

The Board of Supervisors of Dallas Township held their monthly meeting for November on Tuesday, November 4, 2020 at 6:30pm in the Municipal Building located at 105 Lieutenant Michael Cleary Drive, Dallas, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania.

Those in attendance included: Supervisor Chairman William J. Grant, Supervisor Elizabeth A. Martin, Solicitor Attorney Thomas J. Mosca, Township Manager Martin K. Barry, Secretary/Treasurer K. Gary Kirk, Police Chief Douglas J. Higgins and Township Roadmaster Gary VanDeutsch, all who were wearing masks, had their temperature checked and also used hand sanitizer prior to the meeting. Those in attendance via phone included: Supervisor Vice Chairman Robert J. Wagner, Alan Pugh, EMA Coordinator and Thomas Doughton, Township Engineer. Marketing Consultant Amanda Faneck was at the Administration Building and set up Facebook Live to allow additional residents to participate in the meeting.

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Supervisor Martin made a **Motion to Pay the Bills**, seconded by Supervisor Wagner and carried.

Supervisor Martin made a **Motion to approve the Minutes** from the October 6, 2020 Meeting, seconded by Supervisor Wagner and carried.

Supervisor Wagner made a **Motion to approve employee health care reimbursements** that had been requested since the last meeting in the amount of \$289.47 seconded by Supervisor Martin and carried. Total employee health reimbursements made for 2020 is \$12,536.42.

Citizens' Comments Concerning Agenda Items:
None.

Agenda:

Supervisor Grant provided a financial update as of October 31, 2020. Real Estate taxes collected are at 99.5% of our budget, our Earned Income Tax is at 82% which is similar to previous years even with an increase in the budget, and our Local Services Tax is at 76% which is behind previous years. This is due to COVID-19 and we have reduced the 2021 budget to \$150,000. Our police pension plan is at 144% and our nonuniform pension plan is at 112% of their January 1, 2019 actuarial liability. We have approximately \$3,000,000 available in the General Fund and \$200,000 in the Fire Protection Tax fund.

Supervisor Grant stated that the most recent Declaration of Disaster Emergency approved at the October 6, 2020 Supervisors' Meeting needed to be renewed. The only changes from the previous Declaration of Disaster Emergency would be that it would be effective today and continue until December 1, 2020. Supervisor Martin made a **Motion to approve the Declaration of Disaster Emergency of November 4, 2020 through December 1, 2020**, seconded by Supervisor Wagner and carried.

Township Manager Barry provided a COVID-19 update and stated that we have not received any concerns or complaints from Township Residents. We are continuing to obtain items in case there is an increase in cases in the fall or winter, and we are applying for grants to help cover the costs of these expenses. EMA Coordinator Pugh stated that positive cases are increasing and encouraged everyone to wear masks, social distance and have good hygiene.

Supervisor Martin made a **Motion to approve Resolution #2020-14, A Resolution Eliminating Police Officers' Contributions to the Police Pension Plan for the year 2021**, seconded by Supervisor Wagner and carried.

Township Manager Barry stated that we have been maintaining Dorchester Court for over 21 years, but it was not listed on the approved Pennsylvania Liquid Fuels map as a Township Road. Supervisor Wagner made a **Motion to approve Resolution #2020-15, A Resolution Adding Dorchester Court to be covered by Liquid Fuels**, seconded by Supervisor Martin and carried.

Supervisor Martin made a **Motion to approve Resolution #2020-16, A Resolution to Sponsor the Back Mountain Community Partnership Local Share Account Grant for Police Equipment**, seconded by Supervisor Wagner and carried.

Supervisor Martin made a **Motion to approve Resolution #2020-17, A Resolution to Participate in the Back Mountain Community Partnership Local Share Account Grant for Police Equipment**, seconded by Supervisor Wagner and carried.

Supervisor Martin made a **Motion to approve Resolution #2020-18, Local Share Account Grant for Police Facilities Specialty Equipment**, seconded by Supervisor Wagner and carried.

Police Chief Higgins stated that in order to apply for future grant funding, police departments must be credentialed by a separate agency. We will begin the process of being credentialed by the Pennsylvania Chiefs Association. Our Police Department is one of four accredited Luzerne County police departments which should make the process of being credentialed easier.

Supervisor Grant stated that the Dallas School District paid the balance due of \$36,562.50 for the School Resource Officers which we provide to the school district.

Supervisor Grant stated that Walter Belchick has resigned from the Planning Commission since he has moved out of the township and thanked him for his many years of service. A notice has been placed in the newspaper and on our website for residents interested in serving on the Planning Commission. We hope to find a new member and an alternate.

Supervisor Grant stated that we have received a couple of proposals for our 2021 health insurance plans and that our current plan with PMHIC has the best overall rate. It will be a .2% decrease from our 2020 rate. We are also projected to receive over \$100,000 in premium refunds in 2021 based on our 2020 usage.

Supervisor Grant provided the first reading of the 2021 Budget. The millage rate will increase from 1.45 mills to 1.55 mills which is still less than the overall 2019 rate of 2.00 mills. This would result in an annual increase of about \$18 for the average homeowner. The surplus from the 2019 Fire Protection Tax is expected to be all used by the end of 2021. We anticipate receiving grant funding for the Southside Park, our Salt Shed and for the Building Renovation/Land Acquisition expenses. We plan to do \$400,000 of road improvements and use Liquid Fuels funds to purchase a new tractor flail mower. Wages, benefits and insurances are approximately 52% of the budget and the grant related expenses are approximately 18% of the budget.

Township Manager Barry stated that the salt shed plans are all designed and a notice to bid will be in tomorrow's and next Thursday's newspaper. Bids will be opened at a Special Supervisors' meeting on December 15, 2020.

Township Manager Barry stated that work has begun on the Southside Park and that we have received payment application #1 in the amount of \$56,388.

Township Manager Barry stated that bagged leaf pick-up be done the week of November 16th.

Supervisor Grant stated that Penn State University Master Gardener program plans to do a garden demonstration project at no cost to the Township at the Administration Building. The Master Gardeners will also maintain the beautification project.

Police Update:

Police Chief Higgins stated that background checks are still being done on prospective new hires. He was not informed until Thursday that Presidential candidate Joe Biden would be coming to the Dallas School District property for a rally on Saturday. It was hectic for our police officers, but everything went very well. He thanked the Road Department for their help with closing some roads. He thanked Code Enforcement/Zoning Officer Carl Alber for condemning a house which allowed the Police Department to arrest some individuals for child endangerment. The body cams should be ready by Friday and the policy will be posted on our website and he hopes to have all our police policies on the website next year. Sergeant Todd Adams will be graduating on Friday from the 3-week Pennsylvania State Police Leadership Program. He also thanked the community for the prayer session that was held at our police station and a few other police stations in the area.

Road Department Update:

Roadmaster VanDeutsch stated that American Asphalt completed the milling & paving of Reservoir Road. Our Road Department finished the paving and resurfacing of Hill Street and are set to pave the 500-foot approach of Ryman Road to Eddinger Road. They have been filling pot holes. They have made accommodations for the new salt shed and have a full supply of road salt and antiskid. He asked residents to put leaves in paper bags for the leaf pick up during the week on November 16th and that the leaf vac has been around on our Township roads several times.

Additional Citizens' Comments:

David Lawrence commented on Facebook about the body camera policies, if the Philadelphia riots have an effect on our department and information on the applicants' background checks. Chief Higgins had already addressed the body camera policies and the background checks in his update and stated that the Philadelphia riots have not had any effect on our department.

Sue Van Horn commented on Facebook about if the Township would be reimbursed for the costs it incurred for the Biden rally. Supervisor Grant stated that we are pursuing reimbursement and we will provide an update at the December meeting.

Adjournment:

Supervisor Martin made a **Motion to adjourn**, seconded by Supervisor Wagner and carried. The Meeting adjourned at 7:11pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. Gary Kirk".

K. Gary Kirk, CPA
Secretary/Treasurer