

TOWNSHIP OF HOPEWELL
Beaver County, Pennsylvania
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
WORKSHOP MINUTES

December 13, 2010
Meeting in Session at 6:38 p.m.

6:38pm: Workshop Meeting Called to Order by Mr. Bufalini and that the meeting will be recorded

ROLL CALL

President

Richard Bufalini

Vice President

Chuck Piroli

Commissioners

Joe Kusnir

Brian Rohm Arrived at 7:50pm

Norm Kraus

Others Present

Andy Brunette, Township Manager/Controller

Mike Jones, Solicitor

6:39pm **ENGINEERS REPORT** Marie Stratakis-Hartman (Report on File)

6:40pm **CITIZEN COMMENTS PERTAINING TO THE AGENDA**

John Lopata 38 Platt Street,

Mr. Lopata stated that the Township has no authority in regulating tractor trailer parking in the shopping center, and that if he owned a boat would he be allowed to park on his property. At this time Mr. Bufalini said that they will discuss this during the items of discussion session in regards to restricting certain types of vehicles that can be allowed to park within the Township boundaries. At this time Mr. Lopata was told that the Board is only hearing comments on the business agenda and will address that at a later time in the meeting.

Marge and Joseph Dornick 5417 Martin Street

Mrs. Dornick asked about the proposed three mills increase and what was the purpose for the increase and if there was any other way that the Township could operate without increasing the millage rate. Mrs. Dornick is concerned because of the residents who are on fixed incomes. Mr. Bufalini explained that since 2007 the Township has been operating using its existing fund balance and cash reserves, and that fixed costs such as health care has increased over 55% in the last two years as well as fixed costs associated with the Township's collective bargaining agreements it has with its three unions on the property. Mr. Bufalini advised all the residents in attendance that the Township reduced payrolls by \$140,000 and have looked at every cost cutting measure that was available from pay freezes for non-contract personnel to not filling jobs that have been left vacant through attrition. Mr. Bufalini also stated that this would be the first non-referendum vote for a tax increase in Hopewell Township since 1991. The only other way for the Township to reduce costs would be to reduce certain types of services within the Township and the Board did not want to reduce any current services. Mr. Bufalini did however advise the residents in attendance that the Township will aggressively pursue all cost cutting and restructuring of fixed cost in 2011 and forward. Mr. Bufalini also stated that when comparing us to a township that is similar to us Chippewa Township, our 2011 tax rate of fourteen mills will still be lower than their current 2010 tax rate of sixteen mills.

Vince Cipolla 1302 Gringo Road

Mr. Cipolla questioned what our taxes are getting us when he believes we have regressed and have not moved forward in any development. Mr. Kraus advised Mr. Cipolla and also the residents in attendance that the current Board and Manager have aggressively pursued with our area representatives from the local, county and federal areas all avenues in trying to enhance our Business Park, Industrial Park, and the interstate 376 corridor between the Allegheny Line and Aliquippa. Mr. Kraus stated that it is a continuous struggle to try and gain their attention that the focus of the County should be to enhance these areas, and that our property and what we have to offer is greater than any other municipality, borough, or city within Beaver County could offer. The Board agreed that their effort with the County CED is a continuous struggle for help and cooperation and that they encourage the residents to voice their concerns on these issues to them personally. Mr. Brunette advised the residents that meetings are currently scheduled with local community leaders to continue the fight for help with development in Hopewell Township and that the Township will continue to pursue this area aggressively and will not give up. The Board also advised Mr. Cipolla and residents that Hopewell Township's shopping center is privately owned and that there is not too much the Board can do to bring business in there. The Township has talked to the owner about bringing businesses into the shopping center but to no avail. It appears that the current owner has no enthusiasm in bettering the shopping center at this point in time. Mr. Kraus stated again that the Board is doing all they can to bring in businesses and development into the Township. Mr. Piroli stated that he has been on the Board for ten years and that he has been continuously addressing this situation with the County and at one point Hopewell Township property along Interstate 376 and the business park was the number one priority for development. Mr. Piroli stated that he is not sure what happened between ten years ago and now and why nothing has come in for Hopewell but he is continuing to aggressively pursue these items and try and find out why nothing has been done. Mr. Piroli reiterated that it has been 19 years since the Township has raised taxes and that when you compare us in the County Hopewell Township at fourteen mills will still be lower than 29 entities of 54 in Beaver County.

Kevin Gurchak 2221 Niesh Avenue

Mr. Gurchak questioned the statistics that Mr. Piroli referenced. The Board advised Mr. Gurchak that he was totaling the School District millage rate with ours and that is why his numbers were off, and yes he was correct that when you combine the school, county and township tax Hopewell would be one of the highest in the County. The Board understands the challenges the School District has with its tax rate and that is one of the reasons why the Township is aggressively pursuing the development issues previously talked about. The Board realizes that any development will help the School District in their budget also, but advised the residents that the Township operates separately from the school with completely two separate budgets. Mr. Kusnir advised that as the newest member of the Board and a fiscal conservative he was floored by what he was presented with at his first look at the budget. Mr. Kusnir stated that he went through the budget line by line and cut everything that was possible, but unfortunately because of decisions of past boards a lot of the fixed costs are tied up in collective bargaining agreements in which he assured the residents that the current Board will aggressively seek cost savings in 2011. Mr. Kusnir also advised the residents that in the future he would not hesitate to lower taxes if necessary if the Township finds itself in a better fiscal position. Mr. Kusnir is aware of the effect that the tax increase will have on the residents on fixed incomes and the elderly, but that he also had to use common sense in the fact that the Board did not want to reduce public services such as Public Works or Police Services and that with the Township last year cutting payroll by \$140,000 to non-contract employees it would be hard to reduce personnel any further without it causing a reduction in service. There are things that are inherent costs that cannot be restructured until 2011. Mr. Brunette answered the question from Mr. Gurchak in regards to when did the Township start using existing fund balance and the biggest expense in the budget. Mr. Brunette replied that the Township started to budget more expenses than revenues in 2007 to 2010 and that during this period existing fund balance and reserve money was used to balance the budget. Mr. Brunette advised the residents that the existing fund balance had reached a critical level where the Township could not operate in its current capacity without a tax increase. Mr. Brunette also advised the residents that protective services make up 26% of the General Fund Budget which equates to 1.5 Million in protective services excluding the Volunteer Fire Department. Mr. Kusnir stated that again the Township wanted to continue these services at their current levels and not cut any services.

Tom Rohm 225 Sharon Grange Road

Mr. Rohm asked the question about the cut in employee wages, Mr. Rohm wanted to know if \$140,000 was a cut in wages or a freeze. Mr. Bufalini advised Mr. Rohm that last year was a cut of \$140,000 in administration wages as well as a pay freeze for all non-contract personnel. This year all non-contract wages again were frozen except for four administration employees who received a total of \$9,000 in raises between the four employees. Mr. Bufalini explained that the savings was made up of eliminating the Wage Tax Office and the consolidation of the Manager's position into existing positions.

Stephen and Rosame Robinson 227 Sharon Grange Road

A letter was submitted by the Robinson's in regards to the tax increase and was passed out to all Board members for review and comment

7:36pm

BUSINESS AGENDA

Mr. Kraus Motion to adopt Ordinance 2010-08 as advertised on November 26, 2010 of the Township of Hopewell Beaver County Pennsylvania a First Class Township under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania appropriating moneys from municipal taxes and revenues to defray expenses and liabilities of Hopewell Township for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2011

Mr. Kusnir Second the motion

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Kusnir Yes
 Mr. Rohm Absent
 Mr. Kraus Yes
 Mr. Piroli Yes
 Mr. Bufalini Yes

Motion Carried

Mr. Kraus Motion to adopt Ordinance 2010-09 as advertised on November 26, 2010 of the Township of Hopewell Beaver County Pennsylvania a First Class Township under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania fixing the tax rates to be required to defray specific expenditures and liabilities for the operation of the Township Government at 14 mills for the year ending December 31, 2011

Mr. Kusnir Second the motion

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Kusnir Yes
 Mr. Rohm Absent
 Mr. Kraus Yes
 Mr. Piroli Yes
 Mr. Bufalini Yes

Motion Carried

Mr. Piroli Motion to approve Resolution R-2010-30 ratifying and amending Ordinance No. 2010-05 Exhibit "A" to reflect changes in the sewer system rentals as hereinafter set forth

Mr. Kraus Second the motion

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Kusnir Yes
 Mr. Rohm Absent
 Mr. Kraus Yes
 Mr. Piroli Yes
 Mr. Bufalini Yes

Motion Carried

Mr. Kraus Motion to approve Hopewell Township's 2011 annual budget as proposed on November 22, 2010 as advertised for public inspection on November 26, 2010

Mr. Piroli Second the motion

Roll Call Vote:

- Mr. Kusnir Yes
- Mr. Rohm Absent
- Mr. Kraus Yes
- Mr. Piroli Yes
- Mr. Bufalini Yes

Motion Carried

Mr. Kusnir Motion to approve Resolution R-2010-31 to complete the updating of the Five Points Intersection in the event the Municipality of Hopewell is awarded funds from the ARLE Grant Application made to the State of Pennsylvania on November 30, 2010

Mr. Piroli Second the motion

Roll Call Vote:

- Mr. Kusnir Yes
- Mr. Rohm Absent
- Mr. Kraus Yes
- Mr. Piroli Yes
- Mr. Bufalini Yes

Motion Carried

Mr. Piroli Motion to approve the Workshop Minutes of November 8, 2010

Mr. Kraus Second the motion

Roll Call Vote:

- Mr. Kusnir Yes
- Mr. Rohm Absent
- Mr. Kraus Yes
- Mr. Piroli Yes
- Mr. Bufalini Yes

Motion Carried

Mr. Kusnir Motion to approve the list of bills dated for December 13, 2010

Mr. Kraus Second the motion

Roll Call Vote:

- Mr. Kusnir Yes
- Mr. Rohm Absent
- Mr. Kraus Yes
- Mr. Piroli Yes
- Mr. Bufalini Yes

Motion Carried

Mr. Kraus Motion to approve Hopewell Township Beaver County annual meeting schedule for 2011

Mr. Kusnir Second the motion

Roll Call Vote:

- Mr. Kusnir Yes
- Mr. Rohm Absent
- Mr. Kraus Yes
- Mr. Piroli Yes

Mr. Bufalini Yes
Motion Carried

Mr. Kusnir Motion to approve Hopewell Township's participation with Hopewell School District in the B.V.I.U. joint purchasing program for office paper dual purpose, 8.5 x 11 – 20lbs. 10 reams/ctn. – white in the amount of 30 cartons

Mr. Kraus Second the motion

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Kusnir Yes
Mr. Rohm Absent
Mr. Kraus Yes
Mr. Piroli Yes
Mr. Bufalini Yes

Motion Carried

Mr. Kraus Motion to approve a one year contract for cleaning services for Hopewell Township's Municipal complex to Jan-Pro Cleaning Systems in the amount of \$13,753.00. Bids are on file at the Administration office

Mr. Piroli Second the motion

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Kusnir Yes
Mr. Rohm Absent
Mr. Kraus Yes
Mr. Piroli Yes
Mr. Bufalini Yes

Motion Carried

Mr. Piroli Motion to approve the authorization of one extra week of vacation for non-contract management and supervisory personnel for the 2011 year in lieu of receiving an annual pay increase for those employees who did not receive an increase. The award of the extra week is only for the 2011 year and cannot be carried over to the next year or reimbursed by compensation for not being used

Mr. Kraus Second the motion

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Kusnir Yes
Mr. Rohm Absent
Mr. Kraus Yes
Mr. Piroli Yes
Mr. Bufalini Yes

Motion Carried

Mr. Kraus Motion to approve the final payment to Ketchel Property Maintenance in the amount of \$6,187.50 contingent upon the contractor first satisfying the remaining punch list items identified by the Township Engineer

Mr. Piroli Second the motion

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Kusnir Yes
Mr. Rohm Absent
Mr. Kraus Yes
Mr. Piroli Yes
Mr. Bufalini Yes

Motion Carried

Mr. Kusnir Motion to approve the NPDES permit renewal application for the Raccoon Creek Sewage Plant in the amount of \$1,250.00 made payable to the Clean Water Fund
 Mr. Kraus Second the motion

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Kusnir Yes
 Mr. Rohm Absent
 Mr. Kraus Yes
 Mr. Piroli Yes
 Mr. Bufalini Yes

Motion Carried

Mr. Kusnir Motion to accept the resignation of Commissioner Chuck Piroli before his term ends December 31, 2011 effective December 31, 2010.
 Mr. Kraus Second the motion

Voice Vote: All in favor except for Commissioner Rohm who was absent
 Motion Carried

7:52pm ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

All items for discussion in regards to engineering were addressed in the engineers report and are on file at the Township Building

The Manager advised the Board that he was informed by the engineer that the final design for Laird Road should be ready by the January 10, 2011 meeting for review.

Mike Jones updated the Board on the progress of Veasey Road, he advised the Board that Mr. Hughes, and Mr. Yanecic has now signed the Township maintenance pending PennDot's determination of the road except for Mrs. Hughes. The Manager advised the Board that PennDot has contacted the Township and wants to schedule a meeting in January 2011 in regards to Veasey Road.

Mr. Bufalini wanted to recognize Joseph Sineri from Boys' Scout Troop 435 who was in observance of the governmental meeting as part of his project for how governments work

Mr. Jones stated that he has provided the following ordinances to the Board for review: vehicles and traffic regulation of parking of commercial, oversized and non-motorized vehicles on Township streets and private driveways, sample ordinance for oil and gas drilling, resolution for the Township website internet policy, resolution for the revised depository fees, ordinance for timber harvesting, ordinance for revising the grading and filling permits, and review the ordinance to revise the current Township Solicitor's permit

The Manager made an announcement to the Board and the residents as a reminder that the Township would be sending out a system town wide message to all of its residents in regards to Ordinance 2010-01 stating that any vehicles parked on the street during snow events could be subject to towing at the owners expense if snow plows are blocked from plowing

John Lopata discussed numerous issues in regards to vehicles on the streets and other and snow removal

Mr. Dornick also questioned if the ordinance under review in regards to vehicle parking regulations will incorporate businesses that have a large volume of cars and trucks that block site viewing at corners. Mr. Kusnir advised Mr. Dornick that this ordinance under review will address those issues

Mr. Jones went over the fireworks application permit and resolution

The Depository fees resolution was discussed by the Manager and Board

The manager advised the board that bids for the Timber Harvest at our newly acquired Park property would be opened on December 16, 2010

8:15pm CITIZENS FORUM None

8:24pm NEW BUSINESS None

8:25pm OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Rohm Motion to approve Resolution R-2010-32 Hopewell Township's Fireworks Display Application/Permit

Mr. Kusnir Second the motion

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Kusnir Yes

Mr. Rohm Yes

Mr. Kraus Yes

Mr. Piroli Yes

Mr. Bufalini Yes

Motion Carried

8:32pm EXECUTIVE SESSION IN

8:55pm EXECUTIVE SESSION OUT

8:56pm ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Kusnir Motion to adjourn

Mr. Kraus Second the motion

Voice Vote: All in favor

Motion Carried

Minutes Recorded by: Andy J. Brunette 12/13/10

Minutes Prepared by: Andy J. Brunette 12/16/10