

Because of Election Day being on Tuesday, November 6th, 2018, the Board of Supervisors of Dallas Township held their monthly Meeting for November on Wednesday, November 7th, 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 Frank E. Wagner, Supervisor William J. Grant, Supervisor Robert J. Wagner, Solicitor, Attorney Thomas P. Brennan, Township Manager/Roadmaster, Martin K. Barry, Police Chief, Douglas J. Higgins, K. Gary Kirk, Secretary-Treasurer Replacement, Carl M. Alber, Zoning Officer/Code Enforcement Officer, Thomas J. Doughton, Township Engineer Representative, and Nancy Y. Balutis, Secretary-Treasurer.

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

Supervisor F. Wagner made a **Motion to approve employee health reimbursements** that had been requested since our last meeting. The total amount was \$1564.67. Motion was seconded by Supervisor W. Grant and carried. Total employee health reimbursements made for 2018 is \$8056.98.

Supervisor F. Wagner made a **Motion to approve the Minutes** from the October 2nd Meeting. Motion was seconded by Supervisor W. Grant and carried.

Supervisor F. Wagner stated we had received a request from the **Fellowship Church** for approval for an **individual Perc-Rite Micro-mound Drip Irrigation Wastewater Disposal System**. Township Engineer Representative, T. Doughton, stated that as part of their land development plan they are requesting an on-site septic, which is a micro system that is not permitted in the plan. However, it has been approved by DEP. Basically, we need to amend our 537 Sewage Facility Plan to allow it. It is the same thing we did in Goodleigh Manor. The agreement must be signed by the Supervisors and notarized stating they agree to amend the Township's plan. Supervisor F. Wagner said he would make the Motion to agree to change the Township's 537 Sewage Plan to allow for an individual Perc-Rite Micro-mound Drip Irrigation Wastewater Disposal System for the Fellowship Church. Motion was seconded by Supervisor W. Grant and carried.

Supervisor F. Wagner made a Motion to approve **Resolution #2018-16** that **eliminates Police Officers from making contributions to the Police Pension Plan for the year 2019**. Motion was seconded by Supervisor R. Wagner and carried. Supervisor W. Grant explained that the reason we can make that resolution is because the Police Pension Plan is overfunded. Right now, depending on where the Market is, we are between one hundred twenty-five to one hundred thirty percent of what we actually need. So, no contribution is required.

Police Chief, D. Higgins said the School District has approached the Police Department about putting additional school resource officers in the Schools so that each building would have one. Right now, we only have one. An additional three would be needed. Chief Higgins said they had agreed to add one new Police Resource Officer. They have been working on putting together an agreement for about the last five months to add one additional resource officer, which would give us a total of two resource officers for the District. Supervisor W. Grant said if the Supervisors agree tonight to add the additional resource Officer, the School District will vote on approving the Contract at their Meeting scheduled for the 12th. If approved, we will be moving forward with plans to bring the second resource officer on sometime around April or May of next year. The cost based on when that individual starts is around \$31,800 and Dallas School District will reimburse the Township 75% of that amount. The first year will roughly be

around \$21,000.00. When the officer is not functioning as a school resource officer for the one hundred eighty days, he or she will be available to work with our Police Department. It ends up being an additional expense to the Township, because we're paying for roughly three months for the officer. That downtime usually happens in the summer, where we have officers taking vacations. The resource officer will help cover their shifts. Supervisor W. Grant said he feels they have worked out a pretty good contract. Police Chief Higgins will have control over the officer. The officer will not really be an employee of the School District. Police Chief Higgins said it is a five-year contract set for three years where the School District can't get out of it. At the end of three years, the School District will have the option to get out of the contract with a one hundred eighty-day notice. That will give the Township a half year to figure out what we want to do with the officer. It probably won't happen, but we wanted an extended contract for at least five years to enable us to make that commitment to the employee that we will be hiring. We have a second officer right now who is certified to function as a resource officer, but he is working a shift and going through rotation. If he was to be taken off of rotation, it would create a lot of overtime. Supervisor W. Grant said he would like to make the **Motion to approve a school resource officer between the Township and the School District subject upon the terms of the agreement.** Motion was seconded by Supervisor F. Wagner and carried. Supervisor W. Grant asked Secretary-Treasurer, Nancy Balutis, to let the School District know that this was passed tonight.

Supervisor F. Wagner said the Supervisors and Township Manager had spoken to the Fire Chiefs of Back Mountain Regional and Kunkle Fire Company about the **possibility of enacting a fire protection tax.** Township Manager, M. Barry, said that they have been evaluating what is going on within the Commonwealth of PA and what other Townships, boroughs, and cities are facing with their volunteer fire departments. They are short of volunteers and of money being available. The current trend is that a lot of Townships are implementing a fire protection tax. The tax is used solely for the fire companies' equipment and facilities and freeing their time up to provide fire services, emergency calls, and training. The majority of the volunteer fire companies are spending time fund-raising and on top of that, trying to respond to all calls. Also, the norm is they are losing people, especially day time volunteers. With call volume increasing in Dallas and the town getting bigger with more traffic, it is going to be a consideration of paid personnel coming, probably in the near future. In their discussions with the fire departments, the fire chiefs explained their fund raisers and the amount of money they bring in. Typically, the mailer they put out every year, does not have a full return. It has a low percentage rate of return and returns received in donations are also low. They have been trying to do extra fund raisers to compensate for what they don't have. After discussion, both Supervisors and fire chiefs agreed that it is to the Township's benefit and safety, to implement a fire protection tax. They presently are in the preliminary stages of setting this tax up for 2019, and figuring out what the needs are for our two fire departments. The fire protection tax, if implemented, will be a separate tax specifically for fire protection and for the two fire companies. It will be a separate line item on the real estate bills, and will not in any way be co-mingled with Township funds or be permitted to be used for any Township funds. It will have its own tax exemption number. It will strictly be used for fire protection, with the possibility of paid drivers, hydrants, personnel protective equipment, and possibly some of the trucks they may need in future years. The tax will be a millage, based on the assessment of a person's home. A fire board will be created, and will consist of the two fire chiefs, the Township Manager, and two members of the community who are not involved with the fire companies, along with a volunteer that has had some experience with the fire companies but is no longer active, but able to give some insight. The committee board will pretty much look at what the needs are for the fire companies for both the present and the future. The fire companies will be held accountable for exactly what they are spending the

money on, because it is tax payers' money. The public, too, needs to be educated. They need to understand how much it costs to provide fire protection - from insurance to equipment. A brand new basic fire engine costs about six hundred thousand dollars. A ladder truck costs over nine hundred thousand dollars. It is up to our Township and community to provide the best fire protection we can.

Supervisor W. Grant said he worked with the department heads in preparing the **2019 budget** and figuring out where we want to go. We will have about an increase in revenue of \$12,000.00 from our surrounding cities for our volunteer firemen's workmen's compensation. The reason for this is that we are going to have a huge increase in our workmen's compensation premium because of two very large claims. We only have two potential providers - one being the commercial carrier we presently have and the other being the State. We have about \$333,000.00 in grant revenues from DCNR and an LSA Grant for the construction of the Dallas Township playground. We also have \$75,000.00 listed in the budget from the Metz family, which is a contribution to put towards the playground. The playground, from the engineer's point, is estimated to cost somewhere between \$400 and \$425 thousand dollars. We are placing the equipment order in somewhere within the next 30 days to avoid a 7% increase in the price of the equipment. We will also be applying for an LSA grant fund for a proposed new salt shed that the Township is definitely in need of replacing. The estimated cost is somewhere around \$220,000.00, which includes all of the land development for the plan. Supervisor Grant said in developing the budget, he was very conservative with his numbers. Hopefully, we will have a larger revenue total number. Anderson & Associates, our actuary pension group, have estimated us receiving approximately 145,000.00 from the State, which is an increase of about \$32,000.00 this year. This increase from the State, which will actually be going out as an expense, is because we are going to be paying \$177,000.00 for our pension plans. We made the decision a couple of years ago to lower our targeted interest rate return on our pension plans, from seven and a half percent to six and a half percent. We have been told by the company that handles our pensions, that out of the one hundred fifty-five municipalities they handle, we are the second best in the State in managing our pension plans. As a result of lowering the targeted interest rate return, we will see a couple of years (probably around four) where there will be an increase in the amount we will have to pay, before the amount levels off and we are back to where we were. The new School Resource Officer will increase the revenue we receive from the School District. Looking at the expense side, the administrative expense category has an increase of about \$160,000.00. Part of that is due to the reclassification of our Roadmaster/Township Manager from the Road Department over to the Administrative area. We also hired a new Secretary-Treasurer, Gary Kirk, to fill the position of Nancy Balutis, who is retiring and will be leaving around mid-May. This year, we have an overlapping of some employee salaries. We felt it was important to bring Gary on early enough so he can go through the budgeting process, work on the annual audit with Baker Tilley, all the DCED reports, to union negotiations and revising our employee handbook. There is a lot to do and we felt it was important to have Gary and Nancy work together. That difference in itself, added about \$20,000.00 to the area. Health care insurances increased by about 6%, which was really good. But our total budgeted increase for health care insurance went up by \$73,000.00. The increase of health care by 6%, amounted roughly to about \$24,000.00. The additional amount was that we had two new employees for health care, as well as two Road Department employees, changing from having single coverage to having family coverage, because of their circumstances. The total amount of single coverage for a year is somewhere around \$11,000.00 while family coverage is somewhere around \$23,000.00 a year. Overtime in the Police Department has increased by around \$25,000.00, the reason being we are doing more social services, but the \$25,000.00 is offset by a revenue amount of \$25,000.00. We increased the amount for contracted paving for this year from \$200,000.00 to \$260,000.00 because we

had some roads that we were unable to get to this year. Hopefully, in the next couple of years, all of our Township roads will be in pretty good shape. The total budget for 2019 for the new Township building, including interest and principal for the mortgage is \$90,180.00. Rent from Representative Karen Boback is \$12,000.00, so our net cost is only 1.86% of the budget for the new building. Workmens compensation insurance increased significantly from \$85,661.00 to \$175,000.00 due to the two very large claims. This will more likely hang around for some time because they usually look back three years at our experience ratio, which had been very good, prior to the two claims. The experience ration will ration up about 25% each year. So for the next couple of years the experience ratio will be in about the 1.5 range which means we will be paying the State rate that they set plus an additional amount to recoup the amount the insurance company has lost over a period of time. After the budget is all said and done, we are showing a slight surplus of about \$4600.00 for 2019. As of October of 2018, we are at a plus 285, with roughly two point nine million dollars in the bank and \$500,000.00 in CD's. Supervisor W. Grant made a Motion to approve and advertise the proposed budget for 2019. Motion was seconded by Supervisor F. Wagner and carried.

Police Chief, D. Higgins, stated the Township has a **towing policy** where there are four individual towing companies that are called on a rotation status. Originally there were five. He was notified that one of the towing companies, Malak's Auto and Towing, had had their insurance lapsed, so he was removed from the Township's list. They have also found that Jacks Towing Company from Larksville, another towing company on the Township's rotation call list, was either showing up late or not showing up at all. They, too, were removed from the rotation call list. Chief Higgins said he had spoken to M. Barry about it and he is now requesting to just have and use the two remaining towers from the Township's rotation call list. Both towers are from the Back Mountain. He said first and foremost, the person who requires the tow would have the first request, but it has to be a reasonable request. Attorney Brennan suggested the Supervisors pass a resolution stating the Township's towing will now be done by the two remaining towers on the Township's rotation call list. Supervisor F Wagner made the Motion to approve **Resolution #2018-17**, which states the Township's towing rotation call list will now consist of the two remaining towers that remain on the Township's rotation call list. Motion was seconded by Supervisor W. Grant and carried.

Township Manager, M. Barry stated he had spoken to Fred Rosencrans from 911 this past week. 911 is looking to start their digital upgrades in the County and they want to put three towers in the Back Mountain, one being in Dallas Township. They have to submit their paperwork for applying for the grant, and they basically are asking for a letter of support from Dallas Township, since one of the towers will be in Dallas Township. Supervisor W. Grant asked if the tower is on Masonic's property. Zoning Officer, C. Alber responded that it is. 911 is paying Verizon to use that tower up there. What they want to do is to put their own tower up so they will not have to pay any more rent. Township Manager, M. Barry, said they are looking at doing towers county wide, three in particular in the Back Mountain. Since one will be located in the Township, they are asking for a letter of support. Fred and Luzerne County 911 is going to be at the next Community Partnership Meeting to discuss with all the municipalities just what is intended and planned for in the next couple of years. Supervisor W. Grant said he just doesn't know enough about the towers. He asked if there wasn't a tower there already on the property. Township Engineer, Tom Doughton, said the tower is on Irem's property and that they rent space to be on the tower. Supervisor W. Grant asked why they can't continue to rent space. Zoning Officer, C. Alber said they are upgrading their system for 911 and they want to put their own tower up so they won't have to pay rent. They will own the tower. They have been paying rent to Verizon not Masonic. They are presently working with Masonic about putting a tower on Masonic property. Verizon has the contract for the lease on the property. Supervisor W. Grant

said he would just like to know a little more about it. Township Manager, M. Barry, said he will contact Fred and have him email Supervisor Grant about it. Supervisor Grant said he would be able to review Fred's email on Thursday or Friday. He asked if we would be able to do a letter of support subject to final review by the Supervisors or if we would have to wait for another Meeting. Attorney Brennan replied that he felt we could. Supervisor W. Grant made the **Motion to do a letter of support for 911 subject to a review from the County 911's administrator for review of by the Supervisors so they have a little more information.** Motion was seconded by Supervisor F. Wagner and carried.

Supervisor F. Wagner said we had received notice that **PA American Water** is applying to the PA Department of Environmental Protection for **renewal of the existing National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit number.** Since we are talking about NPDES permits, Supervisor W. Grant asked if we had been notified about a NPDES Permit by the playground people because a permit is required for the playground. Township Engineer Representative, T. Doughton, said the playground people originally didn't think they needed one. Zoning Officer, C. Alber replied he didn't think he had received any information on it. Supervisor W. Grant asked if he could follow up with Bryan Smith to see what the status is and where they are with that.

Supervisor F. Wagner stated **Misericordia University** is asking for a **Plan Revision to the Township's "Official Sewage Facilities Plan" for their new Science Building development.** The new Science Building addition will be served by sewer tap-ins. This is the same thing needed by the Church. Supervisor W. Grant made a Motion to approve **Resolution #2018-15:** A Resolution approving a revision to the Township's "Official Sewage Facilities Plan" for Misericordia University's new Science Building. Motion was seconded by Supervisor F. Wagner and carried.

Supervisor W. Grant said we had received a **request from the Beaumont Inn 33, LLC to extend its temporary use of septic system** to December 11th. The Beaumont Inn had been required to put a septic system in but were held up by the weather and the Pipeline construction. Supervisor W. Grant said he believes that it is now completed, but he's not sure where The Beaumont Inn is with the septic system. Zoning Officer, C. Alber, said Larry Spaciano from DAMA, was up there late week to check on it to make sure they are making progress, and they are. They should be able to be done by December 11th. Supervisor W. Grant made a Motion to extend Beaumont Inn 33's temporary use of its septic system to December 11th. Motion was seconded by Supervisor R. Wagner and carried.

Supervisor W. Grant said we had received a **letter of resignation as Township Auditor** from Gary Kirk, effective October 31st, 2018. Gary has been appointed as the Township's Secretary-Treasurer's replacement until Nancy Balutis retires in May of 2019.

Supervisor W. Grant said a **public hearing will be held November 27th at 7:00P.M.** to receive residents' comments regarding the **amendment to the Township's Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map.** The amendments will be considered for adoption at the regular scheduled Supervisors Meeting to be held December 4th at 7:00P.M.

Supervisor W, Grant said **Misericordia University donated \$5000.00 to the Township** this year because they are not for profit. They did come through for the Township, which is a big plus.

Police Chief, D. Higgins, said the Police Department just completed a teen driving seatbelt safety enforcement grant from the highway, which was done around the school. They have also completed a Click It or Ticket campaign that is aimed at increasing the use of seat belts among young adults. A car seat safety check has been approved and will be conducted from November 19th to December 2nd. A career fair will be held at the high school on November 15th from 10:00A.M. until 1:00P.M. Both Chief Higgins and School Resource Officer, Gina Kotowski, will be there. Chief Higgins said he just completed a three-week leadership developing program that was held at the PA State Police Academy in Hershey, which was free of charge.

Roadmaster, M. Barry, said the **Road Department** has been working on storm water issues, doing some replacements of storm water infrastructure, pot hole patching, road paving. They finished up the paving and berming of Kingswood Court. They also did the restoration of Ryman Road on the Demunds Road side. They have been doing some gravel road work and have already begun leaf pick-up. Supervisor F. Wagner asked if the storm company is going to do anything on Reservoir Road before it snows. Roadmaster, M. Barry, replied that they weren't and that the Township would have to put a thin coat out there. Supervisor F. Wagner said we have to do something, as his phone is ringing off the wall with complaints about the pot holes.

Citizens Comments:

1. **Ann Davies** of Richard Drive asked Roadmaster Barry if he felt the Road Department will have the work completed on Richard Drive by spring. She said she learned from the Township that everything is about water. Roadmaster Barry said he plans to have Richard Drive done by Spring, providing it doesn't rain. Mrs. Davies said she just wants to make sure they are kept on the Road Department's schedule. Roadmaster Barry assured her that they won't forget her.
2. **Brenda Pugh** said she wanted to thank everything present this evening who participated in the Trunk or Treat pre-Halloween event held at the Fairgrounds. She said the EMA were there along with various organizations like the Dallas Kiwanis, that handed out candy. They figured they had about five thousand people come through for the free event. They had some haunted houses. People seemed to really have a good time and were in the holiday mood.

Looking at the upcoming Christmas Tree Lighting Event, scheduled for December 8th, Brenda said the committee has had a couple of meetings. They are going to do the Holiday Decorating Contest again this year. Forms can be picked up here for entering your home to be judged. She said Alan is meeting with the Kiwanis and Bernie Banks over the ice rink and where it is going to be placed. Bernie Banks is doing a lot of excavation work on the property with the permission of the School District. It will be a great improvement. There will be even more vendors this year, and everything will be set up as it was last year. It is really a great community event, and people seem to really want it. Brenda said she will be calling Martin regarding picking up the tree and getting it in place. Kunkle Fire Chief, Jack Dodson, has volunteered to bring a ladder truck to help decorate the top of the tree. She said she knows Martin had said the Road Department could pick the tree up sometime during the week of November 26th, weather permitting. The tree is coming from the same place it came from last year. Martin told her to tell them to really wrap it tight or to go with a smaller size tree. Once the tree is brought to the tree seller, they will let her know, and it can stay there until Martin and the Road Department are able to pick it up. She will give the tree seller Martin's phone number

and they can work out the pick-up date and time among themselves. Brenda said she will pay for the tree and the Township can reimburse her later. It is a great event. Hot chocolate will be given away, there will be caroling, and there will be a lot of fun. They have received a lot of donations already. Vendor set-up will be at 5:00P.M. Two police officers will be on duty for the event this year. Again this year, resident Rob Friedman has volunteered his trolley to transport people. It really is a great event that will be enjoyed by all.

3. **Kunkle Fire Chief, Jack Dodson**, said he would really like to thank both the Supervisors and Township Manager for considering implementing a fire protection tax. He said they are really hurting for volunteers, especially during the day time, when many of them have jobs. Fire incidents have increased over the year greatly. They respond to about 700 calls during the course of a year. The tax will not include EMS, but will be totally for fire purposes. If you add EMS calls to the fire calls, between Back Mountain Regional and Kunkle, they respond to about four thousand calls during a year. Supervisor F. Wagner said we are also trying to get more fire hydrants added as the water company updates its lines. Jack said he and Back Mountain Regional Fire Chief, Harry Vivian, think the tax will be a big step in the right direction. When there is a fire, they have to get there, and they have to get there quick. What we are going to be doing will affect everyone's ISO rating and insurance rates will go down. Every citizen in Dallas Township will be helped. Supervisor F. Wagner said it has come to the point when we have to do something. We just can't get the volunteers today.

Supervisor F. Wagner made a **Motion to adjourn the Meeting**. Motion was seconded by Supervisor R. Wagner and carried. The Meeting ended at 7:56P.M.

Respectfully submitted by,

Nancy Y. Balutis
Secretary-Treasurer