

LEHIGH TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

October 14, 2025

- I. CALL TO ORDER. The Lehigh Township Board of Supervisors held their regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, October 14, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was held at the Lehigh Township Municipal Building, 1069 Municipal Road, Walnutport, Pa. 18088. Chairman Mike Jones called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance and roll call.

Present: Janet Sheats
Mike Jones
David Hess
Cindy Miller
Attorney David Backenstoe
Mike Muffley
John Henry
Frank Zamadics
Alice Rehrig

Absent: Jerry Pritchard

- II. 2026 BUDGET. Alice Rehrig reviewed the changes made to the draft of the budget. The real estate tax revenue has been adjusted to reflect the August 31, 2025, assessed values. This revenue may be able to be increased slightly depending upon how the collections for October go. With the delinquent notices going out in September, the current year collections are expected to be higher, but it will reduce the prior year's collections going forward. With the delinquent notices being mailed in September instead of December, it will help keep the taxes that are collected in the current year.

For this draft, it was assumed that the Township would be successful in obtaining the COPS grant for two officers. The revenues include the grant award, and the expenses include two officers at an experienced officer rate. The grant would be \$125,000 per officer over a three year period, with a declining amount each year. A receipt of \$65,000 per officer for 2026 has been assumed.

The expected State Aid for the pension is expected to decrease next year because we would have less eligible units for funding.

The remaining funds in the building fund have been used to offset some of the building improvements which will leave \$63,000 for renovations to the meeting room.

Board of Supervisor Minutes
October 14, 2025

It is still unknown if we will be receiving the grant for the tandem dump truck. If we are successful with the award, the single axle dump truck that is in the budget can be swapped with the tandem. Both trucks are 2004 vehicles.

The enclosure of the pavilions, the shelters for the dog park, and the additional gates for the ballfields are scheduled to be paid for from the Recreation Land Fees. If the tennis court in Danielsville takes place, it will be funded from the Recreation Capital Fund.

Generators for both the Municipal Building and the Public Works Building will be funded through the Project Fund.

There will be a 17.1% increase in medical insurance. Cindy Miller questioned why it was so high; she has been reading that the average is 11% for small groups. Alice Rehrig commented part of the cost is based on claims paid and there have been some significant claims that have been paid. With the structure of the plan, if the funds are not needed, they will be refunded in 2026. Our 2024 claims were less than expected and we were issued a refund of \$44,000.

Funding has been included for the installation of a second internet provider to run in tandem with the current so that if one goes down, there is a second source for internet access.

It is still unknown as to whether or not the Township will receive the grant award for the digital sign. It will need to be determined if the Board wants to move forward with the project if the grant is not awarded.

Janet Sheats questioned what the savings would be for switching to new uniforms. Alice Rehrig commented it is about a 50 percent savings plus there is no dry cleaning involved. Janet Sheats questioned if the new uniforms were going to be phased or if they were going to be bought all at one time. Alice Rehrig commented she included two uniforms in the budget which is basically the same as the normal replacement of one uniform per year.

A quarterly shredding service was included in the budget because of the volume of shredding that the Police Department has. This would be an alternative to having to replace the office shredder. This could be adjusted to twice per year if needed.

Funding has been included to replace some of the body worn cameras. There are problems with some of the cameras and the quality of the video. The Department is looking into what the options are, but it looks like keeping the Digital Ally cameras will be the most practical option. It was discovered that there is a five year contract that was

entered into with them. Cindy Miller commented they come with software and if anything is changed, we will need to switch out the software. Alice Rehrig commented if we stay with Digital Ally, it is more of a hardware change; the software would be mostly the same, just upgraded. At this point, we don't know costs. It seems like the driving cost with all the companies is the cloud storage. An allowance was made in the budget knowing that something needs to be done, but there is still investigation needed as to what is the most economic and best solution to the problem. Mike Jones questioned if the storage could be on one of our servers. Alice Rehrig commented that is also something that is being looked at. One of the benefits to the cloud, it that the uploading of data can be done while the officers are at a scene rather than having to return to the station for the upload. Cindy Miller commented it may also be a matter of security requirements.

The total station that is used for accident and crime scene reconstruction is aging and consideration should be given to replacing it at some point. The current station is almost 20 years old and requires two people to map the scene. With the newer model, only one person would be needed. The new model is \$8,500 with \$500 annual GPS fees. Software would only need to be updated every two to three years at a cost of roughly \$500. The current station has annual subscriptions of \$2,500. Cindy Miller questioned how often this is used. Alice Rehrig commented it is used whenever there is a serious or fatal accident.

Cindy Miller wanted to verify the items that are being looked at for the Police Department: potentially cameras, digital radios on the radar, the total station, the 10-21 app, generator, vehicle, and in car cameras in one year. Alice Rehrig commented the in car camera would be one camera for the vehicle that would be replaced.

Janet Sheats commented the total station wasn't included in the capital plan, but it needs to be replaced. The new one would cost almost \$22,000 less than what the original station would cost to replace it. Cindy Miller questioned if it must be done this year. Alice Rehrig commented she believes the new one is still working. It could be pushed off another year. Cindy Miller questioned why grants haven't been applied for or brought up before now. Alice Rehrig commented she knows that the Department was going to check with the DA's office if they had funding. Mike Jones suggested holding off on this purchase and try to obtain grant funding. Janet Sheats commented with the manpower issues we have been having, this could be a benefit since it only requires one officer. Cindy Miller questioned if we would only send one officer out on a serious accident, or would we send two out regardless. John Henry commented the current total station does the measurement and documentation of a crash scene. It can also be used for crime scenes, but is mainly used for fatal and serious crashes. It's set up almost like a sawhorse with a computer on it and someone carries a rod to establish the locations and

measurements. The new one is a hand held device that one person can walk around and document the scene. Their current model is quite old and they are looking to update it.

Cindy Miller questioned if there would still be two officers sent out to a serious accident. John Henry commented there would most likely still be two officers at the accident, but it would reduce the need for calling out two additional officers to document the scene. You would only need one officer for the call out. It would also cut down on the length of time that a road would remain closed because the new device is much easier to use. If at some point, the Township developed a drone program, it could be used in conjunction with that. He has not checked into any type of grants for the equipment. It is an item that can be pushed off. They don't necessarily need to purchase it in 2026. Mike Jones requested that John Henry check with the company to see what kind of increase they may see in the next year. Additional officers besides the reconstructionist can also be trained to do the basic documentation at the scene.

Cindy Miller commented she is just looking at the amount of equipment that the Department needs, but her greatest concern is the digital radios. Janet Sheats commented that is an issue for everyone. All the other counties have helped their municipalities, but Northampton is not.

John Henry commented the 10-21 app allows officers to use their personal phones without having the information stored on the phone. With the changing of the cell phones, this is not as important of an item.

The Planning and Zoning section of the budget will need to be adjusted because the Zoning and SALDO updates will not be completed by the end of this year. This will be a carryover item.

The budget assumes that the Public Works Department will be brought back to 8 individuals.

In addition to the normal allowance, the tools included some minor items for the garage such as an additional air line and a printer for the garage computer.

The capital includes replacing the 2004 single axle dump truck and resheeting the garage between the new building and the police station.

Additional funding has been included for road maintenance.

Mike Jones commented the funding to add supports to the Danielsville pavilion can be eliminated. He has the material to do that repair.

Board of Supervisor Minutes
October 14, 2025

There is continued savings for the replacement of the roof on the Danielsville pavilion and the block building at Indiantrail Park and large projects. The refurbishing of the tennis court in Danielsville, the enclosing of the underside of the pavilions at Indiantrail Park, the shelters at Delps Park, and the additional gates on the ballfields have also been included. Alice Rehrig noted that the Rec Board has not yet had discussions about their budget.

The estimated allocation for the State fund has been received. There has been a 4 percent reduction in the amount. The estimated amount is \$474,989. This is \$8,000 less than what the 2025 estimate was and is \$17,000 less than the actual amount that was received. There is a possibility that the actual amount that is received will be higher.

With the adjustments to the revenues and the expenditures, there still is a difference of \$279,868. There may be some additional adjustments that could be made to the budget, but it will not be enough to make up that difference.

Cindy Miller questioned what 1 mill of tax revenue would equal. Alice Rehrig commented \$279,394. Cindy Miller commented she doesn't see how the Board will be able to get around a tax increase. Alice Rehrig commented the only other option would be to eliminate items from the budget. Cindy Miller commented we can only cut so much, and we need to start working on our roads.

Cindy Miller commented there should be additional legal fees included in the budget in the event that the referendum for open space passes. Janet Sheats commented it wouldn't necessarily need to be included. The budget could be amended in the event that it passes. Cindy Miller commented if the money is included the budget can still be amended if it doesn't pass. Since we know this is a possibility, it should be included in the budget. Attorney Backenstoe estimated that the cost of the required ordinances would be approximately \$5,000.

Janet Sheats commented in the past the Board has met with the Fire Company to have an open discussion regarding any concerns they may have. She would like to see a meeting set up with them.

Alice Rehrig questioned whether there were any items that the Board specifically wanted to include or exclude from the budget. Cindy Miller commented she has concerns with hiring two new officers. She is not sure how we can do that even with a grant. The grant is split over three years, and the Township will have to make up the difference from the first year. She wants to see the department get back to the 12 officers they are supposed to have. Janet Sheats commented one of the reasons for hiring the additional two officers is because it has been years since there were actually 12 officers on the road for one reason or another. Cindy Miller commented she doesn't know where the money will

come from. It needs to be figured out where the money would come from. David Hess commented his concern is the limited amount of applications that we are receiving.

Janet Sheats commented part of the problem is that taxes haven't been raised for 12 years. Everything has gone up. How can you keep sustaining the Township running appropriately without raising taxes at all? Cindy Miller commented that is why she asked the question regarding what a mill increase would generate. The Board will have to raise taxes, but she will not raise taxes to hire more staff. We can get our roads done. The roads need to start getting done. When she talks to the public, that is what they want over hiring more police officers. They like our police department, but people want road over more staff. How do we answer that and bring it back to the public? Janet Sheats commented she would like to hear from the public; she knows what people have been telling her. How much are we spending on overtime? Alice Rehrig commented the year to date amount is \$139,900. The anticipated amount of overtime was \$55,400. The difference between the two amounts is offset by the regular time being under budget because of being short staffed. Cindy Miller commented there has to be a tax increase; we just need to figure out what it will be. The Township has held off for as long as they can; it has been 10 years.

Alice Rehrig questioned whether there was something that the Board did not want to see included in the budget. If there is something that is known, she can pull it out along with other adjustments to the budget to see where things stand and then prepare different options for the Board to review. Janet Sheats commented if the grant is not received for the LED sign, then that is something that will need to be pushed off. Janet Sheats questioned what the conditions are of the police vehicles. John Henry commented they will be able to add the unmarked all wheel drive back into the fleet for general use and it seems to be in good working order, but the miles are high. Frank Zamadics commented the sedans tend to be prone to developing problems as compared to the SUVs. Amy Hilborn questioned what is considered to be high mileage. Mike Jones commented high is around 100,000 miles, but besides the mileage, there are a lot of engine hours on the cars. Amy Hilborn questioned if the vehicles are replaced each year. Mike Jones commented typically there is a new vehicle each year on a rotating basis. Each car lasts six to seven years. Janet Sheats suggested the Board look through the budget to see what areas they think can be reduced, but she believes over the last eleven years prior Boards have reduced things to a point where there is not much to cut. Alice Rehrig commented she will also review the budget to see what she can adjust. She also has not yet received the workers' comp renewal, but she doesn't expect that it will have a significant impact on the budget. Since it is payroll based, she did plan on somewhat of an increase.

Katherine Mack commented she believes it is time to raise taxes and increase police protection to reduce the strain on the department; otherwise, you will lose people and have degraded quality of protection if they are constantly having to work overtime. She

also agrees that our roads need to be improved and that takes a lot of money. This is one of the first times that she has heard that some of the tax money that they actually pay is going in the budget as a line item for the roads. It has always been State money that was used. She also noted that if someone was paying a \$1,000 township tax bill and their tax was raised 4 percent, that would be \$40. When you look at the amount of money that people would actually have to pay, it is a minimal amount of money.

Monica Brown commented if there is a tax increase, everyone will see the benefit. It is our community, and it is where their tax money should be going, unlike the school where the taxes increase almost every year and you don't see any benefit, especially to those who are retired. You can't keep cutting things back when everything has been going up for the last 10 years.

Paul Nikisher commented he would have to agree. You can only stretch things for so long. No one wants to see an increase, but it is time. Now we just need to figure out how much. He sees more push back here for the small amount of taxes that we are paying that what you do with the school district when they increase our taxes and it is not just this year, it the next year and the one after that. It's time to raise it so we are not struggling. If the grants come through, then it is a bonus. He also thinks it is more palatable since everything stays here. He commended the Board for waiting so long to raise taxes, but sometimes it is easier if it is done in small increments.

John Knoblach questioned if the School District pays taxes on the new building they built. Cindy Miller commented they do not because they are exempt from Real Estate Taxes. They are subject to the Fire Tax. They won't pay the fire tax but will make a donation in the amount of the fire tax.

Janet Sheats made a motion to amend the agenda to include the appointment of the Zoning Officer under the Zoning Report. Cindy Miller seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A. September 23, 2025. Janet Sheats made a motion to approve these minutes. Cindy Miller seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

IV. APPROVAL OF BILLS

A. General Fund Checks 29049 to 29090. Cindy Miller made a motion to approve these bills. David Hess seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

B. State Fund Checks 1632 and 1633. David Hess made a motion to approve these bills. Janet Sheats seconded the motion. Motion carried. All voted aye.

C. Pennoni Associates

1. Check 29010 & Additional Costs. Janet Sheats made a motion to table this since we didn't receive a new proposal. Cindy Miller seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

V. PLANNING RELATED ITEMS

A. Extension of Time for Plan Approval

1. Billy Carter Minor Subdivision. The developer was unable to attend the meeting and there were difficulties in reaching him by phone. The developer granted an extension of time for the review of his plan. He was before the Planning Commission via phone, and they recommended accepting an extension until April 30, 2026. Mike Muffley noted when this plan was initially submitted there were issues with steep slopes and wetlands and there will be more work needed on this plan.

Janet Sheats made a motion to accept the extension of time until April 30, 2026. Cindy Miller seconded the motion. David Hess noted in the past individuals were required to be present in order to get their extensions approved. That was the policy set by the Board. Mike Jones noted he did call into the Planning Commission meeting. Other applicants that were not present did not make any attempt to attend any of the meetings. Janet Sheats withdrew her motion.

Since Mr. Carter couldn't be present at the meeting and there were difficulties reaching him by phone, Janet Sheats made a motion to table this plan and place it on the next agenda. Cindy Miller seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

B. Extension of Time for Plan Recording

1. Timothy Pitts Land Development Plan. Mark Leuthe was present to represent this plan. Mark Leuthe commented they are waiting on DEP to approve their Planning Module. DEP is requiring specific language because of the LLC ownership of property. It is a slow process getting through the Planning Module approval. They need additional time to work through DEP and the PUC and was requesting an extension until February 28, 2026, to have their plan recorded.

Cindy Miller made a motion to grant an extension of time to record this plan until February 28, 2026. Janet Sheats seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

C. Engineer's Report. Mike Muffley did not have anything additional to report.

VI. DEPARTMENTAL/ORGANIZATIONAL REPORT

- A. Recreation Report. Sandy Hopkins did not have anything specific to report other than the Tree Lighting is coming together.

Mike Jones commented he stopped by the snack stand in Berlinsville and looked at the door. The door needs weatherstripping in order keep the water from blowing it. He will get the material and install it.

1. Additional Gates for Ballfields. The Board had previously approved adding a gate along the first base line for Berlinsville and the lower field in Danielsville, but the final pricing was not known. They did not approve the upper field because no one was using the field. Mike Jones commented his team is using the field and in order to get the drags and other field equipment to the field, they have to drive on the roadway and come in from Lime Drive because there is not enough room to fit the drags between the neighbors property and the fence. Frank Zamadics also noted that the mowers need to do the same thing. They cannot get to the upper field from the lower field without going around the block. Mike Jones noted the cost that was initially provided was \$8,000 for the two gates. The new quote is for \$5,720 for all three gates.

David Hess made a motion to approve \$5,720 for the installation of gates on the first base side of Berlinsville and both fields in Danielsville. Janet Sheats seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

- B. Public Works Report. Frank Zamadics commented over the next 10 days they will be completing some road projects, and then they will be preparing for leaf season.

Today Frank Zamadics was made aware of the opportunity to purchase 16 blue spruce trees that can be planning along the berms between the property lines to replace some of the others that have died off. There are ten 2 foot trees and six 3 to 5 foot trees available for \$500 if the Board would be interested in this. David Hess made a motion to approve the purchase of 16 blue spruce trees. Janet Sheats seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Cindy Miller questioned if Frank Zamadics had an idea of what roads he would be looking to do next year. Frank Zamadics commented he and Alice Rehrig were discussing that and he will be working on a list over the next two weeks or so. The three roads that were eliminated from the oil and chip list this year would definitely be included for next year.

Robert Manogue commented there are some holes on Peach Drive that need to be repaired. Frank Zamadics commented they have patched the holes, but they are not holding. They need more than just patch. They have mostly been working on the repairs for the oil and chip project. They can try to get there over in the next two weeks.

- C. Zoning Report. Alice Rehrig reported there were 21 new zoning permit applications received in September. There was a zoning hearing meeting last Thursday and there is also one that will be scheduled for November.

1. Appointment of Zoning Officer. Cindy Miller made a motion to appoint Roxann Colfer as Zoning Officer with a start date of October 20th. Janet Sheats seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

- D. Police Report. John Henry reported the following activity of the Police Department for the month of September:

485 calls were logged
4 reportable accidents investigated
4 non-reportable accidents investigated
7 equipment repair orders/warnings issued
7 criminals processed through the booking center
12 arrests were made including aggravated assault by vehicle, aggravated assault, harassment, simple assault, DUI with motor vehicle accident harassment/physical contact, drug paraphernalia, public drunkenness, terroristic threats, and unnecessary noise.

John Henry noted the unnecessary noise was the result of a large party that took place at 631 Bishops Place. There were approximately 200 people that attended a party and they were not only at that property but went throughout the neighborhood throwing trash, urinating on people property, and speeding. The first call came in around 10:51 p.m. and went until 2:00 a.m. until the individuals left. The officers responded to multiple calls and in the end called in Walnutport, Moore Township and Slatington Police Department to help get the individuals to leave and the renter of the property did start cleaning up some of the neighborhood. He also spoke with the owner of the Airbnb and she has a two day rental requirement in an effort to try to prevent something like this. She said she made an agreement with a gentleman from Lancaster to make an exception and allow him to rent it for one day. He never rented it but she had already switched it through Airbnb and the person who had the party picked it up. He had stated that it was supposed to be a small party, but it turned into this large party. The officers did issue a citation to him for permitting the noise from

the party. He also looked back in the Department records. There previously was a large party in 2016 and there hasn't been anything like this since that time that the police were called to.

A resident commented the individual knew it was going to be a large party. It was posted all over the internet New York City/PA hottest DJs, 10 PM on Bishops Place, \$5 for girls, \$10 for boys.

Another resident commented the lack of officers is the reason that the party escalated the way it did. The first call that was made was regarding a speeding car, both sides of street were parked up, and there were kids walking in the street carrying alcohol. The first officer got there 35 minutes after they called, drove to the cul-de-sac, turned around and left. 35 minutes later, the two on duty officers arrived and stayed for about 45 minutes and that is when the kids scattered through the neighborhood and cars turned off their lights and waited for the police to leave. As soon as they left, everyone went back to the party, and it got even larger.

Sherry Paules commented she lives next door and was not home the night of the party but has video of someone trying to enter her home through her back door which means they came through her yard. In 2016, she noticed something was starting to happen with an Airbnb and they found it listed on the Airbnb website. She came over and spoke with Laura Harrier at that time. She also sent her an email and copied Lori Lambert but never received a response. She has pictures of a large tent that was placed in the back yard. Since that time, she has occasionally had people who came over and used the swing set in her back yard, and she had to tell them it was not part of the rental property. This was but two months ago. Everything that she had in her email of July 2016 is now coming true. Now they have people who know it is a dead end street; it's a rental and people can look on the Airbnb site and know it is not rented this week and possibly do more harm. This was the first huge party. She understands that she wants to make some income, but a short term rental in their development is not appropriate. A long term rental would be different. Her question is whether the use is grandfathered in because the ordinance was not adopted until 2020. She also believes that Northampton County was looking at different taxes for Airbnb's. She hasn't said anything before and just lived with it. This is now becoming a problem, especially now that someone has tried to get into her home. There are not enough police to patrol their street.

A resident commented there are not enough Township officers to handle a situation like this. It took five or six officers until they were finally able to defuse the situation. There were people there from New York, New Jersey, and even Virginia.

Sherry Paules commented the property owner wrote a letter of apology to the residents of the area. A resident commented it states in the letter that her internet was down so that tells him that there is no guarantee that this won't happen again.

Cindy Miller commented she reviewed the property file. In 2017, the property owner came in and questioned whether she could have an Airbnb. The Township Engineer at that time determined that it was not a special exception and was a permitted use, so she received permission to have the Airbnb. Sherry Paules questioned if she needs to follow the rules of the ordinance that was adopted. Attorney Backenstoe commented when the ordinance was adopted, he was able to successfully prosecute problem Airbnb and get them shut down, but that was a different situation. If someone was given a permit to operate, they have a vested right to continue to operate; however, they don't have the authority to disturb the peace like that. We need to work with the police to get more police out there when things like this happen. Even though any incident like this is too many, this may have been an isolated incident. If this continues to be a problem, the Township might be able to file an injunction to stop them from using it because there is a pattern of abuse and misbehavior, but this can take some doing. We don't want them to have several of these instances. He thinks it would be more effective to work with the police and have them arrested for public drunkenness, lewd behavior, breaking and entering into someone's home. Unfortunately, the police were shorthanded. He would suggest that someone from the Township sit down with the owner and have a discussion letting them know that the Township is serious and if these type of situations continue to occur, the Township will file for an injunction with the court to have her shut down. He can't guarantee that the Township will win, but that is the legal approach to this. Sheri Paules commented if the police are aware that there is an Airbnb on Bishops Place and that when they call, it is for a major problem. They don't call for just little things.

David Hess questioned if the letter that the property owner received is considered a permit. Attorney Backenstoe commented he needs to review the file. He understands that the concern is whether she has a permit and the Township has authorized her to operate. The Township has been on notice that she has been doing this for several years so she has a vested right. She doesn't have the right to torture the entire neighborhood which is why he feels that a personal discussion, followed up with a letter putting her on notice that while she may have a vested right, it may be taken away through the courts and she won't be able to do it at all if she cannot control the people there.

Mike Jones questioned if she can be held to the standards that are in the ordinance. Attorney Backenstoe commented she was there before the current ordinance and it is

a lawful non-conforming use and can continue to operate in the manner in which she has been operating. Cindy Miller commented in 2020, our prior zoning officer sent her a letter trying to shut her down and found out that she couldn't do that. Sheri Paules questioned where the letter is getting sent because she doesn't live there. Cindy Miller commented she was told that she lives there, but travels a lot for business and rents it out when she is not home. Sheri Paules commented she does not live there. She lives in New York. Mike Jones questioned if she has ever been there. Sheri Paules commented she was there in the very beginning, maybe a few years around 2004. Then she was either traveling or moved and the house was unoccupied for awhile. During the winter, her pipes froze and everything flooded, and she had the home remodeled. It was shortly after the remodeling that they started to notice that there are different people there each weekend. They looked on the Airbnb website and found the address on the site. She also was able to find it on the website at the time of the incident in September. Giving her the benefit of doubt, she would say she lived there from 2004 until 2015 or 2016. David Hess questioned if the fact that she was living there in 2016 and is not living there now, is that enough to shut it down. Attorney Backenstoe commented he would need to review the file to determine if there is anything that can be done. Sheri Paules commented there is a cleaning person who comes to the house. This person is the only local connection to the property.

Cindy Miller commented she knew someone who stayed there and was able to obtain a copy of the contract. The owner told the person who rented the home that she travels on business and that it when she rents it. When she is not traveling, she stays at the house. The neighbors commented that is not true. There are no cars there during the week and on weekends the vehicles are all from out of state. A neighbor also noted that she is not maintaining the property the way she should.

Cindy Miller commented that as a result of this incident, she did some research and found that there are two more Airbnb's in the Township and will be turning that information over to the new zoning officer.

John Henry requested a brief Executive Session to discuss personnel. The Board went into Executive Session. No action was taken.

- E. Fire Company Report. Rick Hildebrand commented the Fire Department responded to 140 calls in the third quarter. 60 calls were EMS related and 80 hazardous or fire conditions. These calls consisted of 20 fires, 30 hazardous conditions, 13 house fires, and 30 medical assists with the ambulance. There were 106 calls that they did not require mutual aid, 23 calls where they provided assistance and 11 calls that they received the assistance. The mutual aid calls are driven by the type of call that is received.

The Octoberfest was a positive event and they will be doing it again next year. Their Sportsmens' Night will be held in March. They will be holding a Truck or Treat Event on October 31st and they have completed several fire prevention events with the school and daycares. They will also be at the Canal Festival this weekend.

The new truck is moving along; it is still anticipated that it will be completed at the end of 2025 or the beginning of 2026.

There have been Congressional hearings regarding the backlogs of building fire apparatus as well as the astronomical costs that have been associated with them.

F. Municipal Authority Report. No one was present on behalf of the Municipal Authority.

Katherine Mack commented she has a concern regarding the Municipal Authority. They do not have to report to anyone. She has reviewed their minutes and does not feel things are being operated correctly. She just read the September minutes and they went into executive session for general business. That is not an appropriate reason to go into executive session. People are being hired without it being noted in the minutes. No one knows anything about what is going on or what they are doing. Attorney Backenstoe commented once an Authority is created, it is no longer an entity of the Township. It is an entity of the Commonwealth, but they are governed by the same rules, such as the Sunshine Act, like every other municipal agency in the Commonwealth. They can be called out by the public or the Supervisors at their meetings for not following the appropriate procedures.

Katherine Mack commented this is not right; things are not being properly recorded and they are handling almost \$2 million. Attorney Backenstoe commented the only thing the Supervisors can do is be careful who they appoint to the Authority as their terms are expiring. If someone believes there is a sunshine violation, they could report them to the Ethics Commission or if things are not be handling appropriately, they could also be reported to the Auditor General.

VII. OLD BUSINESS. There was no old business.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Liaison to Municipal Authority. David Hess made a motion to appoint Janet Sheats as the liaison to the Municipal Authority. Cindy Miller seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

- B. Paver for Mike McGonigle Memorial. Janet Sheat commented she received a call regarding the Township purchasing a paver for the Mike McGonigle Memorial at St. Nick's church.

Cindy Miller made a motion that the Board does not purchase a paver for the Mike McGonigle Memorial. David Hess seconded the motion to open it for discussion. Cindy Miller commented she does not believe in using taxpayer dollars for a memorial that is set up at a church. She believes it is a total conflict. There is more that she knows about this as a member of that church that she is not able to speak about, but can say it is controversial and the parishioners are upset. She does not agree with spending tax payer dollars to do this. The Board was approached about a year ago and they did not do it then. Janet Sheats noted that the Board did not vote on this. Cindy Miller commented she agrees the Board didn't vote on it, but when the information came to the Board it was stated if there was an interest in doing this to make contact. There was no interest so there was contact. She also questioned if it was true that the Police Department purchased a paver. John Henry commented the Police Association may have purchased one, but not as the Department. Katherine Mack commented taxpayer money should not be used for this. Janet Sheats commented she also has a concern with spending taxpayer dollars at the church. If someone is not a member, there is no benefit to them. Cindy Miller commented she spoke with the church regarding a general memorial. She told them if the memorial is for the parishioners of the church or the church, it belongs with the church, but as far as extending it to the entire community, she did not feel it was appropriate. Mike Jones questioned why there is a specific name attached to the memorial. Cindy Miller commented the memorial was supposed to be general in nature, but it was not done correctly. It is her personal opinion that if you want to create a memorial for your loved one, it should be on you, not pushed onto others. Paul Nikisher commented after hearing the discussion, he would have to agree. You could be setting the precedent where others could be coming in and requesting funding. Cindy Miller also commented that people have approached the Township from a recreational standpoint about doing something in memory of their loved ones and they provided the funding. It was done with the dog park and with benches. Linda Roman commented it probably came about because Mike McGonigle was an officer in the Township. Janet Sheats commented she understands, but the Board doesn't want to set a precedence; we would have to do it for all of them. David Hess commented it is not that the Board is against him, but it is taxpayer money. All voted aye. Motion carried.

- C. Indianland Cemetery Association. Diane Dieter, the Treasurer of the Association and Jeff Hantz were present on behalf of the Indianland Cemetery Association. They are requesting to be exonerated from the Fire Tax. As a cemetery and non-profit entity that have always been exempt from property taxes and feel it should apply to the fire

tax as well. They are there for the benefit of the community and are recognized as tax exempt under Pennsylvania law. The tax bill is only \$52.77. It is more about the principal right now. They do not have income coming in. The fees they charge is enough to mow the grass and keep the snow plowed for people to come to see their loved ones throughout the year. They are doing that as a public and historical landmark of peoples loved ones.

Janet Sheats commented her concern is that all the non-profits will be coming in to request the exemption which will create a spiral effect and how do you determine which one should or shouldn't qualify for the exemption. Even as a cemetery, a service could be provided; there could be a brush fire, someone could get hurt or sick and require assistance. Cindy Miller commented the Fire Tax has specific guidelines through the State. It does not require exemptions which is why the Township chose to do it across the board for everyone. If all the non-profits and tax exempt parcels were not taxed, the remaining taxpayers would need to make up the difference.

Rick Hildebrand commented that there is a cost for running a fire company. The money that is received from the fire tax is a small portion of the expenses that are involved in running a fire company. This is the only tax that the Board chose to unilaterally apply the tax across all parcels because everyone has the potential to benefit from it. There are some non-profits that are heavy users of their services.

Mike Jones commented when the Board adopted the tax, they all agreed that no one should get a pass because where would they draw the line as to who should or shouldn't pay. Monica Brown commented the tax is on all properties. The non-profits have the ability to use the services.

Linda Roman commented the Township has always provided funding to the Fire Company and the Fire Tax was forced upon all properties. She doesn't agree with the taxing of the churches. Cindy Miller commented she doesn't agree with the tax exempt status of the non-profits in general. Large companies, such as the medical centers, are considered to be non-profits and their large buildings are tax exempt.

- D. Manager's Report. Alice Rehrig commented Senator Miller is hosting a Scan Jam program at the East Allen Township Municipal Building on October 30th from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The program is geared towards helping seniors to avoid and spot fraud and scams.

Alice Rehrig reported the Statewide gaming grant for 2025 is open until November 30th and was looking for suggestions as to what the Board would like her to submit for. The minimum is \$25,000 and the maximum is \$1,000,000. It was suggested that

she apply for the digital radios. Janet Sheats suggested including the Fire Company with the grant. They are also in need of the digital radios. Cindy Miller questioned what happens if we submit for \$500,000 and we only receive \$250,000. Janet Sheats commented the Township radios would come first, but the radios in general will benefit everyone. Rick Hildebrand commented the Fire Company has 51 portables and 13 mobile units. They have been able to acquire 10 through a County grant and they are also applying for additional grants but that will not be enough. This really is an unfunded mandate that is pure insanity for all the departments to come up with the money for the switch over. Any help the Township can provide through a grant is appreciated. Mike Jones questioned if there is a possibility of the County going to a proprietary vendor. Rick Hildebrand commented there is a private operator of Schuylkill County radio. It is a private operation and the County subscribes to them. Carbon County needed to update their system, they decided to jump onto that system to save the expense of adding towers. Everything is proprietary and the person who owns the system is a radio distributor and you must buy the radios from them. If you don't go through him, you can't get on the system. So far Lehigh, Northampton, and Monroe Counties are open systems meaning you don't have to buy a specific brand of radio.

E. Solicitor's Report. Attorney Backenstoe did not have anything specific to report.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT. Linda Roman commented it is good that they are taking the dead trees down in the park, but they should also take the trees down by her place.

Janet Sheats made a motion to have the Billy Carter subdivision placed on the next agenda. David Hess seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

X. ADJOURN. Janet Sheats made a motion to adjourn. David Hess seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.