

The Board of Supervisors of Dallas Township held their monthly Meeting for December on Tuesday, December 4, 2018 at 7:00P.M. in the Municipal Building located at 105 Lieutenant Michael Cleary Drive, Dallas, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania. Those in attendance included: Supervisor William J. Grant, Supervisor Robert J. Wagner, Solicitor, Attorney Thomas P. Brennan, Township Manager/Roadmaster, Martin K. Barry, Police Chief, Douglas J. Higgins, Carl M. Alber, Zoning Officer/Code Enforcement Officer, Nancy Y. Balutis, Secretary/Treasurer and K. Gary Kirk, Secretary/Treasurer as well as approximately 35 other individuals. Supervisor Frank E. Wagner was not able to attend.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Supervisor R. Wagner made a **Motion to Pay the Bills**. Motion was seconded by Supervisor W. Grant and carried.

Supervisor R. Wagner made a **Motion to approve employee health reimbursements** that had been requested since the last meeting in the amount of \$104,69. Motion was seconded by Supervisor W. Grant and carried. Total employee health reimbursements made for 2018 is \$8,161.87.

Supervisor R. Wagner made a **Motion to approve the Minutes** from the November 7, 2018 Meeting. Motion was seconded by Supervisor W. Grant and carried.

Supervisor R. Wagner made a **Motion to approve the Minutes** from the November 27, 2018 Ordinance Amendment Meeting. Motion was seconded by Supervisor W. Grant and carried.

#### **Agenda:**

Supervisor W. Grant stated that the first two items on the agenda were Ordinance #2018-5, An Ordinance to Amend the Township's Zoning Map, and Ordinance #2018-6, An Ordinance to Amend the Township's Zoning Ordinance of 2008, as amended. He thanked the Comprehensive Planning Committee that recommended the changes to the zoning map including adding an institutional district, a manufactured home district, and changes to reduce oil and gas activities by adding a rural agricultural district. The current A-1, Agricultural District, was open to oil and gas activities as a conditional use which would require Supervisors' approval. The new A-2, Rural Agricultural District, would be the only district open to oil and gas activities and the Township is required by municipality code to have an area open for these activities. The changes would also reduce oil and gas activities from being available in about 70% of the Township to only about 25% of the Township. The Comprehensive Planning Committee recommendations were sent to the Township's Planning Commission for review, changes and any comments. The Planning Commission reviewed the documents and sent their recommendations to the Supervisors. The Supervisors had a public meeting on November 27, 2018 to solicit comments. The Supervisors made some changes to the Zoning Ordinance based on the public comments.

Supervisor R. Wagner made a **Motion to approve Ordinance #2018-5, An Ordinance to Amend the Township's Zoning Map**, as detailed and shown on the board. Motion was seconded by Supervisor W. Grant and carried.

Supervisor W. Grant along with Zoning Officer/Code Enforcement Officer C. Alber explained that the change that the Supervisors' made to the Zoning Ordinance was to change the wording in the A-2, Rural Agricultural District that had oil and gas activities as allowed by right to now be by special exception. This would require oil and gas activities to go before the Zoning Hearing Board and have a public hearing. It was also stated that the A-1, Agricultural District would no longer allow oil and gas activities.

There was applause from those in attendance and Supervisor W. Grant thanked the public for their comments at last week's special meeting.

Supervisor R. Wagner made a **Motion to approve Ordinance #2018-6, An Ordinance to Amend the Township Zoning Ordinance of 2008, as amended.** Motion was seconded by Supervisor W. Grant and carried.

Supervisor R. Wagner made a **Motion to approve Resolution #2018-18, A Resolution agreeing to participate in the Back Mountain Community Partnership for an LSA Grant to be submitted by Harvey's Lake Borough for infrastructure improvements.** Motion was seconded by Supervisor W. Grant and carried.

Attorney Brennan stated that Crown Castle has the right to sublet the Kunkle cell tower with permission which cannot be unreasonably withheld. Supervisor R. Wagner made a **Motion to approve Crown Castle's request to add T-Mobile to the Tower Lease at the Kunkle Tower.** Motion was seconded by Supervisor W. Grant and carried.

Township Manager M. Barry stated that the Eastern Pennsylvania Coalition did a public meeting here last summer to do stream bank improvements in the Trout Brook and Toby's Creek stream areas. They are trying to obtain another grant to provide public education and to start stream restoration. Supervisor R. Wagner made a **Motion to approve the Eastern Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation support letter.** Motion was seconded by Supervisor W. Grant and carried.

Supervisor W. Grant stated the Township's **2019 Reorganization Meeting** will be held on Monday January 7, 2019.

Supervisor W. Grant stated that due to weather issues the Beaumont Inn was not able to complete their new septic system on schedule and have requested an extension to December 31, 2018. Supervisor R. Wagner made a **Motion to approve the Beaumont Inn's request for extension of time until December 31, 2018 to complete their septic system.** Motion was seconded by Supervisor W. Grant and carried.

Supervisor W. Grant stated that the Township is planning on implementing a Fire Protection Tax. The Township has seen a decline in volunteers at both fire departments. This has also been seen on a statewide basis as in the 1970's there were over 300,000 firefighters in Pennsylvania and it is now around 40,000. Due to the reduction in volunteers, it has increased the response time to emergencies. The plan is to hire 2 full time employees at both departments between 6am and 6pm which are the busiest times. The funds will not be comingled with Township funds and will be in a separate account. A fire board will be created and the fire departments will report their needs to the fire board who will disperse the funds as needed for the four new employees and upgrade of equipment. The plan is to have it fully implemented by the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2019. The tax will be effective January 2019 and be .75 mills which would generate approximately \$492,000 annually which matches the estimated costs for the wages, workers' compensation insurance, equipment, fire hydrants and equipment contingency. Kunkle Fire Chief Dodson stated that having the full-time employees could save 10 minutes of response time per call and will allow them to do more training and less time fundraising. The cost of a fire truck is \$500,000-600,000. Township Manager M. Barry stated it will help improve/add fire hydrants which will provide a benefit to homeowners with their insurance and it will also improve public safety. As the number of volunteers decline, the Township wants to be proactive to help our fire departments. Supervisor W. Grant stated that the annual appeal participation rate is around 40% for Kunkle Fire

Department and around 50% for Back Mountain Regional. The tax will be a separate line item on the tax bill and the millage rate will be reviewed every year and be adjusted up or down accordingly. The average assessed value for a home in the Township is around \$150,000 which would add a \$110 to the tax bill. Only about 6½% of a Township residents' total tax bill goes to Dallas Township to take care of the roads, fire, and police. Supervisor R. Wagner made a **Motion to approve the Implementation of the Dallas Township Fire Protection Tax**. Motion was seconded by Supervisor W. Grant and carried.

Supervisor W. Grant stated that the Township's operating budget tax millage rate will remain at 1.25 mills. The total revenue is budgeted at \$4,193,376 and total expenses budgeted at \$4,188,186 for a small surplus of \$5,190. This will be the sixth straight year of a budgeted surplus. There are many projects for 2019 including paving of roads, some facility upgrades for the road department salt shed and additional police and police cars. We will be applying for grants. From grants already received, the Dallas Township Playground improvements will be started April and hopefully completed in July. Supervisor R. Wagner made a **Motion to approve adopt the 2019 Budget**. Motion was seconded by Supervisor W. Grant and carried.

**Police Update:**

Chief D. Higgins provided the police update and stated that a new police car was received last week and the other new car should be here in 2 to 3 weeks. The hiring process for a new School Resource Officer (SRO)/Police Officer should happen in the next few weeks. The Dallas School District had requested an additional SRO and they reimburse the Township 75% of the cost of the SRO. The other 25% paid by the Township will be used to cover vacation time of other officers.

**Road Department Update:**

Township Manager M. Barry provided the road department update and stated that they are still picking up leaves, but have been behind due to the weather. They will be also be doing pot hole patching.

**Citizen's Comments:**

Brenda Pugh thanked the Supervisors and the Road Department for their help with the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Christmas Celebration which will be held this Saturday from 5pm to 9pm. They will be collecting toys which will be distributed to the Dallas School District by the police department.

**Adjournment**

Supervisor R. Wagner made a **Motion to adjourn the Meeting**. Motion was seconded by Supervisor W. Grant and carried. The Meeting ended at 7:27pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

K. Gary Kirk, CPA  
Secretary/Treasurer