

MINUTES  
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE  
MAY 6, 2024

The Penn Township Public Safety Committee convened on Monday, May 6, 2024, at 7 p.m. Present were Chairman Heiland, Commissioners Baile, Berlingo, Brown, and Elksnis. Also present were Police Lieutenant Merwede, Fire Chief Clouser, Township Engineer Bortner, Zoning Officer Smith, and Township Secretary Sweeney. Township Manager Ledley was absent with notice. The following items were discussed:

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Commissioner Heiland announced that an executive session was held on April 15, 2024, following the Board of Commissioners meeting to consult with the solicitor to discuss personnel issues and other matters involving attorney client privilege. Additionally, he announced that there will be an executive session this evening following the Public Works Committee meeting to discuss personnel matters.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: The minutes of the April 1, 2024, Public Safety Committee meeting were approved as submitted.

CITIZEN'S COMMENTS: Ms. Mary Beth Norton, O'Neill Avenue. Ms. Norton expressed her concerns about a neighbor parking an 18-wheeler diesel truck on McAllister Street, emitting toxic fumes into her home. She highlighted her efforts in contacting the police and referenced zoning ordinances that seemed ambiguous in enforcement. She sought clarification on legal actions and expressed frustration at the lack of resolution. Committee members discussed ongoing efforts to address the issue through potential ordinance changes but acknowledged legal complexities. They advised Norton on documenting violations for effective action and assured her of continued efforts to find a solution.

UPDATE ON PROBATIONARY FIREFIGHTER: Fire Chief Clouser reported the probationary firefighter recently failed the academy, prompting a restart in the selection process. Currently, 11 candidates are undergoing testing for the candidate physical ability test (CPAT) at the Lancaster County Fire Training Center. The director of the Fire Academy expressed confidence that passing the CPAT would bode well for the candidates in the subsequent phases of the academy. Updates on the progress are expected during the next public safety meeting, as the department works to develop a new list of candidates.

2018 PIERCE PUMPER TITLE TRANSFER: Fire Chief Clouser provided an update on the completion of the transfer process for the 2018 Pierce-Pumper. Last year in May, the final payment was made, and recently, the transfer was finalized with the assistance of the secretary and manager. The title for the truck has been obtained, allowing it to be removed from the Township's inventory.

REVIEW OF FIRE COMMISSION MEETING: Fire Chief Clouser provided an overview of the Fire Commission Meeting. The treasury report highlighted that ambulance billing revenue and

subscriptions are slightly above budget, but there is a salary budget concern for EMTs. The hiring of an advanced EMT was discussed to address the issue. A grant for the sprinkler systems offset budget overruns. The Commission entered agreements with Brown Plus and iSolve for financial oversight and payroll services. Building updates included completion of cement work at Clearview and upcoming assessments for other stations. A significant portion of the meeting was dedicated to an award ceremony recognizing the valor and clinical saves by several firefighters and EMS personnel. HR policies were reviewed and will be formally adopted at the next meeting. Operational policies and best practices will undergo a review process before implementation. Chief Clouser reported EMS operational policies are nearly finalized. Proctors for the physical agility test have been trained at the Lancaster County Training Center, which will reduce costs by conducting in-house testing. A plan to potentially improve the ISO rating to class 2 was submitted, aiming to lower the current class 3 rating. Additionally, a trust disbursement of over \$11,000 was received from a deceased resident of Penn Township, with the funds redirected to Hanover Area Fire and Rescue.

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER LAPTOP PROJECT: Emergency Coordinator Waltman reported on the establishment of an Emergency Operations Center (EOC). A quote for the necessary equipment, including four laptops and a printer, was presented. The total cost is approximately \$8,000. The laptops are intended for use by staff during emergency situations. Usage will vary depending on the incident, ranging from single-person incidents to larger emergencies involving multiple agencies. The EOC will be equipped to handle various emergency support functions such as finance, hazmat, and humanitarian relief. Four laptops were deemed adequate, considering the possibility of additional personnel bringing their own devices. The EOC location has backup power and broadband access. The board agreed that being prepared is crucial, even though there have been many "sunny days" without emergencies. Since the cost does not exceed the bid threshold and falls under the Costars program, no formal motion for approval was required. The total cost of \$7,800 will be covered by funds already set aside. The EOC will be part of a larger plan, with another center being developed by the borough in their new public safety building. The board had no further questions and agreed to move forward with the purchase and establishment of the EOC.

EMA UPDATE: Emergency Management Coordinator Waltman presented his report for March. Mr. Waltman also reported that the county's hazard mitigation plan has completed public review and is now with PEMA for approval. Once PEMA approves, the plan returns to the county for adoption and then goes to local municipalities for adoption. This process should be completed in the next two to three months, with the plan being valid for five years. Adoption of the hazard mitigation plan is required for federal funding. Appreciation was expressed to the Trinity Church of Nazarene for providing crisis care kits, which are hybrid toiletry kits. These kits have been essential in helping 13 individuals displaced by two fires in the past month. The church congregation assembles these kits, which are then distributed to affected individuals. The Red Cross also assists, and the church serves as a backup when the Red Cross cannot meet all needs. There were no further questions or issues raised, and the Committee expressed gratitude for the ongoing support from the community and organizations involved.

OTHER MATTERS: Fire Chief Clousher reported that last year, discussions were held regarding an ordinance for food trucks and updating the fire code. The current fire code includes a chapter on food trucks, but it does not fully address all concerns raised by the Zoning Officer regarding the food truck ordinance. Ahead of this meeting, the intention was to send proposed changes to the board, but due to time constraints, this will now be done tomorrow morning. These proposed changes, initially drafted by Solicitor Hovis, are expected to require minimal revisions. The updated proposal will include the food truck chapter for the board's review, and the Zoning Officer will be included in this process. The fire code update review will be added to the agenda for next month's meeting for further discussion.

Police Lieutenant Merwede informed the board that the hiring process is progressing, but noted that the top four candidates on the list have already been lost. Meeting the academy deadline by early to mid-July will be challenging, and the team will have a considerable amount of work ahead. However, they are committed to trying their best to meet this goal.

CITIZEN'S QUESTIONS TO COMMITTEE REGARDING DISCUSSION ITEMS: There were none.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna M. Sweeney,  
Township Secretary