

SWATARA TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING II
DECEMBER 11, 2019

1. Call to Order: The Regular Meeting II of the Swatara Township Board of Commissioners was called to order at 7:12 pm by President Connolly on Wednesday, December 11, 2019, Township Administration Building, 599 Eisenhower Blvd., Swatara, PA 17111.
2. Pledge of Allegiance: President Connolly led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Invocation: Commissioner Troxell gave the invocation.
4. Roll Call: Commissioners Boudier, Connolly, Troxell, Varner and Zubeck were present. Also present: Solicitor Scott Wyland, Township Manager Jim Fosselman, Assistant Manager Kim Kaufman, Director of Fire and Emergency Services Michael Ibberson, Director of Public Safety Darrell Reider, Highway Superintendent Todd Webb, Director of Codes and Zoning Robert Ihlein and Secretary Mary Kepp.
5. Presentation of Award:
 - A. Life Saving Award and Award of Merit was presented to Cpl. Matthew Corby by Director of Public Safety Reider.
6. Executive Session: Was held prior to tonight's Commissioner's meeting regarding personnel.
7. Motion to Approve Agenda: Commissioner Boudier made a motion to approve tonight's agenda with the addition of 16A, seconded by Commissioner Troxell; unanimously approved.
16A. Motion to Confirm Compensation of Tax Collector.
8. Motion to Approve Items on Consent Agenda: Commissioner Troxell made a motion to approve items on consent agenda, seconded by Commissioner Varner; unanimously approved.
 - A. Monthly Departmental Reports
 - B. Committee Reports
 - C. Codes Reports
9. Consideration of Minutes - Regular Meeting I December 4, 2019: Commissioner Boudier made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Connolly; unanimously approved.
10. Recap of Tree Lighting Ceremony: This event was attended by over 500 people. There was a coloring contest, bike raffles, visits from Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus, police,

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firefighters, highway department, goodie bags, pizza, hot dogs, music by a DJ and lots of fun. Pictures are posted to the Township's Facebook page.

11. Visitors Requests and Comments:

Meghan ONeill, 5870 Bell Road: Referenced Township 2017 laws regarding proposed warehouses. The developers haven't addressed many issues including buffering, noise, light, septic, home values, wetlands, sloped lands, sink holes, limited hours of operation. Concerned about having trucks on Chambers Hill Road while school buses are on the same road. Requesting an additional traffic study.

The Regular Meeting II adjourned at 7:36 p.m. for the Public Hearing - Municipal Comprehensive Plan. The Regular Meeting II reconvened at 8:02 p.m.

Lisa Neiter, 6140 Hocker Drive: Concerned about decrease in property value. Would like the Township to ask CRG to add conditions to their agreement including a line of credit for future expenses to the residents. Still lots of questions that are unanswered. Also requested minutes posted on the Township's website be updated.

Billy Roberts, 1084 Highland Street: Inquired about sidewalks being added from Eisenhower Blvd to Turkey Hill. He also thanked the Commissioners for the warning lights by Swatara Middle School. Commissioner Connolly thanked him for his role as a school board member in helping to get this project completed. He did say the one light does shine on a neighbor's porch. He's also getting calls on drainage problems at 48th and Franklin Streets.

Tom Garlock, 6050 Hocker Drive: Upset about warehouse meetings. Conditions need to be put on CRG now. CRG's numbers in their traffic study are way off compared to other studies. He also wanted to know guidelines for the next meeting on December 18, 2019.

Robert Goucher, 6051 Hocker Drive: CRG hasn't turned over studies. He also stated all the vacant warehouse spaces available and why should we build more. The Township needs more space for recreational use.

Billy Roberts, 1084 Highland Street: He also feels there is a need for more recreational area. Commissioner Connolly spoke that it's disappointing the need for recreational area isn't as great as before. The number of leagues has dwindled off and have merge into other leagues. There are fields available but standing empty.

Terri Matio, 5991 Hocker Drive: She has the same concerns as others on Hocker Drive. She is very concerned about the amount of traffic. She hopes the Board takes all the comments into consideration before taking a vote.

Michael Tuckey, 5875 Gensemer Lane: He's concerned about the neighborhood. It will destroy the vegetation and there will be water issues. Also he is concerned about the noise from the warehouses being in the back yard of the school. The amount of traffic on

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Chambers Hill Road. His biggest complaint is CRG isn't being responsive. His neighbors don't feel like their voices are being heard.

12. Reports:

A. Manager's Report: none at this time

B. Treasurer's Report: Commissioner Troxell made a motion to accept the November 2019 treasurer's report. Seconded by Commission Boudier. Motion carried unanimously.

C. Solicitor's Report: none at this time

D. Stormwater Report: none at this time

E. Swatara Rising Comp Plan Report: The report is to be shared with Steel-High School District and will be voted on next month.

F. Fire Services Report: Report presented and will be posted in the Township lobby. They participated in the Tri-Community Fall Festival, Township's Hero Run and Veterans Day Service at Veterans Circle. A group of fire fighters designed and sold over \$1,000 in tee shirt sales for Feel Your Boobies Foundation. He announced Community Life Team is at full staff and will be adding a second EMS unit in the Township and will be available at peak hours. They adopted a family again this year for Christmas. Everything they do is by donation through the police, highway and firefighters. The Highway Department built beds for the children of the family.

G. Director of Public Safety Report: Report presented and will be posted in the Township lobby. Koffee with a Kop is at McDonald's tomorrow. The highlight of the Community Service report was the 7th Annual 5K Hero Race. Over \$21,000 was raised for Wounded Warriors, Fallen Firefighters and the Township K9 Fund. Falkner Toyota donated \$10,000 to the Township K9 Fund.

13. Consideration of Ordinance: 2020 Budget (O-2019-07). Motion by Commissioner Troxell; seconded by Commissioner Connolly. Commissioner Troxell thank Township Manager Fosselman for all his hard work and knowledge to make this a great budget including a tax reduction without cutting any services. Commissioner Varner questioned Commissioner Troxell if he is confident that the budget is stable. Commissioner Troxell assured him with the efforts by Township Manager Fosselman and his excellent investments this budget is sustainable and he thinks we could have done a 10% instead of a 5% tax decrease. He projects another tax cut next year. Commissioner Zubeck noted that there is a 3% increase in contractual wages. She's would like clarification that it's closer to 12% increase along with a 5% increase in health care. Township Fosselman said the percentage of raises to union employees is based on their longevity and those increases are built in and reflected in the 2020 Budget along with the cut in taxes. She questioned whether the budget is sustainable with having a decrease in millage and what the tax savings are per property owners. Township Manager Fosselman said the amount depended on the

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assessed value of the house. The average tax savings will be between \$9 and \$17. Commissioner Zubeck asked about the tax reduction on business properties within the Township. Township Manager Fosselman didn't have that information on hand as that would come from the Tax Office. Commissioner Zubeck has stated her concerns for two meetings regarding the budget. Also, this is a one-year budget when the Township should be working on multi-year budgets. She doesn't want to have to come back and raise taxes in a year or two due to a tax decrease for 2020 and we didn't budget correctly. Commissioner Troxell informed the Board the Township is starting off the new year with a projected surplus of \$569,000. Commissioner Connolly noted there had been a tax increase in the Township for five years before him and Commissioner Troxell took office. Taxes had been increased between 6 and 43%. Since they took office there have been no tax increases. Thru the efforts of Commissioner Troxell the capital revenue surplus grew by five times. The Township didn't raise taxes, and increased services. This is a reverse trend from previous years. Commissioner Troxell thought we could have given a large tax reduction and thinks that there will be another tax reduction next year. He supports this budget. Commissioner Zubeck expressed that she hopes it is correct. We lost revenue this year. She's concerned about passing a one-year budget when the Department of Community and Economic Development puts out planners for municipalities and they recommend working on budgets of 3 to 5 years. Commissioner Troxell suggested that DCED doesn't follow their own practices. He thanked the Township Manager again for all his knowledge and efforts in putting together the 2020 budget. Motion unanimously passed.

Commissioner Boudier - Yes
Commissioner Connolly - Yes
Commissioner Troxell - Yes
Commissioner Varner - Yes
Commissioner Zubeck - Yes

14. Consideration of Resolution: 2020 Tax Rates (R-2019-42). Motion by Commissioner Troxell; seconded by Commissioner Boudier. After a discussion about the proposed tax decrease, the motion unanimously passed.

Commissioner Boudier - Yes
Commissioner Connolly - Yes
Commissioner Troxell - Yes
Commissioner Varner - Yes
Commissioner Zubeck - Yes

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15. Consideration of Resolution: Tax Discount and Penalties (R-2019-43). Motion by Commissioner Troxell; seconded by Commissioner Boudier. After a discussion, motion unanimously passed.
16. Permission to Advertise Modification to Planning Commission: Motion by Commissioner Connolly; seconded by Commissioner Boudier. Solicitor Wyland brought up that the motion was made at the previous meeting to advertise to reduce the number of planning commission members from 9 to 5 to align with the number of Commissioners. It failed by a 2-2 vote with only four Commissioners being in attendance. Commissioner Zubeck expressed her concerns at the last meeting. Her thought is the planning commission is a very dynamic group that knows the area and their neighborhoods. Also, this item had been added to last meeting's agenda at the last minute. Commissioner Connolly responded that the number of Township Commissioners was reduced from 9 to 5. Reducing the number of planning commission members would be aligned with the Board Commissioners. Planning commission members were appointed by a Commissioner from their ward. With having five planning commission members, all areas of the Township would be represented rather than just neighborhoods. Also, no planning commission members would be losing their position as terms have ended for four of the members. Commissioner Zubeck said they volunteer for their positions. Commissioner Troxell said volunteers receive a monthly stipend. He served on the planning commission for thirteen years and he believes five members are more effective and less bureaucratic and easier to work with. It would also save administrative costs. Motion passed by a 3-2 vote.
- Commissioner Boudier - Yes
Commissioner Connolly - Yes
Commissioner Troxell - Yes
Commissioner Varner - No
Commissioner Zubeck - No
- A. Motion to Confirm Compensation of Tax Collector (R-2019-44). Motion by Commissioner Troxell; seconded by Commissioner Boudier. Commissioner Troxell asked Solicitor Wyland if a resolution is needed to confirm compensation of Tax Collector. Solicitor responded it is necessary if there is a change. Commissioner Zubeck questioned why there is a resolution if no changes are being made. Commissioner Troxell announced he was seeking a resolution to remove administrative support and administrative officers for tax collecting from the township building. Commissioner Varner expressed his concerns about this resolution being added at the last minute to the agenda. He is also confused to what is the plan. He feels the residents are going to be upset and wonders if any thought has been given to this decision. Commissioner Troxell responded that the tax collector is a separate office and should be paying for administration services to perform

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their function. The Township has provided an office, paid for utilities and other administrative costs. Tax collectors in other neighboring municipalities either rent an office, work from home or have an office in schools or administration buildings. Some municipalities have their taxes collected through the county. This change will save the Township over \$43,000. Commissioner Troxell is also concerned about security with people coming in and out of the building. Commissioner Zubeck says the timing is not right. She's upset that this has never come up and was added to the agenda at the last minute. The Board hasn't met with the Tax Collector and there has been no discussion with him. She feels this isn't the right way to treat people. He also may have to lay off his staff right before Christmas. Commissioner Varner inquired if anybody had talked to the County. Commissioner Connolly explained that the monies collected through the Township are divided, with Swatara Township receiving the least at 14%, Central Dauphin School District receiving 56% and the remainder going to Dauphin County. Neither the school district nor county reimburse the Township for any expenses. He pointed out the timing is good because the new millage was just voted on and we can start the process of taxes for next year with the new rate. Also, 94% of tax bills are paid through escrow. It is not fiscally sound to our residents to spend over \$43,000 to receive 4% of the 14% of taxes collected. He is also aware of security issues in the building. Commissioner Zubeck stated the space provided is a convenience for the residents and maybe we could reach out to the school district or county for reimbursement. She also stated there was no discussion ahead of time. No transparency. Commissioner Boudier responded that it's unfair for the Township residents to pay over \$43,000 for the full load when we receive the least amount of taxes collected. Commissioner Varner stated that some residents like to visit the Township and pay their taxes in person. Commissioner Boudier responded to tell the county and school district to chip in towards the \$43,000. It is not worth the taxpayers to pay \$43,000 for convenience. Motion passed by a 3-2 vote.

Commissioner Boudier - Yes

Commissioner Connolly - Yes

Commissioner Troxell - Yes

Commissioner Varner - No

Commissioner Zubeck - No

17. Subdivision/Land Development Plans:

A. Consideration of Improvement Guarantee Reduction - Safelite Auto Glass, 1251 Eisenhower Blvd. Commissioner Zubeck made a motion to approve; seconded by Commissioner Troxell.

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18. Visitor Requests & Comments:

Michael Tuckey, 5875 Gensemer Lane: He's disappointed the Board didn't discuss removal of the tax office before it was put on tonight's agenda.

Meghan O'Neill, 5890 Bell Road: She indicated she would rather not have a tax reduction but save that money for down the road. While it is about a \$16 yearly tax savings for residents, it is much more tax savings for businesses.

19. Any Possible Storm water Violations We Need to Investigate?

Billy Roberts, 1084 Highland Street: Stormwater issue at Highland and Hanshue near Swatara Middle School and 48th and Franklin Streets.

Lisa Neiter, 6140 Hocker Drive: Drainage issue on Hocker Drive

20. Commissioners Requests and Comments, Additional Business and Correspondence:

Commissioner Varner: He's been a commissioner for 8 years. He feels it's irresponsible to the taxpayers to bring a vote to change the location of the tax office especially at the last minute. He also wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Commissioner Zubeck: She's in agreement with Commissioner Varner. She's upset that two weeks in a row there have been last minute items added to the agenda. She also wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

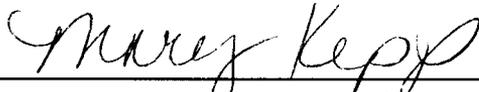
Commissioner Boudier: He acknowledged it is Commissioner Troxell's last regular meeting. He thanked him for his services and recognized how much he contributed to the Township. He also wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Commissioner Troxell: He thanked Commissioner Boudier for his kind words. He also praised him for everything he does. He will stay involved in the Township and prays for all of us.

Commissioner Connolly: He thanked the entire staff of the Township and always going above and beyond. He is proud of the amount of time and money they dedicate to help others. Our Highway, Police and Firefighters provided services last night during President Trump's visit to Hershey. He has seen many changes in the Township and worked with different Boards. Its always about what is best for the Township even when everyone isn't in agreement. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

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12. Adjournment: Commissioner Connolly made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Boudier. Motion carried unanimously. The Regular Meeting II adjourned 10:28 pm.



Mary Kepp, Township Secretary