

The regular meeting of the **PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE** for May 2021 was held tonight via web-conference, Chairman Brockington presiding. Members present were Commissioners Areman, Holland, Pransky, Rappoport, and Zygmund-Felt and Ex-Officio member Norris.

Staff present via web-conference were: Robert Zienkowski, Township Manager; Alyson Elliott, Assistant Township Manager; John Frye, Chief of Police; Scott Lynch, Fire Marshal and Kenneth Hellendall; Director EMS and Emergency Management Coordinator. Also present was Joseph Bagley, Esq., Township Solicitor.

Mr. Bagley announced the Board met in Executive Session twice prior to tonight's meeting to discuss personnel, potential litigation, potential purchase of real property, emergency preparedness and protection of public safety and matters which if discussed in public would violate a lawful privilege.

Mr. Brockington called the meeting of the Public Safety Committee to order at 7:40 p.m.

1. Consider approval of the Traffic Calming Committee Minutes dated March 9, 2021.

Mr. Brockington inquired about the status of the solar stop sign installation. Mr. Zienkowski stated that letters were hand-delivered last week to the residents who live nearby He received one call of concern, which was addressed immediately. Mr. Norris requested that going forward, the approximate cost of items is included and asked if the Township can look into speed cushions instead of bumps on several of the streets. Mr. Brockington noted that this was looked into before and asked if the Township could look for the report and resend it to everyone. Mr. Zygmund-Felt asked about the process for reporting issues and whether residents participate in the meetings. Mr. Brockington reviewed the process and said that the Traffic Calming Committee has a public comment section and residents can email concerns to him as well. Ms. Rappoport also noted that the form is located on the Township website.

Upon motion of Mr. Brockington, the Committee unanimously approved the Traffic Calming Committee minutes.

2. **Report of the Police Chief**

A. Chief Frye reviewed the Police Clearance and Juvenile Clearance Reports for the month of March 2021.

Upon motion of Mr. Brockington, the Committee unanimously received the Report of the Police Chief.

B. Upon motion of Mr. Norris, the Committee unanimously approved the purchase order for the annual lease and equipment costs for the Department's Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) machine to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (Pennsylvania State Police) in the amount of \$5,100.

C. Chief Frye provided a de-briefing of a carjacking incident at Walmart on April 28, 2021. At 9:51 p.m., two males, one with a gun, approached a man and demanded his vehicle. Police canvassed the area and found the vehicle with the suspects traveling on Cheltenham Avenue towards Philadelphia. Police were able to pull over the vehicle. The driver got out with a gun in hand and fled the scene. The passenger remained with the vehicle and was taken into custody. This is a case where the stop could have gone very bad, but the officer remained calm, maintained discipline, and made the decision not to chase. The Commissioners thanked the officers and were happy it ended well for everyone involved.

D. Chief Frye provided a de-briefing of a 911 call from a suicidal resident on May 1, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. When Police arrived at the location, the man and vehicle were not there, but family members were. Police were able to ping the cell phone location to Elkins Park Middle School. A Police Sergeant, who is also a SWAT negotiator, and another Officer were able to talk to the male and de-escalate the situation. The male admitted he wanted to kill himself, but really wanted police to do it. The

family arrived and transported him to the Philadelphia VA Hospital to seek mental health treatment. This ended in a peaceful resolution and happens more frequently than people think. This was a great job all around and the officers showed empathy towards this man. The Commissioners thanked all the officers involved and Ms. Rappoport asked if the man was referred to the HUB program. Chief said no because his family took him directly to the VA Hospital.

Mrs. Rappoport asked if special citations will be issued to these officers and Chief Frye said they will be submitted to the Awards Committee for citation.

Mr. Areman, following up from a previous meeting, asked about the School District Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Police. Chief Frye said he reviewed it just the day before and it should be presented at a meeting early next week. He was happy with the document and the discretionary section has been removed. Mr. Areman said he appreciated the Chief acting as a liaison with the School District and feels this is a huge step in a positive direction. Mr. Areman noted in the daily reports that there was an increase in catalytic converter thefts and asked if this is typical. Chief Frye said this is becoming common all over.

### 3. **Report of the Fire Marshal**

- A. Mr. Lynch presented the fire report for the month of March 2021 and the minutes of the Fire Board Meeting from April 1, 2021.

Mr. Lynch spoke to Ms. Rappoport and let her know he was working on editing the reports to include information on mutual aid calls. Once he has it together, he will send for her review.

Mr. Lynch told the Board the fire companies are forming a Township Water Rescue Team over the next few months.

Mr. Lynch said the lateral transfer policy allowing the former Ogontz members to transfer into other fire companies in the Township will expire on October 31, 2021. Mr. Brockington said he understood the need for an expiration date, but felt six months was too short. Mr. Areman disagreed and asked if it has been formally communicated to Ogontz members. Township Solicitor, Joseph Bagley responded by saying it was communicated to members earlier by email and a formal letter followed.

Mr. Lynch noted that membership at all four fire companies has increased. Mr. Brockington asked if all the new members were residents. Mr. Lynch stated one definitely was, but he would have to look into the others. The Commissioners asked what advertising was working and Mr. Lynch said advertising on social media, banners and lawn signs have been drawing members in.

Upon motion of Mr. Brockington, the Committee unanimously received the report of the Fire Marshal and the Fire Board Minutes.

### 4. **Report of the EMS Director**

- A. Mr. Hellendall presented the EMS reports for the month of March 2021. He noted they are two weeks into outsourced billing and things are running smoothly. Payments billed prior to May 1 are coming in and are being applied under the previous billing system.

Upon motion of Mr. Norris, the Committee unanimously received the report of the EMS Director.

- B. Recommend the Board of Commissioners approve the remounting of the 2015 Lifeline Ambulance by 10-8 Emergency Vehicle Service, a COSTARS vendor, in the amount of \$148,797.00 (see attached).

Mr. Pransky asked about the cost of a new ambulance. Mr. Hellendall said he did not obtain a quote for a new ambulance due to the height of the bay and new ambulances no longer can be cut

down. There is a four foot difference in height and the current ambulances clear the bay doors by approximately three inches, so the only option is to remount the existing ambulance. The current ambulance would be out of service for three months. Mr. Norris complimented Mr. Hellendall on the informative memo explaining the reason behind requesting the remount; it was very helpful.

**Recommendation to the Board of Commissioners** Upon motion of Mr. Norris, the Committee unanimously recommended the Board of Commissioners approve the remounting of the 2015 Lifeline Ambulance by 10-8 Emergency Vehicle Service, a COSTARS vendor, in the amount of \$148,797.00.

5. **Report of the Emergency Management Coordinator**

- A. Mr. Hellendall presented the EMA reports for the month of March 2021. He noted that enough vaccines are available, so people do not need appointments. The County will begin in-home service soon. A link for more information will be provided by the County shortly. Mr. Brockington asked how residents will know about the in-home service and Mr. Hellendall said the County will make a form available and will contact the resident directly. Effective June 1, Pennsylvania will be lifting all restrictions except for masks and six foot distancing. Mr. Hellendall plans to survey Township employees (not by name) to see how many are vaccinated. Mr. Brockington asked if there was a way to find out how many residents have been vaccinated and Mr. Hellendall said no. The County may have some numbers in their reports on a County level, but it is important to keep HIPAA rules in mind.

There was a discussion about the gas shortage and Mr. Hellendall didn't expect any shortage in this area, unless people begin to hoard gas. He has spoken to the County and there is no plan in place to address a possible gas shortage. Mr. Pransky suggested the Township put out a statement requesting residents not to hoard gas.

Mr. Hellendall wanted to let the committee know that EMA fully supports the Township Water Rescue Team being established by the fire companies and plans to request a budget next year to be able to assist.

Upon motion of Mr. Norris, the Committee unanimously received the report of the EMA Director.

6. **Report of the Township Manager:** Mr. Zienkowski deferred his comments to new business.

7. **Old Business:** None.

8. **New Business:**

- A. Mr. Zienkowski reviewed an unexpected expense of a new Code Administration vehicle to replace the existing one, an old police vehicle that is not in the safest condition. They are requesting a 2021 Dodge Durango in the amount of \$35,039.31. Mr. Sergio from Code Administration said they looked into the Police Interceptors but the cost was more than the Durango. The trade-in value of the current vehicle is \$5,500.

Mr. Zienkowski suggested two ways to pay for this vehicle: (1) utilized proceeds from two CDs in the amount of \$249,000 each which recently matured; or (2) utilize unencumbered capital money, which amounts to \$2.5 million. He recommends looking at the unencumbered capital and leaving the two CDs alone.

Mr. Pransky asked why there are emergency lights on the vehicle and if there was a less expensive alternative. Mr. Sergio said it is a safety issue since he spends a significant amount of time assisting other departments in emergency situations. Mr. Hellendall said Mr. Sergio is part of the Emergency Management Team and State regulations require 360 degree.

Mr. Zygmund-Felt requested that Mr. Zienkowski request all Department Heads to see if there are any unexpected items not budgeted that may arise this year and present to the Board to be characterized and quantified so they can see what funds are available.

Mr. Holland asked if the current vehicle is operational and if so, why it was not listed in the capital budget. Mr. Zienkowski and Mr. Sergio stated it is operational, has over 100K miles and could keep running. They priced out vehicles to see what was available and when they were told they would receive \$5,500 for trade-in, they felt it was a good offer and holding off another year would decrease that value significantly. Mr. Pransky agreed that the trade in value was a good offer and does not foresee the trade-in value holding another year.

Mr. Norris does not dispute the vehicle needing to be replaced but is more concerned with why this was not included in the November Capital Budget. Mr. Clewell explained that the previous management philosophy was to use vehicles “to the death.”

Mr. Areman asked if this would qualify under recovery funds that we may be anticipating or another funding source. Mr. Zienkowski said he would look into this.

Mr. Clewell mentioned another vehicle that may need to be replaced in the near future: a 10 year old Parks truck that has rot around the door so it will not close or not pass inspection. It has 115,000 to 120,000 miles and is currently not in service. Mr. Holland inquired if this vehicle is more urgent and should be taken care of first, since these are two vehicles that are unexpected and the Board has already approved three other vehicles that were not budgeted. Currently, Public Works is using a maintenance pick truck that was driven by a furloughed employee, which will continue to serve as the replacement right now, as long as the furloughed position is not filled.

**Recommendation to the Board of Commissioners** Upon motion of Mr. Holland, the Committee unanimously recommended the Board of Commissioners approve the purchase of a new Code Administrator vehicle in the amount of \$35,039.31.

- B. Mr. Bagley provided an overview of the a Resolution extending the period of non-enforcement of parking meter violations, with certain exceptions in the Township until December 31, 2021, as discussed at last week’s Building and Zoning Committee meeting. The exceptions would be certain “hot spot” areas, such as where Elkins Park train station commuters are using the meters for all day parking and overnight parking. Many of the business owners in the Glenside business district are in support of extending the period of non-enforcement. Many of the Commissioners commented how the overnight and all day parking are being abused by people.

**Recommendation to the Board of Commissioners** Upon motion of Mr. Brockington, the Committee unanimously recommended the Board of Commissioners adopt a Resolution extending the period of non-enforcement of parking meter violations in the Township, with certain exceptions, until December 31, 2021.

9. **Citizens’ Forum:** None.

There being no further business, upon motion of Mr. Brockington, and unanimously approved by the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

  
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Robert Zienkowski  
Township Manager

per Eileen Wass