

Commissioners' Meeting Activity

December 15, 2014

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>MOTION</u>	<u>SECOND</u>
Approve Workshop Meeting Minutes of 12-8-14	Comm. Schollaert	Comm. Jones
Adopt 2015 Millage Rate Ordinance	Comm. Jones	Comm. Lisanti
Adopt 2015 Budget Ordinance	Comm. Jones	Comm. Schollaert
Exonerate the following Real Estate tax payers: a) Fuller, Von & Cindy M., 431 Weber Road/422-L-231 for \$22,900 reduction in assessed valuation for 2014 (refund of \$78.54), b) Minnock Construction Company, 109 Sewickley Heights Drive/422-D-450 for \$14,000 reduction in assessed valuation for 2014 (refund of \$48.02)	Comm. Schollaert	Comm. Jones
Approve the November bill list in the amount of \$108,316.72	VP Doeblner	Comm. Jones
Ratify the November pre-paid bills in the amount of \$7,490.38	VP Doeblner	Comm. Schollaert
Ratify the November payroll transfers in the amount of \$15,367.08	VP Doeblner	Comm. Jones
Motion to authorize to make the offers of the estimates of just compensation according to the appraisals that were submitted by Solicitor Stone not to exceed \$25,000	VP Doeblner	Comm. Schollaert
Adjournment	Comm. Lisanti	Comm. Jones

TOWNSHIP OF ALEPPO
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 15, 2014

CALL TO ORDER:

President Rodney W. Gartner called the meeting to order at 7 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance and roll call. Those in attendance were Vice-President Matthew Doebler, Commissioner Joanne Schollaert, Commissioner George Jones, Commissioner Anthony Lisanti, Solicitor Harlan S. Stone, Manager Gwen Patterson and Secretary Kimberly A. Koskey.

MINUTES:

Commissioner Schollaert made a motion to approve the Workshop Meeting Minutes of December 8, 2014. Commissioner Jones seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Jones made a motion to adopt the 2015 Millage Rate Ordinance. Commissioner Lisanti seconded. A roll call vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Jones made a motion to adopt the 2015 Budget Ordinance. Commissioner Schollaert seconded. President Gartner also stated that the Millage rate has stayed the same as 2014 at 3.5. A roll call vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC SAFETY REPORT:

Ohio Township Chief of Police Norbert Micklos gave his report to the Board and to the public. Chief Micklos asked that the commissioners request or write letters to the state of Pennsylvania legislators to approve radar for speeding. The report was accepted.

FIRE DEPARTMENT:

No report.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT:

No report.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Vice-President Doebler expressed that the people of Aleppo are not happy with the rate increase for the water authority. Commissioner Lisanti responded with the explanation that there has been plenty of notice, and that the increase is a financial necessity due to the expenses. President Gartner recommended comparing rates. Commissioner Lisanti explained that he has a presentation to explain the comparison. The report was accepted.

PLANNING/ZONING:

Manager Patterson stated that there was a pre-application conference held to address a question that Vesuvius USA, the company that is looking to buy the property on Deer Run Road. They came in to get some guidance on a possible future modification to the site. No official application has been submitted. The report was accepted.

TAX COLLECTOR:

Treasurer Charlotte Pierce gave her report to the Board and the public. She explained that we are over budget. Commissioner Schollaert asked if the transfer realty tax was 1%, and who gets the money. Manager Patterson explained the school district gets half, and Aleppo Township gets half. Solicitor Stone wanted to clarify that the property tax collected was \$1,300.00, not \$13,000.00, Treasures Charlotte Pierce agreed to the correction. The report was accepted.

TREASURER:

Charlotte Pierce reported to the Board and the public. Commissioner Lisanti questioned where is the bond reserve fund, Manager Patterson explained that it is all in the same account right now. The report was accepted.

Commissioner Schollaert motioned to exonerate the following Real Estate tax payers: a) Fuller, Von & Cindy M., 431 Weber Road/422-L-231 for \$22,900 reduction in assessed valuation for 2014 (refund of \$78.54), b) Minnock Construction Company, 109 Sewickley Heights Drive/422-D-450 for \$14,000 reduction in assessed valuation for 2014 (refund of \$48.02). Commissioner Jones seconded. Vice President Doebler questioned what this refund is for. Manager Patterson explained the appeal/exonerating process. Solicitor Stone also explained the appeal/hearing process. This motion passed unanimously.

FINANCE:

Vice-President Doebler made a motion to approve the November bill list in the amount of \$108,316.72. Commissioner Jones seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Vice-President Doebler made a motion to ratify the November pre-paid bills in the amount of \$7,490.38. Commissioner Schollaert seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Vice-President Doebler made a motion to ratify the November payroll transfers in the amount of \$15,367.08. Commissioner Jones seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

ALEPPO TOWNSHIP AUTHORITY:

Commissioner Lisanti gave a report regarding the Authority meeting from last week. The subject of the meeting was the rate increase for the Water Authority. The sewer budget was approved with no rate increase. Commissioner Lisanti explained the water system has incurred several extraordinary expenses.

The Water Authority had lost money in 2012 and in 2013. He discussed the water system budget report through November 2014. Vice President Doebler questioned if this report has been

approved, Manager Patterson answered the report has been approved, the 2015 budget with new rates has not yet been approved.

Commissioner Lisanti reported the professional fees for the audit expenses and an accountant helping to prepare the budget every month. The Hill Road landslide was not budgeted. There is a loss of approximately \$44,000. There was also the South McCoy Street water line replacement amounting to \$30,000 which was not budgeted and had to take that out of the capital account. In addition there is the loan of \$100,000 for the subsurface work and the design of the new water line, along with the pressure sensing device. This will all be covered by the AIM Loan from Allegheny County with a 1.34% loan for a 5 year term. The 2015 budget has to show paying this loan off. The Authority will have plans and specifications ready for bids to replace the water line. The Authority will try to get a grant or get another loan with a lower interest rate. The Authority would like to increase the rate 15%. West View Water is raising their rates which will have the Water Authority needing another 15% increase.

Commissioner Lisanti presented a report with water rates for all of the authorities within Allegheny County. The table is based upon the average use of 15,000 gallons per quarter, which Aleppo does not use, but that is what the table was based on. The figures were based on 2014 rates. Commissioner Lisanti explained the reason for the West View Water rate increase is due to a new water plant that will be built to service the northern tier including Cranberry and our service area.

Commissioner Schollaert questioned if there was any other plant that we could get the water from that would be at a cheaper rate. Solicitor Stone explained that the other supplier that Aleppo is already hooked up to is Sewickley, however, they are much more expensive.

Commissioner Jones had a question about the Authority budget, whether it is through November 2014. Commissioner Lisanti explained that it is through November 2014. Commissioner Jones also commented that the Authority did not increase the rates 30%, but only increased to 15%. He also questioned whether Aleppo could be in jeopardy of losing their supply with West View Water. Solicitor Stone explained that they are in the process of negotiating a new 30 year service agreement with West View Water, it has been agreed on within the Authority. Solicitor Stone is in the process of incorporating some minor revisions. He also explained that there are several water authorities that want new customers, we are not in jeopardy of losing the water supplier.

Commissioner Jones questioned the recapture of the \$136,000 spent on the Glenfield landslide costs. Solicitor Stone explained that this is still an open subject. The focus has been on the remediation plan, the subject of the recovery is to be discussed in executive session.

Commissioner Jones commented that calculating paying back the \$100,000 loan over 5 years at 1% would be approximately \$20,000 per year. Commissioner Lisanti agreed.

Commissioner Schollaert questioned if the Authority is voting on the rate increase tomorrow at the Authority meeting and if an ordinance is needed. Commissioner Lisanti answered that they are voting tomorrow. Solicitor Stone explained that an ordinance is not needed, however, in some townships the authority does come to the township and asks for an ordinance because with an ordinance the authority can have some enforcement and liening powers on delinquent accounts. Commissioner Lisanti explained that the Authority does not ask for an ordinance.

Vice President Doebler thanked Commissioner Lisanti for all of the hard work on the Authority report.

QVCOG:

No report.

AMBULANCE AUTHORITY:

Commissioner Schollaert reported that there was a meeting in November 2014. This report was accepted.

PUBLIC WORKS:

Thomas Jarvie gave a report to the board and the public. The report was accepted.

Commissioner Lisanti reported that a committee was chaired to look at the paving consisting of Manager Patterson, Thomas Jarvie, and Len Kinter. The committee came up with a plan of what will be required over the next 5 years. Manager Patterson will have the criteria in a forum for the meeting next month.

SOLICITOR:

Solicitor Stone reported that he did get an extension agreement with El Grande with the deadline of 4/30/2015. The agreement was signed and returned.

Solicitor Stone reported that with the condemnation work that is left to complete the sewer project there are 19-20 properties that have not entered into easement agreements and as a result he had to file declarations of taking for condemnation proceedings against those properties. He explained that once the declaration of taking is filed, the Township has the right to put in the lines, and do the construction, however, the Township is still required to pay the property owner for the use/taking of their property. He stated that Manager Patterson did a wonderful job getting most of the property owners under easement agreements, but there are 20 that did not want to sign easement agreements. The next step in the process is to hire an appraiser, he gives an appraisal for each one of the properties that are affected by the taking. The appraisals are back. Solicitor Stone needs authorization to offer just compensation to each one of the property owners for whom we have an appraisal. The total of the estimated just compensation is at about \$25,000 over 20 properties.

Commissioner Lisanti asked what the individual totals are. Solicitor Stone explained that the highest appraisal came back at \$12,700 and the lowest is as low as \$100. He also explained that the project consists of sewer lines under ground which is not going to bring much damage to the property owner, but when the work is above ground or crossing the properties, not in an existing easement, the price goes up. This includes all sewers and the pump station. Commissioner Jones asked if the funding will come from the balance of the bond proceeds. Manager Patterson answered that this is an allowable use. Commissioner Jones asked if this requires a motion. Solicitor Stone also commented that KLH should have made a projected estimate to get the bond issue done of what the property acquisition costs would be for the project. Commissioner Jones asked Manager Patterson if the legal costs associated with this effort are within the Act 537 line

item. Manager Patterson answered yes, so far. Commissioner Jones also asked if there are a few more billings, Manager Patterson answered yes.

Solicitor Stone explained that he does not anticipate a lot of resistance with these appraisals, they are done by a reputable appraiser, and most property owners come to an agreement along those terms. He explained that occasionally a property owner will not accept the estimate of just compensation, in which case the board of viewers will come out and do their own estimate of just compensation. If the property owner doesn't like that estimate then it will go to a hearing where the property owner goes to court with an appraiser of their own to challenge the figures. He feels that this seems unlikely, but it does happen. Commissioner Schollaert asked if an authorization is needed. Solicitor Stone explained that he is asking for authorization to make the offers of the estimates of just compensation according to the appraisals that we have received. Commissioner Jones asked if this requires a motion, Solicitor Stone answered yes. Vice President Doebler made the motion. Commissioner Lisanti added that he would like the motion to include not to exceed \$25,000. President Gartner accepted that amendment. Commissioner Schollaert seconded. A roll call vote was taken. The motion passed unanimously.

VP Doebler asked Solicitor Stone about the progress of the codification. Solicitor Stone hopes to have it done before the end of the year.

SEWER PROJECT:

No report.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Commissioner Schollaert asked if a letter has been sent to the residents yet regarding the name change, Manager Patterson replied that a letter will be going out after Christmas, at the beginning of the new year. Commissioner Schollaert asked what would be included in the letter. Manager Patterson stated the letter would include an introduction of the name change topic, explain why the name change is necessary, and see what kind of feedback is received.

Commissioner Jones reported that Commissioner Lisanti has given him a several names and that he also has 2 names, and Solicitor Stone has additional names to employ an independent counsel to review a strategy for the refinancing of the bond issue. Commissioner Jones questioned what is the next step to proceed with the hiring, who should do the interviewing. Commissioner Jones and Solicitor Stone could do the interviewing together. President Gartner authorized Commissioner Jones and Solicitor Stone to interview possible counsel.

Commissioner Lisanti reported that there is now an engineering RFP ready, Manager Patterson agreed.

NEW BUSINESS:

None.

ACTION ITEMS:

Manager Patterson explained the audit recommendations that have been completed and discussed with VP Doebler, and Commissioner Lisanti. VP Doebler questioned the length of time waiting

for the auditor. He also questioned if Solicitor Stone could help with finding policies. Solicitor Stone replied that these are auditing policies, not legal. Commissioner Jones believes that we can get the policies elsewhere. He asked Manager Patterson if she could do the research, call other municipal managers, and get their policies. Solicitor Stone believes he can ask other municipalities their policies.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION:

None

ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner Lisanti made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Jones seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly A. Koskey
Township Secretary