

EAST FALLOWFIELD TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING
October 24, 2023 Approved Minutes

Members Present

Wilson Lambert, Chairman
Joseph Heffern, Vice-Chairman
Katja DiRado, Member
Al Wright, Member

Township Staff Present

Scott Swichar, Township Manager
Chad Osborn, Chief of Police
Lisa Ionata, Treasurer

1. CALL TO ORDER, SILENT MEDITATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Lambert called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

2. DISCUSSION

A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

OCTOBER 10, 2023 BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: Vice Chairman Heffern made a motion to approve the October 10, 2023 Board of Supervisors meeting minutes as presented. Chairman Lambert seconded.

VOTE: 4-0.

3. Chairman Lambert stated there was an executive session held on October 10, 2023, regarding personnel issues.

4. COMMENDATION TO POLICE OFFICERS JOHN HEWCZUK AND COREY DENTON

5. 'TRUNK OR TREAT' AWARD PRESENTATION PRESENTED TO KATIE TORRENTE

Clare Small presented a \$50 Stottsville Inn gift card to the Trunk or Treat winner, Katie Torrente.

6. TREASURER'S REPORT

1) Payment Authorizations.

MOTION: Chairman Lambert made a motion to approve the Payment Authorizations for the period of October 11, 2023 through October 24, 2023 in the total amount of \$201,218.57 as presented. Supervisor Wright seconded.

VOTE: 4-0.

2) A Resolution Executing an Agreement of Services with Berkheimer

MOTION: Vice Chairman Heffern moved that the Township approve Resolution No. 2023-18 authorizing the Township Manager to execute an Agreement of Services with Berkheimer dated October 24, 2023, authorizing them to undertake collection of property taxes and trash fees. Chairman Lambert seconded.

Treasurer Ionata stated that County who is the current tax collector is raising their fee. There would be a \$5,000 savings versus the fees that would be paid next year with the Chester County Treasurer's office. The consumer would receive a bill from Berkheimer next year.

Mr. Swichar stated that Berkheimer would also provide the same 2% discount period that is currently offered by the county.

VOTE: 4-0.

- 3) John Sly, President of Westwood Fire Company to Request Additional Funds to Support Modena Fire Company and Westwood Fire Company.

Mr. Sly stated that a federal grant was received three years ago to provide staffing for full time firefighters. The grant is due to expire next year. He stated that a millage increase would support one paid firefighter at Modena Fire Company and Westwood Fire Company. There are continued staffing challenges. They still maintain a good roster of volunteers.

Supervisor DiRado questioned how many full-time firefighters are currently on staff and whether Modena Fire Company applied for the grant as well. She questioned if the pay rate will remain the same as under the grant.

Mr. Sly stated that Westwood has three full-time firefighters. Modena Fire Company does not have any paid firefighters. He stated that Modena Fire Company struggles with nighttime labor shortages. Mr. Sly stated there would be no change in salary.

There was a board discussion on the matter.

- 4) Transfer of Funds from Meridian Bank Capital Fund to PLGIT

MOTION: Vice Chairman Heffern make a motion directing the Township Treasurer to transfer \$500,000 from Meridian Bank to PLGIT Prime Money Market. Supervisor DiRado seconded.

Treasurer Ionata stated that the Township could earn 5 ½% interest. The funds would be liquid. PLGIT only works with municipalities.

VOTE: 4-0.

7. TOWNSHIP MANAGER'S REPORT

- 1) Resolution for DCED Statewide Local Share Assessment Grant

Township Manager Swichar requested that the board approve a resolution allowing him to

apply for a \$275,000 grant from the DCED Local Share Account Program to repair the drainage pipe on Saw Mill Road. No matching funds are required. There are currently two active grants with LSA that will provide funding for traffic calming in Newlinville as well as a new gas pump. He stated that applying for this program will not interfere with those two active grants. There is a proposed motion in the board's packet.

MOTION: Supervisor Wright made a motion approving the submission of Resolution 2023-19 authorizing the submission of a grant application to DCED's Statewide Local Share Assessment Grant in the amount of \$275,000 for a drainage/pipe replacement project on Saw Mill Road and authorizing the Township Manager to execute all documents. Vice Chairman Heffer seconded.

VOTE: 4-0.

- a. Agreement with T.P.D for Engineering Services to Repair Drainage Pipe on Saw Mill Road

Township Manager Swichar stated that approving this agreement would allow the project to move forward with the permitting, erosion and sediment pollution control plan and hydraulic calculations.

MOTION: Supervisor DiRado made a motion to approve an agreement with Traffic, Planning, and Design, Inc. at an amount not to exceed \$19,500 to complete an erosion control plan and permitting tasks related to a damaged drainage pipe on Saw Mill Road. Chairman Lambert seconded.

VOTE: 4-0.

- b. Appointment of John Winters as a Full-Time Laborer in the Public Works Department

MOTION: Chairman Lambert made a motion to hire John Winters as a full-time laborer in the public works department at a rate of \$24.00/hour. Vice Chairman Heffern seconded.

VOTE: 4-0.

- c. Proposal from Madsen Tree Service for Tree Removal at Frog Hollow Road

Township Manager Swichar stated that there are six dead trees pushing into the bridge on Frog Hollow Road. The board has the estimate from Madsen Tree Service in their packet.

MOTION: Vice Chairman Heffern make a motion to approve a proposal in the amount of \$3,500 from Madsen Tree Service, LLC for the removal of six dead trees on Frog Hollow Road. Chairman Lambert seconded.

VOTE: 4-0.

- d. First Presentation of Budget (Informational)

Mr. Swichar provided an overview of the 2024 budget.

Mr. Swichar stated that on October 10 there was a detailed presentation and budget work session. He stated that the Board is scheduled to meet again on November 14 to review the budget and could authorize the advertisement of the budget on that date. The budget must be advertised at least 20 days before adoption. The board is scheduled to meet on December 12 and adoption could happen that evening.

Mr. Swichar stated that the draft budget does not propose using fund balance as revenue to balance the 2024 budget. There is no real estate tax increase proposed in the 2023 General Fund. However, there is a proposed tax increase of .75 mills in the Fire/EMS budget to fund the provision of advanced life support (ALS) and provide for a full-time fire fighter at Westwood Fire Company and Modena Fire Company.

Mr. Swichar stated that 2024 General Fund Revenues are \$3,014,556. The 2024 general fund budgeted revenue is \$380,515 greater than 2023 General Fund Revenue of \$2,634,041. This is largely attributed to increased Real Estate property taxes and increased Earned Income Taxes (EIT).

The 2024 General Fund expenditure Budget is \$3,014,556, which is \$320,242 greater than 2023 General Fund Expenditure budget of \$2,694,314. The 2024 expenditure budget also includes a \$155,922 interfund transfer from the general fund into the Capital Fund. Mr. Swichar stated that this is reflected on line item 492.18 in the general fund budget. When you remove the interfund transfer, the 2024 expenditure budget is \$164,320 greater than the 2023 General Fund Expenditure Budget. The proposed budget includes increases of 5% into insurance costs and operating expenses.

The proposed budget includes continued investment in infrastructure: The Township budget includes \$350,000 for road paving, \$275,000 for Traffic Calming in Newlinville Village, \$275,000 for repairs to Saw Mill Road, a new fuel Master Pump System. He stated that grants were received for the pump system and traffic calming projects. The draft budget includes \$75,000 to complete a feasibility study for a new municipal complex. The Township purchased 10.9 acres of land on Wilmington Road which could become the site of a future municipal complex. A feasibility study would be the next logical step.

Mr. Swichar discussed the Fire/EMS budget which starts at line 301 in the budget. He stated that the Township has not increased its millage rate since 2018. Westwood Fire Company and Modena Fire Company approached the Township this year and requested that the township increase the Fire/EMS millage to fund a paid firefighter at each fire department due to staffing issues with finding volunteers.

The request from the fire companies was to increase the Fire/EMS tax from 1 mill to 1.75 mills. Mr. Swichar stated that .69 mills increase would fund the hiring of one fire fighter at each fire department. He also stated that .06 millage increase would go to Westwood Ambulance to continue to provide Advanced Life Support (ALS) service to the entire township.

Mr. Swichar stated that the average Homeowner currently pays \$408.35 a year in Township real estate property taxes- The average property in East Fallowfield Township has an

assessment of \$136,116. Some properties will be more than this amount, some will be less. If the Fire/EMS mills are increased by .75 mills, the average homeowner will see an increase of \$102 next year. Mr. Swichar stated that the total township tax bill would increase on average from \$408.35 to \$510 next year.

Mr. Swichar stated that if the Township increases millage by .75 mills, he projects there would be an excess of about \$100,000 next year in the Fire/EMS Fund. The Board would need to have a separate discussion on how to best use that extra money to support the fire companies.

Mr. Swichar provided an overview of the proposed trash budget. Mr. Swichar stated that the Township went out to bid this summer and awarded a 3 year Hauling Contract to the low bidder, AJ Blosenski. Mr. Swichar stated that Blosenski was almost \$500,000 cheaper than the second lowest bid from Whitetail Disposal.

Mr. Swichar stated that the Township is aware that A.J. Blosenski is working through operational issues as a result of a corporate acquisition. Blosenski has assured the Township that any issues will be ironed out by January 1. Blosenski also agreed to a provision in the agreement that would allow the Township to terminate the agreement at its discretion with 6 months-notice.

Mr. Swichar stated that there was a 52% increase in the hauling cost from 2023 to 2024.

Tipping Fees and costs to process recycling are expected to increase dramatically next year.

Mr. Swichar stated that trash fund reserves are currently healthy, however if there is no increase to the Annual Trash Fee of \$310, the Township would deplete its reserves in 2024 and there would be no operating capital to operate the trash fund in 2025.

Mr. Swichar stated that the administration is strongly recommending an increase in trash fee from \$310 to \$450 in 2024 to balance the trash fund and protect required operating capital.

Mr. Swichar provided an overview of the three-year projection for the trash fee. If the Township increases the trash fee to \$450 in 2024, the Township projects keeping it steady in 2025 and not raise it again until 2026. Mr. Swichar stated that the Township expects to end 2023 with a surplus in the General Fund. 2023 Revenue is projected to be \$3,108,736 compared to the 2023 Budgeted Revenue of \$2,634,041. EIT and Transfer Tax well exceeded budget estimates. Mr. Swichar stated that he expects to end the year with a positive balance of \$474,695. Mr. Swichar stated that he will recommend a transfer of \$400,000 at the December meeting to the Capital Fund to fund capital projects proposed in 2024.

e. Establishing Sweep Account at Meridian Bank (Informational)

Treasurer Ionata provided an overview of the Meridian Sweep account. The Township is looking into earning a higher interest rate. Anything over an established amount would be swept into FDIC accounts in increments of \$250,000 and would be invested in various investments. The interest rate is approximately 5.1% interest. There is an automatic

sweeping process. As accounts earn interest, the interest would sweep back into the account.

Mr. Swichar stated that the Township realized a cost savings of approximately \$8,000 when they switched from Fulton Bank to Meridian Bank. The Township now wants to take advantage of higher interest rates.

8. LEGAL

1) Approval of Subdivision Application –315 and 317 Strode Avenue UPI 47-5A-1

Solicitor Crotty stated that the property is in Valley Township and East Fallowfield Township. There are no new lots or buildings proposed. The applicant is shifting lot lines to mirror municipal boundaries. The county planning commission has reviewed the application and made a recommendation. The Township Planning Commission has recommended that the subdivision be approved. The Township engineer recommends approval. The request for lot line change approval would include the lot line change and waiver of submission of the historic resource study. The conditions of approval are complying with items in the township engineer's review letter and that any future development comply with the zoning/subdivision ordinance, obtain all necessary permits and reimburse all consultant fees. Mr. Crotty stated that the well on the Valley Township site would need an easement.

The applicant, Mr. Milewski, stated they are looking at creating two deeds from one deed.

MOTION: Chairman Lambert moved that the Township approve the preliminary/final subdivision plans for the Charles Milewski Application, per the form of the written decision prepared by the Township Solicitor. Vice Chairman Heffern seconded.

VOTE: 4-0.

9. PARK AND RECREATION

- 1) Report and Calendar of Special Events Submitted.
- 2) Vice Chairman Heffern stated that the little free library was installed at the township park by Hannah Lamb

10. PLANNING COMMISSION

- 1) No Report Submitted

11. POLICE DEPARTMENT

- 1) September Police Report submitted for Board and resident review.
- 2) Approving New Policies for the Police Department

MOTION: Vice Chairman Heffern made a motion to approve the following new policies for the Police Department: Body Worn Camera; Property and Evidence Control; Temporary Holding Facility; Vehicle Operations and Call Response; Child Abuse Investigations; Crime Victims Act; and Juvenile Offenders. Chairman Lambert seconded.

Supervisor DiRado questioned how often the policies need to be revised.

Chief Osborn provided an overview of how updates are provided. The police department instituted a software called POWERDMS which notifies when the policy could expire.

VOTE: 4-0.

12. PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

1) September Road Department Report submitted for Board and resident review.

13. HISTORICAL COMMISSION

14. OLD BUSINESS

15. NEW BUSINESS

There was a discussion on the Fee in Lieu of for Park and Community Recreation.

Solicitor Crotty stated that BAWA was not required to pay a fee because they were grandfathered in from previous ordinances. He stated that fees were not required.

There was a board discussion on park and recreation fees.

Supervisor DiRado questioned if monies could be budgeted for a bike lane.

Township Manager Swichar stated that bike lanes are being discussed during the open space meetings.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

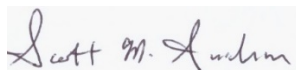
Teri Dickinson discussed the AED at the Township Park.

16. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Supervisor Wright made a motion to adjourn the October 24, 2023 Board of Supervisors Meeting at 7:51 PM. Supervisor DiRado seconded.

VOTE: 4-0.

Respectfully Submitted,



Scott Swichar,
Township Manager/Secretary