

The Board of Supervisors of Dallas Township held their monthly meeting for October on Tuesday, October 6, 2020 at 6:30pm in the Municipal Building located at 105 Lieutenant Michael Cleary Drive, Dallas, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania.

Those in attendance included: Supervisor Chairman William J. Grant, Supervisor Vice Chairman Robert J. Wagner, Supervisor Elizabeth A. Martin, Solicitor Attorney Thomas J. Mosca, Township Manager Martin K. Barry, Secretary/Treasurer K. Gary Kirk, Police Chief Douglas J. Higgins and Township Roadmaster Gary VanDeutsch, all who were wearing masks, had their temperature checked and also used hand sanitizer prior to the meeting. Those in attendance via phone included: Alan Pugh, EMA Coordinator. Marketing Consultant Amanda Faneck was at the Administration Building and set up Facebook Live to allow additional residents to participate in the meeting. There were over 240 views on Facebook. Also in attendance wearing masks and keeping socially distant were Office Robert J. Odgers, several of his family members and several members of the Dallas Township Police Department.

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Supervisor Wagner made a **Motion to Pay the Bills**, seconded by Supervisor Martin and carried.

Supervisor Martin made a **Motion to approve the Minutes** from the September 1, 2020 Meeting and September 29, 2020 Special Meeting, seconded by Supervisor Wagner and carried.

Supervisor Wagner made a **Motion to approve employee health care reimbursements** that had been requested since the last meeting in the amount of \$999.51, seconded by Supervisor Martin and carried. Total employee health reimbursements made for 2020 is \$12,246.95.

Supervisor Grant shared that two outstanding citizens recently passed away. Robert Dolbear, who was 104, was a former school administrator and founded the "Old Shoe Football Game" between Dallas and Lake-Lehman High Schools. He was also involved in many community groups. Catherine Wega was a former school teacher and school board member and was also involved in many community groups.

Citizens' Comments Concerning Agenda Items:

None.

Agenda:

Police Chief Higgins thanked the Supervisors for allowing the hiring of a Police Detective, discussed the need for a Police Detective, and the hiring process. He was pleased to announce that Officer Robert J. Odgers had been selected to be promoted to Detective. After he was congratulated, Detective Odgers, his family members and the members of the Dallas Police Department who were at the meeting, exited the meeting room due to the COVID-19 restrictions.

Supervisor Grant stated that the most recent Declaration of Disaster Emergency approved at the September 1, 2020 Supervisors' Meeting needed to be renewed. The only changes from the previous Declaration of Disaster Emergency would be that it would be effective today and continue until November 4, 2020. Supervisor Martin made a **Motion to approve the Declaration of Disaster Emergency of October 6, 2020 through November 4, 2020**, seconded by Supervisor Wagner and carried.

Township Manager Barry provided a COVID-19 update and stated that we have not received any concerns or complaints from Township Residents. We are continuing to obtain items in case there is an

increase in cases in the fall, and we are applying for grants to help cover the costs of these expenses. EMA Coordinator Pugh stated that testing is increasing, there have been some cases in our area, and that he has been in contact with the schools. He has not been informed of any issues at Misericordia University.

Resolution #2020-9 was approved at the August 4, 2020 meeting, and provided Authorization for Township Manager Barry to sign COVID-19 Grants. He will be completing a grant application for FEMA.

Supervisor Wagner made a **Motion to approve Resolution #2020-13, A Resolution Amending the Police Pension Plan**, seconded by Supervisor Martin and carried. The resolution increases the amount of monthly pension for years of service in excess of 25 years to a maximum of \$300 per month, from \$200 per month, to agree with the current police contract.

Supervisor Grant stated that we have a contract with the Dallas School District and provide two School Resource Officers (SROs). We billed them in January 2020 per the contract and when they paid us in March, they reduced their payment by \$36,562.50. There have been several meetings with the School Board and Administration, but we still have not received our full payment. Attorney Mosca stated that there is not anything in the contract to allow them to reduce the payment. There was discussion concerning sending a letter to the school district and what should be in the letter. All Supervisors were in agreement to have Township Manager Barry send them a letter requesting payment by October 30, 2020. If we do not receive payment by then, we will consider it a breach of contract and inform the school district that we will no longer provide SROs. They will have to contract their own private security. If that happens, we are willing to work with the school district on a transitional plan.

Township Manager Barry stated that DAMA plans to terminate their Sewage Enforcement Officer. They will still provide the service, but will contract with individuals to do the testing instead of having an employee. All Supervisors were in agreement to proceed with DAMA's recommendation.

Supervisor Grant stated that we are working on the 2021 budget and plan to have the first reading at the November meeting.

Township Manager Barry stated that DEP did our MS4 inspection and we received a good review. They made some recommendations and that there will be further inspections and audits of our MS4 records by 2022.

Township Manager Barry provided an update on the salt shed. There is one more item related to storm water to resolve and then everything will be able to proceed. It should be ready by February 1, 2021. The new salt shed will be paid entirely through LSA grants.

Township Manager Barry provided an update on the Southside Park. We received our NPDES approval and the preconstruction meeting was last Friday. EBI, LLC should begin work by the end of this week. Our Road Department has been doing some in-kind site work this week. The project will include working with DAMA to improve storm water at the park.

Township Manager Barry stated that Carl Miers, Judge of Elections, has resigned effective September 26, 2020 due to health issues of both himself and his wife. The Luzerne County Bureau of Elections will address the vacancy. Township Manager Barry will send him a letter thanking him for his service.

The November Supervisors' Meeting will be held on Wednesday November 4, 2020 since the election is on Tuesday, November 3, 2020.

Supervisor Grant provided a financial update as of September 30, 2020. We have over \$3,000,000 in the General Fund, our Real Estate & Earned Income Tax collections are similar to previous years and close to budget, the Local Services Tax is lower than previous years and below budget, and both pension plans are valued greater than their January 1, 2019 actuarial liability.

Police Update:

Chief Higgins stated that we have received 1st Responder respirators and that our officers have been doing online training including training on de-escalation, constitutional law, and civil law. Sgt. Adams was accepted and will be attending the PA State Police Leadership course. Officer Eramo was accepted in to an instructor course on de-escalation and use of force. There is an IT issue with the new body cameras, but they should be working by October 15th. There are not any current concerns with voting places, but additional officers will be added to the schedule that day.

Road Department Update:

Roadmaster VanDeutsch stated that they have prepared Reservoir Road for its upcoming contracted milling and paving and that he was pleased with the work American Asphalt did on Harris Street. New blacktop gutters were installed on Campground Road, Sedlar Road & Robbins Road. The first order of rock salt was received. They are continuing routine maintenance of roads and Hill Street should be paved soon. The leaf vac truck has started going around the Township to pick up leaves. They are continuing to install the new "No Parking" signs.

Additional Citizens' Comments:

EMA Coordinator Pugh asked additional questions concerning not having SROs. It was stated that if the contract was terminated, that we would not leave the schools unprotected and would work with the schools during the transition. We are also willing to continue to meet with the school district to resolve the amount due to us.

David Lawrence commented on Facebook about an update on hiring police officers and Chief Higgins stated that they are currently doing background checks on six candidates.

Roseann Kebles commented on Facebook that there has been a growth in COVID-19 cases in the 18612 zip code. The 18612 zip code includes more than just Dallas Township and does include the PA State Correctional Facility.

There were several comments on Facebook congratulating Detective Odgers.

Adjournment:

Supervisor Martin made a **Motion to adjourn**, seconded by Supervisor Wagner and carried. The Meeting adjourned at 7:15pm.

Respectfully submitted by,


K. Gary Kirk, CPA
Secretary/Treasurer