

**TOWNSHIP OF BLAIRSTOWN
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
REGULAR WORKSHOP MEETING
Wednesday, January 24, 2018, 6:45PM**

MINUTES

Regular meeting begins at 7:30 pm or immediately following Closed Session, whichever comes last.

OPENING: ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Lance at 6:45pm. Those present were Mr. Avery, Mrs. Dalton, Mrs. Van Valkenburg, Mrs. Waldron and Mayor Lance. Also present were Clerk Leidner and CFO Rolef.

The **FLAG SALUTE** was conducted.

SUNSHINE STATEMENT

Mayor Lance read the following statement: Notice of this meeting has been sent to two newspapers of general circulation in which notice was given of the date, time, place and general agenda in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Resolution No. 2018 – 029 - AUTHORIZING EXECUTIVE SESSION – for the purpose of Potential Litigation and Contract Negotiations.

Mrs. Waldron made a motion to accept Resolution 2018-029, which was seconded by Mrs. Van Valkenburg.

Roll call vote – AYE- Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance
All ayes, motion carried.

Executive Session began at 6:48 pm.

Mrs. Waldron made a motion to re-open the Regular Meeting at 7:56 pm. The Motion was seconded by Mr. Avery.

Roll Call Vote: AYE – Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance
All ayes: Motion carried.

Mr. Lance announced that results of Executive Session will be released at a later date. The purpose of the meeting was Potential Litigation and Contract Negotiations.

OLD BUSINESS

Continued discussion 2018 Budget Wish list

Christine Rolef, CFO explained that this isn't really the wish list, we are actually starting with the 2018 Budget process.

Mrs. Rolef began with the Water Department. She noted that the Committee received really good news regarding the new backup well.

Mrs. Rolef went on to explain that she spoke with the Township Engineer prior to the meeting and he is going to find out what Phase 2 of the well is going to be. The Township currently has Authorized Debt,

but not issued in the amount of \$445,000.00. This number will most likely go down. There is \$300,000.00 for Phase 2 of the well, depending on what else needs to be done. The well did go \$15,000.00 over budget. In February there will be an amendment to the initial Ordinance to drill the well. The total cost is a little over \$75,000.00.

Phase 2 will be the completion of the work.

Mr. Rodman noted that because the new backup well does not have to be treated, that may become the main well. Mr. Rodman will now need to find out what the standards will be for the old well becoming the back-up well.

Mr. Rodman also explained that we are at the point in the project where the Township will need to hire a Water Engineer to assist with the planning of the tie into the well. This process is above and beyond what he or Leggitt, Brashears are able to do. Mr. Rodman will get three proposals for a Water Engineer.

Mrs. Rolef continued, and noted that the Water Operating Budget Fund Balance is down to approximately \$35,000.00 this year. It is down about \$24,000.00. We need to start paying down Debt Service which means a rate study for a rate increase will need to be done. If this is not done the Water Department will be running at a deficit next year. One of the items on the table is the Water Operator. There is a meeting scheduled with the current contracted Water Operator, Albert Schwartz, in house Water Operator and John Zukoski along with Committee Members Mr. Avery and Deputy Mayor Van Valkenburg.

Open Space – Mrs. Rolef noted that Mrs. Van Valkenburg asked her if she took out all of the committed Open Space parcels that we have and the remaining Debt Service, which we have the front loader portion of it coming, at the end of the year there is approximately \$217,000.00 unallocated in the Open Space Trust Fund. This year we moved the equivalent of 1 tax point to valid, legitimate expenditures out of the Current Fund Budget over to Open Space.

Mrs. Rolef explained that two years ago when the Township participated in the Gypsy Moth Suppression Program it cost the Township \$20,000.00, we only got reimbursed 31%. This year we will need to do a local match in the Current Fund Budget. The cost will be \$12,000.00 with the 50% reimbursement it will be \$6000.00.

At the December Meeting Mrs. Rolef provided the Committee with the Wish list and there were items that the Committee wanted the Department Heads to get prices on and they were:

Pole Barn - Mr. Usionowicz received 2 quotes on a Pole Barn to go behind the DPW and they range from \$40,000.00 to \$50,000.00. The reason for this is to move equipment out of Jones Farm and have it in a secure location on the DPW property.

Telephone System – Mrs. Rolef and Mrs. Leidner met with a company for a telephone system for the Municipal Building, the cost is between \$13,000.00 and \$15,000.00. This system would connect the Municipal Building with the Police Department. Our current telephone system is very antiquated.

Hook and Go System - This would be for one of the trucks in the DPW garage, Mr. Usionowicz is still waiting to hear back. He has contacted two people but they have not gotten back to him as yet. He still estimates that to be around \$30,000.00.

Mrs. Rolef went on to explain that if the Committee chooses to include these items she would like to place them in the Capital section of the Current Budget. We would not have to do a Capital Ordinance for these items, they would just be anticipated in the Current Budget. These purchases would still require a separate Resolution approving the purchases, it just alleviates the cost of advertising and Ordinance Introduction and Adoption and the cost of the Bond Attorney. The Total amounts to approximately \$95,000.00. The Committee asked Mrs. Rolef to place this in the Budget so that they can see what the Total Budget will amount to and then it can be removed if necessary.

Mrs. Rolef continued with the three more expensive items:

Belcher Road – Last year there was \$30,000.00 allocated to the S curves on Belcher Road. Until the work is started you really can't get a good cost estimate because you don't know what you will run into.

Mohican Road - State Aid was received for this road. Ted Rodman did put in for a change of scope to the State and is awaiting a response. Mr. Rodman will put together options for this road.

Mrs. Rolef indicated that she spoke with Calvin Inscho, Fire Chief and they will be requesting air packs. Air packs are \$157,000.00. This number would be for 20 air packs, 15 extra masks, 20 spare bottles and it includes a \$25,000.00 trade in credit. To refurbish the air packs would cost about \$65,000.00. The current air packs are expiring this year.

Mrs. Rolef explained that these last three items are Capital items. They do not impact this year's budget, they will impact down the road.

The last figure with General Capital what is currently out and have purchased is \$798,000.00 for equipment or roads that are authorized but not issued. Mrs. Rolef explained that this debt was authorized, the items were purchased and then it needs to be paid back.

Mr. Lance inquired if we would be making a payment on that this year. Mrs. Rolef replied that one payment we will be making is about \$13, 775.00 paying off the police SUV from 2015. The final budget will determine how much we can pay down.

Mrs. Rolef began speaking about the General Operating portion of the Budget.

COAH – In the COAH Trust Fund Reserve there is approximately \$2,200 of Admin, which is just about done. The remaining balance in COAH is \$105,000.00. There is a \$125,000.00 obligation to a Group Home. Theresa Tamburro, Affordable Housing Liaison is proposing 2 COAH units. So there are 3 Options for COAH:

1) We could use the Trust Fund Money of \$105,000.00 to pay for the 2 COAH Units. If and when the Group Home is purchased we can Bond for it.

2) Leave \$105,000.00 sitting in the Trust Fund and Bond for the 2 Units.

3) Don't do anything.

Mrs. Rolef went on to explain that because the COAH Administrative money is drained, Mrs. Tamburro's salary would need to be raised in the budget. Admin fee would be good at \$3000.00 to cover advertising.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg recommended that the Township charge a COAH fee on renovation applications. A survey will be done to see how other municipalities handle this.

The consensus of the Committee is to do the 2 COAH Units out of the COAH Trust. Mrs. Rolef will speak with Mrs. Tamburro and put a COAH line item in the budget to cover administrative fees.

The next item Mrs. Rolef discussed was salaries. Mrs. Rolef noted that last year Mrs. Dalton and Mayor Shoemaker met with her, they came up with a spreadsheet and it was distributed to the Committee to discuss. This will be done again, it will be Mrs. Dalton and another Committee Member. Then a detailed spreadsheet will be distributed to the other members of the Committee for review and discussion.

Mrs. Rolef inquired as to whether there would be fees needed for the filing of the Foreclosures. Township Attorney Sullivan will provide that information to Mrs. Rolef and she will place a line item into the budget for foreclosures.

Mrs. Rolef noted that as last year, the municipal contribution to the rescue squad will be lowered. This is their request, eventually they would like to obtain no contribution from the Township.

Streets and Roads was the next item of discussion. In December Mr. Usinowicz discussed with the Committee the possibility of hiring outside contractors to do the oil and chip, instead of having the DPW do this job. It was suggested that instead of hiring another full time DPW Employee, take that money and dedicate a line item for Road Repair in the amount of \$40,000.00. This would be enough to oil in chip 2 or 3 roads.

Mr. Usinowicz did request that the Township hire part time lawn mowers again this year with the possibility of a long term seasonal part time employee.

Mrs. Rolef noted that as far as Health Benefits, the State has indicated there will be no premium increase this year.

The next item is the Police Department and the possible expansion of hours and hiring of 2 Police Officers. The cost for this would be about \$140,000.00. This would expand the hours to 6am to Midnight. The Police Contract is coming due. Mrs. Rolef is requesting a Memorandum of Understanding by the time the budget is due.

The consensus of the Committee is to put the money in the budget to hire 2 Police officers and see what the total budget looks like.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg requested the Committee to come up with a date to hold a Public Meeting at North Warren to give the public the opportunity to have input regarding issues in the Township. The date set is April 25, 2018 – this is a regularly scheduled Workshop Meeting.

A budget subcommittee meeting will be scheduled.

Mrs. Rolef will have the budget information for the February 28, 2018 Workshop Meeting. If all is in order the budget will be introduced at the March 14 Regular Meeting.

Traffic patterns at the ACME Supermarket.

Mr. Lance began a discussion about the ACME and the proposed one way entrance only for the driveway closest to Lambert Road. Mr. Rodman is unsure as to whether the Township is able to change a traffic pattern on private property.

Captain Johnsen joined the conversation and noted that he has had a discussion with the DOT about this issue. The person that he spoke with at the DOT did say that with a Proclamation from the Township Committee the DOT can force the owner of ACME Shopping Center to make that an entrance only. The gentlemen also noted that changing the traffic light itself will not be beneficial in the long term. Mr. Johnsen will get back in touch with the DOT to let them know that this is the action the Committee would like to take.

Mrs. Waldron discussed the possibility of an Ordinance, similar to what other towns have, where if our police officers are required at a road, bridge or utility project for safety purposes and to direct traffic, the contractor would need to pay for this service. Mr. Johnsen explained that the Ordinance needs to be in place so that the police can shut down an unsafe worksite. Mrs. Waldron gave a copy of a sample Ordinance to the Township Committee and to Township Attorney Sullivan. Ms. Sullivan will work on creating an Ordinance.

Mr. Rodman had two additional items to discuss:

Walnut Valley Firehouse – Mr. Rodman will be providing a summary to Ms. Sullivan of what has happened with this issue up until now. The Township will have to make a decision to do something or nothing at some point. Mr. Rodman will copy the Township Committee on this so that everyone has the same information.

The other was the scheduling of a meeting with the County Freeholder Smith and the County Engineer regarding Main Street. Mr. Avery and Mr. Lance will meet with them along with Mr. Rodman.

Authorization for the Mayor and Clerk to execute the “2018 Final Gypsy Moth Control Options Commitment” which must be done by Feb. 2. Also setting the date for Public Hearing about the spraying as February 14, 2018

Mr. Lance attended the mandatory meeting regarding the Gypsy Moth Spraying. Blirstown Township and Hardwick are basically the only 2 Municipalities in Warren County that are being sprayed. They seem confident that we will receive the 50% reimbursement from the USDA because the project participation is so small. BT will be sprayed, which is a natural biological agent. After the caterpillar ingests it the caterpillar dies. This takes some time, this does not kill on contact. This project is going to cost the Township about \$12,000.00, \$6,000.00 with the anticipated 50% reimbursement. The spraying will be done at the end of Mohican Road and Gaisler Road and into Hardwick Township. This is about a 246 acre area.

Mrs. Dalton made a motion to authorize the Mayor and Township Clerk to execute the “2018 Final Gypsy Moth Control Options Commitment”, which was seconded by Mrs. Van Valkenburg.

Roll call vote: AYE- Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance
All ayes, motion carried.

Mr. Lance brought up the point that our next Regular Meeting is scheduled to be held on Valentine's Day and Ash Wednesday. All members of the Township Committee are fine with holding the meeting that night.

Request from Police Department to use Township Meeting Room for Drug Awareness Program.

Captain Johnsen is requesting the use of the Township Meeting Room sometime at the end of February to host a DA Program, called Hidden in Plain Sight. This is to help people know what to look for in the bedroom of teenagers and young adults for signs of drug use.

Mrs. Van Valkenburg made a motion to approve this request, which was seconded by Mrs. Waldron.
Voice Vote – all ayes, motion carried.

Discussion – Possible Introduction of the following Ordinances at the February 14 Meeting:

a. **Amending Chapter 171, Article III "Snow from Driveways"** – this would be to include an enforcement section to the Ordinance that will include fines for shoveling snow in the road.

b. **Amending Chapter 84 "Concerts and Festivals Outdoor"** – The portion of this Ordinance that will be amended would be inclusion of wording that the applicant must allow Township Departments or Agency to have a spot at the event without any fees. There would also be an amendment to the language regarding waiver of the Application once per year per applicant. Section 84-3.

c. **Amending Section 184-15 "Handicapped Parking Spaces"** – This is a specific request for a resident at 11 Douglas Street.

Motion was made by Mrs. Dalton to Introduce Ordinance No. 2018-04 Amending Section 184-15 "Handicapped Parking Spaces", which was seconded by Mrs. Waldron.

Roll Call Vote: AYE: Avery, Dalton, Van Valkenburg, Waldron, Lance
All ayes, motion carried.

The Public Hearing and Adoption will be held on February 14, 2018

D. Establishing an Electric and/or Natural Gas Aggregation Program – Mayor Lance explained that there will be a presentation at the February 14, 2018 from Concord Energy. This is an energy aggregation company. Several surrounding municipalities have joined this and their residents have seen significant savings on their electric bill each month. Should the Township choose to participate this Ordinance would be introduced at the February 14 meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

FROM THE PUBLIC

William P. Askin, Esq. - Attorney, on behalf of the Blairstown Museum, Jeanette Iurato regarding the Special Event Application for the Blairstown Historic Day to be held on August 4, 2018. Mr. Askin inquired about the 200' Public Notice Requirement in the Ordinance. Because the address of this event is Main Street he does not have an address to give the Assessor to obtain the 200' List. The Township Committee recommended that he take an address from each end of the closure location on Main Street.

Attorney Askin also inquired about the request to have this event be exempted from coming before the Township Committee each year since this is going to be an annual event. The Applicant is looking to be made a part of the list of Blirstown Organizations that are exempt from fees. Mrs. Waldron explained that the events that are exempt are Municipal Events.

ADJOURNMENT

As there were no further comments from the public, Mr. Avery made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mrs. Van Valkenburg. All members voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 9:39pm.

Submitted by:

Linda Leidner, RMC
Municipal Clerk