

**PLAINFIELD TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS SPECIAL MEETING
November 1, 2018**

A special meeting of the Plainfield Township Board of Supervisors was held on Thursday, November 1, 2018 at the Plainfield Township Municipal Building, 6292 Sullivan Trail, Nazareth, PA 18064.

Chairman, Randy Heard, called the meeting to order at 7:22 P.M.

The Pledge of Allegiance was performed.

ROLL CALL:

The following Supervisors answered roll call: Chairman, Randy Heard, Vice Chairman, Glenn Borger, Joyce Lambert, Jane Mellert, and Stephen Hurni.

Also present were Township Manager, Thomas Petrucci, Treasurer, Katelyn Kopach, and Administrative Assistant, Paige Gerstenberg.

I. SECRETARY–THOMAS PETRUCCI:

1. Executive Session (Possible Litigation Discussion - 6:30 PM to 7:00 PM):

An executive session was held from 6:30 P.M. to 7:22 P.M. The Board of Supervisors discussed readily identifiable litigation. No action was taken during the executive session.

2. 2019 Plainfield Township Budget (Proposed)- Discussion:

Township Manager, Tom Petrucci, stated that there are no loans, bonds or tax increases within the 2019 Plainfield Township Proposed Budget. The proposal increases the General Fund by the percentage amount of 5.44%. The Highway Aid Fund (State Liquid Fuels) was decreased by almost 50% due to the fact that it is proposed to use only one year of Liquid Fuels funds. Last fiscal year (2018), the Township used both the 2017 and 2018 allocations to fund the majority of road work within the Township in 2018. The Refuse Fund Budget was increased to over \$100,000.00 due to a one-time funding allocation to the General Fund.

The Plainfield Township Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan needs to be updated, as per Department of Environmental Protection recommended guidelines. The Act 537 Plan has not been updated in approximately thirty years. The Township has received a Community Investment Partnership Program (CIPP) grant in the amount of \$25,000.00 from Northampton County, but additional funds are necessary. The additional funding required for this estimated \$100,000.00 project (as well as the additional \$50,000.00 allocation to

the Fire Department) necessitated the use of the amount currently held in the Refuse Fund (\$153,909.34) to balance the Proposed Budget.

The Slate Belt Regional Police Department (SBRPD) Budget was also provided to the Board as follows:

2019 Slate Belt Regional Police Department Budget (Proposed)

The proposed 2019 Slate Belt Regional Police Department Proposal was previously forwarded to the Board of Supervisors. The breakdown of the proposed municipal share for the 2019 Slate Belt Regional Police Department Budget is as follows:

- **Pen Argyl Borough- \$637,861.55**
- **Plainfield Township- \$1,253,386.31**
- **Wind Gap Borough- \$543,557.14**

Plainfield’s proportionate cost share has increased from last year’s budgeted amount by \$13,185.64; the cost allocation share for Plainfield in 2018 was \$1,240,200.67 with a portion of operating reserve funds used to offset the final allocation share required to be paid by the members of the Slate Belt Regional Police Department. The Charter Agreement of the Slate Belt Regional Police Department requires the proposed Budget of the Regional Police Department to be approved no later than November 1st of the preceding fiscal year.

The Budget as currently proposed will require a modification to the cost allocation formula as follows:

35% Assessed Value	30% Population	30% Weighted Incidents	5% Road Mileage
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**Please note that the definition of “Incident” within the Charter Agreement for the 2019 fiscal year will be modified as follows:*

Article V (entitled Cost Assessment) Section (B)(2)(c)(1) (entitled Definitions)

(1) Definition. The term “incident”, as used in the formula, shall mean a matter or service that results in at least two (2) of the following:

- a. a police response;
- b. a written report; or
- c. the assignment of a case number;

The Chief shall have the responsibility to track and tally incidents occurring in each Municipality and shall report the number of incidents on a monthly, quarterly, and yearly basis. The incident numbers shall be weighted and shall utilize the nationally accepted International Association of Chiefs of Police weighted calls for service scale, as amended.

Previously, the formula for the proportionate cost share allocation for 2018 was as follows:

40% Population	40% Assessed Value	20% Incidents
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The 2019 Slate Belt Regional Police Department Budget was approved on October 25, 2018 by unanimous vote of the Plainfield Township Board of Supervisors during a Special Meeting.

The SBRPD costs the Township approximately 7 mills of Real Estate taxes. Manager Petrucci pointed out that all other Township operations (including Administration, Planning/Zoning, and the Road Department) operate primarily on Earned Income Tax (EIT), Host Community Fees, and miscellaneous revenue sources.

There is a new tenant that will be occupying the majority of the warehouse building located at 1380 Jacobsburg Road, and this will cause the assessed value of a portion of the building to increase- thereby increasing the real estate taxes paid by the property owner. However, a final assessment will need to be completed by Northampton County before the Township sees any revenue from the occupancy of the building. The Proposed Budget was conservatively increased to account for the additional anticipated revenue.

Chairman Randy Heard questioned why the revenue received for overweight truck fines are so low year-to-date. The Board questioned how the Township benefits from this. Township Manager, Tom Petrucci, stated that the drivers would be fined if they were to be overweight. However, the SBRPD/Township does not benefit from these fines until

the fines are actually paid. Mr. Petrucci added that this would be a discussion for the Chief of Police.

Mr. Petrucci highlighted the changes made to the codification service for 2019. He has increased this line item because the proposed Appalachian Trail Ordinance has not been adopted to date; therefore, it has not been codified. The allocated funds for codification have not been utilized in 2018, because Manager Petrucci stated that it would be more cost-effective to complete the codification update once all major zoning updates (including the Appalachian Trail Ordinance) have been completed.

The Board of Supervisors discussed a potential raise for Township Manager, Tom Petrucci. The Board agreed to extend a 3% raise for Township Manager, Tom Petrucci. Mr. Petrucci added that since he was awarded a 3% raise, he asked that the administrative personnel also be awarded a 3% raise. Supervisor, Jane Mellert, noted that she would like raises to be merit based. At this time, the Board of Supervisors went into executive session from 7:36 P.M. to 7:51 P.M. in order to discuss matters related to personnel.

ACTION: Motion was made by Glenn Borger and seconded by Joyce Lambert to approve a 3% raise for the office administrative staff. *Prior to the vote, Chairman, Randy Heard, asked if there were any comments from the governing body or the public.* Motion approved. Vote 4-0-1 with Chairman, Randy Heard, abstaining.

Township Manager, Tom Petrucci, stated that the Township Treasurer now has a \$2,000,000.00 bond. The premium was adjusted accordingly. The Elected Tax Collector, Ms. Susan Lieberman, also had a bond increase as well, and it was necessary to increase the line item to pay the associated costs of the increased bond amount.

Township Manager, Tom Petrucci, stated that he will not be attending the International City Management Association (ICMA) conference this year; accordingly, the training/conferences line item for the Township Manager was lowered. In addition, Administrative Assistant, Paige Gerstenberg will be attending a Building Code Official course in Harrisburg, PA in February of 2019. Training will be Monday through Thursday. The final day, Friday, will be for testing purposes only. This area of the budget was increased in order to allow Ms. Gerstenberg to take this course.

Mr. Petrucci also added a new computer for the Administrative Assistant, Paige Gerstenberg. Her current computer (Joyce Lambert's previous computer workstation) has not been functioning correctly, and it has reached the end of its useful life.

Mr. Petrucci stated that advertising costs were very high this year due to changes of meeting dates, re-bids, cancellations, etc. This is the reasoning as to why this portion of the budget was higher than normal. Mr. Petrucci also added approximately \$14,000.00 in the budget for replacing the phone system. He does not believe the phone system will need to be replaced in the year of 2019; however, it is an older system and may need to be replaced at any given time. Mr. Petrucci added that the Slate Belt Regional Police Department has indicated that if the system were to go down, they would consider putting funds towards the cost of a new system or any issues that would need to be corrected.

Special engineering fees were also increased dramatically due to the anticipated continued engineering review costs in regards to the submission from Synagro Slate Belt Heat Recovery Center. This expenditure was very high this year due to this proposed facility. Plainfield Township has engaged additional technical/engineering professional firms that have attended the meetings and provided additional feedback and comments with respect to the review process. Mr. Petrucci has shifted the capital engineering costs for culvert/bridge replacements into the Capital Reserve Fund.

Supervisor, Jane Mellert, inquired whether the proposed Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan Update line amount could be lowered to balance the Budget for 2019 due to the fact that not all of the costs will be incurred in 2019. Mr. Petrucci stated that this was a reasonable assumption, and that the line item could be adjusted accordingly.

Within the budget, Mr. Petrucci included funds for possible interior updates to the municipal building with respect to the lighting (LED upgrade) shelving units for the Zoning Office and in the basement. Supervisor Jane Mellert questioned whether the budget could cover a carpeting replacement, and Mr. Petrucci felt that the money was already allocated if the Board was inclined to replace the carpeting of the municipal building in 2019.

The purchase of fire proof cabinets and scanning of all of the minute books were also discussed. Paving the parking lot was also discussed. Mr. Petrucci stated that because of the new paver that was purchased, the Road Department may be able to improve the surface of the parking lot, but he would need to clarify with the Road Department and Wind Gap's Crew Leader, Rich Fox.

The Zoning Hearing Board members and Planning Commission member's wages were increased due to the higher frequency of meetings being held recently. Under the Animal Control section of the budget, Mr. Petrucci added an additional expense in the event that the dogs in the holding kennels would need to be transferred to a licensed shelter. Typically, a fee is required in order for the shelter to take in the animals.

Other mandatory increases throughout the budget were included as the pricing for certain items has recently gone up (including health insurance). A separate line item was created for street lighting repairs so that expenses can be more easily tracked and budgeted. The budget for materials for the road department was increased due to an anticipated increase work load for stormwater and base repair. Manager Petrucci noted that road line painting may not be completed this year due to the current weather conditions- namely excessive rain and dropping temperatures. Because of the weather conditions, many contractors are behind on projects and are unable to complete the work they have scheduled through to the end of the year.

Mr. Petrucci added that the Non-Uniform Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) increased this year as well. He noted that the MMO was already approved by the Board of Supervisors by the September 31, 2018 deadline.

The resurfacing of Plainfield Acres will also be completed in 2019, with funding support provided by Northampton County via a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) award in the \$50,000.00.

The Host Retro Agreement Fund budget is a little over \$1,800,000.00. Manager Petrucci stated that this Fund does not operate in the way that a traditional fund of the Township would operate, in his opinion. The Host Retro Agreement Fund simply takes in the Community Host fees from the Grand Central Sanitary Landfill, and then the budget is construed to allow for transfers to the General Fund and Capital Reserve Fund to support Township operations. In response to an inquiry from Chairman Heard, he noted that the balance of the Capital Reserve Fund is currently at \$364,187.00; this amount includes all unappropriated funds that are not held in CD's. The Township relies on the Host Retro Agreement to support its capital projects.

The garage doors and the salt storage shed are major items that need to be replaced. A standby generator for the Road Department Building was also discussed. Currently, if the Road Department were to lose power, the employees cannot use the building until power has been restored. The Board agreed that a standby for the Road Department would be appropriate to purchase from an emergency preparedness standpoint.

Mr. Petrucci also budgeted for stream water bank restoration projects in the Township in accordance with the Township's MS4 renewal permit, which requires that the Township reduce sediment load by ten percent (10%) over the five year permit period. He noted that it is unclear whether these restoration projects will be completed this coming year; however, budgeting for these projects each year are imperative. Additional funds for road paving within Plainfield Township have also been included.

For the Recreation Fund, the board discussed a possible combined storage area, gathering/office area, bathroom, pavilion, and a snack/refreshment stand facility at the Community Park. Chairman, Randy Heard, noted that he would like to see the project move forward. He added that this project has been discussed every year, but he has not seen any progress. Mr. Petrucci stated that he has estimated approximately \$400,000.00 in improvement costs (including site work, septic system installation, and electric wiring) for this project. The sketch plan that was previously done for this project will need to be redesigned. Funds from the Host Retro Fund would be used to fund the Recreation account for this project. Mr. Petrucci recommended that the Board of Supervisors allocate money towards the NPDES permit costs and the septic system permit costs at this time to get this project to move forward.

Approximately \$50,000.00 is needed to begin the NPDES permit and the septic system permit processes. All engineering costs with respect to the pavilion at Community Park will be budgeted within the Capital Reserve Fund.

There is currently no upcoming budget meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

Having no further business to come before the Board of Supervisors, motion was made by Glenn Borger and seconded by Joyce Lambert to adjourn the meeting. Motion approved. Vote 5-0.

The meeting adjourned at 9:46 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Petrucci, Township Manager/Secretary
Plainfield Township
Board of Supervisors

These minutes were prepared with the assistance of the Administrative Assistant of the Township, Paige Gerstenberg, under the direction of the Township Manager/Secretary