

MARCH 9, 2015

A special meeting of the Hope Township Committee convened at 4:00 P.M. at the Hope Township Municipal Building with the following members present: Mayor Timothy McDonough, Deputy Mayor George Beatty, and Committeeman John Koonz. Also present were Anthony Ardito, CPA, Municipal Auditor; Kathleen Reinalda, CFO; and Mary Pat Quinn, Municipal Clerk.

Under the provisions of the "Open Public Meetings Act", adequate notice of the meeting had been provided by publishing notice in The Express Times and on the Township bulletin boards all on March 2, 2015.

PUBLIC

Donna Rottengen, a resident of Osmun Road, was present to thank the governing body for budgeting funds last year for the replacement of a portion of guiderail on Osmun Road. She advised that the road is in need of repair and maintenance, and the drains are not being cleaned on a regular basis in good weather. Although, there are not as many residents on the road compared to others in the Township, it is a through road for people traveling between Hope and Knowlton Township. Beatty noted that when the snow clears and weather permits, the public works foreman will assess all of the Township roads and repairs will be done, budget permitting.

PREPARE 2015 MUNICIPAL BUDGET

McDonough discussed the results of the meeting he and Ardito had last week with representatives of the DCA. The topics that were addressed were: reducing the municipal court budget, exploring all options to increase the collection of taxes and court fines, utilizing the Christmas Market Trust Fund, and possibly cutting employee services.

Ardito added that the debt service reserve may be used as a revenue source to offset the debt service payment affect. Prior to the principle payment of \$135,000.00 in February, the total amount of the bond anticipation note debt was \$666,000.00.

The governing body preliminarily budgeted \$200,000.00 in the capital improvement fund for the purchase of a new truck and to provide additional funding for the replacement of catch basins. Consideration is being given to other capital projects, which would possibly be included in a permanent bond.

Also discussed was the possible revision of the purpose for the local open space tax. Presently, the tax is collected for the sole purpose of farmland preservation. The governing body will consider presenting a referendum to the voters to expand the use of the tax to include the maintenance of municipally owned recreational areas. The Clerk was directed to obtain a copy of Blairstown Township's Open Space Ordinance.

Ardito advised that he included a one and a half percent salary increase in the budget.

Reinalda asked the governing body what the approach will be with the salt shed. McDonough stated that the Township Attorney confirmed the information that Ardito and Reinalda gave the

Township Committee, that the replacement of the shed must be formally bid. The Clerk was directed to ask the Township Engineer to draw up specifications using a combination of the three options that are being considered.

The Clerk was directed to get other proposals for cleaning services for the Municipal Building, Community Center and the Moravian Grange. Notices will be placed on the Township website and in Panther Prints.

A meeting with the Municipal Court Judge and the Acting Court Administrator will be scheduled to work on a budget for the court.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 P.M. on a motion made by Koonz, seconded by Beatty. The motion was carried.

Respectfully submitted:

Mary Pat Quinn
Municipal Clerk