

November 2, 2011
Curtis Hall

A regular meeting of the **PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE** was held tonight, J. Andrew Sharkey, Chairman, presiding. Members present were Commissioners Hampton, Haywood, Simon and Swavola. Also present was Ex-Officio Member Portner. Staff present were Joseph Bagley, Wisler Pearlstine LLC; Bryan T. Havir, Assistant Township Manager; Kenneth Hellendall, EMS Director; David Lynch, Director of Engineering, Zoning and Inspections; John J. Norris, Chief of Police; Kevin O'Brien, Deputy Chief of Police; Joseph O'Neill, Fire Marshal; and David G. Kraynik, Township Manager. A Public Attendance List is attached.

Mr. Sharkey called the meeting to order.

1. Chief Norris reviewed the Police Activity/Community Policing Unit, Clearance and Juvenile Contact Reports for the month of September, 2011.

2. The Committee reviewed a proposed Ordinance to the Traffic Code that would

add and **delete** the following:

ADD:

Paxson Avenue – “No Parking”, south side, from 147-feet east of Hewett Road to 187-feet east.

DELETE:

Beecher Avenue – “Handicapped Parking” at 300 Beecher Avenue.

Chief Norris reported that the addition of the “No Parking” restriction on Paxson Avenue is due to four (4) homes that share a common driveway having difficulty exiting due to train commuters, and the “Handicapped Parking” space was no longer needed at the property on Beecher Avenue.

3. Upon motion of Mr. Haywood, and unanimously approved by the Committee, it was recommended to the Board of Commissioners the adoption of an Ordinance amending Chapter 285, thereof, entitled "Vehicles and Traffic" (see attached).

4. Upon motion of Mr. Haywood, and unanimously approved by the Committee, the Police Activity/Community Policing Unit, Clearance and Juvenile Contact Reports for the month of September, 2011 were accepted.

5. Upon motion of Mr. Portner, and unanimously approved by the Committee, the Report of the Fire Marshal for the month of October, 2011 was accepted.

6. Upon motion of Mr. Swavola, and unanimously approved by the Committee, the Report of the EMS Director for the month of October, 2011 was accepted.

7. Under Citizens' Forum:

Albert Meinster, 7830 Spring Avenue, expressed his concerns with the Police Department and stated that he several issues that he would bring to future meetings but tonight he would like to focus on one concern, i.e. the selection process used to hire police officers.

It was his understanding that the police force consists of 80 officers, and only a handful are Afro-Americans and women. It seemed to him that there is an inherent bias in the selection process. He was concerned that since most of the candidates are white men, there may be a sub-selection process that makes the selection. Not all of the members of the police force have the attitude and approach to the citizenry that he expects. It was his opinion that a review of the selection process might bring forth candidates who are a better fit.

He discussed and reviewed the written and oral testing process. Since the police exam is a civil service exam, he asked if he could see the exam.

Mr. Sharkey responded that the Police Department works with the NAACP, and as a result, testing procedures have been changed. The test is administered by various members of the Montgomery County Consortium of Communities. He suggested that Mr. Meinster submit an Open Records Request for the exam.

Mr. Meinster asked if the Commissioners have seen the exam. When no one responded, he asked that the record show no one seems to indicate that they have seen the exam. He asked if anyone has asked to see the exam. When no one responded, he asked that the record show that no one indicates that they have asked to see the exam. He felt the exam should focus in on character type and values held by the candidates.

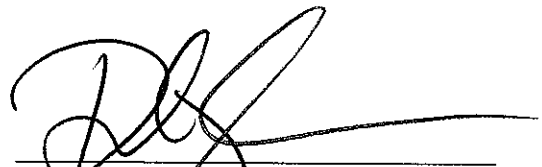
A level of reading equivalent to a Harvard or Oxford student was unnecessary. There are other qualities besides reading comprehension. He is not pleased with the behavior of certain members of the Cheltenham Police Department. He asked if Commissioners could provide him with the starting salary or have seen the Police Contract.

In response, it was Mr. Swavola's opinion that Mr. Meinster seemed to want to demonstrate what the Commissioners do not know about the Police Department. The Commissioners have previously reviewed the contract in detail. As far as the testing procedures, the Commissioners are not experts on what is required to determine criteria for selection but there has been a study completed in conjunction with the NAACP for the last several months, and a new test has been developed. None of the Commissioners can speak to what is going on in terms of the selection process. The expert is the Police Chief, and he can best answer the question.

Mr. Swavola asked if Mr. Meinster was looking for something specific in the test. Mr. Meinster asked if Mr. Swavola saw the new exam. Mr. Swavola responded that he has not seen the exam, and it was his opinion that Mr. Meinster was questioning and insinuating there is a bias in an exam that he too has not seen and was basing his opinion on a couple of conversations that he had with a police officer whose responses were not satisfactory to him. If so, Mr. Swavola suggested that Mr. Meinster discuss his complaint with the Police Department. Mr. Meinster stated that he was bringing his concerns to the elected officials of the Township. Mr. Swavola felt said concerns should be brought directly to the Police Department as well and asked if Mr. Meinster did this. Mr. Meinster responded that all Townships should have a civilian check on Police Departments, not just the Police Chief, to act as "watch dogs", which he felt should be the Commissioners. Mr. Swavola asked if he complained to the Police Department. Mr. Meinster stated that he spoke to the Police Department regarding several of his complaints, and he would return to discuss other complaints at future meetings.

Mr. Sharkey stated that the Police Department has the support of the full Board.

There being no further business, upon motion of Mr. Sharkey, and unanimously approved by the Committee, the meeting was adjourned.



David G. Kraynik
Township Manager

as per Anna Marie Felix

ORDINANCE NO. ___-11

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF CHELTENHAM, CHAPTER 285 THEREOF, ENTITLED VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC, BY AMENDING CERTAIN STREET AND PARKING REGULATIONS.

The Board of Commissioners of the Township of Cheltenham hereby ordains:

SECTION 1. The Code of the Township of Cheltenham, Chapter 285, Article IV, entitled Schedule of Traffic Regulations, Section 285-43 thereof is hereby amended by **DELETING** the following:

BEECHER AVENUE (8) HANDICAPPED PARKING, north side, from 80 feet to 98 feet west of Central Avenue (for 118 Central Avenue).

SECTION 2. The Code of the Township of Cheltenham, Chapter 285, Article IV, entitled Schedule of Traffic Regulations, Section 285-43 thereof is hereby amended by **ADDING** the following:

PAXSON AVENUE A. (7) NO PARKING, south side, from 147 feet east of Hewett Road to 187 feet east.

SECTION 3. That in all other respects Chapter 285 of the Code of the Township of Cheltenham is hereby approved and accepted as amended, and shall continue in full force and effect.

SECTION 4. This Ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after its approval as required by law.

ENACTED into an Ordinance this **16th day of November, A.D., 2011.**

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TOWNSHIP OF CHELTENHAM

By _____
Harvey Portner, President

ATTEST: _____
David G. Kraynik, Secretary



PUBLIC ATTENDANCE LIST
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING (President's Budget Message), 7:30 p.m.
Public Affairs Committee, 7:45 p.m.
Public Safety Committee, 8:00 p.m.
Building and Zoning Committee, 8:15 p.m.
Wednesday, November 2, 2011
Curtis Hall

NAME (Please Print)	ADDRESS	E-MAIL and/or TELEPHONE
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