

**Tredyffrin Township  
Board of Supervisors' Meeting  
Minutes – December 5, 2011**

The regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Tredyffrin Township was held on the above date at the Township Building. Board members present included Chairman Robert Lamina; Vice-chairman Paul Olson; John DiBuonaventuro; Michael Heaberg; Evelyn Richter; and Michele Kichline. Also in attendance were Township Manager Mimi Gleason; Police Superintendent Andrew Chambers; Township Solicitor Vincent Donohue; Assistant Township Manager Tom Scott; Township Engineer Stephen Burgo; Finance Director Tim Klarich; Lt. Anthony Giaimo; Director of Public Works Scott Cannon; and Recording Secretary Patricia Hoffman.

**Call to Order**

Mr. Lamina called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

**Announcements**

This is the final reminder for all residents and staff that The American Red Cross will hold a Blood Drive at the Tredyffrin Township Building on Wednesday, December 14<sup>th</sup>, from 1 – 7 p.m. in Keene Hall. Information for the Drive and the link to log on and sign up can be found on the Tredyffrin Township website at [www.tredyffrin.org](http://www.tredyffrin.org) or by calling the American Red Cross at (215) 451-4000 and using sponsor code 02210984. If you experience technical difficulty with the online registration site, please call the Township main number at 610-644-1400 and speak with Kate Jones or Pat Hoffman to sign up.

There will be a public hearing for the Trout Creek Overlay District Ordinance following the public meeting of the Board of Supervisors on Monday, January 23, 2012.

Superintendent Chambers announced the retirement of Detective Sergeant John Bailey, effective at year-end. Detective Bailey completed his 35<sup>th</sup> year of service to Tredyffrin Township today. He was instrumental in forming the investigative unit in Tredyffrin Township and provided steady leadership for that unit. Superintendent Chambers added that he would be sorely missed by the Department. Mr. Lamina presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Detective Bailey who thanked the Board, the Police Department, and the residents who were present. On January 3, 2012, Detective Bailey will assume the role of magisterial district justice for West Whiteland Township.

**Minutes**

Motion made by Mr. Lamina, seconded by Mr. Olson, and passed unanimously to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of November 21, 2011.

**Resolution to Adopt and Submit a Revision of the VCTS Official Plan to the DEP**

Motion made by Mr. Lamina, seconded by Mr. Olson, to adopt the Resolution adopting and submitting a revision of the Official Plan to the Department of Environmental Protection for its approval of an Act 537 Plan Review for the Valley Creek Trunk Sewer. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **Supervisor Liaison Reports**

Mr. Lamina reported that the Board met in Executive Session prior to this meeting to discuss legal and personnel matters.

Mrs. Kichline reported that the Business Development Advisory Council held their first meeting on November 28<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Heaberg, Mr. Donahue and Mrs. Kichline met with them to define the broad parameters and to set the expectations for this committee. The committee will meet again on December 12<sup>th</sup>. The committee will provide updates to the Board of Supervisors on a periodic basis.

Mr. Olson reported that Mrs. Kichline, Mr. Cannon, Ms. Gleason and he met with the Mount Pleasant Civic Association regarding the replacement of the playground equipment that was destroyed by fire several months ago. We have received the insurance reimbursement. The equipment will be ordered tomorrow and it should be in place in the next month or so. The residents of the area who attended the meeting were pleased with the outcome.

## **Continued 2012 Preliminary Budget Discussion**

Mr. Lamina opened discussions with the following statement:

“During consideration of the Preliminary Budget during our last few public Board meetings, it was re-affirmed what we all believe to be true; and that is that current economic conditions continue to be unfavorable on the revenue side of our budget with respect to tax receipts and other funding sources, and that staff working with the Finance committee had done a good job of crafting a budget package that was lean on the expenditure side, limiting General Fund expenditures that were just about flat vs. our 2011 year end forecast, and only 1.5% increase greater than the 2011 Budget.

With that said, I also expressed at that time a view which I hope was shared by my colleagues, that we should continue to explore ways to reduce what was still proposed as a 6.9% increase in real estate property taxes next year in terms of overall millage.

At our last meeting on 11/28, I noted that there were essentially three ways to achieve that goal, either through a reduction in services that we either currently or are projecting to provide in 2012, defer or reduce projects to later years, or fund some of our projected shortfall through utilization of our reserves.”

Mr. Lamina made a motion to reduce the property tax increase contained in the Preliminary General Fund Budget to 3.5% by implementing the following reductions and/or deferrals in General Fund expenditures:

1. Reduction of professional fees by \$49,700;
2. Fund IT equipment previously sought to be paid through General Fund expenditures and in lieu thereof, fund with capital reserves in the amount of \$67,500;
3. Incorporate favorable adjustments to the preliminary budget identified by staff in various accounts in the amount of \$45,400;

4. Defer the numeric equivalent of two police officers' salaries until July 1, 2012, in the amount of \$85,800;
5. Defer the equivalent of Health Benefits associated with these salaries in the amount of \$41,500;
6. Make other adjustments as necessary to the General Fund reserves to result in a balance that results in a 3.5% increase in millage in the General Fund for 2012.

Mr. Olson seconded.

Mr. Lamina stated that there has been discussion with staff who agreed to challenge themselves in 2012 to live within an approximate 10% reduction in professional fees in the coming year. He stated that capital equipment that was going to be funded through the general fund in Ms. Gleason's previous presentations can be funded with capital reserves. Mr. Lamina added that Mr. Klarich reviewed the budget and found various other areas where expenses could be reduced. In the Police element of the motion, deferring numeric equivalent does not mean that this will lead to a reduction in police staff. We are currently running with 45 on staff. In discussions with Superintendent Chambers, he agreed to these numeric guidelines for six months.

Mr. DiBuonaventuro asked why we were holding off for six months instead of a different timeframe. Mr. Lamina stated that this was so that the budget could get to the numeric equivalent. Mr. DiBuonaventuro clarified that this numeric equivalent was equal to one officer for the year. Mr. Klarich confirmed. Mr. DiBuonaventuro clarified that if the total staffing level falls below 45, Superintendent would be able to hire immediately. Mr. Lamina said that this was the intent.

Mrs. Kichline asked if Superintendent Chambers finds a qualified candidate before July 1, does he have permission to hire. Mr. Lamina responded that the Chief would need to demonstrate that he could save the equivalent dollar amounts even with the new hire. Mr. DiBuonaventuro asked for clarification on hiring two new officers to bring staffing levels to 47 and Mr. Lamina responded that the Board and/or Personnel Committee would review such request to ensure that the Chief is staying within the numeric equivalents (approximately \$130,000 budget reduction on the staffing side for the police budget). Mrs. Kichline asked for Superintendent Chambers understanding. Superintendent Chambers responded that it was his understanding that he was to stay within the dollar amount and that it was achievable.

Mr. Lamina clarified that if the department should fall below the 45 staffing level, the Chief would have authority to hire with consultation of Personnel Committee. Mr. DiBuonaventuro clarified that if Superintendent Chambers found the appropriate candidate and was able to stay within the numeric equivalent stated above, he would have permission to hire that officer even though it would fall within the 45-47 range. Mr. Lamina again agreed, with the Superintendent consulting with the Personnel Committee.

Mr. Heaberg asked about the six police vehicles in the budget. Superintendent Chambers responded that ensuring that the police have reliable front line vehicles is a very serious safety concern. This year, the new vehicles that were approved in the previous budget were not deployed until September because of design issues with that model year and our interface needs. He added that 75,000 miles is the estimated safe mileage accrual for front line police vehicles

(based on polls around the country). Mr. Heaberg asked how many miles we average in a year for a front line vehicle and Lt. Giaimo responded 76,000 mile/year.

Mr. DiBuonaventuro asked if the notification system was budgeted to come out of the operations or the capital side. Ms. Gleason responded that it was in operations but was now included in what was moved to reserves.

Mrs. Richter asked for the estimated total of dollars projected to come from reserves to balance this budget. Mr. Klarich responded that it was between \$600,000 and \$700,000. Mr. Olson asked what would remain in the reserves after the reduction and Mr. Klarich responded it would be between \$14,500,000 and \$16,000,000.

A roll call vote was taken to adopt the motion made by Mr. Lamina to adopt the general fund budget with the amendments to the preliminary budget that were made tonight. Mrs. Kichline voted aye; Mrs. Richter voted aye and thanked Mr. Lamina for working with the staff to make improvements in the budget but felt we should go further to fill the gaps in the budget without going to the reserves; Mr. Olson voted aye; Mr. Lamina voted aye; Mr. Heaberg voted aye; Mr. DiBuonaventuro voted aye. The motion passed.

Mr. Lamina continued with discussion of the capital budget. He stated that the Fire Companies are funded every year through general fund and capital expenditures from the capital reserves from the Township and through funding a one-time passed through the Township from the State to the fire companies. This year, the state provided a one-time increase to the fire companies that was \$258,000 more than was originally planned and budgeted over the prior year which equated to a 60% increase overall that was split between the two fire companies. The fire companies will be fully supported in 2012. Mr. DiBuonaventuro clarified that additional funding was due to an advance collection from insurance companies a year in advance which is the source of the State funding; that it was not a true increase.

Mr. Lamina stated that the next capital item was the IT web enhancements. These enhancements are budgeted at \$100,000 and he added that there was some discussion after the last meeting if this was appropriate for 2012. Mr. DiBuonaventuro added that the \$100,000 is divided into two equal parts of \$50,000 each – ½ for the up-front platform and ½ for the back-end bridges to the services so that the platform could be used. Mrs. Kichline added that this was discussed at the Business Development Advisory Council meeting and they were tasked with reviewing the Township website to determine how effective it is and how it could be improved to move forward to better serve the community. The committee will plan to report to the Board in the spring. Mr. Heaberg added that Mike Giurastante, IT Director, provided a memo to the Board dated November 14<sup>th</sup> that detailed how the first \$50,000 would be spent for the front-end content management system which would include mapping, extranet, first generation online permitting system, and an e-payment system, all of which would enable the Township website to be more user-friendly. Mr. Heaberg concluded by stating that he is in favor of spending the first \$50,000 in 2012 with the caveat that the staff will provide more detail of what any ongoing licensing fees would be needed and what would be the timeline for implementation. Mrs. Richter asked if we would be able to see more expenditures removed from the IT package pending a review from the Business Development Advisory Council. She added that their report may be able to provide the best direction on how to improve the website. Mr. Heaberg responded that the staff can wait for feedback from the Business Development Advisory Council before beginning implementation but that the costs need to be included in the budget to allow them to move ahead when ready.

Mr. DiBuonaventuro added that he was in favor of a more thorough analysis and a fuller review of how to interface on the back-end and leaving the full \$100,000 in the budget. He further stated that the first \$50,000 should be spent to set up the base system and that the second \$50,000 would be spent pending the outcome of the review by the Business Development Advisory Council on the back-end interfaces that would be needed to meet our needs and what would best serve the community. He added that a lot of due-diligence was already done to get to the point of knowing what the base system should include. Mr. Giurastante responded that many computer savvy people did provide the analysis and review for the thorough report provided to the Board and reiterated that the IT budget has not been increased since 2007. He added that the second \$50,000 will allow the community better use of the system.

Mr. Heaberg stated that the second \$50,000 includes Public Works interfaces and he asked what the new Director of Public Works thinks is needed by his department to be more effective. Mr. Cannon responded that there are communication problems in the field which can cause productivity problems and which can impede emergency response time and cause safety issues. He added that the technology needs to be updated and improved. Mrs. Kichline asked if he would prefer to keep the money allocated in the budget for this system while he researches what is needed. Mr. Cannon stated that would be preferable so that he could further research the most beneficial and cost effective solution. Mr. Heaberg added that the Board supports providing Mr. Cannon some flexibility to determine what will best meet the needs for Public Works to address the communication issues.

Mr. DiBuonaventuro wanted to recognize that the notification system was budgeted at \$10,000 when first requested a couple of years ago, but is now \$6,500 in the 2012 budget. However, there is a \$2,500 fee to Verizon that needs to be added to the capital budget. Mr. Lamina asked that the Board affirm that this fee be added as a line item to the capital budget and it was so affirmed.

Mr. Lamina concluded by stating that it has been advertised to adopt the final budget on December 19<sup>th</sup> and this will be on the agenda to adopt the final general fund budget as amended at the December 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### **New Matters**

Mrs. Richter reported that the Township and PECO representatives met regarding the Chesterbrook streetlights and it looks like some communication improvements will be occurring and that residents should expect to see improvements.

Mr. Lamina asked about the timing and the underground sensors at the traffic signal at Sullivan and Valley Forge Roads. Mr. DiBuonaventuro responded that the issue was sent to the Traffic Committee last week. Lt. Giaimo reported that the intersection was investigated by three different contractors to ensure it was working as per PennDOT standards, which it is. Mr. Lamina asked if there were some adjustments that could be made within those standards and Lt. Giaimo responded that it may be possible to adjust the timing. This is on the agenda for the next Traffic Committee meeting.

Mrs. Richter reported that residents have voiced safety concerns regarding the intersection at N. Valley and Swedesford Roads. Lt. Giaimo said that some skip-line enhancements were made and that he, Mr. Burgo and Mr. Cannon will work with the Local Area Technical Assistance Program to review possible improvements. Mr. DiBuonaventuro added that this has been an

ongoing problem over the last several years and PennDOT has been involved in discussions with the Traffic Committee. There is not much the Township can do as both roads are state roads and PennDOT has the ultimate decision-making authority for any changes to the intersection. PennDOT has indicated that they will not remove the hump in the road nor will they reduce the speed limit. Resident Ray Clarke added that he agreed that the intersection was dangerous and hoped that PennDOT will work with the Township to keep attention on that intersection to make any changes that may be needed. Mrs. Richter said that PennDOT indicated in a meeting recently that the Township has the ultimate decision making authority for any proposed changes and Ms. Gleason responded that that was not so and that it was, in fact, PennDOT's responsibility.

Mrs. Richter asked about the pedestrian crossing at the SEPTA lot at North Valley Road. Lt. Giaimo responded that again, the Traffic Committee is working with PennDOT on this issue as it is a state road.

Residents asked that the proposed budget with the adjustments be posted on the website and Mr. Lamina responded that they would be posted.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Hoffman  
Recording Secretary