

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING II

SWATARA TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

OCTOBER 14, 2020

1. **Call to Order**: President Connolly called the Regular Meeting II of the Swatara Township Board of Commissioners to order at 7:02 p.m. Wednesday, October 14, 2020 at the Swatara Township Municipal Building, 599 Eisenhower Boulevard, Swatara, PA 17111.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**: Boy Scout Troop 36 led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. **Invocation**: Pastor Gary Lathrop performed the invocation.
4. **Roll Call**: Commissioners Zubeck, Varner, Ellis, Vice President Boudier and President Connolly were present. Also present: Township Manager Jim Fosselman, Assistant Manager Kim Kaufman, Solicitor Scott Wyland, Director of Public Safety and Sergeant-at-Arms Darrell Reider, Fire Chief Michael Ibberson, Director of Planning and Zoning Robert Ihlein, Highway Superintendent Todd Webb, and Assistant Secretary Karen Alleman.
5. **Announce Executive Session**: An Executive Session was held to discuss a personnel matter. No action was taken.
6. **Swearing-in of K-9 Santi**: Public Safety Director Reider gave a brief history of Officer Chris Smith. Officer Smith then presented K-9 Santi for his official swearing-in by Magisterial District Justice Michael J. Smith. Santi is a Bhutanese word that means "Peace."
7. **Visitors Requests and Comments**:
 - A. **Michael Tuckey, 5875 Gensemer Lane**: Noted there were a lot of members of the volunteer fire companies and residents that would be making statements this evening regarding the future of the fire companies. He agreed that the police department needed a facility for a growing department. He feels the fire companies are being set up to fail to accommodate the idea of a big fire company. He feels there is an untrained leadership team that does not communicate to the firefighters. He does not feel a borrowing should be made to build a new multi-million-dollar fire building. He feels the township needs to be fiscally responsible.
 - B. **Debra Noles, 6080 Hocker Drive**: Instead of borrowing, she thinks the township should save or be thrifty. Asked why each fire chief needs to have a township issued vehicle to respond to emergencies. She feels fire chiefs need to report to the fire house first in order to respond to an emergency. She feels the way is being paved for a paid fire company.
 - C. **Mary Klaus, 447 Pritchard Court**: She is a long-time firefighter. She thanked the township for providing good apparatus and equipment to protect residents. All the fire companies in the township need help, they are losing volunteers. She is 100% in favor of the police department receiving a new building. She said there are plans to close Chambers Hill and Bressler fire companies and move them to one station hoping people would go there to run calls. She would like a meeting with all fire chiefs, so they are all on the same page. She would like more attention given to personnel. She would like the volunteers to receive shots they were promised to keep them safe and protected.
 - D. **Robert Patterson, 6111 Chatham Court**: Has been an active member of the Rutherford Fire Company for over 33 years. Volunteers are on a drastic decline because of how the township fire service is being run. Multiple requests for meetings with the fire chief have been declined. Swatara Township fire and rescue is not the original plan agreed to. There were supposed to be five companies, each retaining their own identity. Company officers

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are no longer elected by the company, they are appointed by the township. All new gear and helmet fronts say "91." Displaying 91 on Rutherford's gear implies they are members of company 91 which is not the case, nor will it ever be. Some members have recently joined other fire companies. Two current fire chiefs do not currently have firefighter one certification which is a requirement to be a township officer.

- E. **Josh Durbin, 7042 Woodsman Drive**: There are currently seven chiefs, each has one vehicle. The State training officers refer to the township chiefs as "The Tahoe Task Force." If the chief is not the duty officer, he should respond to the nearest station to respond to a call. All township trainings are always held at Station 1. Trainings are longer than usual because of large class size.
- F. **Larry Hassman, 70 North 62th Street**: Rutherford Fire Company are all home responders, meaning they don't have live-ins. Their response time is 4-6 minutes. What has been a strong company for the past three decades is now struggling.
- G. **Bob Zalek, 864 Monroe Street**: Has been in fire services for the last 44 years. He has seen many changes, good and bad. He was 100% in favor of the fire tax back in 1992. The tax was never supposed to be used to build buildings. Why is there a proposed building less than one-half mile away from another fire company? Is the fire house a want or a need? He sees no need to build a new fire house. He said the fire tax has increased 500% over the last five years.
- H. **Tom Garlic, 6050 Hocker Drive**: He is not a firefighter, but feels that their words need to be heard. \$56,900 out of a \$100,000 budget for officers, plus a car, is a lot. The Commissioners don't even make what the officers do. Fire Marshal Ibberson says we only need four full time firefighters. Why do we need paid firefighters when there are more than four volunteers? This will be a huge impact on taxpayers down the road for increased debt you are placing on taxpayers.
- I. **George Galinac, 521 Beck Circle**: He is a former firefighter and fire chief from Chambers Hill, with 37 years in fire service. He left the fire service because of politics and it has not changed. The township has lost so many volunteers because of the fire chief. He has an agenda to do away with volunteers. There are two sets of rules for the fire service, one for the firefighters and one for the chiefs. The chiefs must be more easily identifiable. He retired from his full-time job and was asked to return to Chambers Hill as a driver. He witnessed conduct that was not very professional and will not return to fire services. The chiefs are now appointed and have book learning, but no common sense.
- J. **Gary Harvey, 105 South 47th Street**: Members of the Lawnton Fire Company held a meeting in October and decided to sell their building. A lot of the older members expressed their concern about the way the Lawnton Fire Company was shut down and equipment taken from the station without notification. There are still people in Lawnton that are not aware there is no equipment at the station. He asked the Commissioners and Chief Ibberson to take a few moments to tell the members present what the future is for the fire service.

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8. **Motion to Approve Agenda:** A motion was made by Vice President Boudier to approve the agenda, with changes, seconded by Commissioner Ellis. Motion carried unanimously. The following items were added: Item 12H - appointments to boards and commissions, and 21B - Schaedler Yesco consideration of extension of time was added.
9. **Motion to Approve Items on Consent Agenda:** Vice President Boudier made a motion to approve the consent agenda items, seconded by Commissioner Ellis. Motion carried unanimously.
 - A. Monthly Departmental Reports
 - B. Committee Reports
 - C. Codes Report
 - D. Modifications to Health Care Program Relative to Swatara Township Authority Benefits
10. **Consideration of Minutes – September 9, 2020:** Commissioner Ellis made a motion to approve the September 9, 2020 minutes as presented, seconded by Vice President Boudier. Motion carried unanimously.
11. **Presentation and Consideration of Website Provider:** GraphTech and Triscari made a Powerpoint presentation to the Board. Commissioner Zubeck made a motion to approve hiring GraphTech and Triscari as the Website provider, seconded by Commissioner Ellis. Motion carried unanimously.
12. **Reports:** All reports are posted in the lobby of the municipal building.
 - A. **Manager’s Report:** The township’s liquid fuels fund was audited by the State Auditor General’s office and passed with no comments.
 - B. **Treasurer’s Report:** President Connolly made a motion to approve the September 2020 treasurer’s report, seconded by Commissioner Ellis. Motion carried unanimously.
 - C. **Solicitor’s Report:** Nothing at this time.
 - D. **Stormwater Report:** Report given to Board prior to meeting.
 - E. **Swatara Rising Comp Plan:** Mr. Ihlein said the township is ahead by more than one hundred building and zoning permits from last year at this time. He would like to modernize the building and codes department. He has spoken with Commissioner Varner and would like to see a software and hardware update. He would like to see a Forward Facing Portal and a mobile app for his department. These are not big budget items.
 - F. **Fire Services Report:** Fire Chief Ibberson said a grant submitted by CapCOG was not awarded to them and will be applied for again next year. We are still awaiting the final ISO rating. Test runs for the NFPA physicals were started last week. The physicals will be made available to everyone in the department by the end of October. He is working on refreshing their website to make it recruitment friendly. The new format for his report also contains an applicant section. This month there were five new applicants. There is also a staff report showing active personnel. There were sixty-three total active personnel this month. The average turn out per incident is 7.6 and year to date is 8.5. There were 271 calls for EMS service, mutual aide handled 48 of those calls, the rest were handled by Community Life Team. Commissioner Zubeck asked for the average monthly turnout of personnel. Officers

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are included in the monthly turnout numbers. President Connolly pointed out that October is Fire Prevention Month, and this is Fire Prevention Week. Many township companies provided remote sessions to schools and the public during Fire Prevention Week. Chief Ibberson said the Fire Officers work very hard and fire services is changing. Every Officer has public safety as their first priority. He is trying to ensure that there is a fire service to provide to citizens. Training standards will be phased in over the next seven years. Standards are based on national standards. The township provides and pays for the firefighters training. The helmet fronts were changed to a color-based system, which the fire services board voted on. He believes that career fire services will come eventually. He is trying to plan for it now, not when it becomes a problem. It will be implemented to supplement the volunteers. There is not a volunteer problem, there is an availability problem. He stands by all the Officers and is very proud of all of them.

Commissioner Zubeck supports fire service. She is disappointed when volunteers go to other fire stations. No one cares more about public safety than she does. We have the best training, the best equipment, the best of everything. We make sure our firefighters are prepared to respond to calls. In Pennsylvania there is not a set statute that tells people exactly what type of training they must have. She wants to make sure the training fits the volunteer fire service. We do not want to help volunteers leave the fire service. She wants to make sure we are doing everything right. She would like to see more input from firefighters to the Fire Advisory Board. She encourages Chief Ibberson to have better communication. She would like to be provided the training standards for a driver and an interior firefighter. She would like Chief Ibberson to do a comparison statewide to see what other municipalities are doing in Pennsylvania. She feels the rank and file should have more input. The fire program should not be so top heavy. Chief Ibberson invited her to come to a Fire Advisory Board meeting. The next Fire Advisory Board meeting is October 29. Commissioner Zubeck is very proud of the fire services in the township. She wants to make sure the firefighters are being heard.

- G. **Director of Public Safety Report:** Director Reider presented his report to the Board. The next Coffee With A Cop will be held on October 15, 9:00 a.m. at Starbucks in Swatara Square. Sgt. Bloss and K-9 J.T. were at a K-9 fund raiser at Texas Roadhouse on September 9. Officer Gibson and K-9 Kix surprised a young resident with a puppy his parents had purchased for him. The TEAM program continues in the schools with changes due to COVID.
- H. **Appointment to Boards and Commissions:** President Connolly made a motion to appoint Mr. Jack Harlacker to the Citizens Police Advisory Board. Motion seconded by Commissioner Zubeck, motion carried unanimously.
- 13. **Consideration of Ordinance: Lincoln Avenue No Parking:** Vice President Boudier made a motion to add an area on Lincoln Avenue to prohibit tractor trailer parking, seconded by Commissioner Zubeck. Motion carried unanimously. Ordinance 2020-05
- 14. **Consideration of Ordinance: Amending Vehicles and Traffic Ordinance:** Commissioner Varner made a motion to approve the amendment to the vehicles and traffic ordinance for special

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purpose parking areas, elimination of special parking areas, and no parking areas on North 69th Street. Motion seconded by Commissioner Zubeck. Motion carried unanimously. Ordinance 2020-06.

15. **Consideration of Resolution: Multimodal Transportation Fund Grant:** President Connolly made a motion to approve resubmittal of the Multimodal Transportation Fund Grant in regard to Eisenhower Boulevard from Lindle Road to Highland Street in the amount of \$441,000. Seconded by Commissioner Zubeck. Motion carried unanimously. R-2020-40
16. **Consideration of Resolution: Designation of Signatory for CARES Grant:** President Connolly made a motion to appoint the President of the Board signatory for the Dauphin County CARES Grant. Motion seconded by Commissioner Zubeck. Motion carried unanimously. R-2020-41
17. **Consideration of Traffic Survey: Parking Restrictions on Princeton Road:** Commissioner Varner made a motion to place parking restrictions on Princeton Road for tractor trailers and similar vehicles. Motion seconded by Commissioner Ellis. Motion carried unanimously.
18. **Consideration of Traffic Survey: Parking Restrictions on Yale Street:** Commissioner Varner made a motion to place parking restrictions on Yale Street for tractor trailers and similar vehicles. Motion seconded by Commissioner Ellis. Motion carried unanimously.
19. **Award of Grant for Harrisburg Area Transportation Study Highland Street Connectivity and Sidewalk Project:** The township has been awarded a grant for sidewalks along Highland Street in the area of Swatara Middle School, connecting Dewey Street, Hanshue Street, and Highland Street to the township's property. Central Dauphin School District will contribute \$50,000 to this project. \$403,084 has been awarded to the township for this project.
20. **Business Demographic Analysis:** President Connolly said he has a meeting with Mr. Mizerak of Dawood Engineering to look at land use in the township and how it affects tax rates in different zones and different districts for permitted use. He wants to look at three different directions, if the township stays the way it is without any more development, if the township restricted business development and that area was geared more toward housing, and a combination of the two. There will be more discussion at the next meeting regarding this matter.
21. **Subdivision/Land Development Plans:**
 - A. Site Improvement Security Release – Norfolk Southern Railway: Commissioner Zubeck made a motion to approve full release of the improvement guarantee for Norfolk Southern. Motion seconded by Commissioner Varner. Motion carried unanimously.
 - B. Schaedler Yesco Distribution Company Time Extension: Commissioner Zubeck made a motion to accept the time extension from Schaedler Yesco Distribution Company to November 30, 2020 for consideration of their proposed subdivision and land development plan. Commissioner Varner seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.
22. **Visitors Requests and Comments**
 - A. **Meghan O'Neill, 5870 Bell Road:** Wanted to make sure the township was protected from ransomware attacks with the new website. She requested the Board vote on the warehouse ordinance next month. Commissioner Zubeck asked Solicitor Wyland to review the website proposal.

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- B. **Zoey Loftus, 5631 Plainview Drive**: Would like to look at the RFP's for the new building. President Connolly said today was the deadline for proposals. No one has seen the proposals yet. Would like to see Bishop Park have trails for mountain biking. She suggested partnering with a volunteer group to put paths in at no cost to the township. She would like to keep her current fire house where it is so that her homeowner's insurance does not go up.
- C. **Mary Klaus, 447 Pritchard Court**: Noted Chambers Hill and Bressler Fire Company participated in virtual fire week with schools and made up packets for the students. She is concerned to hear Rutherford Fire Company losing members to other municipalities. She would like companies to be able to keep their identities. The fire companies are not the enemy, we have good apparatus, but the dedicated volunteers are what saves the township.
- D. **Debra Noles, 6080 Hocker Drive**: She has heard from multiple firemen that they have completed training, but the trainer won't sign off. If they successfully complete training, they should be certified. She is also concerned that Rutherford tried many times to meet with the Fire Chief but was refused a meeting.
- E. **Michael Tuckey, 5875 Gensemer Lane**: Asked how much the FEMA grant was for that was lost. Chief Ibberson responded over \$2 million. Wanted to verify the amount for Bishop Park was \$4 million, which included an amphitheater. Asked how many parks are in the township. There are 17 parks in the township.
- F. **Tom Garlic, 6050 Hocker Drive**: Asked why management was on the Fire Advisory Board. President Connolly responded the Board was created by ordinance and is composed of a designated officer from each fire company, two citizens, the director of fire services, and one member from the Board of Commissioners. When the ordinance was created all fire companies and the solicitor looked over the proposed ordinance and approved it.
- G. **Nancy Tuckey, 5875 Gensemer Lane**: Thought the three-minute time limit was difficult for the firemen to stay within. She would have liked to donate her three minutes to one of the firemen. President Connolly said each visitor is allotted three minutes.
23. **Possible Stormwater Violations**: None at this time.
24. **Commissioners Requests and Comments**
- A. **Commissioner Varner**: Thanked the fire service members for coming out. He thought there were good points made for discussion.
- B. **Commissioner Zubeck**: Thanked the fire service members for coming out, and the audience members. She thanked the Rutherford Fire Company for their hard work and dedication to the community. She noted the Chambers Hill United Methodist Church has a Trunk or Treat event coming up. She thanked the fire departments for doing remote sessions this week and preparing packets for the schools. She thanked the police for extra coverage to schools during COVID. She thanked Todd and the highway department for their hard work clearing drains and sweeping streets.
- C. **Commissioner Ellis**: Congratulated K-9 Santi and Officer Smith. She thanked everyone for coming out tonight.

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- D. **Vice President Boudier:** Nothing at this time.
- E. **President Connolly:** Director Reider, Lt. Stauffer and himself were pleased to attend the grand re-opening of the Paxtang Park which was brought back to life. The park is located under the Route 83 overpass area. Swatara Township partnered with the Dauphin County Housing Authority to renovate the Conestoga Court Basketball area. Richard E. Plesic Memorial Park was re-dedicated. The park received improvements and is on the site of the former Bressler School. Reminded everyone of Coffee With A Cop tomorrow. Thanked the highway department for brush pickup. Reiterated taxes have not gone up in seven years, and services have improved. He thanked everyone for coming out this evening.
25. **Adjournment:** Commissioner Zubeck made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:08 p.m., seconded by Commissioner Ellis. Motion carried unanimously.



Karen Alleman, Assistant Secretary