

The Board's Minutes of the East Donegal Township Board of Supervisors
Special Meeting
Held on October 20, 2020

A special meeting of the Board of Supervisors of East Donegal Township was held on Tuesday, October 20, 2020 at 4:30 PM in the East Donegal Township Municipal Building, 190 Rock Point Road, Marietta, PA 17547.

The meeting was called to order by Supervisor John Murphy.

Supervisor Murphy led with a Prayer and Pledge to the Flag.

Roll call of Supervisors: Present were John E. Murphy, Jr., Chairman; Allen D. Esbenshade, Vice Chairman; Tom Jones, Supervisor and Jeffrey Butler, Township Manager. Also attending were Craig Underwood, Township Zoning Officer/Building Code Official, Jodi Diaz, Township Finance Officer and Jake Bair, Township Public Works Director.

Old Business.

Trash and Recycling Contract for East Donegal Township

A motion was made by Mr. Esbenshade, and seconded by Mr. Jones, to award the contract for trash and recycling collection to Republic Services of PA LLC for the Base Bid amount of \$130.08 per unit.

There was general discussion regarding the use of curbcarts for collection of waste and recyclable materials. The current market for the recycling materials collected was also discussed. Vote: Mr. Jones, yes; Mr. Esbenshade, yes; and Mr. Murphy, no. Motion passed 2-1.

New Business.

Discussion of 2021 Township General Fund Budget

Mr. Murphy stated that the special meeting was being held to discuss the preparation of the 2021 Township Budget for the Township's General Fund and asked Mr. Butler to lead the discussion.

Mr. Butler highlighted the proposed timeline for consideration and adoption of the 2021 Budget. It's anticipated that a preliminary budget will be approved for public review at the November 5, 2020 meeting of the Board and that adoption of the budget would occur at the December 3, 2020 meeting of the Board. Should revisions require additional time for consideration, the budget must be adopted before the end of the year. The draft preliminary budget prepared for this meeting did not propose an increase in the current Township tax rate of 3.1165 mills.

Over 82% of the revenue for the General Fund comes from taxes collected. There are four taxes collected that provide Township revenue. They are Real Estate Property tax,

Earned Income Tax, Local Services tax and Real Estate Transfer tax.

The draft budget presented projects that property taxes will generate \$1,968,720.00. However, this is based on the November 2019 real estate valuation provided by Lancaster County. It is further reduced in anticipation that the COVID 19 pandemic will impact payment of real estate taxes. There was general discussion regarding the potential of decreased real estate taxes collection. It was agreed to re-evaluate this calculation when current real estate valuation information is received prior to consideration of adoption of the 2021 budget.

The amount collected from Earned Income and Local Services taxes has been projected by the Lancaster County Tax Collection Bureau, the entity appointed to collect the taxes. Earned Income tax is projected to generate \$1,143,272.00 and Local Services tax is projected to generate \$121,000.00.

Finally, the Real Estate transfer tax, collected when property sales are made, is projected to generate \$180,000.00.

On the expenditures side, Mr. Underwood provided an overview of the Planning/Zoning and UCC Code Enforcement expenditure categories of the preliminary draft budget. Overall there are small increases in some categories that have experienced increased costs in 2020.

Mr. Butler presented the projected expenditures in the Public Safety categories of the budget. The Police line items in the draft General Fund budget reflect the budget prepared and approved by the Susquehanna Regional Police Commission. The contract cost to the Township for 2021 is \$1,693,437.00. This represents 58.11% of the member municipalities' contribution to the Commission, and a \$69,700.00 increase from the Township's 2020 contractual obligation.

Under the Fire line items, the Township's donations made to the Maytown East Donegal Township Fire Department, and the other departments that service the Township, remains at the current levels. There was general discussion regarding the length of time remaining to payoff the two loans taken by the Department for the addition to the fire station and the purchase of fire engine.

Mr. Bair presented the line items within the Public Works categories. There are no significant equipment purchase proposed for 2021. Mr. Bair did explain that the final small equipment purchases for the Public Works wash bay are proposed.

Public Works projects include stormwater management improvements to Coffee Goss Road and the realignment of Coffee Goss Road needed to accommodate these stormwater improvements. These projects are to be done in conjunction with the Bridle Path residential development currently under construction.

Stormwater improvements are be undertaken to the Longwood Square detention basin.

This work is to be fund through a donation to be made by the developer of an adjacent property. Paving projects include Apple Alley in Maytown and the paving of the fire station parking lot.

Although not part of the General Fund, Mr. Butler provided the Board with the list of projects to be done utilizing Highway Aid Fund monies. These include base repair to be done to Long Lane, Old Colebrook Road, Vinegar Ferry Road and Oak Road. In addition, oil and chip treatment is proposed for these roads. The final wearing course will be installed on East High Street utilizing Highway Aid funds.

Mr. Butler identified projects proposed within Township parks. Projects includes the preparation of a Park Master Plan for the Chickies Creek Day Use Area. The \$40,000.000 budgeted for the project will be covered, in part, by a \$20,000 grant received from the state. Other projects included the addition of playground equipment at Fuhrman Park and the resurfacing of a basketball court. There was general discussion regarding the need, and cost, for surveillance camera at Riverfront and Fuhrman Parks. The Board agreed to include \$19,000 for the installation of cameras in these parks.

It's anticipated that the Township's summer playground program will be coordinated and staffed by GEARS of Elizabethtown and budgeted at \$10,000. Therefore, there will not be staffing and supply costs directly incurred by the Township for the 2021 program.

Mr. Butler indicated that the preliminary draft budget presented incorporates a 1% pay rate increase for Township employees. No additional employees are budgeted to be add in 2021. It was noted that health insurance premiums are to decrease by 1.5% in 2021.

The Board discussed contributions that are made to outside organizations. The Board suggested increasing the contribution to the Milanof-Schock Library to \$38,500.00 for 2021. To address the funding issues raised by Northwest Emergency Medical Service, the Board agreed to again implement an increase of \$4,700.00 as the second step. The draft budget does not propose an increase in the amounts to be given to the Maytown Historical Society and the American Legion for the Memorial Day parade activities. The Board did indicate that \$2,000.00 should be added to the budget to fund any improvements to the square that might be undertaken in 2021.

There was general discussion regarding funds placed in the Township's Emergency Services Capital Reserve Fund. Although not specifically earmarked for fire services, funds from the Emergency Services Capital Reserve Fund were used to provide a down payment on the most recent engine purchase. The draft budget provides for \$100,000.00 to be placed in the Emergency Services Capital Reserve Fund.

The total anticipated expenditures of the preliminary draft 2021 Budget totaled \$4,748,681.35 and reflects an decrease of \$36,425.65 in expenditures from the adopted 2020 budget.

Mr. Butler informed the Board that the budget handout indicates that anticipated expenditures exceed the anticipated revenue by \$492,790.00. However, it was stated that the amount of the shortfall is greater due to a typographical error already identified in the draft budget.

There was general discussion about ways to address the shortfall. Mr. Butler indicated that expenditures will be re-evaluated to look for ways to reduce the gap between revenue and expenditures. The Board reviewed the impact that an increase in the tax rate would make regarding revenues. The Board expressed a desire to use Township reserves to cover any anticipated shortfall in lieu of increasing the Township's taxing rate.

Mr. Butler stated that the draft preliminary budget will be revised based on the additional information gathered from the meeting and the receipt of refined cost estimates. It's anticipated that the final preliminary budget will be prepared for the November 5, 2020 meeting of the Board of Supervisors.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Mr. Jones and seconded by Mr. Esbshade to adjourn the special meeting at 6:40 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jeffrey L. Butler, Township Secretary