

PENN TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
100 Municipal Building Road
Duncannon, PA 17020-1100

Henry A. Holman, Jr., Chairman

Charles H. Stoner, Vice Chairman

Robert E. Shaffer, Sr., Supervisor

MINUTES OF MARCH 21, 2007

Page 1 of 2

Fire Study

The Penn Township Board of Supervisors (PTS) met on Wednesday, March 21, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building to conduct a Fire Study meeting. Chairman Henry Holman, Jr. was in attendance. Other personnel present were Helen Klinepeter (Secretary), and Susan Long (Recording Secretary). The meeting was recorded to aid in the preparation of the minutes. A list of visitors is on file in the Township office.

VISITORS

John Myers	Duncannon Borough
Byron Worner	Duncannon Fire Company (DFC)
Heath Sands	DFC
Monte Supko	Perdix Fire Company (PFC)
Scott Howell	PFC
Jodi Rissinger	PFC
Paul Soltis	Emergency Management Coordinator

Chairman Holman opened the meeting with the note that the other two supervisors were not able to attend the meeting. Mr. Soltis stated that he was highly disappointed that Mr. Stoner was not in attendance since he had specifically requested at the PTS meeting that he attend. He requested that his comment be made part of the record.

CONCERNS

Byron Warner commented that he has been attending these meetings for four years and nothing ever gets accomplished. He felt a different approach is needed. He stated that, based on the fire study, the DFC built a new building and both companies have purchased new apparatus. Byron stated that the fire companies can not continue without financial backing and that Penn Township has a financial responsibility to the fire companies so that they can accomplish the goals of the fire study. The PTS has stated informally that it does not want to own fire stations and equipment. If the fire companies are to take on this responsibility they need more funding.

Byron pointed out that both fire companies have presented reports detailing expenses for 2006. He briefly reviewed the expenses in the DFC 2007 budget. He then noted that the DFC has been receiving approximately the same amount of funding, with only small increases, from the PTS for as long as he can remember.

Monte briefly reviewed the expenses of the PFC for the period of 2004 through the present, noting that the three-year total was in excess of \$500,000. He noted that there is no money at this time for vehicle maintenance, adding that the PFC has a nice little nest egg but has chosen not to transfer money from accounts at this time until it has to.

Monte noted that, with the increasing costs of sewer, gas, and taxes, residents can't afford to play bingo and that bingo revenue is way down. He said that expenses take 50% of the bingo revenue, and unless forty people start attending, bingo will be cancelled.

Monte and Byron both noted the amount of time volunteers spend that, coupled with full-time jobs and family responsibilities, is leading to burn-out. Firefighters have no time or energy left for fund-raisers. Byron said both fire companies need more money and the financial reports were presented to justify the expenses. The companies are not asking for the additional contribution from the PTS until fiscal year 2008.

PENN TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
100 Municipal Building Road
Duncannon, PA 17020-1100

Henry A. Holman, Jr., Chairman

Charles H. Stoner, Vice Chairman

Robert E. Shaffer, Sr., Supervisor

MINUTES OF MARCH 21, 2007

Page 2 of 2

Fire Study

Chairman Holman commented that the Township made cuts in the 2007 budget to keep from enacting a real estate tax increase. He offered that, if the fire companies are looking to the PTS for more revenue, a tax increase would be necessary. He noted that the PTS is in the same financial condition as the fire companies and might need to raise taxes to pay its own expenses, even before an increase in its fire company contributions.

Chairman Holman offered that he has not changed his opinion on a fire tax since the issue was discussed at previous meetings. He said that he thought the fire companies were to have been planning a public relations campaign to inform the public what the funds were needed for.

On behalf of both fire companies, Byron then requested the equivalent of a one mill fire tax, or \$126,000, to be distributed equally between the companies. He explained that the PTS is currently providing \$50,000 plus workmen's compensation, so the increase would be \$76,000.

Chairman Holman stated that he could support an increase if the money would be given to the fire companies on a five-year plan and not in one lump sum.

Byron asked the PTS to take the request under advisement and get back to the fire companies if it accepts the proposal. Monte reiterated that the companies can not implement the fire study without additional funds. He noted that the law requires municipalities to provide fire protection.

Paul offered that the fire companies needed a grass-roots public relations campaign, to involve the public. He suggested that they present the same information to the public in the way it was presented tonight. He said that the way to convince the public of the necessity for a tax increase is to "chisel little bits of the rock" away one step at a time. Even if the tax increase is not implemented, if the companies got twenty more people to contribute, the campaign was worth it. Jodi suggested that it would give validity to the presentations if the PTS was also in attendance to verify that the fire companies' need is there.

Byron requested that future talks be held once a month to discuss call box changes and tax rebates, among other issues.

OTHER ISSUES

The Secretary stated that the Penn Township Planning Commission (PTPC) is considering adding height restrictions of commercial and residential buildings into the zoning ordinance and would like input from the fire companies. Suggestions were made at this time, with the companies to provide final input for the April 16, 2007 PTPC meeting.

Monte suggested that the PTPC consider requiring that house driveways be accessible to fire equipment. He noted developments in other municipalities where driveways were so steep they were inaccessible. He also recommended that the Township should enact a fire code.

The meeting ended at 7:30 p.m.

Susan E. Long
Recording Secretary