letter of credit for Silver Creek Subdivision. Karen Bedics **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously.

Old Business – None

New Business

1. UBREMS – Update on Activities – Gary Pearson thanked the Board for what has been done for UBREMS in the past months—the FEMA trailer and its set-up, financial support promised, etc. Gary stated they have not come to the Township for funds as yet because they are awaiting their audit report. When this is received, they will supply a copy of it, along with their 990 Form and a copy of their budget, to the Township along with a request for some of the funds which have been allocated in the township budget for them.

They are making some internal changes, such as outsourcing of billing, which will improve their efficiency. This will permit them to cut back on office work and thus free the current office person (who is also an EMT) to spend more time on emergency work rather than working on office business.

There was discussion about a recent news article relating to a cutback by Aetna Insurance Company in what they will pay for EMT services. Gary indicated that Aetna wants EMS providers to enter into a contract with Aetna, such as physicians now do, and then receive a fixed reimbursement for services provided. The problem with this is that the reimbursement figure set by Aetna is about 1/3 of what it costs UBREMS to provide the service, and thus none of the EMS providers will enter into such a contract. There is concern that if Aetna does this, other insurance companies may also attempt to do it. Blue Cross and Blue Shield are not taking this route, and they have been more reasonable about the rate they pay for ambulance service. Gary indicated there is little that the Township and/or residents can do at this point to help with the Aetna situation. He indicated that Congressman Murphy is working with them to try to bring about a satisfactory resolution to this issue. Another problem with Aetna is that they send the reimbursement check to the policyholder and not to the service provider. The policyholder then must forward the check to UBREMS, and sometimes this never happens.

Gary indicated that when a resident subscribes to UBREMS, and requires service, UBREMS accepts what that resident's insurance company pays. If a non-subscriber needs emergency transportation, they are billed for whatever portion of the transport bill their insurance company does not pay.

Karen suggested that the township send a letter to Congressman Patrick Murphy saying that what Aetna is doing is placing an additional strain on township and EMS resources. The township is already committing a substantial amount of money to the EMS and this will burden UBREMS once again about where funding will come from. In addition, this letter should address the issue of Aetna sending payment directly to UBREMS instead of their policy holders.

Karen noted that a resident had commented they frequently see ambulances parked at restaurants in the area and they feel that unnecessary fuel is being used for personal use. They felt EMTs should use their personal vehicles instead of the ambulance. Gary indicated that EMTs have definite guidelines about this, but that they need to be able to respond to emergency calls quickly and not having the ambulance where they are can cause a slower response time. However, Gary will communicate this observation to the squad.

Information about fund raising events for UBREMS will be made available to the township to publicize on their website and on bulletin boards. It was noted that the rabies clinic will become an annual spring event. For a donation, veterinarian Dr. David Peterson will provide free rabies vaccine for dogs.

Gary listed several key issues that affect EMS service and require attention:

1. There is no requirement by the commonwealth or by the county to provide EMS service, as there is to provide police and fire services.
2. There are no federal grant programs available such as there are for police and fire departments.
3. Insurance reimbursements to EMS providers should equal what the service actually costs to provide.
4. EMT education and training initiatives
5. Education of the public about what EMS does, how services are provided and how squads are funded.

Correspondence

Chuck Halderman noted that a number of correspondence items had been received and copies were distributed to the Supervisors.

Public Comments - None

Supervisor's Comments

Karen Bedics explained to residents in attendance that she had requested that acknowledgement and thank you letters be sent to the newspaper carrier (for reporting the fire), Springtown Fire Department (putting the fire out), and the Springfield Township Police Department, Quakertown Police Department, Lower Pottsgrove Police Department and the State Police (apprehension & arrest of the arsonists). Karen Bedics moved that the letters be

amended for signature by both Jim Brownlow, Chairman of the supervisors, and Rich Schilling, Township Manager. Rob Zisko **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously.

Rob Zisko **moved** that an invitation letter be sent to local legislators inviting them and their families to attend Springfield Township's Community Day on Saturday, September 29, 2007. Karen Bedics **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously.

Karen would like the township to place a light outside of the small meeting room and a picnic table beside the building for staff and visitors to the Township Building to use. Rob Zisko questioned what the cost for a picnic table would be. Rich Schilling is waiting for an EAC recommendation for new plantings beside the building and if a picnic table is purchased, he would like to know where it would be placed in conjunction with the work being done by EAC. Rich does not feel that the staff will utilize the picnic table, for various reasons. Rich Schilling will determine cost and possible location for discussion at a later date. Rich will follow up on the light outside the small meeting room with the road department.

No donations have been promised toward the Township Building sign at this time. Rich will follow up on this for discussion at a later date.

Mining & Drilling Ordinance – Karen requested Terry Clemons to re-email a copy of the Nockamixon Mining and Drilling Ordinance for review by the Supervisors. Terry will email a copy to the Township office and Rich Schilling will copy the ordinance for the Board of Supervisors. Further discussion will be tabled until the Supervisors have an opportunity to review the Nockamixon Ordinance. There was discussion about the need for public education about the process by which mining companies obtain rights to drill on individuals' properties. Terry Clemons said that the two issues are entirely separate: 1) land use regulations and where use is permitted and 2) public education about the mining issue. Terry indicated that the lobbying group for mining is very powerful in Pennsylvania. And, the State takes the position that local municipalities cannot have more restrictive conditions in their ordinances than are present in the state regulations. In addition, the county is bound by state mining regulations.

Chuck Halderman spoke about Act 4, the Act to freeze the property tax on local properties in the Ag Security District. Chuck feels that representatives from the townships within Palisades School District should get together and request to be placed on the School District's agenda to support this Act. Chuck said that most local municipalities and the county have already passed resolutions supporting Act 4, but that it was now time to visit a School Board meeting and indicate local support of this issue. Rob Zisko indicated that he attended a School Board meeting recently and his evaluation was that they were supportive of Act 4.

Karen Bedics will contact the school board and request that we be placed on the Sept 5 School Board agenda. Chuck asked representatives present at this meeting from other local townships to speak to their Boards about attending that meeting.

Adjournment

At 9:00 p.m., Rob Zisko **moved** to adjourn the meeting. Karen Bedics **seconded**; the motion **passed** unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra L. Everitt
Secretary/Treasurer

Next meeting: July 24, 2007
Approved: August 14, 2007