

ATHENS TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS  
December 29, 2010 7:00 PM

Chairman Ronald Reagan called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM. Supervisors Jack Walter, Maurice Fay and Robin Smith were also in attendance, as was Attorney John Thompson. Cheryl Wood-Walter was out of town.

Voice of the Residents:

Terry Cockcroft of Gateway Industrial Park Road said he had come in to look at the budget and sees there is a one-mill increase proposed. He asked how much one-mill generates in revenue and Robin said it was about \$120,000. Terry questioned why we need the tax increase with all the growth we have had in the township. Ron said one example is in the last month Lowe's won an assessment appeal and their refund comes to about \$10,000. Terry asked about the transfer tax on the sale of the airport and that may have to be refunded because of the KOZ status of the site. We should receive tax revenue from the Nomac development, though, as that is not in the KOZ. Ron said we are also taking funds out of our Capital Purchase account to help meet expenses. Terry asked if we would be able to get money from Chesapeake through a PILOT program. Robin said she didn't think we are allowed to do that by law and John Thompson agreed. Terry asked how Sayre Borough gets Guthrie to do it and John said that is a totally different situation as Guthrie is non-profit.

Jack said we are \$200,000 short on earned income tax collection. Roman asked how we keep track of that and Jack said we are in the process of implementing a County-wide tax office and that should tighten things up. Roman asked when our gas lease expires and Robin said March of 2011. Roman said we have the potential to get a much greater lease amount that could offset a tax increase. Robin said we have to plan for what we have. We have a set amount of expenditures. We need to have the money in place to cover those expenditures. You can't do a budget built on "if..., maybe,...might,...could" – you have to fund your expenditures.

Terry asked what the road program for next year was. Robin asked Jack to explain this, since he oversees the road crew. Jack said he sees what money is left in the budget for roads and they plan from that. He said they may want to pave 8 – 10 roads and may only be able to do 3. They choose the poorest and do them first. He said they can come in early with a plan and then it gets cut in the budget. Ron said typically Ray does a "wish list" and we try to accommodate that. This year the road budget is \$135,000 less than it was last year. Terry asked why we put a \$30,000 dump box on a 22-year-old truck. Ron said he needs to ask the other end of the table as that was not a majority vote.

Terry said they tarred and chipped Gateway Industrial Park Road 3 years ago and only put down one course of stone. They were supposed to put two, but never got back to do the second one. The stone they used was so dirty they had to rent a street sweeper to come and clean it off. The ditches haven't been cleaned in 15 years. Jack said the

ditches are not a problem out there. Terry said they are, and he brought in pictures. Jack doesn't see the problem there. Terry just thinks there's a better way to do things. Communication would be a better solution to the problem.

Roman asked if Mill's Pride was requesting to have their assessment lowered. Robin said she was not aware of that.

Bob Smith asked if Road C was going to go all the way to Mile Lane Road. Robin said it will tie in at Lamoka Road. Bob said he sent a letter down in December to all the supervisors and only got a response from Robin. He asked if anyone else had looked at it. He wants to get answers from the others as well. He asked if there is any chance of Chesapeake repairing some of these roads and the answer was yes. Maurice said the bridge replacement on Thomas Avenue has been moved up because frac sand will be coming via rail from Colorado to the Sayre railyards and trucked out. Jack said we just put a lot of money into that bridge, but it was in bad shape.

Gary Rosh asked with all the people coming into the Valley – are they taxed? What about the housing facility? That is not in the KOZ, but that also is not the worker's permanent address, so we do not get earned income tax. Gary asked about the ones whose children go to school here. Ron said we've had this discussion in several meetings. How can we tax them? We can't single just one group out. There are good things and bad things about the gas business.

A question was asked as to how much money the township has in Road C. Robin said we have no money in it at this point, and she hopes we never have to put money into it. It has been all grant funding so far. Jack said in the old days he and Everett would have put that road through for under \$100,000. Why do we need this road?? Mill's Pride came, Chesapeake came.... Ron said they came because this road was coming.

Roman and Bob discussed access to their properties near the Elmira Street and West Lockhart Street intersection. Roman said there was never a red light there until Elmira Street was widened.

On motion of Maurice, second by Jack, it was unanimous to approve the minutes of November 17 and December 14, 2010 as written.

John Thompson advised the Board that Tennessee Gas Pipeline Pipeyard was withdrawing their application for the Valley Business Park location.

On motion of Ron, second by Robin, it was unanimous to grant Walmart's request for a 90-day extension for their Supercenter project to be located on Elmira Street. This extension will run through March 29, 2011.

On motion of Ron, second by Maurice, it was unanimous to send anyone who wants to go to the Course in Community Planning to be held in Wysox on January 13, 20 and 27, 2011 from 6:15 – 9:30 PM at a cost of \$30 per person.

Bob Blauvelt reported for Athens Township Authority. Bob said their budget was done for 2011. They are also still investigating the possibility of selling water from the Valley Joint Sewer Plant to the gas companies.

Ray Brobst did not attend tonight's meeting.

Ron opened discussion as to whether we should go to road maintenance agreements with the gas company or keep the posting and bonding. John Thompson said the agreement we reviewed needs to have more added to it before he would be comfortable with it. He also said Eddie has some issues with the bonding ordinance as it is written. Robin asked John what he recommends we do, and he said he could go either way. Eddie thinks the bonds are not sufficient. Robin asked if the agreement is not working, can we go back to the posting and bonding. John said we can. If we do the agreement, all the weight limit signs are removed. John said the disadvantage he sees to the agreement is that it may not stand up in court, because PENNDOT has provided the bonding mechanism for this. He said neither provided for the widening of roads – both only state the road goes back to its original condition prior to use. Jack said we haven't had any problems with the gas companies. Robin said we only have one company here right now. Ron said they will not be able to get to the Murphy Road site without improvement. Jack thinks they will be reasonable. John said he has spoken with Chesapeake and they will negotiate language in the agreement. Jack then said we hired an engineering company to do our weight limit study for the posting and bonding – he thinks we should stick with that. Ron said the problem with our roads is that they're not wide enough. If the gas companies are willing to widen the roads, we should work with them. He also doesn't think they want bad publicity. Bob Blauvelt asked if the roads had been videotaped and Robin said yes – it's part of the posting and bonding requirements. Robin said she would like to see us try the agreement, and if it doesn't work out, we can go back to the posting and bonding. On motion of Ron, second by Maurice, it was unanimous to have John Thompson draw up a road maintenance agreement for our review.

Our proposed 2011 budget was presented, which included a 1-mill tax increase. Jack Walter said our proposed budget has no raises for the employees and he wants to see a 3% increase for all employees. Robin asked him where the money would come from and

he said Ruth told him it would take \$30,000 to give all employees a 3% raise, so he would not do any crushing next year since there is a good amount of material in the pit and we have budgeted \$30,000 for crushing. Robin said your budget is \$135,000 less than it was last year, and you even wants to take it down further?? Jack said he has enough in the pit to do 2 projects next year. Terry Cockcroft asked Jack what 2 projects he plans to do and Jack said he hasn't decided yet. Robin said everyone in this building understands why we will have no raises this year, except you and the road crew. Robin said health insurance costs have skyrocketed this year. Employees that are on Blue Cross/Blue Shield Traditional plan for their family received the equivalent of \$2.23 per HOUR, and those on First Priority family plan received the equivalent of \$1.71 per hour. Traditional increased \$4,278.84 PER EMPLOYEE, per year for family coverage. That's a huge raise!! We also have to come up with \$120,000 for the Thomas Avenue Bridge replacement. Fuel costs are going up. Earned Income Tax is down. We have to secure a loan to pay for the backhoe, a police car and the garage roof replacement. We are taking \$141,014 out of Capital Purchases to help with our expense load. Yes, Chesapeake has purchased the airport property, but we will see no tax revenue out of that until 2017. We are making our taxpayers pay an increase of 1-mill – how can we justify a 3% raise for our employees??

Ron said all full-time employees contribute NOTHING to their pension or health insurance. He took a 50% pay cut in the last 2 years. Maurice said ask the Packer employees the last time they got a raise. Robin said she cannot in good conscience vote for a raise in this economy under these circumstances.

On motion of Robin, second by Maurice, it passed to adopt RESOLUTION 2010-14 adopting the 2011 budget as presented, with no raises. Jack Walter voted no.

On motion of Maurice, second by Robin, it was unanimous to adopt RESOLUTION 2010-15 setting the millage rate for 2011 at 11 mills.

On motion of Robin, second by Jack, it was unanimous to adopt RESOLUTION 2010-16 setting the Athens Township Volunteer Fire Company contribution at \$93,100 for 2011.

On motion of Robin, second by Ron, it was unanimous to transfer \$141,014 from the Capital Purchase Fund to General Fund.

Notice of lease termination was received from Arch Wireless/Mobilecomm, however, the date of termination was listed as March 22, 2010 instead of 2011. Robin will return the termination notice and request a corrected copy for us to execute.

On motion of Jack, second by Maurice, it was unanimous to reappoint Terry Depew to both the police and non-uniform pension boards for a term to expire January 1, 2014.

On motion of Maurice, second by Jack, it was unanimous to appoint Mike Chilson to the non-uniform pension board to replace Jim Watson (who is retiring) for a term to expire January 1, 2014.

On motion of Ron, second by Robin, it was unanimous to approve the payment of the COG dues invoice for 2011 in the amount of \$75.

On motion of Maurice, second by Jack, it was unanimous to approve the payment of the PSATS annual dues invoice in the amount of \$1,725.

On motion of Robin, second by Ron, it was unanimous to approve, sign and execute the Bradford County Humane Society Contract for 2011 in the amount of \$1,264.50.

On motion of Jack, second by Robin, it was unanimous to approve Derrick Hall's application for Fire Police with the Athens Township Volunteer Fire Company.

Discussion was held as to whether anyone would attend the convention this year in light of the budget constraints. Jack said he was going. Robin, Ron and Maurice said they will not be going. On motion of Ron, second by Maurice, it passed to send one person – Jack Walter – to the PSATS convention in April, 2011.

On motion of Maurice, second by Jack, it was unanimous to accept the monthly reports as presented.

On motion of Ron, second by Jack, it was unanimous to approve the payment of the monthly bills as submitted. A complete list of revenues and expenditures is on file in the office of the Treasurer.

Correspondence/Information was as listed in the meeting agenda.

Chairman Reagan took the Board into executive session at 8:15 PM for personnel and litigation. The regular meeting reconvened at 10:05 PM.

On motion of Jack, second by Robin, it was unanimous to have the Chairman of the Board sign as the Board representative for the condemnation proceedings for the Road C project.

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There being no further business, on motion of Robin, second by Maurice, it was unanimous to adjourn the meeting at 10:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin L. Smith  
Secretary