

MINUTES
October 5, 2020
Zoom Meeting of the Board of Supervisors
7:00 p.m.

A scheduled meeting of Milford Township Supervisors was called to order at 7 P.M. by Chairperson Penney Luhrs through a Zoom call, the meeting ID for which had been advertised in advance in the Pike County Dispatch. Also present were Vice-Chairman Gary M. Williams, Supervisor Rachel Hendricks, Solicitor Anthony Magnotta, Zoning Officer Shawn Bolles, and Secretary/Treasurer Shahana Shamim.

Gary M. Williams made a motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting, Rachel Hendricks seconded, and it was passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report:

Shahana reported that she had received \$34.00 from AmTrust North America, \$35.00 from Code Inspections, and \$4,752.19 from Auditor General. She also reported the account balances as \$130,351.40, \$14,617.73, \$27,056.94, \$23,568.78, and \$77,765.43 in Wayne Bank (Investment), Wayne Bank (Payroll), NBT Bank, PLGIT (General), and PLGIT (Liquid Fuels) accounts respectively.

Roadmaster:

Gary M. Williams, the Roadmaster, reported that roadcrews had cleaned up a couple of trees. He added that they had also cleaned shoulders of Old Milford Road. Fuel filters were being changed, getting trucks ready for winter.

Zoning:

The Zoning Officer informed the Supervisors that the conditional use application from Natasha Ferousis for Light Up the Spectrum Recreational Facility was denied in the past Planning Board meeting, which was held on September 22, 2020, as the applicant was confused about the actual date of that meeting. The Solicitor said that this hearing can be held in the next Supervisors' meeting, which was scheduled for October 19, 2020, but it would have to be advertised in two consecutive weeks. The Zoning Officer said that he would assist the applicant to appear at the hearing with all requirements.

Public Participation #1:

None

Correspondence:

Shahana presented correspondences including DEPG, Columns, PSATS, Light Up the Spectrum, Department of the Auditor General, Pike County Conservation District, Pike County Area Agency on Aging, NEPA Newslines, Delaware Township, Stephenson Equipment, Hickory Hills POA, PA Department of Community & Economic Development, HRG, Pike County Tax Administration, and Pike County Humane Society.

Old Business:

- a. **Sewage (Act 537 Plan Draft):** Rachel said that the Planning Board would discuss this draft on Wednesday, October 7, 2020.
- b. **EMS Service: Special Meeting with Milford Fire Dept. & EMS Service and Milford Borough to discuss EMS:** Rachel Hendricks made to motion to hold a special joint meeting via Zoom on October 15, 2020 (Thursday) with Milford Borough and Milford Fire Department and to advertise for this meeting. Gary M. Williams seconded this motion, and it passed unanimously.
- c. **Joint Comprehensive Plan with Westfall Township:** Rachel informed the other two Supervisors that Kevin Stroyan and she would attend a meeting, which was scheduled for the next day in Westfall Township building, to discuss this plan.
- d. **Ambulance Tax FAQs:** Penney Luhrs informed the public that Supervisor Hendricks had composed FAQs for the ambulance tax referendum for a tax of two mills. Rachel made a motion to post the FAQ in the Township website and to place “Ambulance Tax vote” sign on township signboard. Gary M. Williams seconded, and it passed unanimously. Rachel added that residents would be better able to make an informed decision by reading the FAQ.

New Business:

- a. **Light Up the Spectrum - waiving conditional use fees:** The Solicitor said that this hearing would need to be advertised in the Pike County Dispatch that week and in the Pocono Record the following week in order to maintain the seven-day gap from the hearing date. He added that all Planning Board Members would be able to join this meeting, as this hearing would be held in the public meeting.
- b. **Request for the Planning Commission to consider a False Alarm Penalty Ordinance:** Penney said that in the last EMS meeting it was discussed that a number of false alarm calls were received by Milford Fire Department and EMS from this Township. She added that some Municipalities have penalty ordinances for such false calls. Rachel said that Delaware and Westfall Township had sent their false alarm penalty ordinances, and the Planning Board could review those. Gary M. Williams inquired who would be in charge of enforcing this ordinance. He added that a State Ordinance existed to handle these false alarms. The Solicitor replied that Municipal false alarm ordinances are based on State ordinances and the Fire Chief would be in charge for enforcing it. Rachel made a motion for the Planning Commission to consider enacting such an ordinance by reviewing other Municipalities’ ordinances as examples, Gary M. Williams seconded, and it passed unanimously.

Public Participation:

Mr. Fred Weber commented that he understood that the EMS coverage was required, and hence raising the tax of two mills was necessary. He inquired how much per taxpayer would actually be raised from this proposed ambulance tax. Mr. Kevin Stroyan replied that two mills were being raised from the current 10 mills tax, and that implied that the tax amount would be raised by 20%, and not 2%. Rachel explained that the average raise in Milford Township would be \$45, but this amount would depend on the assessment of each property. This raise of two

mills would generate \$56,000 from the Township if this referendum passes, and the FAQs for this referendum would be posted in the website to allow voters to make informed decisions. The Supervisors' had voted to raise half a mill, which would generate only \$14,000, and it would not cover much for the paid EMTs, which is the biggest need for the time in order to maintain a fully functional EMS. It is hard to respond to daytime calls, as the 12 volunteers have their own daytime commitments. The information from the County showed that there were *just over* 200 EMS calls from this township in 2019. They often receive multiple calls from people who are experiencing life threatening illnesses. There are no insurance reimbursements when EMTs respond to calls and callers do not go to the hospital. This township will have a joint meeting with EMS and Milford Borough on October 15 at 6:30 P.M. via Zoom, and EMS will provide its financial report, call report, and documents to show its finances and expenses. This information would be posted in the website before the meeting so that questions could be asked, and this meeting will be advertised in the Pike County Dispatch. Mr. Weber suggested talking about actual tax amount increases instead of mills, as two mills sounded like only two percent.

Mr. Stroyan suggested having a seat at the Fire Department's meetings for overseeing EMS expenditures, as this Township would become a substantial supporter in case the referendum passes. Gary M. Williams suggested that EMS should provide monthly or bi-weekly reports of their expenditures, as it is the taxpayers' money. Rachel continued that Dingman Township had scheduled their meeting with the Fire Department for October 27, and Milford Township had scheduled this earlier meeting with Fire Department, as October 27 would be too close the election date, which is on November 3rd. This type of expenditure would be new for the Fire Department also. Mr. Stroyan said that it was a fluid situation and hence it is quite important to have a seat for watching where the money is going. Penney suggested looking at the audit of the Fire Department. The Solicitor said that only Volunteer Fire Relief Association's audit is performed. Mr. Stroyan commented that audits can be very expensive. Rachel said that a Municipal liaison for the oversight could be proposed in the upcoming joint meeting.

Penney Luhrs made a motion to pay the bills and adjourn. Gary M. Williams said that he needed an executive session to discuss personnel. Penney agreed and said that the result of this session would be declared in the next Supervisors' meeting. A motion was made and seconded to pay the bills and recess into executive session. The executive session started at 7:42 P.M and thereafter the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Shahana Shamim

Secretary/Treasurer