

**CUMRU TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
SPECIAL MEETING**

**OCTOBER 24, 2016**

The Special Meeting of the Cumru Township Board of Commissioners was called to order by President Ruth O'Leary at 6:10 p.m. Other Commissioners in attendance were Vice President Edward L. Gottschall, Sheri Hoover, and Lorri K. Swan. Tony J. Sacco was absent with prior notification to the Board. Also attending were Chief of Police Madison Winchester, Superintendent of Public Works Robert McNichols, Jr., Assistant Superintendent of Public Works James A. Bean, Business/Personnel Administrator Peggy A. Carpenter, Recreation Director Samson Gausch, Manager Jeanne E. Johnston, and Secretary Latoya Procopio.

**PUBLIC**

No members of the public were present.

**2017 BUDGET**

General Fund – Building and Grounds

The Board reviewed the 2017 draft buildings and grounds budget. Ms. Johnston proposed new line items for the distribution of manager and business administrator salaries throughout all of the departments in the general fund, including buildings and grounds. In 2016, this process had begun with a portion of these salaries being distributed to the police department budget. This would allow for a more accurate evaluation of costs in the event that consolidation would ever be considered. She and Mrs. Carpenter were evaluating the final proposed salary distribution for each of the general fund departments.

Ms. Johnston recommended increasing the line item for maintenance wages by \$10,000.00 due to anticipated 2017 projects. Ms. Johnston reported that several projects come out of the contracted services line item for buildings and grounds, one example being the camera and fobbing systems. Chief Winchester explained to the Board that the camera at the Sally port needed to be replaced. The replacement camera was also quoted with a key fob for the sally port door for a total quoted amount of \$2,260.00. The Board concurred with the project.

Refuse Fund

The Board reviewed the 2017 draft refuse fund budget. Ms. Johnston reported that receipt of a recycling equipment grant reimbursement in the amount of \$203,933 was anticipated by 12/31/16. After taking the reimbursement and anticipated 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2016 expenses into account, it was recommended to discuss a potential increase in the refuse rate. The Township's goal has been to retain a six-month reserve in the refuse fund. From 2013 through 2016, the refuse fee - \$138 for one adult and \$155 for two adults - has been sufficient to maintain the reserve. However, a deficit of approximately \$180,000 is anticipated in 2017 and carry over is not projected to maintain the reserve. The Board tentatively agreed to raise the refuse fee in 2017 to \$145 for one adult and \$165 for two adults. The Board also asked staff to examine the refuse rates in surrounding municipalities and provide that information.

Sewage Management Program (SMP) Fund

Ms. Johnston again reviewed the origin of this proposed fund with the Board: the Sewage Management Program (SMP) is a requirement from the PaDEP with the update to the Act 537 sewage facilities plan. An SMP involves documenting proof that a septic tank is pumped a

minimum of every 3 years. The goals of such programs are to minimize groundwater pollution, especially since areas of on lot sewers have wells, and minimize health hazards due to malfunctioning septic systems. Several municipalities in the area already have SMPs, including Muhlenberg Township.

Some entity needs to handle the required notices, answer questions, monitor the documentation, and deal with any deficiencies in the on lot systems and documentation, including coordination of inspections with a Sewage Enforcement Officer (SEO). Administration of the program would require a fee to cover the costs.

As has been described to the Board on prior occasions, Cumru's proposal is to have a separate fund for the SMP and other on lot sewage matters, like the refuse fund. Currently, fees for new on lot system permits are deposited into the general fund and expenses for enforcement of on lot sewage problems, as well as the on lot portions of the Act 537 plan, are subsidized by the general fund. It is proposed that these line items would be removed from the general fund and transferred to the SMP fund. The sanitary sewer portions of the Act 537 plan are subsidized by the sewer fund.

It is further proposed that the mechanism for administering the fee would also be the same as the refuse fund: using the County/Township bills. This would minimize costs of creating and mailing bills. Using the County/Township bills, the fee would be annualized.

Since Cumru Township has over 1,000 on lot sewage systems, managing this program in-house is not feasible with the current staffing. It is proposed to split the Township into 3 districts, each with approximately 1/3 of the on lot systems, and have the SEO's firm administer the notifications, address inquiries, perform inspections, and maintain documentation. In the initial 3-year cycle, one district would be notified each year. There may be an initial increase in enforcement for the first several years of the program, as some inspections will reveal deficiencies.

The draft budget was based on an annualized fee of \$75. Looking at the fee on a 3-year basis, the fee would be \$225. Muhlenberg Township's fee is \$200. If the Board chooses, the Township could adopt a discount and a penalty for the fee, similar to the refuse fund fee schedule.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

A) Meeting Advertised in the Reading Eagle on 10/14/2016

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**ON MOTION OF MRS.SWAN, SECOND OF MRS. HOOVER, A UNANIMOUS VOTE  
TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:39 P.M.**

Respectfully submitted,



Latoya Procopio  
Secretary