

Springfield Township, Bucks County
Board of Supervisors Meeting
December 12, 2006

Present: Chairman Jim Brownlow, Rob Zisko, Karen Bedics, Township Manager Rich Schilling, Treasurer Sandy Everitt, Chief of Police Scott Huber, Solicitors Terry Clemons and Scott MacNair

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Brownlow at 7:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. Brownlow informs the audience that since the Board has only three Supervisors present this evening all motions that are put forward need a unanimous vote.

Minutes from November 14th & 28th Meetings

Bedics motions to accept the minutes as presented for the November 14th & November 28th meetings. Zisko seconds the motion. Board votes unanimously in favor of the motion.

Bills for Approval (November 26th thru December 12th, 2006):

Brownlow motions to approve the bill list. Bedics seconds the motion. Board votes unanimously in favor of the motion.

Brownlow states that the Board has held two executive sessions; November 20th & December 12th. Both sessions were for personnel matters.

Road Department Report:

Posted

Police Department Report:

Huber states that for the month of November the police department responded to (119) calls for service with (8) accident investigations with (3) traffic arrests. Huber states that at the last meeting there was a request for him to provide a graph detailing the nature of calls, which he has provided and he is wondering if that is what the Board was looking for. Brownlow states that from his perspective it is a great tool that has been provided but he would like a comparative graph from year to year which would help us to see how the numbers of incidents are going up. Huber states ok. Huber states that he is requesting that the BOS approve the quote that was provided to the Board in November for (3) supplemental vests for the officers. Bedics thinks that it is a good idea to purchase the vests. Brownlow asks how much the vests cost. Huber states that he has a state bid of \$2400, which they brought down to an even \$2100 for all three vests. Zisko motions to approve the supplemental vest purchase as outlined by Huber. Bedics seconds the motion. Board votes unanimously in favor of the motion. Huber questions the budget and the proposed expenditures in relationship to the original budgets that were submitted by the department managers. and that there is over \$160,000 of those cuts were in the police department. The Board has at the last meeting discussed giving more money to the EMS, which Huber wholeheartedly agrees that public safety is the number one issue in municipalities which is police, fire and ambulance. Additionally in looking at the

expenditures since 2003 the public works department expenditures have increased by 70% and all the other departments have steadily increased over the years. The police budget for 2003 was a little over \$430,000, which was 39% of the entire township budget. In 2007 our budget proposal for the police department was a little over \$430,000 which is about 29% of the township budget. If you cut the two part-time police officers from this budget the police department will be even less than it was in 2003 while all the other departments have continued to increase. I have given a lot of information over the last two years and more specifically the last packet that you received, which shows the need for more officers. Some of the other observations that I have noted is that the budget show the treasurer position shows a pay of \$22.00 per hour and that the current rate is \$19.95, which is a 10% increase and the other positions are 4% and I do not understand why the increase for that line item. Since that there is 25 hours a week at the treasurer position and 15 hours a week at the zoning and planning secretary are all the hours being paid at the treasurer rate or the secretary rate. It is my understanding if the hours as zoning and planning secretary are paid at the treasure rate, which is \$22.00 per hour the secretary to the zoning officer will be making more than the zoning officer who is slated to make \$21.15 per hour. So his secretary will be making a higher hourly rate than him. Additionally this budget shows an increase for the receptionist to full time with an increase in hours and pay. I had to list the additional duties for the police receptionist when I requested her to go from part-time to full-time and I was wondering if that will be the case now for the receptionist position. Schilling states that it needs to be pointed out that the cuts in the police budget are not hard cuts but cuts in a proposed budget that the police chief submitted and in this proposal the hiring of two full-time officers was a 100% increase of officers who are on the street. Schilling states that the increased in spending in the public works is long over due in most 2nd Class Townships the biggest part of the municipal budget is earmarked for public works and it is time to support their efforts. On the Secretary Treasurer position I want to point out that Sandy Everitt stepped in unbelievably when the original treasurer left the township. The Board originally gave her a \$5.00 per hour increase to compensate her for the additional duties that she was performing. This raise was to be for an interim period until a treasurer was hired. Subsequently Sandy has been appointed the position permanently and has done a great job in piecing together a big puzzle with little or no help. In evaluating the PSATS wage and salary schedule for municipalities relative to our size I feel comfortable that the proposed wage fits that scale especially under the circumstances that she walked into and her performance. In addition Sandy will be reclassified as Secretary/Treasurer and the zoning and planning secretarial duties will be shifted to the current receptionist and with the increased subdivision activity this position needs to be full-time. Brownlow thanks Huber for his comments and states that the Board will take them under advisement.

Manager's Report:

Schilling states that he could go line for line in the manager's report but will touch on the important highlights, which include meeting with the labor attorney on negotiations and personnel issues. Major meetings included police negotiations, cable franchise meeting. Schilling affirms his support to the Planning Commission and Open Space Committee. EAC, Historic Commission. Schilling states that the official interest form has been

submitted to PennDot for the Scenic By Ways Program and he would like to thank Denise Sandy and Scott Douglas for their diligent work on this submission. Schilling has made contact with the Open Space Coordinator and has requested a list of his activities and what is in the pipeline for 2007, which is attached to your report. Schilling states that policies were put in place this past month that are related to vehicle use, cell phone use and a sexual harassment and non-fraternization policy. Schilling states that the current medical plan is being changed to a plan with very comparable benefits. Under the current plan we have (9) full-time employees covered for medical/dental/vision and (1) employee receiving a stipend for medical. The total cost for this is \$126,886.20. By changing our medical plans we anticipate filling the full-time positions that are in the 2007 budget, which will consist of (11) full-time employees covered for medical/dental/vision and (1) employee receiving a stipend for medical for a total of \$86,782.88. So we can add (2) more full-time employees and on the medical end save \$40,103.32, which is a significant savings.

Schilling states that the road crew is doing a tremendous job for the manpower and equipment that they now have. That being said the loader/backhoe that we now utilize is over twenty years old and needs to be replaced. I would ask that the Board approve the purchase of a new John Deere 410G loader/backhoe from Plasterer Equipment on the State PACC Program for a total of \$74,901.00, which includes a (60) month warranty. This purchase would be made out of the approximately \$160,000 rollover of revenue that was not spent. Zisko motions for the purchase of a John Deere 410G for the quoted price of \$74,901.00, which includes the (60) month warranty. Bedics seconds the motion. Board votes unanimously for the motion.

Schilling then asks the Board for Scott Douglas (Chairman EAC) to go over a request for professional services quote for a multi-municipal stormwater management plan. Douglas reviews the draft RFP with the Board. The plan would be for the townships of Durham, Springfield and Lower Saucon. Brownlow motions to authorize the quote letter. Bedics seconds the motion. Board votes in favor of the motion.

Public Comment on Agenda Items:

None

Public Hearing - Ordinance 136 (Adoption of EMS Tax):

Solicitor MacNair gives background on Ordinance 136 (attached). This has been advertised for adoption. It imposes a tax on individuals who work within the township up to \$52 per year with exclusion to individuals who earn less than \$12,000 per year. The solicitor asks for public comment.

Dennis Steskal states that he thinks this is a step forward because most municipalities are collecting this tax already. He states that this is something that is really important.

The solicitor then asks for any other comments and with none forthcoming declares the public hearing portion closed and deliberations shall begin.

Zisko explains the reason behind the tax with the fire department needing support for new equipment and the ambulance request it is imperative to generate a revenue stream to cover the escalating costs.

Bedics asks who will collect the tax. Schilling states that the way he reads it the tax collector, the treasurer or an outside agency can collect the tax.

MacNair states that is correct. A discussion takes place by the Board on the actual collection of the tax and how that will transpire. Brownlow reads a letter from Supervisor Halderman stating that he wanted the Board to know his position on the tax. Halderman's reservation on the tax is that it will unfairly tax people who work in the Township and for the most part will not benefit from the services based upon that Halderman states that he would not support it. Brownlow states that he understands what Halderman is saying but this tax is very important and that he personally pays his EMS tax in Doylestown where he works plus he subscribes to the UBRES, so in essence Brownlow feels that he is paying for services twice. Brownlow motions to adopt Ordinance #136. Zisko seconds the motion. Board votes unanimously in favor of the motion.

Old Business:

Cable Franchise Agreement Update: Ken Simmons (Upper Bucks Cable Franchise Consortium) and Schilling speak to the status of the on going cable negotiations. The consortium has approved a draft agreement, which was forwarded to Service Electric for their review and response. Service Electric has been installing digital cable on Route 212 & Route 412 in Springfield Township.

New Business:

1) Freeh Easement:

Clemons states that in a previous meeting he was directed by the Board to write up language for a conservation easement on the Freeh property and just as a matter of having a paper trail he has prepared a Resolution with a draft of the conservation easement, which he has attached to the resolution. The resolution also reflects the purchase price of \$94,400 and that we will probably be settling early next year. Zisko amends motion to authorize Clemons to prepare documents for easement that mirrors county and state and attend settlement. Zisko motions to approve the resolution as prepared by the solicitor. Bedics seconds the motion. Board votes unanimously in favor of the motion.

2) Recreation Board and Recreation Plan:

Bedics states that she and a number of residents feel that a recreation board would be a good thing to implement based upon the number of developments that are in the works. Some residents have expressed an interest in serving on such a Board and that she wanted to get the Boards feeling on establishing a recreation board. Bedics reads a list that she has prepared for some of the possible duties of a recreation board, which include; come up with ideas for use of the property that the township owns on Peppermint Road, work with the township manager, historical commission and the EAC in how funding should be directed on grants such as the PA By Ways grant. They could also plan for a Township Community Day. The committee would work with developers on recreation opportunities within their developments and they could check on the use status for the wild life sanctuary that we have on Slifer Valley Road and work to utilize this area.

Zisko asks about the proposal that Schilling included in the Board packets. Schilling states that establishing a recreation board would be the first step and that then a recreation plan must be implemented in order to charge a recreation fee. Brownlow has two comments; first in the recently updated comprehensive plan that was adopted parks and recreation was way down on the list and secondly I would want to see structure and I do not see that. I would need to see how many members, duties, the terms of the board etc may. Clemons states that if you establish a recreation board in accordance with the 2nd Class Township Code it gives specifics on structure and duties and etc.

Zisko states that he would like to see more structure and that he is not one to endorse trails and linkages on private property. Zisko states that if we do enact a committee that maybe we could task them to come up with good uses for the property as Bedics stated and look at the adjoining property, which we have first refusal on. Brownlow states that he does not want to create a committee without the structure. Schilling will get information on other recreation board and committees and how they operate.

3) Community Day:

Bedics was hoping that if we get this recreation board up and running we could start a small community day. Bedics reads suggestions from Cindy McCurdy (EAC), which include: planning the event to take place in September, allowing different organizations and committees to have booths (EAC, Historic Commission, Open Space Committee, Boy Scouts and the Historical Society, UMBRES, Springtown Fire Department, Police Department could do finger printing).

Brownlow asks how Bedics would organize this.

Bedics states with a committee. If we have the Parks and Recreation Board that could be one of the first thing that they plan.

Zisko states that the township held a Community Day before for the townships 250th anniversary.

Brownlow states that the Parks and Recreation Board would be a great start in planning this but we do not have this board yet. Brownlow asks Bedics can we get three volunteers.

Bedics respond yes Cindy McCurdy and some others will be interested.

Brownlow wants to put a request for volunteers on the township website.

Discussion takes place and it is decided to ask for seven volunteers and to have Schilling pull information together.

4) Christmas Tree Recycling:

Board decides to table this at this time.

5) Sewage Enforcement Officer:

Board decides to table this at this time.

Correspondence:

Brownlow states that the correspondence received is listed on the agenda.

Public Comment:

Steskal states that Drifting Drive in the last month has become the choice of three axle dump trucks that are picking up stone at the quarry located on Route 611 and we are talking trucks carrying between 18 – 22 thousand pounds. The road was recently paved by the township and is getting beat up pretty badly and with the development taking place in that area it is going to exacerbate that problem and the township should look into posting that road with a weight limit.

Brownlow appreciates the comments and knows in the past we tried to reduce the weight limit and needed both municipalities to agree on the reduction. We could not just do our side of the road.

Clemons states that a structural engineering evaluation must be performed. Steskal disagrees with this and Clemons states that he has not done any in-depth look at this and if there happens to be police out and about in that area looking for unsafe conditions it may limit the amount of traffic on that road. After further discussion it Clemons was directed to look into it further and let the Board know.

Sandra Kuegler asks how specifically the EMS tax works. MacNair relays the details of the EMS tax.

Supervisors Comments:

Zisko motions that a letter sent to Senator Wonderling, Representative Clymer and Congressman and not just say when it is going to be fixed but specific dates that a design plan will be finished and a specific time table for fixing the bridge. Brownlow seconds the motion. Board votes unanimously in favor of the motion.

Brownlow reads a letter from UBRES thanking Springfield Township for the support. Brownlow states that on December 19th the 2007 budget will be adopted and then on January 2nd there will be a brief meeting for a re-organization, which is required by the 2nd Class Township Code and at that meeting reappointments to positions will occur.

Zisko motions to adjourn the meeting. Bedics seconds the motion. Board votes unanimously to adjourn at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Richard Schilling
Township Manager/Secretary