

LEHIGH TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Minutes of the July 27, 2021, Meeting

- I. CALL TO ORDER. The Lehigh Township Board of Supervisors held their second monthly meeting on Tuesday, July 27, 2021, at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was held at the Lehigh Township Municipal Building, 1069 Municipal Road, Walnutport, Pa. 18088. Chairman Cindy Miller called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance and roll call.

Present: Phil Gogel  
Keith Hantz  
Cindy Miller  
Mike Jones  
David Backenstoe  
Alice Rehrig

Absent: Mike McGonigle

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

- A. Minutes of July 13, 2021. Phil Gogel made a motion to approve these minutes. Mike Jones seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

III. APPROVAL OF BILLS

- A. General Fund Checks 25004 to 25039. Phil Gogel made a motion to approve these bills. Keith Hantz seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Cherryville Intersection. The intersection project is almost complete. The only items remaining are punch list type items. There will be a request for payment before the Board at the next meeting.

Phil Gogel commented the height of the curbing seems high in relationship to the sidewalk and requested the engineer review it.

Jerry Pritchard questioned if the vacant Turkey Hill lot could be cleaned up. Alice Rehrig commented Liz Gehman has sent them a letter regarding getting it cut.

Jerry Pritchard questioned what the balance is that is owed to the contractor. Alice Rehrig commented the balance owed is approximately \$85,000 and the payment request that will be before the Board at the next meeting is about \$10,000. The final payment will probably be in September.

- B. Maintenance Building. Over the past two weeks there has been a lot of correspondence between the engineer, architect, electrical, and mechanical

engineer. The bid specs are very close to completion. Cindy Miller commented the Board will need to make the decision as to whether they want to advertise the building now or hold off because the price of steel is up by 300 percent. Jerry Pritchard commented it could be put to bid to see how the prices come back. If it is too high, it can be rebid again later. Phil Gogel commented each time it is put out to bid, there is an expense to the Township.

V. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Pollution Reduction Plan Comments. The Pollution Reduction Plan has been posted to the website for the past several weeks. The plan consists of several projects so that the Township can meet their MS4 requirements. As part of the advertisement process, the Township needs to take public comment at their meeting. Public comments can also be submitted in writing until August 5. The PRP will be on the August 10 agenda for adoption.
- B. Hiring of Public Works Employee. Keith Hantz questioned where things were at with the hiring of a Public Works Employee. He believes the budget was set up to hire someone by September 1, 2021. Alice Rehrig commented she was holding off on advertising because the contract was not yet settled. Keith Hantz commented we would be working off the old contract. Alice Rehrig commented the concern is with the changes for new hires. Keith Hantz commented he thought that may be the reason, but how close are things to be settled. Phil Gogel commented it is very close. It will be discussed in Executive Session. Alice Rehrig commented next meeting may be a better meeting for the discussion. Keith Hantz commented why not advertise now? Are we going to wait until the contract is settled to even advertise for a Public Works Employee? It's not easy to get people right now and it may take time. If we wait until fall to hire, will they know what they are doing by the time the snow starts falling? Alice Rehrig commented she can do advertisement as soon as the Board approves it. Phil Gogel commented he thought it was discussed a while ago about not hiring until the contract was settled, but that has taken longer than expected. Mike Jones commented he also agrees that we want to get them hired as soon as we can. Couldn't we advertise? Cindy Miller commented we could, but when we interview, what are we going to tell them as far as salary and benefits. Wouldn't the salary be included as part of the ad? Keith Hantz commented he didn't think we told each applicant what the salary and benefits were. He thought we narrowed the candidates down to three and then brought them in for interviews and discussed the salary and benefits. Phil Gogel commented he would prefer to wait one more meeting. We are almost there.

Jerry Pritchard questioned how many employees there currently are in the Road Department. Keith Hantz commented, seven full time including the foreman. Jerry Pritchard questioned if there is a certain number that they need to have.

Cindy Miller commented there is not. Keith Hantz noted there used to be 13 at one point. Jim Aldio retired last year and was not replaced and Guy Rice was never replaced when he retired nine years ago. Phil Gogel commented it wouldn't be bad to have a work study done to see if we need more people, less people, or are we just right, but that is another discussion. He does believe there is a bare minimum as to where you need to be. The guys are pushing hard.

Paul Nikisher questioned how we are doing at this point with six workers and a foreman. Are we making it? Keith Hantz commented Jim Aldio retired right before winter last year. Alice Rehrig commented Frank Zamadics took a route for the snow storms. With the amount of snow last year, it was taxing. Where they are really running into problems is when there are breakdowns. With Frank Zamadics having a route, there are two routes that are not getting done when there is a breakdown. When Jim Aldio was working, the guys all had routes and Frank Zamadics took care of opening the parking lots, the avenues in Pennsville, and a few cul-de-sacs so he would be available to assist with breakdowns. Last year, things got delayed when there was an issue. Paul Nikisher commented if the winter is when the person is needed the most, maybe we would better be served with a part time person. Phil Gogel commented it is not a bad approach, but it could be difficult to get a plow driver. Paul Nikisher commented it may be something that could be looked into because it is more than just the salary with pensions. Phil Gogel commented it is a 401 pension which is funded by them and the Township so that cost is not as great as a traditional legacy pension.

Jerry Pritchard questioned if the medical insurance is paid in full. Alice Rehrig commented the employee pays 10 percent.

Phil Gogel commented we could also check how much overtime was paid, but he doesn't think it was that much. Alice Rehrig noted most of the guys take overtime as comp time. That creates a different type of problem because of the additional time off resulting in not enough workers. Summers gets rough when people are taking vacation time and comp time.

Keith Hantz questioned if we are still down to one summer help employee. Alice Rehrig commented we only have the one individual as summer help. Keith Hantz commented so now we have one of our full time workers tied up mowing grass. Phil Gogel commented it is a shame that one quit. He was willing to work for \$10 an hour, then when the Board bumped it up to \$10.50 to be fair with past practice, it wasn't good enough. He feels he should have just stuck it out regardless of what another community was paying because he agreed to come back for the initial \$10 per hour. Now we are in a bind because of lack of help.

Sandy Hopkins questioned if we couldn't replace the part time person. Alice Rehrig commented she posted it on the website but hasn't received any applications. Getting summer help at this time of the year is tough because most of the people looking for summer work already have their jobs lined up and if they are a college student, they will be going back to school shortly.

- C. Funding of Fire Truck/Fire Tax. Keith Hantz commented it was mentioned about two months ago by a resident that this should be on every meeting agenda for discussion which is why he requested this be added to the agenda, plus we are getting close to budget time. He is wondering what everyone's thoughts were regarding what can be done to help the Fire Company with either a fire tax or fundraising.

He also knows a discussion took place outside the Township meeting regarding the money that was allocated in 2020 but not put into the Fire Truck fund. Where is this money? Alice Rehrig commented it is in the General Fund. It was never allocated to go to a specific item. Keith Hantz questioned if it is still there, does that mean they will get both the 2020 and 2021 allocation in 2021. Alice Rehrig commented they would be getting the 2021 allocation in 2021 and the 2020 allocation will be part of the balance carried forward into 2022. When the budget was created, we didn't know what type of financial position the Township would be in, so the 2021 budget was based on one year's allocation. Since 2020 wasn't as bad as what was projected, it will give us additional funds to be carried forward into next year. Cindy Miller commented in 2020, all capital for every department was frozen because of COVID. The Board said they were not going to allocate any capital for anyone last year, other than the Road Department received a truck because it was ordered in January, prior to COVID. If they would have waited until March to order the truck, they probably wouldn't have gotten the truck because the Board froze all accounts for capital. Keith Hantz commented the money is there. Cindy Miller commented the money is there for every department. We said we were going to freeze it and not allocate it and we would start with the plan again this year. This year, they are allocated \$140,000 and that money will go into their account. Last year was a wash; we didn't do anything with capital last year. Keith Hantz commented the tax money still came in and the money is there. Alice Rehrig commented it is part of the fund balance. Cindy Miller commented you can't go back to every department and say spend all the money just because it's there and it wasn't spent last year. Keith Hantz commented that is not what he is suggesting. Last year, everyone was designated to work with a department and most of the departments came up with a 9 or 10 percent cut in their budget. Taking \$137,000 from the Fire Company is more than 9 or 10 percent. We only gave them \$8,000 last year. Cindy Miller commented we also gave them \$77,000 for the fire police vehicle, their workers comp and other insurance. We

paid the operating expenses like we did for every other department. There is a difference between capital and operating. Phil Gogel noted the money for the truck was money that was already in their fund, not something from the capital budget.

Keith Hantz commented the Fire Chief was told at the polls that the money was still there; we didn't take the money away from them. Cindy Miller commented she told him that after she was accused of stealing money from the Fire Company. That never happened; she wants that cleared up. The money is in the account. It's in the General Fund. If we give the Fire Company their allocation, are we going to have to give additional money to other departments? Keith Hantz commented he is not saying give them the money; he is saying put it in their truck fund. Cindy Miller commented the allocation to the truck fund is part of the capital. We didn't do it for anyone else. Keith Hantz commented we just gave the Police Department a police car. Phil Gogel commented we needed to get the car because one of their cars is not working. He does understand the importance of the Fire Company.

Alice Rehrig commented the money is still in the General Fund. No money went into any of the capital funds last year. Last year, the Road Crew got the truck, but then this year, the 2021 allocation was pushed back. Nothing was put into the Recreation Savings last year. All the money that was designated to go to the capital funds is still in the general fund and will be part of a balance carried forward into next year. There were no funds transferred out of the General Fund to go to capital funds in 2020. Phil Gogel questioned if we will be allocating it during budget time. Mike Jones commented we are now behind everything. Cindy Miller commented everything was pushed out a year. Mike Jones commented everything worked out so there should be additional money. Cindy Miller commented when the budget is done for next year, the Board can give additional money since there was money carried from last year. It is up to the Board. If that is what the Board wants to do, they can do that. Phil Gogel commented in order to keep the capital plan on target for the trucks, we would pretty much have to fund the account. If we have the money to fund it, we should. Cindy Miller commented if the money is there, we can do that.

Roger Spadt commented the Board can call it a budget, capital expense or whatever they want, but it was still the budget for the fire apparatus. The Fire Company is the only department that was cut 100 percent. Cindy Miller commented that is not true. She can show the budget.

Roger Spadt questioned how much COVID money the Township was going to get. Cindy Miller commented the Township is getting \$1 million, but the Township was advised to sit on the money until it is figured out what the guidelines are for using the money and how are they going to do it.

Roger Spadt noted the Township did not pay the operating expenses of the fire house. They paid the required workers compensation and fuel. Cindy Miller commented for the Township, that is operating expenses. Roger Spadt commented the Fire Company paid much more than that in maintenance costs and to keep the lights on and trucks running at the fire house.

Cindy Miller commented she wants to let everyone know what the Township has paid for the Fire Department to stop the rumors and what is being said about her and the Board stealing money that did not happen. It needs to end. The municipal governments in Pennsylvania are responsible to pay workers comp, liability insurance, the pass through Fireman's Relief that is funded through outside insurance company and paid by the State, and the Township also pays fuel. In 2019, workers comp was \$31,400. Workers comp will vary depending upon the amount of claims that were filed. In 2020, we paid \$24,500 in workers comp, and in 2021, it went down to \$18,000. Liability insurance cost \$19,400 in 2019, \$14,780 in 2020; and \$15,580 in 2021. Fuel costs were \$5,491 in 2019; \$4,471 in 2020, and 2021 is estimated to be \$5,000 based on prior years. Fireman's relief which is a pass through expense, not coming from general fund tax dollars, we paid \$64,195 in 2019; \$64,562 in 2020 and \$64,000 is expected for 2021. The capital fund, which is the capital improvement fund allocated for large apparatus, in 2019, we contributed \$140,000; in 2020 we froze it but it was to be \$140,000, and in 2021 we have another allocation of \$140,000. Looking at these years, not counting the Fireman's Relief funding, the general fund paid \$195,898 in 2019, \$43,760 in 2020 because the \$140,000 was not put in the capital improvement fund, and in 2021, it is estimated that \$178,671 will be paid. 2021 is down because the workers comp insurance has come down. These are the total operating and capital expenses. She is only speaking of the Township operating expenses. She knows these expenses do not include anything at the fire house.

Cindy Miller commented she has also called around and spoken with other municipalities to try to figure this out. Some of them have a fire tax and others do not. When she talks to other municipalities and tells them what Lehigh Township is paying, even those with a fire tax, we are paying more than those with fire tax. The reason being, when you have a fire tax the municipalities are not putting out 1 mill. It may be .25 of a mill; .5 of a mill; .1 of a mill. They are not paying a whole mill or a mill and a half. When she talks to other municipalities and tells them

what we are paying, they tell her you are better running it through your General Fund the way you are doing it than allocating a fire tax. Years ago, she met with the State, Rick Hildebrand, and Roger Spadt and told us that if we can find a way to run it through the General Fund, do not allocate a fire tax. Don't do it if you don't have to. Keith Hantz commented he agrees with the statement, but with doing it through the General Fund, they are not guaranteed the same amount every year. How do they budget for a truck? Cindy Miller questioned if they would get the same amount through a fire tax. What is the cost to administer the tax? With what is coming in the economy, what happens if people can't afford to pay their real estate taxes or their fire tax and then we have to try to collect it. The chances of COVID hitting again and shutting down our economy again are very slim. That was an extenuating circumstance. She didn't want to do it; she didn't like doing it. It was an unknown. We had to protect our community with tax dollars. Phil Gogel commented Cindy Miller is right. There will be administration costs with a fire tax. You will need to pay someone to collect it, do bills, send them out and process them. Someone will also need to administer the fund. Cindy Miller commented if the tax is delinquent, you need to pay 3 percent to have someone collect it. It's a dilemma. She wants to support our fire company. They need to be supported; she gets it. The Township needs to provide fire services, but at the same time, she is trying to figure out how it will benefit the Fire Company and the Township.

Roger Spadt questioned who the other municipalities or fire companies were that Cindy Miller spoke to. Are we comparing apples to apples; comparable Townships, fire companies, call volume and needs. Cindy Miller commented she was asked by individuals to not state the names. One Township has four fire companies and they pay \$120,000 to \$140,000 total; \$30,000 to \$40,000 per fire company. Another one has a fire tax, is a smaller municipality than us and they give \$88,000. Another one that is smaller gives a donation of \$28,000. A larger Township than us has three fire companies and they give each one \$25,000, mainly through splitting Fireman's Relief amongst them. Another one pays \$133,000, they are pretty comparable to us. This amount includes their Fireman's Relief which is \$50,000 to \$60,000. Another much richer community has a fire tax which raises \$300,000, but they only allocate \$130,000. The balance is saved in an account to purchase equipment.

Keith Hantz questioned if the sources of the information that is being provided would be public information if she is collecting information as Chairman of the Board. Cindy Miller commented she didn't obtain the information as Chairman of the Board. She represents a committee where she meets with nine municipalities and they shared the information. Roger Spadt questioned how you could serve on a committee and not represent Lehigh Township. Cindy Miller commented it is

the Government Committee for the Greater Northern Lehigh Chamber of Commerce. She serves as Chairman and represents the Chamber. She was asked by the Chamber to do this because of her municipal background. Keith Hantz commented the information should be turned over to every Board member. Cindy Miller commented she is not turning it over. The information will be in the minutes and she is not revealing the sources. Attorney Backenstoe commented if Cindy Miller was acting on behalf of the Board, then the information should be turned over. If she is acting on behalf of another entity and is sharing information that she derived from her affiliation with another entity, then she doesn't have to give the information. Keith Hantz commented if she is representing the Township, it should be turned over. Cindy Miller commented she is not representing the Township. She is chairing a committee from a different organization. Jerry Pritchard questioned if the other organization makes any rulings for the Township. Cindy Miller commented they don't. Mike Jones questioned why the information couldn't be shared with the Board. Cindy Miller commented she shared the information. She is not sharing the specific municipality. Roger Spadt commented the rest of the Board may want to follow up with those municipalities. Cindy Miller commented the rest of the Board can call the communities around us and find out what they do. Jerry Pritchard commented no one is talking about how we can get the money, just who gives what.

Phil Gogel commented he though the discussion would be if it is available and what the process would be to do a fire tax and then better understand if it is cost effective to instill a fire tax when there are minimal costs involved by including it in the budget. Mike Jones questioned what the fire tax would be to reach the same level of we are contributing. Alice Rehrig commented it would be approximately .75 mill. Keith Hantz noted 1 mill brings in around \$250,000. Mike Jones questioned if the tax collector would collect the fire tax. Mary Trexler commented the fire tax would be rolled into the millage of the regular taxes and then when she collects it and puts it in the bank, Alice Rehrig would have to separate it out.

Roger Spadt commented the fire tax is only a portion of why the Fire Company is on the agenda. When there is a fire tax there is no separate administration or accounts. When the tax is collected, it is separated out and it goes into the budget. You can use the money for fire related expenses. All the Fire Company wanted was for it to be used for apparatus. They are not asking for any of the other allowable expenses. Cindy Miller commented if there is a fire tax, the workers comp and other expenses would be included. Roger Spadt commented it doesn't have to be. It doesn't have to be allocated for all expenses. It can be designated for just apparatus.



Roger Spadt noted the approval to move forward with the replacement of 4712 also needs to be discussed. The guys have spent tons of hours working on specs and what will best serve the community for the next 15 to 20 years. They've been travelling all over looking at what is out there. They need to know if they can move forward or is this a waste of their time because there is no sun on the horizon. Phil Gogel commented he believes they can keep moving forward because he believes the Fire Department is very important and we need to fund it. Roger Spadt commented they need to know a time when they can put this out for specs and put it out to bid. There is no sense to get to this point and sit down with the manufacturer and drawing up specs and getting ready to go to bid if there is no future.

Cindy Miller questioned what year it was slated in the capital improvements plan. Alice Rehrig commented it was originally slated for 2024, but because of everything being pushed back because of COVID, it was moved to 2025. Roger Spadt commented we need to get back on track and get the 2020 money into the fund and get this engine into the Township. Cindy Miller commented they also were looking at the funds. Will there be enough in the fund? Roger Spadt commented for each year the truck is pushed back, the cost will increase. Cindy Miller questioned how the cost went from \$750,000 to \$850,000? Why would it go up \$100,000 in a year? Roger Spadt commented that is the normal increase. Cindy Miller commented when she did research, the cost of the trucks increase by 4.5 percent each year. Phil Gogel commented the prices could fluctuate from year to year because of the steel prices. Roger Spadt commented it needs to get put back on track to 2023. Also, the longer you put it off, the less value there will be in the old engine.

Cindy Miller questioned what the balance was in the Fire Truck Fund. Alice Rehrig commented after the 2021 allocation is deposited, the balance will be \$152,036.

Phil Gogel commented it should also be noted that there is a savings to the residents because all the certifications the Fire Company helps to boost the ISO rating which reduces the homeowners insurance. Kristen Soldridge commented she disagrees. She contacted her homeowners insurance company and they told her it didn't make a difference because of where her home was located in relation to the Fire Company and there are no fire hydrants near her home. Roger Spadt commented they just completed their ISO rating review. Their last rating was a 6 to 9. They carry a variable rate. The ratings go from 1 to 10, with 10 being a very rural fire department with a bunch of guys in a pickup truck and some water, one fire station. We were fortunate enough to qualify for a split rating because of the changes in the Township. The drawback to the split rating is that

when you live so far from the fire house you end up with the 9 rather than the 6. That is nothing that the Fire Company can have an impact on because they would need three more fire stations in order for everyone to qualify for a 5. A fire station needs to be within so many miles and there needs to be a certain number of fire hydrants. Kristen Soldridge commented she checked with two different agencies and she did not qualify for any discount because of the rating. She also knows other people who also checked with their insurance agent and they are not getting the discount because of where they live.

Cindy Miller commented in looking at the Capital Improvements Plan, if the engine is moved back to 2024, it is doable. We still will be a little short, but 2023 is not possible. Roger Spadt commented it will take a few more months to complete the specs. If it is put to bid over the winter months, the bids will be awarded mid-2022. The production time is a year to year and a half so it could be early 2024 for delivery.

Roger Spadt noted if there was a fire tax, a discussion like this wouldn't need to take place because the funding would be there. It would also help put money back into the general fund. Kristen Soldridge questioned what happens if people stop donating to the Fire Company if they hear that a fire tax is included in their tax. She has talked to people and they have said if a fire tax is included in their taxes, they are not donating. They will just keep driving when they see the coin toss. Roger Spadt commented the fire tax would then need to be increased. They spend countless hours keeping the doors open. The Township does nothing as a whole to keep the fire station functioning; they never have. Besides taking care of the fire company, they are continuing hours of mandatory training that keeps on getting increased every year. The call volume keeps going up. There are only 40 or 45 percent of the people donating to the fire company. As the community changes and more and more people are moving into the Township from other areas, they don't understand the fund drive. They thought the fire service was included in their taxes. They question why the firefighters have to pay to keep their station open. If people don't want to donate, the fire station closes. Fireman's relief already is paying a disability policy for the volunteers because the Township doesn't have one for them. Where do people think all the equipment on the trucks comes from? Where does the maintenance on the trucks come from?

Cindy Miller questioned if the Fire Company does a budget every year. Roger Spadt commented they do. You can budget, but the only things you know are your insurance and basic utility costs. You can't budget for equipment and other costs. Phil Gogel commented with the volunteers, it is cheap for the Township to have a Fire Department. Keith Hantz noted our Fire Department is a professional department, maintains their equipment, and is very well trained. They go on a lot

of calls in the Township and provide a lot of mutual aid. Many of the surrounding fire departments depend on Lehigh Township to help them out. The \$200,000 that is in the budget to help the fire department is pretty much next to nothing for what they do. We need to think about what happens when the volunteer stops volunteering. If we would have to go to a paid fire department it would cost the residents much more than the police department. Roger Spadt commented when the study was done several years ago, the cost to operate a minimum career fire department is four to six million. When they talk to people, they say they will roll their windows down, they want to come up and help; they all have great ideas about fundraising, but when they have things at the Fire Company, he doesn't see tons of people coming up there to be members of the fundraising committee and to help with fundraising. Everyone has these great ideas and he appreciates the ideas, but how do they expect the firefighters to do all of these extra ideas? You can only sell so many hot dogs and so many things to pay the bills. They do a coin toss twice a year. That money gets earmarked for their uniform fund. That is strictly what that coin toss goes for; nothing operational. Why? You want to have good looking firefighters when you go places. You don't want them showing up places in t-shirts and jeans. They had a coin toss and got themselves Class A uniforms. Now when they go places, they look nice. He's not a fan of putting on a fancy blazer and tie, but you need to. They would go to funerals, and there they were with washout blue shirts and no one had matching pants. Now, they look like a department. That is what the coin toss goes to. If people don't want to donate, that is fine. Not all firemen have uniforms.

Kristen Soldridge questioned what fundraisers they need help with. She went to Rick Hildebrand and gave him all types of ideas. He shot everyone of them down for whatever the reason. She suggested using the upstairs to do a breakfast; he said they can't because they lease it out. She asked about Zach Mako to come and talk to him and the treasurer and nothing came out of that because of the way the situation is. They can't do this, they can't do that because their hands are tied with this or that. All the options that were provided to assist, with the exception of the sportsman raffle which focuses solely on people who hunt, were shot down. She offered to help at the farm and the first night they were open she donated a check of \$275 because she walked around with a bucket for people to donate to the Fire Company. Now, no one is walking around. Cody has a bucket setting out on the table and on the fire truck. You're not going to get donations that way. Roger Spadt commented their hands are tied with using the hall because they have a lease for the banquet hall. They can't run the banquet hall like they used to in the old days. The sportsman raffle is geared towards hunting, but it is also the largest fundraiser they have next to the fund drive. They used to have turkey and ham raffles, but they were losing money. The overall make up of the Township has changed. Yes, the people that are here are still the Lehigh Township people and

they will come out and support them and the breakfasts. It was the same way for bingo; it cost them more to open the doors than what they made at bingo, just like the turkey raffles and the ham raffles. Kristen Soldridge commented she has a hard time understanding that when other fire companies hold breakfasts and they bring in money left and right. Roger Spadt commented they are different communities. Anyone is welcome to come out to their business meeting, which will be on the first Tuesday in August, joint the fundraising committee and see first hand what they are talking about. They tried the different themed bingos, no one came out. They tried the breakfasts, that didn't work. Food was good, prices were good, churches all over, but no one came out. They can't keep stacking more fundraiser on and expect the fire people to do them. They don't have the time. They don't have the time to make all the calls and all the training. The Supervisors are encouraged to come out for the next five Mondays. The School Board has allowed them the use of the old elementary school for training until it is demolished. They can do any type of training except for open burning. They will be there every Monday night from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Also in August, they will also be co-sponsoring a full day training with all the accelerant K9 dogs in the area.

Jerry Pritchard questioned how the Fire Company handles their money. It wasn't that long ago when they had money stolen from the Fire Company. Cindy Miller commented it was not the Fire Company. It was the Fireman's Relief Fund which is separate from the Fire Company. Jerry Pritchard questioned if the Fire Company doesn't oversee that fund. Keith Hantz commented the Fireman's Relief Association has their own officers. Roger Spadt is the president of the Fire Company, but he is not the president of Fireman's Relief Association. Jerry Pritchard questioned if a Board doesn't oversee that fund. How did it get so far out before it was discovered? Roger Spadt commented there are two different organizations. The Fire Company is strictly a Fire Company. The Fireman's Relief is where the pass through money from the State goes. The Relief Association is 100 percent their own legal entity. They have their own Federal EIN and Sales Tax number. Yes, they are at a fire house because they are affiliated with a fire house, ambulance, or rescue squad. They have their own officers and their own Board. As President of the Fire house, he has no say into their workings. When he goes to their meetings, he only has the authority to speak as a regular person. The individual who did this, who was an Allentown Police Officer, had his City pension challenged because of the criminal activity. He finally had his appeal hearing and they are waiting for the Judge to make his decision. If things go as they are hoping, his pension will be used for full restitution and a jail sentence will be dealt. The Relief Association has already been made whole because they were properly bonded. The insurance company

will be where most of the pension will go because they need to be paid back. As to how this happened, this gentleman was so good, there were two sets of books, fake receipts, fake checks, fake invoices; everything. There were fake inventory sheets. They are required to do an inventory by item which was purchased with the Relief money. The set of books that were shown to the Board were a fake set of books, thinking not anyone would find out about it. He went through two audits by the State Auditor General Department who oversees the relief fund. His fake books were so good that the State Auditor General's office did not catch it. It was such a good case that it is part of a mandatory training for the State Auditor General's Office. They must now study Mr. Cole's actions. Jerry Pritchard questioned if no one asked where the equipment was that was listed on the receipt. Roger Spadt commented the set of books and inventory that was shown to the Relief Officers all matched. How this all came to light was they had a Federal Grant and the Relief Association needed to pay the bill.

Cindy Miller commented if the replacement of the truck is moved to 2024, we could do that. Roger Spadt commented they could put it out to bid late 2022 and you would be looking at delivery and acceptance early in 2024. Cindy Miller commented it seems like the Fire Truck issue has been resolved. As far as the fire tax, that can be discussed during budget. Keith Hantz commented the Fire Company needs to be aware when the budget talks are taking place. Roger Spadt commented the Board has all their spreadsheets. Cindy Miller commented they do, but replacing two pieces of equipment in eight years will be tough and that needs to be figured out.

Jerry Pritchard questioned if the price of the truck will be based on 2022 or 2024 prices. Roger Spadt commented the price is based on the date in which the bids are accepted. They also do not require a specific time frame for delivery because that just drives up the price. Alice Rehrig noted the chassis is paid when it is completed rather than waiting until the end because there is a savings in paying the chassis separate from the body.

- D. Manager's Report. Alice Rehrig provided everyone with copies of where things are with the Capital Improvements Plan, showing the planned expenses from 2021 to 2030. The only thing that has changed is under the Police, there is a revised proposed sheet reflecting the purchase of a new police car in either 2021 or 2022 depending upon when it becomes available, and the rearrangement of the replacement schedule as a result of the replacement of the 2017 car being moved up to 2021 or 2022. The spreadsheets for the Fire Department show what we currently are operating under and the numbers that were proposed by the Fire Company through 2030. The Board can review these sheets and discuss them at the next meeting when all the Departments are present. This will help with the

starting of the budget. The Recreation Board will not have the opportunity to discuss their portion of the plan until after the August 10 meeting because they do not meet until August 16.

After discussing the Capital Improvements Plan, the budget discussions will need to take place and the Board will need to determine how they want to handle that as far as starting the meeting early at 6:00 p.m. or holding a special meeting. The operational portion of the budget should be in rough draft by the end of August. The Board agreed they would have a budget meeting at 6:00 p.m. on September 14.

Alice Rehrig also suggested the Board consider trying to get the Hills of Greenock out to bid this year so that the roadway can be completed before winter. She believes there is an area that needs to be repaired and then the remaining section needs to be paved. She could work with Mike Muffley to see if it can be done by using the PennDOT bid forms rather than creating the projects manuals which become costly. If this process can be done, she would like authorization to get it advertised to not delay the completion. If it becomes too complicated, she will bring it back to the Board. Phil Gogel made a motion to authorize the advertisement of bids for completing the paving in the Hills of Greenock. Keith Hantz seconded the motion. Alice Rehrig commented if it turned out that it will become more complicated than just paving, she will bring it back to the Board. All voted aye. Motion carried.

The Streambank Restoration project at Indiantrail Park will be completed by the contractor this week. There were no issues with the project. Because the project went well, it is expected that there will be a significant amount of grant funding left. Because of this, Wildlands will be working on a budget to get the bridge on Cinchona Road replaced with a limited amount of funding from the Township. Based on the left over funding and using a culvert instead of a bridge, the Township may only need to contribute \$25,000 to \$30,000 towards that project.

Alice Rehrig provided the Board with a letter from Sheldon and Maryann Endy as well as a supporting letter from the Sewage Enforcement officer. They currently have a malfunctioning septic system that needs to be replaced. The only suitable replacement area will be located within the 100 foot well/septic isolation distance. They will need a waiver from the Board in order to have their well and septic system closer than the 100 foot requirement. As part of approving the waiver, they would sign an indemnification agreement to hold the Township harmless. Phil Gogel made a motion to grant the waiver of the isolation distance for the well and septic subject to the owners entering into an indemnification agreement. Mike Jones seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.

Keith Hantz questioned if Alice Rehrig or anyone else from the Township contacted the gentleman who owns the ConAgra property. Cindy Miller

commented she contacted him just to find out what was going on with that property and what he wanted for it. She explained to him that in the Comp Plan that will be presented by the Planners, and even LTMA talked about it, was that the area would be a good place for a future Sewer Treatment Plant. She told him she had no idea if it was going to come to fruition. She was just calling to see how much he was asking for the property and if it was something the Township should consider. He wasn't able to give her a price and just said make an offer. Keith Hantz commented he was curious because when he talked to him, he was excited after he got the phone call. Cindy Miller commented he gave her the impression he had plans for a portion of the property because of the rail system. Keith Hantz commented he was told it would cost \$250,000 to put the rails back in and he didn't want to spend that type of money. He believes this gentleman would work with the Township if they are really interested in this property. Phil Gogel will mention this to LTMA.

- E. Solicitor's Report. Attorney Backenstoe reported the hearing for Terry Vandling was held on July 14. Mr. Vandling was present for the hearing. The Judge did ask if there was any way that this can be resolved with Mr. Vandling doing the right thing one more time. He doesn't believe the judge was quite ready to hold him in contempt and possibly put him in jail which is pretty much where we are at if he doesn't do what he is supposed to do. He spoke with Mr. Vandling who pleaded and promised he was going to get this done. They made a record in front of the Judge, so this is it. He admitted to the Judge that he violated every provision of the May 14 injunction order, admitted he was in contempt and that it cost the Township a lot of legal fees to enforce this. He agreed to pay \$5,000 within 60 days to reimburse the Township for their legal expenses. He agreed to file his land development plan within 30 days of July 14. He also agreed to file a soil and erosion plan within 30 days, his sewage permit, electrical permit, house permit, and NPDES permit within 30 days. After the hearing, he came up to Attorney Backenstoe and told him he messed up and asked if he would help him and talk to the engineer. Attorney Backenstoe called Mark Leuthe and told him what was going on and Mark Leuthe said if he comes in and retains them again, they will get it done. He did pay Lehigh Engineering a substantial amount of money to submit his plans on time. It is Attorney Backenstoe's hope and expectation that all of these plans will be filed in August. If not, there is only one thing to do which is go back to court and ask the court to really hammer him because there is no other way to force compliance. While the neighbors were disappointed because he wasn't hammered the day of the hearing, he did explain that as Solicitor he is there to try to get him to comply with the ordinances. They understood and were understanding of his position that all he needs to do is submit the property plans

and get them approved. Attorney Backenstoe assured them this was it and there were no more chances. If he doesn't comply, he will go back and ask the Judge to do what is necessary and put him away for a while to take this more seriously.

- VI. PUBLIC COMMENT. Cindy Miller commented she saw the Dog Park and it looks very nice. Keith Hantz agreed.

Keith Hantz noted the residents have also been doing a good job with putting up the green reflective house numbers and hopes the cooperation continues.

Keith Hantz also commented he missed the last meeting, but wanted to confirm that no one on the Board of Supervisors was trying to shut down the Lorah Farm. He has been hearing that rumor. He thought that the Board was just looking for them to come back to discuss the activities based on what was authorized back in 2012 when three events per year were approved. Alice Rehrig commented the Zoning Officer sent them a letter asking them to come to the August 10 meeting. Keith Hantz commented he just wanted to make it clear that the Board wants to work with them, not shut them down.

Cindy Miller commented she has a more detailed report on the 2020 Christmas Tree Lighting. The tree lighting was co-sponsored with the Greater Lehigh Chamber of Commerce. The revenue that was collected by the Chamber was \$2,060. They incurred \$693.56 in expenses, which gave the Chamber a net income for the event of \$1,366.44. The revenue that was received for the event was through sponsorships by businesses. Keith Hantz questioned if lights and other items that were donated by the Board were not donated, would they have paid for them or would it have been an expense of the Township? Cindy Miller commented it would have been an expense of the Township's general fund. Keith Hantz was questioning if some of the income of the event should have been donated back to the Township. Cindy Miller commented the Chamber doesn't do that when they hold these events. They did give the Fire Company a donation of \$125. The Chamber holds these events all over the Valley and this is how they handle it. She will be letting them know that Lehigh Township has decided to do it on their own this year. Sandy Hopkins also noted the Recreation Board is not looking to do it as a fund raiser. Their goal is to have it as no expense to the Township. They are looking at it as a community event, not a fundraiser. Cindy Miller commented most of the sponsorships the Chamber received were from active Chamber members because of their involvement with the Chamber. There were very few Lehigh Township businesses that provided the sponsorships.

Keith Hantz questioned if Mr. Jaindl has come into Planning with any other plans? Cindy Miller commented nothing has come into Planning. Keith Hantz questioned what the status is of the Lehigh Valley Resort and Spa. Cindy Miller commented when they were before the Board for the water easement they were asked and she believes it was their



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engineer who commented they are working on designs for the hotel, but it takes a lot of time. Keith Hantz commented when he drives by the site, he thinks about how Lehigh Township is in a better situation to have a property like this rather than having the issues that other Townships are facing with the warehouses. He believes when the project is done, it will be a much better situation than having warehouses or homes across the entire property. Cindy Miller commented she is not sure what the plans are as far as will they get started on Phase I or will they hold off and get Phase II, the residential portion approved. It could also be the economy right now.

Jerry Pritchard commented there is a bill in Washington containing provisions for Human Infrastructure. What this will do is it will remove the local zoning requirements and the Township will be required to take and build what ever type of housing the federal government requires. This should be a concern to everyone. If nothing gets done to pull this out of the bill, Township zoning will be gone.

- VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION. The Board went in Executive Session to discuss a Collective Bargaining Agreement. No action was taken.
- VIII. ADJOURN. Keith Hantz made a motion to adjourn. Mike Jones seconded the motion. All voted aye. Motion carried.