

The regular meeting of the **PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE** for November 2021 was held tonight via web-conference, Chairman Brockington presiding. Members present were Commissioners Areman, Holland, Rappoport, and Zygmund-Felt and Ex-Officio member Norris. Commissioner was not present Pransky.

Staff present via web-conference were: Robert Zienkowski, Township Manager; Alyson Elliott, Assistant Township Manager; John Slavin, Acting Police Chief; Scott Lynch, Fire Marshall and Kenneth Hellendall, Director EMS and Emergency Management Coordinator.

Mr. Norris called the meeting of the Public Safety Committee to order at 7:35 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mike Wolk, President of the Elkins Park Fire Company along with Veterans at the VFW Post in Cheltenham.

1. On behalf of the Board of Commissioners, Mr. Norris recognized all Veterans who have served in the Armed Forces to keep us safe and free.

Sailors, Soldiers, Airmen, Marines and Coast Guard Guardsmen and their families are simply the best America has to offer. That is why supporting military families is a national imperative and we need to be committed to these efforts because we will honor our sacred obligation to support our military and veteran families and ensure they receive all they need to thrive. Tomorrow we show our appreciation to the spouses, partners, children, caregivers and survivors of our service members and veterans for their selfless sacrifice on behalf of the nation. We honor them and their invaluable contributions, we share their pride in our armed forces and we will never forget what they and their loved ones do for us.

2. Mr. Areman recognized two citizens who received Community Service Awards who demonstrated heroism on October 28, 2021: Neil Batiancila and Nate Batiancila, father and son. On the afternoon of Thursday, October 28, 2021, Nate Batiancila heard cries from his next door neighbor's home. Nate immediately ran next door to alert Mr. Bernhard, who was unable to hear the cries for help from his wife because he was running the leaf blower and had his headphones in. Mrs. Bernhard was pinned to the side of the home due to concrete stairs collapsing on her. Nate ran back to his home to alert his father, Neil, to assist. They helped remove concrete using a long pry bar to move the concrete stairs off Mrs. Bernhard, while Mr. Bernhard dialed 911. Glenside and Weldon Fire Companies, along with EMS, arrived on scene to extricate Mrs. Bernhard. Without the quick actions of Nate and Niel Batiancila, the outcome of this accident may have been very different.

Mr. and Mrs. Bernhard thanked Neil and Nate, along with Cheltenham EMS and the La Mott, Weldon, Cheltenham, and Glenside Fire Companies.

3. Mr. Brockington welcomed the new Acting Police Chief, John Slavin. Mr. Brockington said he is a 30+ year Police veteran and the Township is very happy to have him running the Police Department.

4. **Report of the Acting Police Chief**

- A. Acting Chief Slavin reviewed the Police Clearance and Juvenile Clearance Reports for the month of September 2021.

Mr. Zygmund-Felt noted that Police services have increased 13 percent since 2020 and noted the activity and involvement of the Police in the community is still essential. He thanked the force for their service.

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

- B. **Recommendation to the Board of Commissioners:** Upon motion of Mr. Norris, the Committee unanimously recommended the Board of Commissioners adopt an Ordinance amending Chapter 285, Vehicles and Traffic, Section 285-43, “Unregistered All-Terrain Vehicles, and Mini-bikes prohibited on streets and sidewalks within the Township and certain other areas owned by the Township” at its regularly scheduled meeting on December 15, 2021.

Mr. Holland confirmed for the residents that this Ordinance is for unregistered ATVs. Acting Chief Slavin said registered ATVs (and dirt bikes) are allowed to cross the roadway to get to another location but are not allowed to operate on roadways. Mini bikes are not required to be registered according to the Department of Agriculture.

- C. **Recommendation to the Board of Commissioners:** Upon motion of Mr. Norris, the Committee unanimously recommended that the Board of Commissioners authorize advertisement of its intention to consider the adoption of the aforementioned Ordinance amending Chapter 285, Vehicles and Traffic.
- D. **Recommendation to the Board of Commissioners:** Upon motion of Mr. Norris, the Committee unanimously recommended the Board of Commissioners adopt an Ordinance amending Chapter 285, Vehicles and Traffic, Section 285-43, to add “Bellmawr Road-No Parking Here to Corner, east side from Cheltenham Avenue to 69 feet north” and “Bellmawr Road-No Parking Here to Corner, west side, from Cheltenham Avenue to 70 feet west,” at its regularly scheduled meeting on December 15, 2021.
- E. **Recommendation to the Board of Commissioners:** Upon motion of Mr. Norris, the Committee unanimously recommended that the Board of Commissioners authorize advertisement of its intention to consider the adoption of the aforementioned Ordinance amending Chapter 285, Vehicles and Traffic.
- F. Upon motion of Mr. Norris, the Committee unanimously recommended approval of a purchase order for Havis in the amount of \$10,290.81 for body camera docking station installation in the patrol vehicles.
- G. Upon motion of Mr. Norris, the Committee unanimously recommended approval of a purchase order for New Holland Ford in the amount of \$45,567 for the purchase of a new Crime Scene Unit Vehicle.

5. **Report of the Fire Marshal**

- A. Mr. Lynch presented the Fire Report for the month of September 2021 and the minutes of the Fire Board Meeting from October 7, 2021.

Mr. Zygmund-Felt noticed that La Mott Fire Company has an average of 3.5 firefighters per run which is below average and asked if there is anything the Commissioners can do to help. Mr. Lynch said that he and the Chief are aware of the numbers and that volunteers are strong in the beginning but then fade out over time. It is a huge commitment. Mr. Hellendall spoke as Vice President of La Mott and said they have rebranded, updated their website and budgeted for a live-in program. One-third of recruits have not moved forward after seeing the 188 hours required to

be a volunteer. Mr. Zygmund-Felt has seen a significant increase to its budget and wants them to keep the Commissioners and the Township Manager updated on any significant issues. He said he is appreciative of every firefighter. Ms. Rappoport added that the La Mott Fire Company is thriving due to the patience and the support of the Township and other Fire Companies.

Upon the motion of Mr. Norris, the Committee unanimously received the September 2021 report of the Fire Marshal and the minutes of the Fire Board Meeting from October 7, 2021

6. **Report of the EMS Director**

Mr. Hellendall presented the EMS reports for the month of September 2021.

- A. Mr. Hellendall noted that two new full-time paramedics started on November 1, 2021, but EMS is still down two paramedics due to injuries.
- B. Mr. Hellendall requested the Commissioners approve a purchase order for Starr Uniform in the amount of \$3,675 for four pieces of body armor, which is within budget, in order to have the new employees fitted for body armor.

Upon motion of Mr. Norris, the Committee unanimously recommended approval of a purchase order for Starr Uniform in the amount of \$3,675 for the purchase of four pieces of body armor.

- C. Recommend the Board of Commissioners approve a purchase order to ESO Solutions, Inc., in the amount of \$9,113.08 for the annual subscription for the trip sheet program.

Mr. Hellendall explained that the trip sheet program is a mandatory program that is required to be completed for every call and is electronically filed with the State, Hospital, County, and the billing company and also charts the status and classes of medics and EMTs.

Upon motion of Mr. Norris, the Committee unanimously recommended approval of a purchase order for ESO Solutions, Inc. in the amount of \$9,113.08 for the annual subscription for the trip sheet program.

- D. Mr. Hellendall presented a thank you letter received for EMS Lt. Nathan Wass, Paramedic Christopher Carey and Police Officer Brett Thomas. This shows the great cooperation between the Police Department and EMS. In other communities, there are times the Police do not respond to calls, but they are an integral part of the Township's system.

7. **Report of the EMA Director**

- A. Mr. Hellendall received approval to submit all paperwork to receive requested funding for all Police, EMS & EMA overtime and all vehicle expenses. In order to process the paperwork, a resolution needs to be adopted so the Township Manager can sign all the paperwork.

Recommendation to the Board of Commissioners: Upon motion of Mr. Norris, the Committee unanimously recommended the Board of Commissioners adopt a Resolution authorizing Robert Zienkowski, Township Manager, to serve as the Township's agent in executing all required forms and documents for the purpose of obtaining financial assistance under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act for Hurricane Ida related expenses

8. Report of the Township Manager

- A. Mr. Zienkowski commended Acting Chief Slavin in embracing the role as Acting Chief and his interaction and response especially in the areas of traffic safety has been outstanding. He also recognized EMS in what they do every day and the exposures they have had during the pandemic and to the men and women of the Cheltenham Police Department who put their lives on the line every day and their response, dedication and commitment to the community. He thanked them for all that they do for the Township.
- B. Mr. Zienkowski asked Mr. Lynch to update the Committee on the Fire Marshal's Operating Budget for 2022, which was not discussed at the Budget Workshop Meeting on October 28 due to time constraints.

Mr. Lynch outlined the 2022 Fire Marshal budget. He explained that there is an increase in salaries due to restructuring – property maintenance and an administrative assistant will now fall under the Fire Marshal's budget. This is a transfer of salaries; not new personnel. Mr. Lynch said he is proposing to hire a full-time inspector so the Township can establish a rental inspection program to ensure the safety of the Township's rental residents. This person would also assist with building and fire inspections.

The Fire Company budget reflects an overall decrease due to operating four fire companies instead of five. The remaining four fire companies would each receive a \$25,000 increase from the Township, which was part of the allocation to the former fifth company. Discussion on capital requests by the fire companies will be discussed at the November 11 budget workshop meeting.

Mr. Brockington asked if the hiring of the Inspector of the Rental Inspection program needs to be a full-time position. Mr. Lynch said there is more than enough work for a full-time employee, which will be responsible for creating the rental database, performing the initial inspections and then inspecting them on a two to three year cycle. The inspector will also do existing building inspections making sure commercial properties are up-to-date. Mr. Zienkowski added that this person will also help the tax office documenting commercial businesses.

Ms. Rappaport said the Township tried to create a rental inspection program in the past, but could not justify hiring a full-time person to handle it. She asked if there was going to be a policy or ordinance in place prior to hiring an inspector. Mr. Lynch said an ordinance would be established with fees listed and a policy adopted prior to hiring an inspector. The fees would generate enough income to cover the salary of the inspector. The position is being added to the budget as a placeholder so the money is available if/when an ordinance is passed. This will be a budget neutral position in which all the revenue and fees would cover the expense of this person. Staff anticipates bringing a proposal for a rental inspection program to the Board for consideration in the next few months.

9. Old Business

Mr. Areman announced the Limekiln Bridge will be closed Saturday November 13 at 3 p.m. through Sunday, November 14 at 8 a.m.

9. New Business:

Mr. Norris asked for a reminder of what is open and closed for Veterans Day. Mr. Clewell stated that trash and recycling collection will be pushed back to Friday due to the Holiday.

10. Citizens' Forum:

Theresa Camerota: inquired if there was an update on the PennDOT traffic study. Mr. Zienkowski said there has been no update, but PennDOT will reach out when it has been completed and schedule a presentation to this Committee. Ms. Camerota thanked Acting Chief Slavin for the digital speed signs on Church and Greenwood Avenues.

Emily Steinberg: thanked the Commissioners for the ATV ordinance and appreciates the attention to this issue. She also thanked everyone for the digital speed signs along Church Road.

There being no further business, upon motion of Mr. Brockington, and unanimously approved by the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.



Robert Zienkowski
Township Manager

per Eileen Wass

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