

**MINUTES OF PLUMSTEAD TOWNSHIP  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
WORKSESSION MEETING  
OCTOBER 24, 2023**

**1. Call to Order:** The October 24, 2023, work session meeting of the Plumstead Township Board of Supervisors was held at Plumstead Township Municipal Building, 5186 Stump Road, Pipersville, PA. Chairman, James McComb, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**ELECTED OFFICIALS PRESENT:**

James McComb	Chair
Daniel Hilferty	Vice Chair
Kenneth Lichtenstein	Assistant Secretary
Peter Busillo	Member
Gregory Bankos	Assistant Treasurer

**APPOINTED OFFICIALS PRESENT:**

Township Manager:	Angela P. Benner
Township Solicitor:	Jonathan J. Reiss, Esq.*
Township Engineer:	Timothy Fulmer, PE*

\* Not Present

**2. Moment of Silence & Pledge of Allegiance:** Mr. McComb led the Board and Audience in a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. Announcements:** There were no announcements at this time.

The Board met in an Executive Session prior to this meeting to discuss negotiations for the police collective bargaining agreement.

**4. Public Comment:** There was no public comment at this time.

**5. Committee Updates:**

**5.1. Environmental Advisory Council (EAC):** In attendance from the EAC was Bala Sreenivasan and Tovah Karl who provided an update on what they accomplished to date in 2023. Accomplishments included tree plantings in the spring and fall, adopt a road cleanup, earth day event, electronic recycling and SALDO reviews. They reviewed the re-useable bag project that currently has several companies participating and have raised over \$5,000 in revenue. This project is anticipated to be completed in spring of 2024. They also stated that they would like to work on a recycled bench project in 2024 that they can create a challenge between schools to see who can collect the most plastic bags to recycle and then the winner can be the school that receives the recycled bench.

The Board thanked the EAC for their time and effort put into their events and projects for 2023 and are looking forward to the recycled bench project creating competition in the schools.

**5.2. Land Preservation Educational Advisory Committee (LPEAC):** In attendance from the LPEAC was Michael May, Gary Talbot, Chance Worthington, James Stark, and Kimberly Troup. Mr. Worthington reviewed the comp plan survey results that related to preservation and stated that 94% of the residents believe it would be important to use tax dollars to purchase easements. Mr. May provided a brief summary of what the committee worked on over the past 9 months and stated that an important part of the job is education. Mr. May

also reviewed the land preservation process and stated that they are developing forms that will be provided for approval to the board in a couple of months. One of the forms they are working on is a criteria form that interested homeowners could fill out. Ms. Troup stated that they are looking at investing in an ArcGIS software that they can integrate with the county instead of having a paper system to maintain. Mr. Talbot stated that they are looking to gain access to tools to better evaluate the data and are in the process of selecting random properties to test their criteria and want to apply rankings to make sure they are getting results that make sense. The committee is close to finalizing forms and establishing criteria for the board to approve and then can look at putting together alternate financing options for property owners.

The Board thanked the LPEAC for their time and effort to help educate the public on preservation and for their time and effort to establish criteria for preservation.

**5.3. Parks & Recreation Advisory Board:** In attendance was Duane Freed, Nicole Raphial, Justine Torres and Diane Bereck. Mr. Freed acknowledged that for the first time in years they have a full board and things are progressing very well. The main goal the board had this year was to strive to have an event every month, and this year they did have an event 8 out of 12 months. This year they added a community yard sale that had 21 vendors, combined a touch a truck event with a movie night. These were held in addition to other annual events (egg hunt, tree lighting, trick or treat event, movie night and concerts in the park). Ms. Raphial stated that the community yard sale, for a first-time event, was well attended and many who participated stated they would come back and attend next year. Ms. Raphial also added that she would like there to be a more personal way to recognize the businesses that donate items to their events. Mr. Freed talked about the sponsorship program that they started in 2023 and how they anticipate seeing participation in that grow. Mr. Freed also added that they are looking to hold a scavenger hunt in 2024 that would take participants to different parks throughout the township. Lastly Mr. Freed stated that they are seeing many repeat families and receiving positive feedback about their growing events and are looking forward to seeing how the events grow in 2024.

The Board thanked the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board for the time and effort put in to make these great events for the residents of Plumstead Township.

## **6. 2024 Budget Discussions:**

**6.1. Point Pleasant EMS:** In attendance was Chief Mike Tuttle and Treasurer Dennis Mood. Chief Tuttle stated that they had a successful year and are on track to be 10-15% busier with transports. There was an influx of volunteers, and they are hoping to create a junior program to get people before they are out of high school, similar to the explorer program for the police. Chief Tuttle stated that with the additional funds the Township provided PPEMS they were able to decrease their overtime reducing the wear and tear on those working. The additional funds for payroll helped make their pay scales comparable in the area and gave them more options. Chief Tuttle also talked about their need to add Stryker load systems and litters to 2 of their existing ambulances. By adding these to their ambulances, they are improving the safety and decreasing the potential injuries to their staff. They did submit for a federal grant that could cover up to 80% of the cost. They are also actively pursuing a possible purchase of 2 used power cots which would cut the cost significantly. At the moment they are looking at a total cost of \$131,859.00. Chief Tuttle also stated that they are looking to add a new medication dosing system that was originally available for pediatric patients and now can be used for all ages. It will help with calculations for the drugs needed based upon patient weight and age. The system includes the way the medical supplies are organized and stored. It would help them to provide quicker and comprehensive care to all patients. The cost for the dosage system is \$6,500.00. Mr. Mood reported to the Board that they are in the process of interviewing individuals who are interested in filling the vacancies on the PPEMS board.

Mr. Hilferty inquired as to what other municipalities are contributing towards PPEMS capital costs, so that it is not just Plumstead covering their costs. Chief Tuttle stated that Hilltown, Bedminster, Tinicum and Dublin are the other main areas that they cover, and they are asking them for financial help as well.

**6.2. Point Pleasant Volunteer Fire Company:** In attendance was Chief Scott Fleischer and President Beth Carroll. Mrs. Carroll stated that they recently held their first budget meeting for 2024 looking at their long-range plan and where they are heading. They expect to have more expenditures than last year, but in conjunction with normal wear and tear they have their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2024. Therefore, they are trying to get some things done sooner than later for their anniversary. Two large projects they are planning for are the repaving of their parking lot and painting of their roof. Mrs. Carroll stated that overall, they are looking at about \$300,000 in building rehab.

Chief Fleischer talked about their completed training center and how they are using it for training with other departments. Chief Fleischer stated that they are looking to replace two (2) trucks, one would be their high rocks rescue truck and the other a utility truck. The high rocks truck is designed around that particular rescue and the utility truck would replace a 30-year-old truck. The cost of both trucks is around \$500,000. Chief Fleischer added that they are looking at truck consolidation in the upcoming years.

Mr. Busillo asked if other companies use the training center and Chief Fleischer stated that yes and those companies are willing to provide a fee to use the center. The PPVFC is looking to see what the maintenance costs are to implement an appropriate use fee. Mr. Lichtenstein asked if other municipalities they serve provide financial assistance. Chief Fleischer stated that yes they do and currently Solebury is discussing a change to their tax and contributing towards the stipend program that Plumstead implemented in 2023. Mr. McComb asked how the stipend has helped and Chief Fleischer stated that they have seen a 13% increase in calls.

**6.3. Plumsteadville Volunteer Fire Company:** In attendance was President Mark Banas, Chief Karen Grabosky and member Bill Meyer. Mr. Banas started off by reviewing all the events that the PVFC attended this year and that they had over 325 calls to date in 2023. Mr. Banas stated that they are looking to supplement the income that they rely on from fundraising with an increase in fire tax by the Township. Mr. Banas reviewed what other municipalities are doing, which included: Warrington township purchased a fire truck, Upper Gwynedd purchased 2 vehicles and they pay for all fuel and insurance, Radnor Township provides \$250k annually for capital expenditures and provides for fuel and insurance, Bensalem is merging companies together and the Township is taking over all capital purchases and consolidating trucks. Bensalem also pays for fuel insurance. Mr. Banas talked about the amount of residential and commercial properties that PVFC covers compared to PPVFC. Chief Grabosky stated that currently the tax money is split evenly between PVFC and PPVFC. However, PVFC has the majority of residents and businesses along with 4 schools. Mr. Banas stated that there are countless hours of maintaining the fire house and most of the work is done by volunteers. There is stuff breaking all the time and it would be nice to have a reprieve from everything they have to do by the Township supplementing their income with fire tax.

Mr. Meyer referred to the fire study completed in 2013 that showed that they have the appropriate equipment and number of buildings, and that the township asked for the substation. That the substation brings in 50% of their membership and station 20 is very critical for membership response to fires. PVFC tried to replace Station 20 with the cheapest building they could come up with because they had no financial help. Mr. Meyer added that the RCAP grant they were awarded will not cover any of the cost associated with Station 20 because they didn't have prevailing wages or steel certs. They need close to \$1 million in work at Station 24 but will have to come up with \$600k in match funding as well as front the entire cost of improvements until they receive reimbursement from the grant. Mr. Banas stated that the grant funds could turn the station into a career-type station with bunk rooms and a kitchen to allow for future staffing. However, without matching funds that won't happen. Mr. Banas asked the Board if they want to put the matching funds up and take advantage of the grant or do they want to lose that money.

Mr. Banas stated that the stipends have helped, and it is a step in the right direction but we have paid fire on our door steps and paid fire will start small while creating other problems. For example, fundraisers will be

less successful and any equipment that the relief association purchases cannot be used by paid crew. The Township has to find a way to extend the life of volunteers and help find ways to recruit. The PVFC asked for a fire tax increase 8 years ago and would like to receive support from the Township for the things they are trying to do.

Chief Grabosky thanked the Board for covering the fuel costs so that then the money they would normally use for fuel could be used to cover other expenses. However, they need more funding so they can focus on training and serving the public and not on fundraising.

Mr. Hilferty stated he understands that they are asking for a tax increase, however, the Township has no idea what the Fire Companies finances are as we have no visibility into them. The Fire Company is saying they are preparing the township for the future, but the fire company should be asking the Township what they want and not telling them what they should want if you want the Township to invest. Mr. Hilferty expressed that he wants to know where exactly the money will go, and that they need to know ahead time and be part of the planning for future expenses and not coming to the Township after purchases are made. Mr. Busillo provided the example of Station 20 and how the township was not included in planning for the station, but the fire company expected them to commit after it was all planned out. Mr. Busillo stated that it is very difficult from a fiduciary standpoint to commit money when we are not included in the planning process. Mr. Hilferty added that the Township wants to help but as the governing body they need input in the decision making if we are going to contribute financially. Ms. Benner stated that she believes that she and Jeff Gouldey (Township Fire Marshal) could work with the fire companies to provide the board the information they need to make the appropriate financial decisions.

**6.4. Budget Follow- Up Items:** Ms. Benner asked the board for their final feedback and comments on the 2024 draft budget as it will need to be adopted preliminary at the next Board meeting. The Board agreed to budget \$60,000 to be given to the PPEMS towards their salaries again in 2024 as well as budget for the Handtevy medication dosage system (\$6,500), and budget 1/3 the cost of the power cots and load system for the PPEMS. The Board also agreed to budget \$100,000 for each fire company out of the Fire and EMS capital fund to be considered in 2024 after additional information is provided to the board on how it would be expended. The Board also agreed to cover the Fire Companies fuel costs up to \$15,000 for 2024.

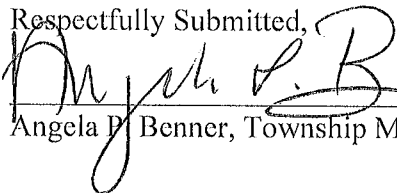
**7. Board of Supervisors Comments:** There were no comments at this time.

**8. Bills List Dated October 24, 2023, in the amount of \$207,509.07, subject to audit.**

**MOTION:** Upon motion by Mr. McComb, seconded by Mr. Lichtenstein, the Board approved the Bills List Dated October 24, 2023, in the amount of \$207,509.07.

**9. Adjournment:** Upon motion from Mr. Bankos seconded by Mr. Lichtenstein the meeting was adjourned at 10:43 pm.

Date Approved: 11/8/23

Respectfully Submitted,  
  
Angela D. Benner, Township Manager