

The meeting of the Douglass Township Board of Supervisors was called to order at 7:00 P.M. Attending were Chairman Josh Stouch, Vice Chairman Tom Wynne, Supervisor Alan Keiser, Solicitor Robert Brant, Khal Hassan of Pennoni & Associates, Pete Hiryak, Mike Heydt, Andrew Duncan, Chief Templin, and approximately 21 residents/developers.

Mr. Stouch led in the Pledge of Allegiance and announced that an Executive Session was held tonight prior to the meeting from approximately 6:00pm to 6:30pm involving real estate and litigation matters. No decisions or votes were taken. The meeting room was set up for social distancing, proper PPE was used by the public.

Mr. Stouch asked if there were any additions, corrections, or comments to the minutes of October 5th, 2020 Board of Supervisors Meeting, none were given.

A motion was made by Mr. Keiser, seconded by Mr. Stouch to approve the minutes of the October 5th, 2020 Board of Supervisors Meeting. Keiser-Aye, Stouch-Aye, Wynne-Aye. Motion passed.

Mr. Stouch asked if there were any questions, comments, or corrections to the October 19th, 2020 Board of Supervisors Agenda, none were given.

A motion was made by Mr. Wynne, seconded by Mr. Keiser to approve the October 19th, 2020 Board of Supervisors Agenda as presented. Keiser-Aye, Stouch-Aye, Wynne-Aye. Motion passed.

Douglass Township Voting Locations for the General Election on Tuesday, November 3rd, 2020

District #1 – Shepherd of The Hills Church, 527 Hoffmansville Rd., Bechtelsville PA 19505

District #2 – Shepherd of The Hills Church (Not E.C. Trinity Church)

District #3 & #4 – Tri-County Bible Church, 142 Buchert Rd, Gilbertsville PA 19525 (Not GF&R)

GF&R Report – Chief Andrew Duncan

September 2020: 2 building fires, 1 passenger vehicle fire, 1 outside equip fire, 4 assist EMS, 2 accident w/injuries, 4 smoke detector activation, 1 gas leak, 2 officer investigation/citizen complaint for a total of 17 incidents. Service time YTD 783 hours and 39 minutes. Response per Municipality: Douglass/Mont 14, Upper Pottsgrove 1, Boyertown Borough 1, Colebrookdale 1. Training: Engineers Night/Equipment Checks, vehicle rescue training, future fire department operation and fire police techniques, firefighter I training, pump training, regional tanker drill, continued apparatus driver training. Events: Fall Carnival/Festival was held at Station 67 by Tons of Fun Shows on October 16, 17, and 18th. Fire Prevention Extravaganza was held on Thursday October 8, 2020 at the Weis Shopping Center from 6:30pm to 9pm. Our reminder fund drive letter was sent out to the public the second week of October. April letter statistics: 3,972 letters sent out, 547 letters returned, \$32,662.00 revenue received for a 13.8% return. 2019 fund drive received \$39,103.00. Chief Duncan gave a brief power point presentation explaining the operations and expenses of running the fire department. Chief Duncan explained that the fire company is required by the State of PA to respond to fires. GF&R is equipped to respond to fires and many more types of emergencies including car accidents, hazardous materials incidents, water and ice emergencies, medical calls and the like. The strategic goals of the fire company are to maintain and increase the number of volunteer firefighters, upgrade existing apparatus, equipment and facilities to meet current standards and technologies, and develop training programs to meet the demands of the public in both fire and ems services. He explained that the number of fires that his department responds to annually has decreased, however the type and complexity of calls has increased such as the response to water rescues and COVID19. The fire company continues to lose income and is unable to sustain fire company expenses with a reduction of donations to their annual fund drive, not being able to utilize the social hall for events due to the deterioration of the building and the ability to hold other fundraising activities due to COVID19.

Chief Duncan asked for support from the Board of Supervisors in order to provide the level of service needed for the community. Chief Duncan gave an overview of their operation budget. Income includes Pennsylvania Fire Commissioners Grant, fund drive income, Douglass Township contribution, accident and insurance billing, building rentals and other donations. Expenses include liability insurance, office supplies, postage, printing, alarm system monitoring, dry cleaning, professional services, building repairs, truck and equipment repairs, fire pump testing, equipment purchases, computer repairs and upgrades, fund drive letter services, memberships, vehicle fuel, utilities, property insurance and truck payment. Chief Duncan thanked the Board for their time.

2021 Emergency Services Tax Information Review

The Board is considering an 2021 Emergency Service Tax. The manager put together some statistics for Mr. Stouch to briefly go over. The Douglass Township Real Estate Tax Millage History: 1990-1994 .65 mill, 1995-2003 .75 mill, 2004-2014 1.7 mill, 2015-2018 1.8 mill, 2019 2.3 mill, 2020 2.6 mill. 2020 Tax Millage Rates: Township – 2.6 mill, Montgomery County 3.8 mill (includes .39 for MCCC), Boyertown School District 28.2 mill. A Mill is equal to \$1.00 or (\$100 for every \$100,000) of a property's tax value (Tax assessment value is much less than a property's re-sale value). In looking at the tax book, most properties in Douglass Township are valued at or between \$100,000, \$150,000, \$200,000. With a property valued at \$100,000 a Douglass Township homeowner would currently pay in real estate taxes: Township \$260, County \$80, and School \$2,820. A property valued at \$150,000 a Township homeowner would currently pay in real estate taxes: Township \$390, County \$570, School \$4,230. A property valued at \$200,000 a Township homeowner would currently pay in real estate taxes: Township \$520, County \$750, School \$5,640. If the Township would raise the millage one-tenth (.1) extra revenue would increase by approximately \$60,000, four-tenths (.4) would generate \$240,000. Each one-tenth (.1) or four-tenths (.4) increase in tax millage would increase a Township tax bill: \$100,000 assessed property (\$10) or (\$40); \$150,000 assessed property (\$15) or (\$60); and \$200,000 assessed property (\$20) or (\$80). A four-tenths (.4) mill increase would raise a Township property owners tax bill to: \$100,000 assessed value from \$260 to \$300, a \$150,000 assessed value from \$390 to \$450, and a \$200,000 assessed value from \$520 to \$600. Mr. Stouch asked the Emergency Services to be patient as we continue with the 2021 budgeting process.

GACAS Report – Chief Garry Schmoltze

Chief Schmoltze and Ms. Morrell gave a brief presentation on the income and expenses of the Gilbertsville Area Community Ambulance in 2019 with income involving service fees, membership drive, municipality donation, united way donation, grants, and other donations the total income was \$645,000.00; the expenses with insurance, operation, vehicles, utilities & building expenses, office/accounting, truck loan, real estate loan, and employee costs come a total of \$640,000.00. Ms. Morrell stated that they have updated a lot of equipment, Chief Schmoltze commented that it costs at least \$225,000.00 for a new ambulance, this does not include the inside equipment, we usually swap out equipment. The manager asked what is the lifespan of an ambulance, Chief Schmoltze replied approximately 10 years. Chief Schmoltze also asked for support from the Board of Supervisors as fundraising is getting more difficult and there are problems recruiting first responders, rising operation costs and Medicare reimbursement that hasn't kept pace with expenses that are stressing emergency medical services throughout rural Pennsylvania. The County Commissioners Association of PA calls EMS problems a crisis and has made it a legislative priority. GACAS proposes, with the Board's consideration for approval at the next Supervisors meeting, to hold a Carnival of Lights on their property with some games, rides, and food available. This CDC approved fundraiser would be held weather permitting from November 27th through December 30th, 2020 with GACAS receiving 20% of the gross gate receipts, and 10% of the gross food, game and gift revenue.

Police Department Report – Chief Templin

September 2020: calls for service 401; 6 reportable accidents; 12 non-reportable accidents; 12 criminal investigations; 4 criminal arrests, 1 paper citations, 57 e-citations, 3 non-traffic citations, and 0 parking tickets. Chief Templin stated it saddens me to announce this; however, Betty Musser, the police department's Office Manager, has announced her retirement effective January 15, 2021. Betty has been an iconic figure here at Douglass Township for over thirty-two years. We will deeply miss her however we wish Betty nothing but the

best into retirement. The Chief personally thanked Betty for her years of service and friendship over the past years. The Drug Take Back Program is scheduled for October 24, 2020 from 10am to 2pm here at the Township building. All current COVID-19 restrictions will be followed. All persons will be able to drop off unwanted, unused, or expired medications for proper disposal. No liquids or sharps are allowed. Our police department will be participating in this year's No Shave November event. Officers will be allowed to grow well-groomed beard or goatee for the month of November. We will be teaming up with surrounding police departments and the Red Corner Benefit to raise awareness of childhood cancer. Proceeds from the event will be donated to a local child who has been touched by this disease in hopes to make her/his holiday season a little brighter. Chief Templin stated that he will be having a minor medical procedure on 10/23/2020 and will be out of the office for two weeks, during his absence Sgt. Steffie will be in charge. No questions were given.

A motion was made by Mr. Stouch, seconded by Mr. Wynne to accept the Police Department Report as presented. Keiser-Aye, Wynne-Aye, Stouch-Aye. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report (Authorization to pay the bills) – Peter Hiryak

Manager Hiryak stated that the bills to be paid for September 2020 total \$259,206.14. No questions were given on the bills. Manager Hiryak announced that the 2021 Budget Meetings will begin this week with the department heads, Treasurer, and Staff. Advertised public meeting – To be announced.

A motion was made by Mr. Stouch, seconded by Mr. Keiser for authorization to pay the September 2020 Unpaid Bills in the amount of \$259,206.14. Keiser-Aye, Wynne-Aye, Stouch-Aye. Motion passed.

Manager's Report - Pete Hiryak

1. The Manager reviewed the upcoming meetings as follows: Monday November 2nd, 2020 BOS Agenda Meeting @ 6:30pm, BOS Meeting @ 7pm, Thursday November 12th, 2020 P/A Meeting @ 7pm, workshop for Act 209 will be advertised.
2. PARRC Agreement & Ordinance – The manager stated that this agreement is between seven Municipalities that manages a Regional Recreation Coordinator and programs that support the promotion and development of regional parks and recreation facilities, services, activities and events in the greater Pottstown area and, most importantly, help obtain grant money for park and open space improvements. Mr. Brant stated that this is an Intergovernmental Cooperative Implementation Agreement for the Pottstown Area Regional Recreation Committee (PARRC) between Douglass Township, East Coventry, Lower Pottsgrove, North Coventry, Upper Pottsgrove, West Pottsgrove, and Pottstown Borough. The legal review has been completed and proof of advertisement dated 10/08/2020 for Ordinance No. 2020-02, Mr. Brant asked for the Execution of the Agreement and adoption of the ordinance.

A motion was made by Mr. Keiser, seconded by Mr. Wynne to authorize the Execution of Agreement and adoption of the proposed ordinance for the membership enrollment of Douglass Township into the Intergovernmental Cooperative Implementation Agreement prepared by the Pottstown Area Regional Recreation Committee, Ordinance No. 2020-02. Keiser-Aye, Stouch-Aye, Wynne-Aye. Motion passed.

3. Police Secretary Betty Musser will retire in January after 32 years of service – The Manager commented, at Executive Sessions we spend a lot of time on personnel and he appreciates the Board for its planning process for the future as we have several key people coming close to retirement and will need time for training in these positions.

A motion was made by Mr. Stouch, seconded by Mr. Wynne to accept the Manager's Report as presented. Keiser-Aye, Stouch-Aye, Wynne-Aye. Motion passed.

Old Business/New Business

Mr. Duncan requested authorization to hire 2 part time leaf collectors for the fall season, this is an annual budgeted item. Mr. Duncan stated that he has one person and needs time to find another worker so the burden does not fall upon the road crew, Mr. Heydt asked if he, Andy, and Pete be allowed to conduct the hiring of the other worker.

A motion was made by Mr. Stouch, seconded by Mr. Keiser approve the hiring of two leaf workers (Matthew Hoffman and one other person to be named) that have been budgeted at \$14.00 per hour, for the fall season and that Mr. Heydt, Mr. Duncan, and Mr. Hiryak are authorized to hire the second leaf collection worker. Roadside leaf collection will be from Monday October 26th through Friday December 4th. Keiser-Aye, Stouch-Aye, Wynne-Aye. Motion passed.

Public Comment

No public comment was given.

A motion was made by Mr. Stouch, seconded by Mr. Keiser to adjourn the meeting at 7:53pm. Keiser-Aye, Stouch-Aye, Wynne-Aye. Motion passed.

The next Board of Supervisor's Meeting will be held on Monday, November 2nd, 2020 @ 7 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,
Marcy Meitzler