

The Board of Supervisors of Dallas Township held their monthly meeting for January on Tuesday, January 2, 2024 at 6:20pm immediately following the Organization Meeting in the Administration Building located at 105 Lt. Michael Cleary Drive, Dallas, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania.

Those in attendance included: Supervisor Chairman William J. Grant, Supervisor Vice Chairman Robert J. Wagner, Supervisor Elizabeth A. Martin, Attorney Thomas J. Mosca, Township Manager Martin K. Barry, Police Chief Douglas J. Higgins, Township Roadmaster Gary Van Deutsch, Zoning/Code Enforcement Officer Russell Coolbaugh, Township Engineer Thomas Doughton, EMA Coordinator Alan Pugh, Police Department Administrative Assistant Kimberly Landmesser and Secretary/Treasurer K. Gary Kirk. There were about 20 other people in attendance including several members of the Police Department. 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 Martin made a **Motion to Pay the Bills**, seconded by Supervisor Wagner and carried.

Supervisor Wagner made a **Motion to approve the Minutes from the December 5, 2023 Monthly Meeting, December 19, 2023 Intermunicipal Transfer of Liquor License Public Hearing, December 19, 2023 Volunteer Firefighter Real Estate Tax Credit Ordinance Public Hearing, and December 19, 2023 Special Meeting**, seconded by Supervisor Martin and carried.

Supervisor Wagner made a **Motion to Approve Employee Health Care Reimbursements** that had been requested in December in the amount of \$2,611.88 seconded by Supervisor Martin and carried. Total employee health reimbursements made for 2023 was \$18,866.95.

Citizens' Comments Concerning Agenda Items:

None.

Agenda:

Police Chief Higgins introduced Officer Daelyn Mynes and stated that she recently graduated from the police academy in Harrisburg. Supervisor Grant swore in Officer Mynes.

Supervisor Grant stated that there was a major rain storm on September 9, 2023 and a Declaration of Disaster Emergency was declared that day and has been continued through January 2, 2024. Supervisor Martin made a **Motion to Approve a Declaration of Disaster Emergency until February 6, 2024 unless Terminated Sooner**, seconded by Supervisor Wagner and carried.

Supervisor Grant provided a financial update as of December 31, 2023. We have received \$1,336,232 of Real Estate taxes which is 101.85% of our budget and is better than the previous 6 years. Earned Income Tax collections were 101.34% of budget or \$1,560,654 which is better than the previous 6 years. Local Services Tax collections were 102.80% of budget or \$179,908 which is better than the previous 6 years. Our Police Pension Plan is at 115.62% and our Non-Uniform Pension Plan is at 96.93% of the January 1, 2023 actuarial liability. Pension plan assets as of December 31, 2023 were \$6,114,267 for the Police Pension Plan and \$3,436,782 for the Non-Uniform Pension Plan. Our non-restricted cash balance is about \$2,667,000 and the Fire Protection account is about \$36,200.

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Supervisor Wagner made a **Motion to Approve Resolution 2024-1, A Resolution Levying and Re-Enacting the Act 511 Taxes**, seconded by Supervisor Martin and carried.

Attorney Mosca stated that the easements for 29 & 31 Dorchester Drive are still being reviewed by all parties involved with the easement including Dallas Area Municipal Authority.

Township Manager Barry stated that due to the September 9, 2023 storm damage, there is a house, private bridge and land located on North Main Street on the border with Kingston Township which has been recommended by PEMA to be condemned and to use the property as flood plain management for Toby's Creek. Since the house is in Kingston Township, they are applying for a BRIC Grant for Land Acquisition. We will need to have a Memorandum of Understanding with Kingston Township concerning the land acquisition in Dallas Township. Supervisor Martin made a **Motion to Approve the Memorandum of Understanding with Kingston Township for BRIC Grant Land Acquisition subject to Attorney Mosca's review and approval**, seconded by Supervisor Wagner and carried.

Supervisor Grant, Township Manager Barry and Township Engineer Doughton stated that our current Zoning Ordinance requires almost all businesses which want to build to have an exception. Approval for this exception has sometimes been with the Supervisors and sometimes been with the Zoning Hearing Board. It is currently with the Zoning Hearing Board. There was discussion about changing the amount of earth disturbance required to need an exception. The exception process could be very costly and they are almost always approved. Supervisor Wagner made a **Motion to Approve to Table Advertising and Scheduling a Hearing for the Zoning Ordinance Amendment**, seconded by Supervisor Martin and carried.

DJ Mark from Keystone Hotel Management Company stated that they are looking for a sponsor for a RACP Grant for developing a hotel in Dallas Township. Supervisor Martin made a **Motion to Approve to Sponsor a RACP Grant Subject to Satisfactorily Review of the Application by Attorney Mosca**, seconded by Supervisor Wagner and carried with Supervisor Grant abstaining.

Supervisor Martin made a **Motion to Approve the 2024 Employee Salary and Hourly Wages listed below**, seconded by Supervisor Wagner and carried.

2024 Salary/Hourly Wage

Douglas Higgins, Police Chief – Salary \$92,664.00/year

Martin Barry, Township Manager - Salary \$84,115.20/year

Gary Van Deutsch, Roadmaster – Salary \$66,060.80/year

K. Gary Kirk, Secretary/Treasurer – Salary \$60,652.80/year

Russell Coolbaugh, Zoning/Code Enforcement Officer – Salary \$50,148.80/year

Kimberly Landmesser-Police Department Administrative Assistant-\$39,020.80/year

Tammy Miller, Planning Commission/Zoning Hearing Board Secretary/Treasurer – \$20.47/hour

Police Department – Paid per union contract

Road Department – Paid per union contract (except for Supervisor Robert Wagner. His wage rate will be approved by the Elected Auditors at their annual meeting on January 3, 2024)

EMA Update:

EMA Coordinator Pugh provided the EMA update. There have not been any updates on approval of funds from the September 9, 2023 storm event. We are expecting winter weather this weekend and have received our new trailer and barricades.

Police Update:

Police Chief Higgins provided the Police Update. No update other than the swearing in of Officer Mynes.

Road Department Update:

Roadmaster Van Deutsch provided the Road Department update. There were three weather events in December and plowing was required in higher elevations. The Goodman Road pipe area continues to need repairs whenever we have heavy rains. This has been since the September 9, 2023 storm event. They will begin work on streambank stabilization along North Main Street. Christmas Tree pick-up has begun and they have already picked up 91 trees. Pothole patching will be done throughout the winter season. EMA Coordinator Pugh suggested that we track all expenses related to the continued storm event repairs which then may be submitted to FEMA.

Zoning/Code Enforcement Officer Update:

Zoning/Code Enforcement Officer Coolbaugh provided the Planning & Zoning update. Seven permits were issued in December and 321 permits were issued in 2023. He and BHW checked some electrical issues at Country Club Apartments. He had to repost condemnation notices at Country Club Apartments as the notices are being removed. There were 197 building permits with about 5 of them for new homes.

Township Manager Update:

Township Manager Barry provided the Township Manager annual update. There is a lot going on and a lot to do, but all departments are providing the services required. He thanked the Police Department, Road Department, Zoning/Code Enforcement Officer Coolbaugh, Secretary/Treasurer Kirk, Township Engineers Ryan & Tom Doughton, Attorney Mosca, Attorney McCall, Attorney Karpowich, Attorney Brennan, the Township Fire Companies, and the Township EMA for all the work they did in 2023. We have spent a lot of time related to issues at the Country Club Apartments and the September 9, 2023 storm damage.

Additional Citizens' Comments:

There was discussion concerning assessing and keeping track of all damages and costs related to the September 9, 2023 storm damage. We also received an emergency permit to do repairs on the Toby's Creek streambank.

Supervisor Grant stated that there are several projects being planned/considered in 2024 in our Township including the hotel, a Wawa's, a Starbucks, our police station, and more improvements to the Southside Park.

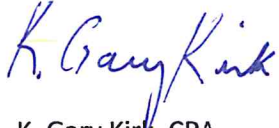
Kathy Boback, Marilyn Bagnick and Lori Duda from College Manor expressed concerns about several houses becoming rental properties for Misericordia University students. There was discussion concerning updating ordinances concerning rental properties. It was discussed that if there are issues at the rental properties, to call 911 and have the police check to see if there are any issues which may be cited. If there are problems with Misericordia University students, the University may have a code of conduct policy which could affect them remaining as students.

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Adjournment:

Supervisor Martin made a **Motion to Adjourn**, seconded by Supervisor Wagner and carried. The Meeting adjourned at 7:29pm.

Respectfully submitted by,



K. Gary Kirk, CPA
Secretary/Treasurer

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