

EAST FALLOWFIELD TOWNSHIP  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING  
October 10, 2023 Approved Minutes

**Members Present**

Wilson Lambert, Chairman  
Joseph Heffern, Vice-Chairman  
Katja DiRado, Member  
Al Wright, Member  
John Nielsen, 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 6:34 PM.

2. DISCUSSION

A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 26, 2023 BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: Vice Chairman Heffern made a motion to approve the September 26, 2023 Board of Supervisors meeting minutes as presented. Chairman Lambert seconded.

VOTE: 5-0.

3. TREASURER'S REPORT

1) September 30, 2023 Treasurer's Report.

MOTION: Supervisor Nielsen made a motion to approve the September 30, 2023 Treasurer's Report as presented. Chairman Lambert seconded.

VOTE: 5-0.

2) Payment Authorizations.

MOTION: Chairman Lambert made a motion to approve the Payment Authorizations for the period of September 27, 2023 through October 10, 2023 in the total amount of \$46,699.33 as presented. Vice Chairman Heffern seconded.

VOTE: 5-0.

4. TOWNSHIP MANAGER'S REPORT

1) Appointment of Farmer to the Agricultural Security Commission

Township Manager Swichar stated that there is currently one opening on the Agricultural Security Committee for a farmer. The Township received an application from Jillian Federoff. The application is in the board's packet. The term expires at the end of this year; however, Ms. Federoff could be reappointed at the reorganization meeting.

MOTION: Supervisor Wright made a motion to appoint Jillian Federoff (Farmer) to the Agricultural Security Commission with a term ending 2023. Vice Chairman Heffern seconded.

*Joe Heffern-Board of Supervisors Member) - Chairperson 2023*  
*Roxanne Liberace– Resident 2022 to 2023 (2-year term)*  
*Arthur DeLeo – Farmer 2022 to 2026 (5-year term)*  
*Clarence Rhoades III – Farmer 2021 to 2023 (3-year term)*  
*Jillian Federoff – Farmer 2020 to 2023 (4-year term)*

VOTE: 5-0.

2) Motion to Amend the Agenda to Include Issuance of Zoning Permit to Triple Fresh

MOTION: Vice Chairman Heffern made a motion to amend the agenda to include the issuance of a zoning permit to Triple Fresh. Supervisor Wright seconded.

Dean Madsen questioned whether there would be any issues if the event was cancelled and rescheduled to the following weekend.

Mr. Swichar stated he has no issue with changing the date to a proposed rain date as long as the conditions are met.

VOTE: 5-0.

3) Zoning Permit for Triple Fresh

Mr. Swichar stated that the Township received an email from Jim Petro about an event on October 14 at 325 Doe Run Road that would be held at the farm belonging to Jim Sisk. The township requested that Mr. Sisk complete a zoning application. The zoning officer reviewed the zoning application and noted that several items need to be addressed before the township could issue a permit. The Board could issue a one-time accessory use zoning permit since the current zoning does not permit this type of event. Mr. Swichar stated that the conditions are the following: The applicant needs approval from the Cheser County Health Department for beer; approval is needed from PennDOT for ingress and egress on a state highway; a vendor certificate naming East Fallowfield as the additional insured is needed; information is needed on modular homes and what they are being used for; fire protection needs to be in place and the applicant needs to pay their fees; all information is needed by the Township no later than October 12 at 12PM or we will not be able to review the application. Also, Mr. Swichar stated that in the future the Township office needs an application at least 90 days in advance.

MOTION: Vice Chairman Heffern made a motion to approve the issuance of a zoning permit for a one-time special event on October 14 subject to the applicant meeting conditions set by the zoning officer. Chairman Lambert seconded.

Dean Madsen stated that he attended a meeting a couple months ago and discussed the events with the Board. They have already had three events. This would be the last event.

Township Manager Swichar stated that the Township has attempted to fast track the review of their application. The event requires a zoning permit and specific requirements need to be met.

Chairman Lambert questioned if there were three events already.

There was a board discussion about the event.

Mr. Madsen stated that the modular homes would be on display. There will be a food drive. It looks like it will rain this weekend so they would like to have a rain date.

Amended Motion: Vice Chairman Heffern made a motion to approve the issuance of a zoning permit for a one-time special event on October 14 with a rain date of October 21 subject to the applicant meeting conditions set by the zoning officer. Supervisor Wright seconded.

Supervisor DiRado questioned where the event was advertised.

VOTE: 5-0.

4) 2024 Budget Overview and Workshop.

Mr. Swichar stated that 2024 Budget Schedule Public Hearings will be held on October 10 is the Budget work session/review draft budget, October 24 is the First Presentation of budget. November 14 is the second presentation of the budget, and the board could authorize advertisement of budget. December 12 is scheduled for Budget adoption.

Mr. Swichar stated that 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 full-time fire fighters at Westwood Fire Company and Modena Fire Company.

The 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 includes a \$155,922 interfund transfer from the general fund into the capital fund. 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 Township has budgeted 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. The Township received two grants for this project. \$275,000 is budgeted for repairs to Saw Mill Road. A new fuel Master Pump System is in the proposed budget. The Township received a grant for this project.

Mr. Swichar compared the 2023 adopted budget and the 2024 proposed budget. He stated that there is a large 51.2 increase in the Fire/EMS budget. There is also a large increase in the Trash Budget, which reflects the much more expensive trash collection contract with A.J. Blosenski, The Park and Rec Fund reflects a large increase in spending. This is attributed to the costs associated with the Open Space Plan. The Township received a \$30,000 Vision Partnership Grant, so a lot of the money will come back to the Township. The Capital Fund reflects \$996,244 in spending reflecting there are a lot of capital projects planned for next year .

Mr. Swichar stated that the proposed budget plans on spending the remaining funds in our ARPA account next year to improve Township Infrastructure. A large underground pipe on Saw Mill Road is failing, The Township completed its bog turtle survey this year and did not find any bog turtle habitats in that area. If the board approves the project, he expects the Township could complete this project next year.

Mr. Swichar provided an overview of real estate property taxes. He stated that the township budgeted \$818,211 in real estate tax revenue for 2024 which is slightly higher than the \$800,000 we budgeted in 2023. The small increase is attributed to the slightly larger real estate assessment in the Township.

Mr. Swichar provided an overview of the revenue comparison of the 2023 adopted budget revenues versus the 2024 Proposed budget.

Mr. Swichar provided an overview of EIT revenues by quarter from 2019 to 2023.

Mr. Swichar provided an overview of expenses in administration.

Mr. Swichar provided an overview of the 2024 police budget which is \$1,494,588 and represents 52% of the General Fund budget. The 2024 budget reflects 7 full-time officers, 5 ft officers, 1 sergeant, one chief, and 6 part-timers. Staffing levels are budgeted to remain as they are now.

The 2024 public works budget is \$526,778. Public Works is 18.4% of General Fund budget. 2024 Budget includes three FT laborers and One Road Foreman, and the addition of one part-time laborer which is permitted under the CBA.

Mr. Swichar provided an overview of the Fire/EMS budget which starts at line 301 in the budget. The Township has not increased its millage rate since 2018. In 2018, the millage rate was set at 3 mills: 2 mills for General Purpose and 1 mill for Fire/EMS.

Westwood Fire Company and Modena Fire Company approached the Township this year and requested that the township increase the Fire/EMS tax so that they can hire paid firefighters since they report it is extremely difficult to staff the fire department with volunteers.

Both Modena Fire Company and Westwood Fire Company have requested that the Township increase its current, Fire/EMS tax from 1 mill to 1.75 mills. As a breakdown .69 mills would go

toward one paid fire fighter at Westwood Fire Company and one full-time fire fighter at Modena Fire Company.

A .06 millage increase would go to Westwood Ambulance to continue to provide Advanced Life Support (ALS) to the entire township. There is an extra \$49,308 reflected in the Subsidy to EMS Budget (411.542), which is money paid directly to Westwood for the ALS service.

Mr. Swichar provided an overview of what a .75 mill tax increase would look like. He 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, and 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. Therefore, the average tax bill will increase from \$408.35 to \$510 next year.

Due to the proposed millage increase and because the assessment value has increased slightly, the 2024 Fire/EMS budget will increase from \$451,232 in 2023 to \$767,166 in 2024. The 2024 Fire/EMS Budget also sets aside \$73,200 so that both fire companies can make capital purchases such as a fire truck or ambulance. The Township has been doing this since at least 2018. Mr. Swichar stated that if the Township raised the millage by .75 mills, then there would be approximately \$100,000 excess in the fund. Mr. Swichar stated that Westwood Fire Company is requesting that additional excess be given to the fire companies for capital needs.

Supervisor Nielsen questioned if he could see the profit loss statement or financials from Westwood Fire Company and wants to see what other municipalities are being charged to see if they are paying their share. He stated that Coatesville City experiences twice the number of EMS calls. He requested that the minutes reflect this request.

Township Manager Swichar stated that Westwood Fire Company has also requested funding from Valley Township. He also requested a meeting with Valley Township.

Treasurer Ionata stated that she believes that each township pays their proportional share based on population and possibly the number of calls. She stated that according to John Sly Valley Township would be paying 75% and East Fallowfield Township would be paying 25% of their proportional share.

Chairman Lambert stated that the board is responsible for ensuring public safety.

Vice Chairman Heffern stated that the closure of Brandywine Hospital has caused major wear and tear on their ambulance vehicles. He stated that the fire companies are struggling to find volunteers.

Mr. Swichar stated that he will ask Mr. McWilliams and John Sly to attend the next board meeting to answer specific questions.

Mr. Swichar provided an overview of the 2024 Liquid Fuels Budget. He stated that the liquid fuels allocation is dollars from the state used for maintenance, snow plowing, and reconstruction of township roads. The 2024 Estimated Liquid Fuels Allocation is \$285,545. The 2024 Liquid Fuels revenue is Budgeted at \$350,547 and expenditures are \$434,600. The proposed 2024 budget will use \$84,053 of reserves so that we can continue the Township's aggressive road paving program. The Township had budgeted to use \$19,612 in reserves in 2023, but projects using \$36,521 in 2023 due to the Township's decision to pave more roads. The

Township has been more aggressive with road paving over the past few years. In 2018, the Township was budgeting close to \$150,000 for road paving; however, \$350,000 is budgeted for road paving next year.

Supervisor Wright questioned if the funding for road paving comes from liquid fuels. He questioned if a master plan is being discussed.

Township Manager Swichar stated yes.

Mr. Swichar provided an overview of the Trash Fund. He stated that the Township went out to bid this summer and awarded a 3 year Hauling Contract to the low bidder AJ Blosenski. That contract will start in 2024. As expected, the contracted price for waste hauling went up dramatically. The hauling Expense increases from \$477,000 in 2023 to \$727,176 in 2024 which is a 52% increase. Also, Tipping Fees which as disposal costs paid to Chester County Solid Waste Authority are projected to increase from \$200,000 (2023 Projected) to \$250,000 in the 2024 Proposed budget.

Mr. Swichar stated that the 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 explained a three-year cost projection for the trash fee. If the trash fee is increased to \$450 in 2024, he stated that the administration expects to keep it steady in 2025 and not raise it again until 2026, when it would be increased to \$480.

Supervisor Nielsen questioned what is included in the total expense on the slide. Has the tonnage rate been set for 2024. He questioned if we pay the tonnage fee to Chester County Solid Waste Authority

Treasurer Ionata stated that the total expense also includes tipping fees, recycling processing and some administrative fees. There is a surplus projected so that the Township can pay the hauler. Revenues do not come in the first few months of the year.

Township Manager Swichar stated solid waste disposal fees are paid to Chester County Solid Waste Authority. The Township receives a discount paying Chester County Solid Waste Authority directly.

Supervisor DiRado questioned the Township recycling center and whether costs could be reduced. She questioned if the Township could help residents since the trash increase will be large.

Township Manager Swichar stated that the Township is paying for a DEP study to investigate the possibility of a transfer station on IMS Drive. The study will explore possible cost savings.

Supervisor Nielsen questioned the possibility of collecting compostables.

Treasurer Ionata stated that residents receive a discount on their county bill if they pay by April 1. The trash fund could not operate if the township does not raise the trash fee.

Supervisor Nielsen questioned how the township could get out of the contract with A.J. Blosenski and whether trash will be collected on Jane Street.

Township Manager Swichar stated that Jane Street will be collected, and the Township needs to provide 6 month's notice,

Mr. Swichar discussed the township's park and recreation fund. Since the township doesn't have a recreation tax, the only guaranteed revenue we receive for park and recreation is the \$1,500 fee paid from new construction. The Township budgeted \$0 for the fee in lieu of. There is no new construction proposed at the moment that provides for a fee in lieu of. There are several projects budgeted in the 2024 Park and recreation fund. \$30,000 is budgeted for the open space plan. The Township will receive \$30,000 back from a grant. \$10,000 is budgeted for the summer concert in the park. The Township received sponsorship dollars to pay for the concert in the past. The township proposes budgeting \$10,000 for enhancements to the memorial pollinator garden, \$10,000 for the summer concert series in the garden, \$00 for the gazebo lighting, and \$1,000 for landscaping and shade tree replacement.

Supervisor Nielsen questioned the fee in lieu of and why BAWA homes are not paying the fee in lieu of. He stated that any home will have an environmental impact. He requested that the fee increase to \$2,500 fee for new construction. He questioned whether additional fees are worth exploring.

Mr. Swichar stated that he will add the fee in lieu of for park and rec to the next board agenda.

Mr. Swichar discussed the 2024 Capital Fund budget of \$996,244. The Township proposes to Transfer \$155,922 from the General Fund to the capital fund next year to pay for capital improvements. The 2024 Capital Budget proposes several projects next year: Newlinville Village Traffic Calming. The board already approved the engineering agreement with Pennoni at their September meeting. The township received a grant to pay for a fuel master pump system. The purchase will happen in 2024. The ARPA Fund does not have enough money to pay for Saw Mill Road repairs, so \$125,000 will come from the capital fund. The next phase of the municipal building complex project should be to complete a feasibility study. \$75,000 is budgeted next year to complete this portion of the project.

Mr. Swichar discussed other proposed capital projects such as a new township website (\$20,000), Server needed for administration (\$11,000) Code enforcement Software \$30,000, Office scanning technology and software, \$60,000 for a new police vehicle, \$16,610 for police related equipment. In public works, \$94,000 was budgeted to replace an aging 2013 dump truck with a new one. \$21,690 is budgeted in capital fund for an asphalt grinder that will allow public works to complete more road repairs in house.

Police Chief Osborne provided an overview of capital needs for the police department.

Mr. Swichar stated that the Township received \$793,727 in ARPA funds. The Township has already spent a great portion of the money. There is \$151,506 remaining in the ARPA Fund. Mr. Swichar stated the proposed ARPA fund includes funding for repair of Saw Mill Road.

Mr. Swichar showed a slide with the real estate tax millage history since 2016. Real estate property taxes are the township's second largest revenue. 2016 was the first time the township had a township real estate property tax. At that time, the Township set the General Purpose millage rate at 1.25 mills in the 2018 budget, the Township increased the General

Purpose township millage to 2.00 and also introduced a fire/EMS tax of 1 mill to fund fire and ambulance service. 2018 was the last time there was a tax increase.

Mr. Swichar provided an overview of what the average township resident pays for their township real estate tax as well as the trash fee. The average homeowner pays approximately \$407 for their township real estate taxes and \$310 for trash, which amounts to a total of \$717.00. Mr. Swichar stated that the Township provides a great deal of services such as snow plowing, 24x7 Police service, and fire protection for that amount of money.

Mr. Swichar explained the distribution of real estate taxes. The real estate tax dollar is made up of three components: the school district, Chester County, and East Fallowfield Township.

Mr. Swichar stated that the school district receives 85 %, Chester County receives 9%, and East Fallowfield Township also receives only 6 %.

Mr. Swichar stated that the Township expected to end 2023 with a Surplus in the General Fund. 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. He will recommend a transfer of \$400,000 to Capital Fund in 2023 to fund capital projects proposed in 2024.

5) OLD BUSINESS

None.

1) NEW BUSINESS

None.

10 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Jillian Federoff, Township Resident, commented on stormwater issues on Cumberland Drive.

11 ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Supervisor DiRado made a motion to adjourn the October 10, 2023 of Supervisors Meeting at 8:27 PM. Vice Chairman Heffern seconded.

VOTE: 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted,



Scott Swichar,  
Township Manager/Secretary