

The Board of Supervisors of Dallas Township held their monthly meeting for October on Tuesday, October 3, 2023 at 5:30pm in the Administration Building located at 105 Lt. Michael Cleary Drive, Dallas, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania.

Those in attendance included: Supervisor Vice Chairman Elizabeth A. Martin, Supervisor Robert J. Wagner, Attorney Thomas Brennan, Township Manager Martin K. Barry, Police Chief Douglas Higgins, Roadmaster Gary Van Deutsch, Zoning/Code Enforcement Officer Russell Coolbaugh, Police Department Administrative Assistant Kimberly Landmesser and Secretary/Treasurer K. Gary Kirk. Participating through GoTo Meeting: EMA Coordinator Alan Pugh. There were 5 other people were in attendance. Administrative Assistant Landmesser set up Facebook Live to allow additional residents to participate in the meeting.

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Supervisor Wagner made a **Motion to Approve the Minutes from the September 5, 2023 Monthly Meeting and the September 11, 2023 Declaration of Disaster Emergency Meeting**, seconded by Supervisor Martin and carried.

Supervisor Wagner made a **Motion to Approve Employee Health Care Reimbursements** that had been requested in September in the amount of \$750.00 seconded by Supervisor Martin and carried. Total employee health care reimbursements made for 2023 was \$14,918.09.

**Citizens' Comments Concerning Agenda Items:**

None.

**Agenda:**

Supervisor Martin stated that there was a major rain storm on September 9, 2023 and a Declaration of Disaster Emergency was declared that day. The Supervisors met on September 11, 2023 and continued the Declaration of Disaster Emergency to October 3, 2023. Supervisor Wagner made a **Motion to Approve a Declaration of Disaster Emergency until November 8, 2023 unless Terminated Sooner**, seconded by Supervisor Martin and carried.

Secretary/Treasurer Kirk provided a financial update as of September 30, 2023. We have received \$1,319,513 of Real Estate taxes which is 100.57% of our budget and is better than the previous 6 years. Earned Income Tax collections are at 76.71% of budget or \$1,181,357 which is better than the previous 6 years. Local Services Tax collections are at 78.66% of budget or \$137,649 which is better than the previous 6 years. Our Police Pension Plan is at 104.92% and our Non-Uniform Pension Plan is at 87.63% of the January 1, 2023 actuarial liability. Pension plan assets as of September 30, 2023 were \$5,548,551 for the Police Pension Plan and \$3,106,883 for the Non-Uniform Pension Plan. Our non-restricted cash balance is about \$3,950,000 and the Fire Protection account is about \$155,000.

Secretary/Treasurer Kirk stated that at the September monthly meeting we received and opened four bids for a loan to build a new police station. The loan bids were for a 10-year fixed rate with a 25-year amortization. The bids received were:

ESSA Bank: 5.50%

First Keystone Bank: 5.85%

FNCB: 4.97%

Luzerne Bank: 5.50%

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He stated that we do not know the exact amount we need to borrow at this time since we are still waiting on some grants. Some of the bids did have deadlines on when we would have to accept them. We are in the process of applying for a loan with USDA and their terms are 35-years at 3.625%, but their rate may increase by the time we are ready to borrow. Depending on the fees with a USDA loan, it is possible that a bank loan may result in less overall payments, but we will not know until we know how much we do need to borrow. Supervisor Wagner made a **Motion to Reject all bids**, seconded by Supervisor Martin and carried.

Attorney Brennan stated as part of the LSA grants received by Ecumenical Enterprises, Inc. (EEI) to construct a new sewer line, cooperation agreements need to be made between them, Dallas Area Municipal Authority (DAMA) and us. Dallas Township and EEI are satisfied with the proposed agreements, but DAMA has not responded yet.

Township Manager Barry stated that the Dallas School District School Resource Officer Agreement Second Addendum approved by the Supervisors at their September monthly meeting was approved by the Dallas School District School Board on September 11, 2023. The addendum is for 3-years through June 2026 and will pay the Township \$400 per day per School Resource Officer.

Township Manager Barry provided an update on the September 9, 2023 flooding and damages. Most of the damages were in the Kunkle area, around Country Club Road, Lake Street and along Toby's Creek. Dallas Township will have to replace a crossover pipe which goes under Goodman Road, the stream bank/retaining wall between Toby's Creek and North Main Street, the main stormwater pipe at Dorchester Drive and some of the berm and roadway on Cloverleaf Drive.

Township Manager Barry stated that Township Engineer Ryan Doughton is preparing cost estimates to fix the crossover pipe which goes under Goodman Road. Supervisor Martin made a **Motion to Approve Bid Specifications and Advertising for Goodman Road Stream Crossing**, seconded by Supervisor Wagner and carried.

Township Manager Barry stated that PennDot would like us to take over the traffic signal in Dallas Borough at the intersection of Route 309 and Dorchester Drive. Except for the intersection, all of Dorchester Drive is in Dallas Township. Dallas Borough agrees with us taking over the traffic signal. PennDot is currently making improvements to the traffic signals and intersections on Route 309 including this one. Supervisor Wagner made a **Motion to Approve Resolution 2023-17, Adoption of Taking Over Dorchester Drive and SR 309 Traffic Light**, seconded by Supervisor Martin and carried.

Secretary/Treasurer Kirk stated that our pension actuary has informed us that based on the Police Pension Plan's current value, our Police Officers do not have to contribute to the Police Pension fund in 2024. This is consistent with past years. Supervisor Wagner made a **Motion to Approve Resolution 2023-18, Eliminating Police Officers' Contributions to the Police Pension Plan for the Year 2024**, seconded by Supervisor Martin and carried.

Township Manager Barry stated that our current schedule of fees does not include fees for Police Reports and bodycam/camera footage and that we should update our Schedule of Fees to include these items. Supervisor Wagner made a **Motion to Approve Resolution 2023-19, Schedule of Fees**, seconded by Supervisor Martin and carried.

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Township Manager Barry stated that there were funds remaining in the Summer Recreation Programs budget. Supervisor Wagner made a **Motion to Approve a Donation of \$888 each to the Back Mountain Food Pantry, Fellowship Church Food Pantry, Shavertown United Methodist Church Community Care Cabinet and St. Paul's Lutheran Church Food Panty**, seconded by Supervisor Martin and carried.

Supervisor Martin reminded everyone that since election day is on the first Tuesday of November that the November monthly Supervisors' meeting will be Wednesday November 8, 2023.

#### **EMA Update:**

EMA Coordinator Alan Pugh provided the EMA update. He thanked everyone who helped during the September 9<sup>th</sup> rain/flooding event. Luzerne County currently has \$853,000 in damage assessments, but needs to have at least \$1,400,000 to receive federal assistance. Wyoming County had \$6,200,000 and Lackawanna County had \$9,300,000 in damage assessments. PEMA & FEMA will be back on Friday to make additional damage assessments. He suggested that the Dallas Township EMA volunteers should have more than 1 radio to communicate through Luzerne County 911 system.

#### **Police Update:**

Chief Higgins provided the Police Department update. They responded to many calls during the September 9<sup>th</sup> rain/flooding event. We received a grant for bulletproof vests which will cover almost half of the overall cost. Cadet Daelyn Mynes is doing very well in her training classes. The Dallas School District, many other schools, and businesses in the surrounding area received bomb threats. Detectives Odgers and Acuff were key to the investigation which led to the FBI arresting someone from Peru.

#### **Road Department Update:**

Roadmaster Van Deutsch provided the Road Department update. There were severe weather events on September 7<sup>th</sup> (wind) and September 9<sup>th</sup> (rain and flooding) which kept the road department very busy with repairs and clean up. Bill Fedrow and Donn Hunter identified a fire in a shed and helped the property owner put it out. Northwoods paving has resumed and will continue for 2 weeks. They have continued roadside vegetation and park maintenance. The leaf vac is ready to begin routine leaf pick up later this month.

#### **Planning & Zoning Update:**

Zoning/Code Enforcement Officer Coolbaugh provided the Planning & Zoning update. 24 permits were issued in September and rental inspections continued. There are still some problems with drain pipes in The Maples. There are still issues with Country Club Apartments and Tractor Supply. He has spent many hours on flooding issues.

#### **Additional Citizens' Comments:**

Robert Warner commented on Facebook about the proposed Aldi's market. We have not received any information about Aldi's coming to Dallas Township.

Nicole Rismondo stated that she would like the Supervisors to approve a real estate tax rebate/reduction for volunteer firefighters. She thanked the Road Department for having fixed the swale across the street from her and believes it prevented her house from being flooded during the recent rain storms.

Merr Trombore is a resident at Masonic Villages and stated that many residents have subscriptions with Back Mountain Regional Fire & EMS ("BMR") for ambulance service. However, when other ambulance

services arrive, they are charged by that ambulance service. The residents would like to know how get subscriptions with other ambulance services, specifically Kunkle Fire & EMS ("Kunkle"). There was discussion about having BMR enter into a reciprocity agreement with Kunkle so that residents would not get billed. There was also discussion that Kunkle is not allowed to send subscription letters to residents not in their coverage area and that maybe the Masonic Villages residents' association could send a letter to Kunkle with a specific request to send subscription letters to them.

Brenda Pugh stated that she will soon begin planning the annual Christmas Tree Lighting event. Local Pennsylvania legislators will be having a license plate replacement event at the Luzerne County Fairgrounds on Thursday to replace damaged license plates. She recommended that we provide a radio repeater service to help our EMA to communicate with one another during emergency events. Due to the wind and rain/flooding events, the Luzerne County Fair was closed for several days and that the volunteer organizations that serve at the fair will not receive funds which they use to provide services throughout the year. There will be a concert for a cause on October 13, 2023 to raise funds for these volunteer organizations. The fairgrounds incurred over \$750,000 in damages from the rain/flooding event.

**Adjournment:**

Supervisor Wagner made a **Motion to Adjourn**, seconded by Supervisor Martin and carried. The Meeting adjourned at 6:14pm.

Respectfully submitted by,



K. Gary Kirk, CPA  
Secretary/Treasurer

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