

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

Henry A. Holman, Jr., Chairman

Lucinda (CeCe) Novinger, Vice-Chairman

Brian Maguire, Supervisor

MINUTES OF JULY 27, 2011

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The Penn Township Board of Supervisors (PTS) met on Wednesday, July 27, 2011 in the Municipal Building. Chairman Henry Holman, Jr., Vice-Chairman CeCe Novinger, and Supervisor Brian Maguire were in attendance. Other personnel present were P. Richard Wagner (Solicitor), Helen Klinepeter (Secretary), Police Chief Paul Sheaffer, and Christine Shaffer (Treasurer). A list of visitors is on file in the Township office.

Chairman Holman called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The Chairman reminded all present that the meeting was being taped to assist in the preparation of minutes, and anyone privately taping needed to declare that to all in attendance. Mr. Stanley Mutzabaugh announced that he would be recording the meeting.

PROPOSED POLICE CONTRACT

Chairman Holman began the meeting with a brief history of how the idea of a possible police agreement with the Borough of Duncannon came about. He also commented on a recent Patriot News article that featured comments by Dauphin County Coroner Graham Hetrick. It was chairman Holman's opinion that an increase in coverage to both municipalities would be a good solution to preventing problems in the entire Duncannon area. After meetings between representatives of the Borough, Township, and Solicitors from both municipalities, this meeting was the next step for the Township to start obtaining public feedback on the proposal. Three representatives from Duncannon Borough; Frank Epply, Michael Bomburger, and Gerald Bell, were present. Following this meeting, the next step for the township to hold a joint public meeting once the proposed contract was available in more detail.

Chairman Holman then turned the floor over to Solicitor Wagner for comments. He began with a personal history of his experience in this subject, which included representation on both the labor and management sides. Mention was made about the issues of rising expenses versus stagnant or declining revenues, and the need to provide adequate coverage at a reasonable cost. Northern York Regional Police Department was given as an example of one way to accomplish this goal. Solicitor Wagner then went on to discuss different options, such as regionalization or contracted coverage, and the pros and cons of each, and why a contract for coverage was the best option for this situation. Some preliminary numbers were provided to show how much has been spent for police coverage in the Township, and the amount of service hours provided. It was also stated that the Perry County District Attorney had indicated that the contract proposal seemed legal at this point.

The floor was then opened for questions and comments from the public.

Bob Harbold asked how many officers would be on rotation and whether it would be one per shift to cover the entire area, and was told by Solicitor Wagner that they believed it would be the Chief and 5 part-time officers. He also commented on the quality of the officers being considered. Mr. Harbold then asked that given the current lack of coverage in Duncannon and the issues that has created, if that would be sufficient to handle the administrative and patrol

duties, and ensure that the Township maintains adequate coverage. Solicitor Wagner explained that the proposal allows for increased coverage within the Township for no additional cost.

Carl Fox then asked if the costs were going to be divided out based on percentage of time in each municipality. It was explained that the proposed contract would provide for a certain amount of coverage to be provided, and provided an example to explain. Mr. Fox then asked about accountability, and was told that forms were being made to track time spent and costs incurred for both sides, as neither side wants to pay the other's bills. Chairman Holman also brought up the possibility of the Borough providing some of the equipment, and the option of reviewing the contract on a quarterly basis to resolve any issues that may arise, and the numbers are still flexible to allow for adjustments.

John Gerner asked for an explanation on how the coverage will be organized. Chief Sheaffer explained that the first 3 months will be used as a trial period to see how best to set a schedule, and see if 8 or possibly 12 hour shifts are needed, and what times a two-officer shift may be necessary. Mr. Gerner agreed that there will be times that one officer is adequate, but other times will require a second officer to be available, especially on the weekends. This trial period will be monitored closely to allow for adjustments. Also, reports will be made to both municipalities. Solicitor Wagner also brought up the amount of time when the state police are the only coverage in the area, and the response issues that can create.

Bob Johnson asked if the allotted time in the coverage allowed for just patrolling, or does that include the clerical duties as well? He also asked who would be responsible for doing that paperwork, or if a clerical staff would become necessary. Solicitor Wagner replied that it was his opinion that the Borough understood that part of their coverage time included the associated duties that accompany patrolling, including court time, etc. Mr. Bomberger then commented that the goal was to get 84 hours of coverage per week for each municipality.

Lynn Harbold brought up a fee issue with using the State Police, and Solicitor Wagner stated that the fee for services was only a proposal by the state, and not expected to be approved by the state legislature. It also was to apply to municipalities that had no police protection, therefore would not be applicable to this situation. It also was mentioned that the municipalities that would be affected by that fee have much larger populations than either the Borough or Township. Mr. Harbold then asked that given the pattern of applicants and their experience level, and the types of issues that are being encountered in the area, are those officers being considered able to meet the physical demands of the job? Chief Sheaffer replied that he doesn't discuss how specific crimes are handled.

Mr. Gerner asked about the risks of entering into a contract, and Solicitor Wagner replied that the main risk was cost, and how costs were allocated. By keeping the terms of the contract short, it allowed for better assessments to be done by both sides. Mr. Gerner then asked about liability, and was informed that this was one of the topics that had been researched early on, and the current insurance coverage would be adjusted to take the new situation into account. Chairman Holman added that another downside to this would be not having the additional coverage for both the Township and Borough

Stanley Mutzabaugh mentioned that the original idea had been mentioned at previous meetings, but then not discussed, and wanted to know why?. Chairman Holman stated that the Township waited until there was more of a detailed plan before having a public discussion. Mr. Mutzabaugh then asked who Chief Sheaffer would report to, and was told that it would be the Supervisor designee for the Township, and the Borough Police Committee. Issues would also be addressed as they occur. Finally, he asked what would happen should a workers'

compensation claim arise, and then the contract dissolved. Chairman Holman and the Borough both stated that there would not be a closed door at that point, and any remaining issues could be worked out. That was the idea behind a 1-year contract with 90-day reviews. Mr. Epply from Duncannon Borough stated that the Borough was willing to do what they could to make this work and be fair.

Lee Wright inquired if the new hires would be subject to unemployment claims if the contract were to fall through, and was told that they would all be at-will employees.

Bob Johnson commented that he felt the Borough seemed unified in their attempt to make this work.

Bob Harbold asked if any of the part-time officers are subject to a limit on the number of hours that they can work per day if they happen to also be employed at another police department, and Solicitor Wagner said that at least 2 or 3 of the officers being considered are no longer employed elsewhere, and he was not aware of any stipulations regarding a maximum hour per day. Mr. Harbold also asked about a potential turnover issue, and Chief Sheaffer stated that those candidates interviewed presented a good chance for retention, as they were more seasoned officers, versus recent graduates, who might not stay as long. Mr. Harbold asked if an older force was a good idea, and the Chief and Chairman Holman felt that the experience level would be beneficial.

Jodi Rissinger asked where the advertisements for new officers had been placed, and was told the position was advertised in the Patriot News, Duncannon Record, and local TV. She was also told that these were all new applications. In response to her question on when the advertisement was placed, she was told that it was in late April or early May of this year, and an exact date could be provided for her later.

In response to Mr. Gerner's final question of what was the next step, Chairman Holman replied that the Borough and the Township would have a joint public meeting to discuss all the details, and then if all was in order, the Borough would have to draft an ordinance to disband their department. In the meanwhile the Township will try to have everything ready to go with people qualified and equipment ready to go.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a Holman/Novinger motion, the PTS voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

Christine Shaffer
Recording Secretary