

MINUTES  
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE  
SEPTEMBER 3, 2024

The Penn Township Public Safety Committee convened on Tuesday, September 3, 2024, at 6 p.m. Present were Chairman Heiland, Commissioners Baile, Berlingo, Brown, and Elksnis. Also present were Police Chief Hettinger, Fire Captain Adams, Township Engineer Bortner, Zoning Officer LeFevre, and Township Secretary Sweeney. The following items were discussed:

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Commissioner Heiland announced that an executive session took place on Monday, August 19th, 2024, following the Board of Commissioners meeting, where the solicitor was consulted on legal and personnel matters. Another executive session was held on Wednesday, August 21st, 2024, to address personnel issues.

Next month's Health and Sanitation Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 1st, at 6 p.m., with the Finance Committee meeting to follow immediately after. Additionally, there will be an executive session this evening, following the Health and Sanitation meeting, to discuss personnel matters.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: The minutes of the August 5, 2024, Public Safety Committee meeting were approved as submitted.

CITIZEN'S COMMENTS: Jason Huggins from 140 Center Street raised concerns about tractor-trailers making U-turns in his neighborhood on Center Street after realizing too late that they cannot proceed further due to inadequate signage. This has resulted in several accidents. He suggested placing clearer signs before the problem area to prevent trucks from entering the residential area. Chief Hettinger reported that originally, there were signs in Hanover Borough indicating "no trucks 500 feet ahead" after crossing the first set of railroad tracks. However, these signs caused confusion, leading truck drivers to stop in the middle of the road, thinking they couldn't proceed to the businesses located on Center Street. As a result, the signs were removed to allow traffic to continue. Additionally, "no left turn for trucks" signs were installed at the Hanover Terminal, and there is consideration of placing more signs further up the road near the Hanover Brands area to address the issue.

Additionally, Mr. Huggins expressed frustration with residents from nearby townhouses parking on his street, which is causing inconvenience for local homeowners. He requested that the issue be addressed. Chief Hettinger said they cannot regulate parking within private property or enforce zoning rules related to it. However, off-street parking is public and open to anyone, so we have no authority to control or restrict it.

ANNUAL HANOVER HALLOWEEN PARADE: Police Chief Hettinger reported that the Hanover Jaycees have officially requested to hold their annual Hanover Halloween Parade on October 24th, following the same format as in previous years. The Committee recommends approving the request.

POLICE CHIEF HETTINGER RETIREMENT: Chief Hettinger announced that he will officially retire from his role as Chief of Police of Penn Township on September 15, 2024, after 31 years of service. He has accepted a position with York County as the Executive Director of Public Safety. Chief Hettinger expressed his gratitude to the township and the commissioners for the opportunities he's had, stating that it has been his distinct pleasure to serve the residents. In response, the board expressed their deep appreciation for his contributions, especially during his tenure as Chief, and noted that he will be greatly missed.

REVIEW OF FIRE COMMISSION MEETING: Captain Adams provided an update on the recent Fire Commission meeting. He reported the primary topic was the shortage of EMS personnel, which raised union concerns about potential full outsourcing of EMS services. The board reassured attendees that full outsourcing is not planned; instead, it's a temporary measure until staffing levels are restored. The Fire Chief reiterated that outsourcing EMS services is only a temporary solution, necessary to meet the Department of Health's requirement for 24/7 ALS service. The job description for the Deputy Chief was approved, and the position has received 50 applications, which are now under review.

The building committee discussed potential future expansions by purchasing properties adjacent to the Clearview Fire Station, with the Chief and board members planning to contact the respective owners. Lastly, Jim Sheldon, the Borough Finance Director, announced plans to submit an SDMP grant in September for the pension review of Penn and Hanover firefighters, including EMS, with the aim of exploring ways to unify the pension system.

VACANT PROPERTY REGISTRATION ORDINANCE: Commissioner Heiland reported the he consulted with the solicitor to address the problem of blight and unused buildings. He stated that the Borough of Hanover implemented a vacant property registration ordinance about a year or two ago. This ordinance would require owners of vacant buildings to register them, pay a fee, and have the properties inspected periodically to ensure they remain safe and aren't at risk of collapse. He provided a copy of this ordinance; he suggested reviewing it for potential discussion at a future meeting to determine if it's something to consider implementing.

EMA UPDATE: Emergency Management Coordinator Waltman presented his report for September. He provided an update on the impact of Hurricane Debbie Remnant on August 8th and 9th. Regular communication was maintained with York OEM, Web USD, and the National Weather Service through Slack software during the storm. He traveled extensively, noting intermittent downpours and wind gusts that caused temporary flash flooding in the usual areas, although the Park Hills area surprisingly avoided flooding this time.

On August 9th, a disaster declaration was granted for 21 counties, including York, which opens state disaster relief funds, not federal. Additionally, he updated all GIS and sector maps for the upcoming Halloween Parade, ensuring better communication between marshals and fire police, who will be stationed at the square during the event.

OTHER MATTERS: Fire Captain Adams reported William McGee has been offered and accepted a position as the 16th firefighter in a floating role within the fire department. He reported Mr. McGee has completed fire academy training in 2023 in Frederick County, Maryland, and will not

need to attend another academy. The next steps involve finalizing the necessary processes, after which he will be ready to start his duties.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 6:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna M. Sweeney,  
Township Secretary