

ATHENS TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS  
Budget Workshop 9:00 AM October 16, 2010

Chairman Ronald Reagan called the meeting to order at 9:12 AM. Supervisors also present were Jack Walter, Maurice Fay and Robin Smith. Cheryl Wood-Walter arrived at 9:30 AM (car trouble).

Voice of the Residents: None

Athens Township Volunteer Fire Company representatives Michael Rosh (President), Deb Northrup (Treasurer) and Bill Campbell (Director) presented the 2011 budget for the company. Deb said they received a donation of new accounting software and will now be able to have a better detailed budget to give a more true projection of their revenues and expenditures. One thing that has never been included with the information we have received in previous years is grant information, which will now be listed. The new budget will also show what is needed for federal compliance. Mike said laws have changed in the last several years and they have worked to keep up with the changes. He also said our company will be holding classes for other companies to help them keep up with the current laws and changes. Even though the company has added vehicles and expanded the building, they will not be requesting an increase in funding for 2011. Ron asked about leasing the firehall – he said it's probably about the only place left in the valley that size for weddings, etc. Deb said they do lease the fire hall for events. They lease the hall itself or you can have the fire company cater an event for \$11/person (includes food & rental).

Deb Northrup said in order for the company to apply for grants, they have to have a certain number of Firefighter 1 and Firefighter 2 personnel. We do have a large percentage of members who have completed this training. These are 40, 60 and 80 hour classes. This coming year the fireman's relief fund will pay for the training. Bradford County's fireman's relief monies were decreased by 2% for 2011, but Athens Township's increased by 6%, because of the record-keeping that is being submitted by John Northrup. Maurice asked how many hours a fireman is required to have in order to maintain active status. Mike said there are no federal, state or local laws, and there is nothing in the by-laws except for line officers. Maurice expressed concern that it was stated at the fire company monthly meeting that they don't have enough guys with enough training to fill the line officer positions. Deb said there are other issues going on – they need to have better record keeping and have the self-discipline to show up at training. She said the kitchen rules are changing, too. Our company requires 40 hours of training, but most other companies don't require nearly that much. Bill said even to be a truck driver requires hours of training. Mike said Athens Township has the most fire calls in the County. Canton's calls are listed as more, but their totals include all their EMS calls. Bill Campbell added that the Valley municipalities have a task force, where 1 truck from each company in the Valley responds, and they respond as a group. Deb said over the years the by-laws have been amended and they are now working on correcting what they have and making real by-laws. They need to make them right.

Ron said we don't hear complaints about you guys. He said a few years ago in one of the parades held in Waverly, our company was in full dress uniform and he was very impressed. Cheryl said this has been a good discussion. She also said it is good that they are sorting out their issues, because we don't want them to affect the confidence of the public. Cheryl asked if there was a mentor program. Robin said they have one for the junior firefighters. Mike said they're working on that. Deb said they stress that safety is first. They work on the "buddy system" – you stay with your buddy until someone comes to relieve you. No one is to be left alone – ever.

Ron asked if the mutual aid agreements are up-to-date. Mike said most of the agreements are verbal. Ron asked if Chemung was in trouble because of that (referring to their tanker being totaled when they responded to one of our fire calls recently). Mike said Chemung got stuck for that because of the incompatibility of the NY/PA laws. Our mutual aid agreements need updating. Robin asked Deb to get her the ones she has and to give her a list of municipalities that we still need to get an agreement from.

Ron asked if there is a point where the South Waverly fire department needs to be merged with one of the other valley companies. Mike said yes. He added that they have already been approached about a possible merger. Mike said we wouldn't take on South Waverly unless the township got their contract in writing.

Ron advised them that we are in the process of creating a new zoning district – Interstate Commercial – which will allow building heights of 6 stories. The Commercial district will allow 4 stories. Our fire company has just recently received an aerial truck from Athens Borough, which will help with the additional stories. Mike said it cost us \$5500 to have the ladder truck recertified, and the building was expanded to hold the larger truck. Mike said our ISO rating shows we should now have a 3<sup>rd</sup> engine and a 2<sup>nd</sup> ladder truck because of our coverage area. Ron said we may be able to get the gas companies to donate toward these things. Mike said they have an active truck replacement plan with a 20-year turn around.

On motion of Ron, second by Robin, it was unanimous to set our fire company contribution at \$93,100 for 2011.

Robin added that the County Fire Police banquet was held at our firehall this month. John Northrup received the Fire Policeman of the Year award and Deb Northrup received the Fire Policewoman of the Year award. We are very proud of them. Deb added that with the donations the fire police received in memory of her father, they are purchasing new helmets – the donations came to the exact amount of the cost.

Chairman Reagan continued with the budget workshop. Treasurer Ruth Casterline went through the line items in the General Fund and the State Liquid Fuels accounts. We have not included any raises for any of the employees, nor have we increased any of the spending in either account. That being said, we are still left with a total deficit of approximately \$445,000. Our Earned Income Tax revenue is way down – over \$200,000 short at this time, which contributes to a good share of our deficit. The greater portion of the remaining deficit comes from the public works department.

Ray Brobst was present to give his roadwork budget for 2011. Ray is proposing \$30,000 for crushing, \$20,000 for liquid calcium, \$10,000 for a bridge pipe for Jacklin Road, \$130,000 to tar and chip 5 miles of road, \$20,000 for the backhoe payment, \$10,000 for pipe, \$10,000 for concrete blocks, \$45,000 for salt, \$32,000 for antiskid and \$2500 for crusher jaws. Cheryl asked which roads would get the tar and chip. Ray said Bradley Road, Queen Esther Drive, Moore Road, Braddock Road and 2 spots on Round Top Road. Ray also said Truck 7 needs to have the transmission fixed and Truck 2 has an oil pressure problem. We also have a few outstanding issues that we have not been billed for yet – the tractor/mower repair from Vanduzen's, \$20,000 of salt through December and a \$3000 (approx.) repair to the 1988 Mack.

Discussion was held as to where we can cut expenses. Jack proposed to come in to the township building on a daily basis to review any items we would contact our attorney for and he will make the determination. He feels we can cut our attorney costs from \$20,000 to \$5,000. Robin said the attorney is not called on a whim – we need a legal answer so that we don't spend more money in lawsuits. Jack also questions whether or not we need to have Elaine's position in the office. Robin and Ron said Elaine covers the police office in the mornings and our office only in the afternoon, not to mention she is secretary for both Planning Commission and Zoning Hearing Board and handles all the work that goes with that. Cheryl suggested we cut the training and conference expenses. We could try to get more classes up here. Robin suggested we consider not drawing our supervisor salaries for a year. Ron asked Ray if he could get along with 5 people out in the garage after Jim Watson retires in April. Ray said he used to only have 4 guys, so he would be able to do that. Ruth suggested each supervisor look at their own departments to see where cuts can be made. We will review the budget again after our Zoning Amendments hearing on Tuesday night.

Robin has a standing committee meeting on November 16, 2010 at PSATS. They will pick up the cost of the hotel and meals. Robin asked the Board if they want her to take a vacation day for this. On motion of Maurice, second by Ron, it was unanimous to allow Robin to attend this meeting, and to pay her salary for the time she would have worked. Robin abstained from the vote as this directly affects her.

Page Four  
Athens Township Supervisors  
October 16, 2010

The attorney for Industrial Electronics finally got the lease for their proposed tower to John Thompson. Attorney Thompson has reviewed the lease and has approved it for us to sign. On motion of Robin, second by Maurice, it was unanimous to approve, sign and execute the lease with Industrial Electronics, and to have Ron sign for the Board.

Laurie Bowen has been researching our website. She has several changes and additions proposed for the site. The biggest change is a switch from our present website host to a company called 3-D Web Design out of New Albany. It is a \$600 design fee, but we will recoup that in 2 years with the savings we will see in the monthly fee. Presently we pay \$40/month and the new monthly fee will be \$15/month. We will also receive a lot more options for our site with the new provider. On motion of Robin, second by Cheryl, it was unanimous to switch to 3-D Web Design as our website provider.

Robin presented 2 applications for recycling – Scott Laidlaw and Dustin Yost. Scott has several good references. Dustin did community service at the recycling center, but John Fives recommends him. On motion of Robin, second by Maurice, it was unanimous to hire both Scott and Dustin as back-up workers for our recycling center at a rate of \$7.25/hour, to work as substitutes on an on-call basis.

Robin advised the Board that Valorie Huckabee's mother, Winifred Krauss, passed away last week. Her service will be held on October 23<sup>rd</sup> in Ulster. On motion of Cheryl, second by Ron, it was unanimous to have Robin order flowers for this.

Robin received a visit from Gary Gregory this week where he again expressed his concerns and frustration with the non-compliance of residents in posting their "new" address numbers. Robin asked him if he would be interested in volunteering to contact people who were not in compliance. He said he would, but he thought our attorney said he would be unable to do that. Robin checked with John and he said he could, if we establish guidelines for him to use. Robin said he came in the next day and brought a notice that he had drafted to give to the residents. Robin said the form was very good and covered all the bases. We will talk with John Thompson to set the guidelines and get this project started.

There being no further business, on motion of Robin, second by Cheryl, it was unanimous to adjourn the meeting at 12:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin L. Smith, Secretary